
Chief Executive's Report on the Submissions and Observations Received on the Draft Wexford County Development Plan 2021-2027

April 2021

BOOK 2

- Section 1 Volume 2 Development Management Manual
- Section 2 Volume 3 Bunclody Town Settlement Plan
- Section 3 Volume 3 Rosslare Harbour & Kilrane Settlement Plan
- Section 4 Volume 3 Castlebridge Specific Objectives
- Section 5 Volume 3 Rosslare Strand Specific Objectives
- Section 6 Volume 4 Statement of Compliance with Section 28 Guidelines

Section 5 – Volume 3 Rosslare Strand Specific Objectives

Relevant Submissions

- WXF-C3-10 Geological Survey of Ireland (GSI)
- WXF-C3-30 Rosslare Development Association (RDA)
- WXF-C3-72 Office of Public Works (OPW)
- WXF-C3-149 Callery
- WXF-C3-164 Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR)

Summary of Issues Raised and Chief Executive’s Response

Section 4.3.9 Flood Risk

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) and WXF-C3-149 (Callery) express concerns about the implications of the JBA flood maps which show much of the northwest of the village to be at risk of flooding. It is requested that the less restrictive OPW CFRAM mapping be used for future flooding assessment and that reference to the JBA map be deleted.

Section 4.3.9 Flood Risk – Chief Executive’s Response

The concerns expressed in WXF-C3-30 (RDA) and WXF-C3-149 (Callery) about the flood zone mapping included in the SFRA are noted. The OPW CFRAM assessment only considers tidal flooding (using a 2D only model with no detailed ground based survey of flood defence embankments or structures) and does not specifically take into account the fluvially influenced local back-drains or residual risk whereby the flood defence embankments of South Slobs and the local environs are ignored. These maps are therefore not a suitable comparison to the Flood Zones used in the Draft County Development Plan. Flood Zones are required to reflect an undefended condition as outlined in Section 3.4 of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009). The basis is therefore conservative and is representative of the OPW ICPSS flood mapping whereby extreme still water sea levels are interpolated inland. They represent a precautionary approach to reflect uncertainties in flooding datasets and risk assessment techniques and the ability to predict the future climate and performance of existing flood defences.

Furthermore, the purpose of these flood zone maps is to identify potential flood risk that may require further consideration. Any future developments in Rosslare will be screened for flood risk and will be subject to appropriately detailed site-specific flood risk assessments in accordance with the Guidelines to determine the level of flood risk. Flood risk will also be considered as part of the proposed Settlement Plan for Rosslare and associated SFRA (see response to WXF-C3-164 OPR). It will be necessary to carry out detailed hydraulic modelling at that juncture to determine the flood zones that will be used to inform land use zoning decisions within the Settlement Plan area. No amendment proposed.

The Council will continue to use all available sources of information when screening for flood risk during the preparation of local area plans, settlement plans and when assessing development proposals. These sources include:

- The CFRAM flood zone mapping.
- The OPW National Indicative Flood Mapping.
- Fluvial flood maps prepared by JBA for the county.

Section 4.4.1 Strategic Aim

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) notes that Rosslare Strand is the premier natural holiday resort in the region and the future planning of the town should be taken as a whole. They suggest that this should be informed by their five year plan which is appended to the submission. They state that their plan is a natural fit for inclusion in the County Development Plan.

Section 4.4.1 Strategic Aim - Chief Executive's Response

The Council congratulates RDA's on their detailed five year plan. While it is not possible to incorporate the entire RDA plan into the County Development Plan, it is considered that the Draft Plan addresses the key elements of the RDA's plan. The Council looks forward to working with the local community to progress the specific objectives identified for Rosslare Strand in the County Development Plan and the proposals in the RDA's plan, where possible and appropriate. No amendment proposed.

Section 4.4.2 Core Strategy Development Approach

WXF-C3-164 (OPR) requests that consideration be given to re-allocating population to Levels 2-4 on the Settlement Hierarchy in Chapter 3 Core Strategy in Volume 1 Written Statement. The OPR also requested that boundaries be identified for settlements.

Section 4.4.2 Core Strategy Development Approach – Chief Executive’s Response

Please refer to Section 2 in Book 1 of this report for the full response to and recommendations arising from consideration of the OPR submission. In summary, the proposed amendments relating to Rosslare Strand are:

- It is now a Level 3(a) Service Settlement;
- A Settlement Plan with land use zoning will be prepared for Rosslare Strand, and
- The population and household growth allocations has been amended to 133 persons and 90 households between 2021-2027.

It is recommended that all relevant references and sections be amended to incorporate these proposed amendments.

