



# **CURRACLOE LOCAL AREA PLAN**

**December 2004**



## Content

The plan commences with general findings of survey work and a general description. Each section commences with an outline of what facilities are available followed by and identify of the issues the plan must address. This is followed by the Planning Authority's aims, policies and objectives for each section. The zonings and objectives are mapped on two maps contained in the appendix. The plan concludes by assessing the environmental impact of implementing the plan. A design guide to help shape village development is also contained in appendix 2.

<u>CONTENTS</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
1.0 Context of the Local Area Plan	1
1.1 Statutory Basis	1
1.2 Planning Context	1
1.3 Public Consultation	1
1.4 Implementation of the Plan	2
2.0 Curracloe General Description, Location and Current Role in the County	2
2.1 Population	2
3.0 Policies and Objectives	4
3.1 Commercial/Service Facilities, Enterprise and Employment	4
3.2 Community, Sports and Recreation	5
3.3 Tourism	6
3.4 Housing, Rate of Growth and Scale of Housing Development	10
3.5 Infrastructure - Water and Sanitary Services	13
3.6 Infrastructure - Transport and Communications	14
3.7 Amenities and Open Space	17
3.8 Conservation: Protecting Village Form, Character and Built Heritage	18
4.0 Development Control Principles	22
4.1 Guides to the Contents of a Planning Application	22
4.2 Land Use Zoning	22
4.3 Non-Conforming Uses	22
4.4 Use Class Related to Zoning (Matrix)	24
5.0 Environmental Impact Assessment	25
 <u>APPENDICES</u>	
Appendix 1 Record of Protected Structures	29
Appendix 2 Curracloe Design Guidelines	30
Zoning Map (attached)	
Specific Objectives Map (attached)	

## **1.0 Context of the Local Area Plan**

According to the County Development Plan for Wexford, the coastal areas around the county are important amenity areas and are very sensitive to new developments. Many of these areas are under pressure for development due to their attractive scenery. It is the aim of Wexford County Council to protect these highly valued amenity areas.

Accordingly it is fitting that a Local Area Plan and a design code is drawn up for Curraclloe, so that development is managed and sustainable in the long term.

### **1.1 Statutory Basis**

The Curraclloe Local Area Plan has been prepared in accordance with sections 18-20 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 and in the context of the Rural Development Strategy (Small Towns and Villages) set out in County Wexford Development Plan 2001. Once made, the Local Area Plan will remain in place for a period of six years i.e. to 2010 notwithstanding any variation of the County Development Plan. The Local Area Plan will cease to have effect in respect of the Curraclloe area where it is inconsistent with the provisions of the County Development Plan in place at the time or variations to same. A Local Area Plan must be reviewed within or at least six years from the making of the previous plan. The Planning Authority may amend or revoke a Local Area Plan at any time.

### **1.2 Planning Context**

The Curraclloe Local Area Plan is consistent with the objectives of the County Wexford Development Plan 2001. Section 3.3 of the County Development Plan emphasises the importance of maintaining the role and vitality of the county's small towns and villages, while protecting their identity, character and setting and quality of life of local communities. The County Development Plan includes objectives to prepare Local Area Plans as a means of guiding new development and of ensuring the proper planning and sustainable development of such areas.

### **1.3 Public Consultation**

The Planning and Development Act provides for planning authorities to consult the public before preparing a local area plan (Section 20). Wexford County Council advertised for preliminary written submissions on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2003, useful knowledge and ideas were gathered from these submissions and they have helped to inform the making of this Plan. A further consultation period will be held before the Local Area Plan is finally adopted and it is hoped to gain the opinions of as many residents, stakeholders and interest groups at that stage possible.

#### **1.4 Implementation of the Plan**

The Local Area Plan will provide landowners, developers and the local community with certainty as to how lands and buildings in and around the village will be developed. The planning authority will apply planning controls in order to implement the objectives of the plan and may also enter into planning agreements with landholders and developers in order to secure objectives. The process of making the plan has and will give residents the opportunity to contribute to the shaping of the future of the village. The incorporation of local knowledge and local goals provides a basis for a partnership approach to the implementation of the plan, involving the planning authority, local people and other agencies.

## **2.0 Curraclloe's general description, location and current role in the County**

The coastal settlement of Curraclloe is located approximately 11km northeast of Wexford Town on the R.742. The coastal amenities of the area have resulted in the development of the village as a seaside resort with day-trip and holiday-based functions. Settlement patterns have spread beyond the traditional village core and are comprised of one-off dwellings in roadside locations and clustered settlements around Coolrainey. To this end the plan area stretches from the village centre to the townland of Coolrainey and as far as the coast at Culleton's Gap and White Gap.