It is further noted that the specific objectives outlined for Rosslare Strand will remain in place until the Wexford County Development 2021-2027 is varied to incorporate the Rosslare Strand Settlement Plan.

Section 4.4.9 Transport and Movement

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) notes that access to the blue flag beach is mainly through the existing main entrance and car park. Additional access points are needed and any new developments adjacent to the beach should be required to provide beach access and additional parking. The submission also highlights their five year plan, published in 2019, which included several projects that the residents identified including the following:

- Re-ordering traffic flow through the village to overcome increased congestion;
- Give urgent address to potential risk of injury, or even tragedy, at the dangerous state of the railway bridges in the village;
- Opening an additional access point to the beach with parking facilities; and

- Consider park and ride facility at the periphery of the village in summer months and acquire available land to create parking for cars and camper vans.

Section 4.4.9 Transport and Movement - Chief Executive's Response

The Council is supportive of providing and facilitating additional pedestrian linkages, including appropriate beach access and parking facilities subject to assessments relating to potential impacts on natural features, habitats and species such as dunes and compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria. Furthermore, Objective CZM67 in Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning in Volume 1 Written Statement states 'To promote public access, including public walkways to beaches and the seashore, where environmentally appropriate and subject to the protection of amenities of coastal communities and normal planning and environmental criteria'.

It is acknowledged that accesses and parking facilities become under pressure during traditional holiday periods, especially summer months, when large numbers of visitors are present. In this regard, Objective RS28 states that it is an objective of the Council to investigate:

- The feasibility of a local traffic management system with measures to prioritise pedestrian, cyclist and public transport movements throughout the settlement and to facilitate the complementary use of private car.
- Options to increase provision of fully accessible pedestrian footpaths and, in particular, arrangements for pedestrians crossing the bridges on Station Road and Mauritiustown Road.
- The feasibility of providing additional car parking facilities at appropriate locations to facilitate the greenway and tourism development generally and an unloading bay in village centre.
- The introduction of formalised cycle paths and walking routes.

No amendment is proposed.

Section 4.4.10 Economic Development

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) notes that Rosslare has been successful in keeping out gaming machines, amusement arcades and gambling facilities and request an objective that this be prohibited in the future.

The submission also notes that the growth in visitor and resident numbers contribute to the local and national economy and that there are opportunities to further growth in employment numbers through progressing projects like the Rosslare to Waterford greenway. Their five-year plan suggests the following additional projects:

- Assist Wexford County Council to create a county wide plan to win funding from Fáilte Ireland
- Greenway with spin-off opportunities in bicycle repair and sale depot, cyclists kits etc.
- Create a bird and wildlife sanctuary on land available at the periphery of the village

Section 4.4.10 Economic Development - Chief Executive's Response

The submission is noted. It is considered that the request to prohibit gambling facilities is outside the remit of the County Development Plan. Section 5.10.7 in Volume 2 Development Management Manual relates to amusement arcades, and it outlines that a proliferation of this type of development will not be permitted and the protection of the character of the area and the amenities of adjoining residential properties and businesses will be taken into consideration when assessing planning applications for this type of development. It is also noted that these facilities require an appropriate license. No amendment proposed.

Objectives TM28 and TM30 in Chapter 7 Tourism Development Strategy provide support for greenways and spin-off developments.

The Council have been planning the development of a greenway on the rail line from Rosslare Harbour to Waterford City. However, the Government recently announced that the Wexford-Waterford rail link will be included in the upcoming all-island Strategic Rail Review and the Council has suspended the development project pending the outcome of this review. The optimal solution, which would achieve the aims of sustainable travel and

tourism/economic development and amenity and health would be for a development which would allow for the development of the greenway alongside the existing track.

Notwithstanding the Council would support such an approach subject to funding being made available by central government. In the interim the Council will support the development of a greenway from Rosslare Harbour to Rosslare Strand if this can be done in a manner which does not prejudice the operation or reopening of the lines. It is recommended that RS39 is amended to reflect the updated position with regard to the Rosslare Europort-Waterford greenway and that an objective is added with regard to the potential for a greenway between Rosslare Harbour and Rosslare Strand.

The Council is supportive of facilitating the provision of additional employment opportunities, particularly those that extends employment beyond the traditional seasonal tourism product. This is provided for in specific objectives Rosslare Strand such as:

- Objective RS32: To encourage and facilitate tourist development that will improve the area's tourist facilities and attractions and to seek to extend the holiday season. Such development should be suitably located, of a size and scale appropriate to the village and of a high-quality design".
- Objective RS34: To facilitate the expansion of existing local services and businesses where appropriate and to facilitate the development of further local employment opportunities and in particular those with year-round potential to address seasonality issues in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area".

The foregoing is also supported by wider economic development and tourism objectives contained in Chapter 6 Economic Development and Chapter 7 Tourism Development Strategy in Volume 1 Written Statement.

Notwithstanding, it is recommended that Objective RS32 be amended to work with Fáilte Ireland and other key stakeholders to further develop tourism facilities in the area and to develop attractions such as a wildlife sanctuary.

Section 4.4.11 Recreation and Open Space

The RDA's five year plan includes several recreation and open space projects that the residents identified including:

- Promenade for beach walkers as well as disabled persons, and slipway for small boats;
- Opening an additional access point to the beach with parking and toilet plus cold-shower facilities;
- Explore the feasibility of developing a purpose built unit to accommodate new dressing rooms with fully equipped gym and men's shed, replace existing temporary units; and
- Apiary project: facilitating the breeding and cultivation of the bee population under the work and guidance of local expertise.

Section 4.4.11 Recreation and Open Space - Chief Executive's Response

The Council welcomes the suggestions submitted enhancing community facilities (Objective RS47). It is considered that the suggestion for the provision of an accessible promenade and slipway for fishing and the provision/improvement of toilet and cold shower facilities at the beach, have merit. Project such as those can be considered under the objectives in Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning in Volume 1 Written Statement such as:

- Objective CZM56 'to support landside development which optimises on maritime tourism such as sea angling, sailing, marine adventure activities, diving and surfing at locations in accordance with Chapter 7 Tourism and subject to compliance with Objective CZM44 and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area'.
- Objective CZM67 'to promote public access, including public walkways to beaches and the seashore, where environmentally appropriate and subject to the protection of amenities of coastal communities and normal planning and environmental criteria'.
- Objective CZM68 'to maintain and upgrade facilities in coastal areas through the provision of appropriate support facilities such as car parking, coach parking, cycle

parking, universally accessible public toilets and refuse disposal facilities and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria’.

Projects such as the suggested Apiary project would be welcomed by the Council subject to normal planning considerations. The suggestion for additional access and parking facilities to the beach are noted and responded to in Section 4.4.9 Transport and Movement. No amendment proposed.

Section 4.4.12 Community and Education

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) notes that the influx of summer visitors and the increasing numbers of home purchases, serves to highlight the urgent need to improve services and social infrastructures which have been sought by the community for some time.

Section 4.4.12 Community and Education - Chief Executive’s Response

It is considered that Rosslare is well served by community facilities. The Council remains supportive of further improvements as expressed by Objective RS47 which states “to support the continued development, maintenance and upgrading of the community and sports centre to serve the needs of the local and visitor population of Rosslare Strand”. No amendment required.

Section 4.4.13 Surface Water, Flooding and Erosion

WXF-C3-30 (RDA) submission highlights that a partnership approach between the Council, local and national politicians, and local community associations was successful in obtaining funding for coastal protection works for protection of our blue flag beach and the Rosslare coastline.

WXF-C3-10 (GSI) requests wording clarifications regarding the survey work undertaken in Rosslare to date.

WXF-C3-72 (OPW) note that Rosslare has been identified as being sensitive to increases in sea level. Consideration might be given as to whether objectives relating to climate adaptation should be included in the specific objectives for Rosslare.

Section 4.4.13 Surface Water, Flooding and Erosion - Chief Executive's Response

The OPW comments are noted. The SFRA (Volume 11) notes that Flood Zone A/B should be avoided for any highly or less vulnerable development and the FRM objectives ensure that climate change is incorporated into FFL consideration at Development Management stage. The Flood Zones themselves utilise a conservative undefended still water projection method which promotes a precautionary approach in this settlement. The area to the north of the settlement core is lower lying and is more susceptible to climate change. There is no formal land use zoning designation in this area and the Justification Test will preclude most highly/less vulnerable new development within Flood Zone A/B. Consideration should also be given to climate change as part of any site specific FRA and particular attention should be given to access routes under this condition.

The Council welcomes the survey work undertaken by the GSI in Rosslare Strand, and it is recommended that the text be amended as requested.

Objective CZM31 in Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning in Volume 1 Written Statement relates to the preparation of coastal erosion management plans. One of the referenced plans is the Rosslare Coastal Erosion and Flood Risk Management Plan. The objective of the scheme, which is currently being prepared, is to implement measures to reduce the impact of erosion and flooding risk at Rosslare Strand. It will also take the effects of climate change into account. The area to the north of the settlement referred to above is covered by the scheme. The scheme has received funding from the OPW and is moving to detailed design stage. The scheme comprises two elements:

1. Erosion: hold the line option to include rock revetment, rock groynes and beach nourishment.
2. Flood: construction of a flood barrier, 1,076m long along the west side of Rosslare spit.