Curraclloe is located in close proximity to Wexford town and to important amenities such as the beach and The Raven. Development in the past has happened in an uncoordinated fashion outside of the traditional village centre. The village core area is linear in form and lacks a central focus. Much of the area in the vicinity of the village especially around the crossroads would benefit from generally improving the visual aspect through, for example, the use of hard and soft landscaping.

### **2.1 Population**

The year round population of the plan area is approximately 586 persons. During the summer months this is estimated to rise close to 1,500 when the caravan parks and holiday homes are fully occupied.

The provision of 13.6ha. for residential development can potentially yield 272 additional dwellings using an average net density of 15-20 dwellings per hectare. Thus on the basis of the projected household size of three persons, the additional lands zoned in the village core could render a population increase of 816 and ensure village vitality on a year-round basis.

### **3.0 Policies and Objectives**

#### **3.1 Commercial / Service Facilities, Enterprise & Employment**

Curraclloe acts as a service centre for the surrounding area. It has a limited range of commercial and retail services which include, a shop/post office, a petrol service station, supermarket, fuel merchant, 2 public houses, hotel and take-away. Payphone facilities are also available in the village. There are two “entertainment centres” close to White Gap.

Curraclloe contains a good range of basic commercial and service facilities for existing local needs. However, with increasing pressure for development and growth in the summer population, there is a need for expansion of village centre facilities. There is also a notable absence of any small industry or other source of employment other than that directly related to tourism or agriculture. This results in a significant proportion of the workforce commuting to Wexford town on a daily basis.

##### **Strategic Aim:**

To ensure the continuation and consolidation of Curraclloe’s commercial and service role in meeting the needs of both the local community and visitors and to encourage development of local enterprise and employment opportunities.

##### **To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

- CP1** To maintain and foster the role of Curraclloe as a local retail/service centre.
- CP2** To facilitate the development of Village Centre facilities, which provide retail outlets, community, services and a social gathering place to cater for the needs of the local community and visitors.
- CP3** To ensure that new retail/commercial outlets are designed to the highest standard and located to ensure safe and convenient access.
- CP4** To encourage and facilitate new employment opportunities that target local employment needs on a year-round basis and help to diversify the rural economy.

##### **Specific Objectives**

- CO1** To seek to encourage the environmental improvement of the village through the provision of off-street parking, traffic calming and management and hard and soft landscaping works as appropriate.

**CO2** To provide for village centre facilities to cater for the commercial and service needs of residents and visitors while acting as employment generators.

### 3.2 Community, Sports and Recreation Facilities

Curracloe enjoys a range of outdoor activities many relating to its tourism function. These include pitch and putt, tennis, water sports, angling, horse riding and walking. There is also a soccer pitch located on the Screen Road and nearby GAA grounds in Hollymount. Opportunities for indoor recreational opportunities are limited. Community facilities in Curracloe are comprised of the Catholic Church and graveyard and the “Curragh Clo Centre” which serves as a community centre. There is also a playgroup located in the “Curragh Clo Centre”. St. Margaret’s National School, which has an increasing population, as shown below, serves the primary educational needs of Curracloe. As there is no secondary school in the Curracloe area the majority of local children travel to Wexford Town for their secondary education.

**School Numbers**

	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
<b>St. Margaret’s National School</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>108</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>117</b>

There are a good range of sports and recreation facilities in Curracloe. However there is a need for more indoor recreation facilities, which would tackle the problem of seasonality.

**Strategic aim:**

To facilitate and improve the range of community, sports and recreation facilities and services to meet the needs of the local community and visitors.

**To achieve this aim it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

- CSP1** To facilitate the provision of additional community, sports and recreation facilities in line with future population trends.
- CSP2** To support attempts by local communities and organizations to improve and expand existing facilities for both residents and visitors to the area.
- CSP3** To encourage and facilitate the provision of community, sports and recreation facilities convenient to residential areas.

**Specific Objectives:**

- CSO1** To work with appropriate agencies, including funding organizations to assess and meet local community, sports and recreation needs in Curracloe.
- CSO2** To provide additional land zoning for institutional uses to allow for increased demand for graveyard space, community hall facilities and school space.
- CSO3** To encourage the provision of additional indoor recreation facilities which operate on a year-round basis.
- CSO4** To require development of active amenity spaces (e.g. tennis court, basketball court, playground) within housing developments larger than 25 houses.

### 3.3 Tourism

Tourism plays a very important role in the economy of Curracloe. The area is characterised by a significant number of caravan parks, self-catering holiday homes and a hotel. There is also significant demand for second homes in the area. The primary attraction is the blue-flag beach, which draws numerous visitors during the summer season. This represents an important source of amenity and it is important to maintain sustainable tourism in the area in order to ensure it retains its environmental quality. Wexford County Council also protects Curracloe beach under the Beach Bye-Laws, 2000.

The coastal location of Curracloe ensures that tourism will continue to be a significant factor in its future development. There appears to be potential for further growth, however this must be carried out in an appropriate fashion and scale so as not to detract from the attributes which make Curracloe an attractive tourist destination. It is evident that poorly sited and designed developments would be visually damaging to the character of Curracloe. Existing tourist accommodation consists mainly of mobile homes and holiday homes. However these developments yield poor economic returns to the local economy.

The County Council's aim is to focus on Curracloe as a prime, quality tourist destination. The interdependence between the village and the area's natural environment, particularly the beach, will be promoted and maximised. The policies and objectives of this plan are designed to strengthen the tourism role of Curracloe while protecting and improving the quality of all available resources and the lifestyle of local residents. The growth in demand for holiday homes has highlighted the need for additional facilities and for greater balance in the type and quality of future development in the area. While the beach and natural environment are and will remain the principal tourism resources, there is a need to extend the range of facilities, both indoor and outdoor and to tackle the problem of seasonality.

A comprehensive tourism package needs to be established through partnership with the various agencies and the local community including the development of sustainable projects in the area. In order to upgrade the quality of the tourism product, and having regard to the dominance of this form at present, further provision of caravan/mobile home parks will be discouraged.

**Tourism - Strategic aims**

- To support the development of sustainable tourism while avoiding conflict between tourism uses and other village uses and amenities.
- To seek to extend the holiday season in the area.
- To ensure that the carrying capacity of the area is not exceeded.

**To achieve these aims it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

**TP1** To encourage the provision of additional indoor recreational and leisure facilities to assist in addressing the problem of seasonality.

**TP2** To protect the natural and built environment as important tourism resources from insensitive and inappropriate tourism development.

**TP3** To strictly control the development of further caravan/mobile home parks in the area.

**TP4** To facilitate other tourism activities including eco-tourism, health centres, horse riding, tennis, walking and cycling and facilities relating to the outdoors and natural environment so as to encourage year round use.

**TP5** To require compliance in all new development with the Design Guidelines contained in Appendix 2 of this plan.

**TP6** To investigate the improvement: existing car parking facilities; and provision of additional, sensitively designed car parking facilities, particularly in proximity to the beach.

**TP7** To ensure that all mobile home / caravan parks comply with the following policy;

- i. All developments to comply with the “Wastewater Treatment Manuals, treatment systems for small communities, business, leisure centres and hotels” as compiled by the EPA 1999. Developments which do not comply will not be permitted.
- ii. All proposals to be accompanied by comprehensive landscape plans. All new site boundaries shall be hedged with a mix of deciduous shrubs suitable for hedging and common to the locality (*e.g. holly, hawthorn, blackthorn, field maple*). The hedging shall be planted continuously (*in a double row*) and indefinitely maintained along the boundaries of the site. A minimum of 50% should be deciduous trees of native (*not dwarfed*) species shall be included in the landscaping of the site in order to screen the proposed development from public view. Suggested species include field maple, sycamore, silver birch, rowan, white



beam, and space permitting, oak, beech or chestnut. The trees shall be a minimum height of 2 metres when planted, maintained indefinitely and replaced if failure occurs. All landscaping should take place in the first planting season prior to occupation of the development. The council will impose a bond on the granting of permission to ensure planting and landscaping is carried out in compliance with the permission.

- iii. The development shall comprise of a single pedestrian access point onto the public road and a single vehicular access point onto the public road (which may be combined).
- iv. A Public lighting schedule shall be provided, and it shall ensure minimum pollution of light. Scheme design to be justified by competent lighting engineer/consultant and shall include impact assessment of lighting on the NHA.
- v. The Planning Authority reserves the right to require the landowner to enter a legal agreement with the Planning Authority under S47 of the Planning and Development Acts 2000-2002 restricting the use of the remainder of the landholding to agricultural/amenity use.
- vi. The density of the proposed development shall be agreed with the planning authority prior/during the development application stage. Of particular importance shall be:
  - The quantity/quality of