While all settlements are subject to the flood risk management objectives contained in Section 9.11 of Volume 1 Written Statement, it is recommended to include a flood risk management objective as a specific objective for Rosslare. This, together with the coastal erosion objectives for the settlement, will ensure that climate change is considered in the

settlement area. Climate change will also be given further consideration during the preparation of the Rosslare Strand Settlement Plan and associated SFRA (see response to WXF-C3-164 OPR).

Chief Executive's Recommendations

It is recommended that the following proposed amendments be made:

CE RS.1

Amend the first two sentences in Section 4.3.1 Settlement Hierarchy on page 153 as follows:

Rosslare Strand is designated as Level 3(a) Service Settlement in the Core Strategy Settlement Hierarchy. Levels 3(a) settlements are important service settlements for their local communities and their wider hinterlands.

CE RS.2

Amend the first sentence in Section 4.4.2 Core Strategy Development Approach on page 158 as follows:

As outlined in Section 4.3.1 Rosslare Strand is designated as a Level 3(a) settlement in the Core Strategy.

CE RS.3

Include the following as the first bullet point in Section 4.4.2 Core Strategy Development Approach on page 158 as follows:

- To prepare a Settlement Plan with land use zoning for Rosslare Strand.

CE RS.4

Amend Section 4.4.8 Residential on page 168 as follows:

As set out in the Core Strategy, an additional population of ~~223~~133 is allocated to Rosslare Strand between ~~2016—2027~~2021-2027. This equates to ~~148~~90 additional households. It is intended to deliver all of these new dwelling units on lands in a sequential manner within the built-up footprint of the settlement ~~plan~~ area as per Section 4.4.6, achieving more than 30% envisaged by NPO 3c in the NPF.

CE RS.5

Amend the first two sentences in the third paragraph in Section 4.4.13 Surface Water, Flooding and Erosion on page 178-179 as follows:

The Geological Survey, of Ireland (GSI), in partnership with the Discovery Programme through the CHERISH project, is surveying sections of the Irish coastline using unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and producing digital elevation models. ~~Where re-surveying occurs, they can provide quantitative assessments of erosion.~~ In Rosslare, ~~sections of eroding sand dunes~~ a 200m section of an eroding sediment cliff was ~~were~~ surveyed in 2017 and in 2018.

CE RS.6

Amend Objective RS28 on page 171 in Section 4.4.9 Transport and Movement as follows:

To investigate:

- The feasibility of a local traffic management system with measures to prioritise pedestrian, cyclist and public transport movements throughout the settlement and to facilitate the complementary use of private car.
- Options to increase provision of fully accessible pedestrian footpaths and, in particular, arrangements for pedestrians crossing the bridges on Station Road and Mauritiustown Road.
- The feasibility of providing additional car parking facilities at appropriate locations to facilitate the greenway and tourism development generally and an unloading bay in village centre.
- The feasibility of developing additional access points to the beach with cycle and parking facilities subject to environment assessments and compliance with the Habitats Directive; and
- The introduction of formalised cycle paths and walking routes.

CE RS.7

Amend Objective RS32 on page 174 in Section 4.4.10 Economic Development as follows:

To work with Fáilte Ireland to encourage and facilitate tourist development that will improve the area's tourist facilities and attractions, such as an appropriately located wildlife sanctuary and to seek to extend the holiday season. Such development should be suitably located, of a size and scale appropriate to the village and of a high quality design.

CE RS.8

To include the following flood risk management objective for Rosslare Strand on page 179 in Section 4.4.13 Surface Water, Flooding and Erosion:

To ensure that all future developments in the settlement area are screened for flood risk and comply fully with the requirements of the Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DEHLG and OPW, 2009) and Circular PL2/2014 and any future update of these guidelines, the County Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (Volume 11) and Chapter 9 Infrastructure in Volume 1 Written Statement.

CE RS.9

Amend objective RS39 on page 176 as follows:

~~To support the development of the Rosslare to Waterford Greenway proposal and associated spin-off developments.~~

To examine the feasibility of reopening the disused Rosslare Europort to Waterford Railway as a sustainable transport corridor which would accommodate a reopened passenger and freight line and a greenway for active travel and amenity use. The Council will seek appropriate funding to facilitate the development of this important corridor between Rosslare Europort and Belview and Waterford MASP.

CE RS.10

Insert new Objective on page 177 as follows:

To support the development of a greenway from Rosslare Harbour to Rosslare Strand subject to the this being achieved in a manner which does not prejudice the operation of existing or reopening of disused lines and subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive.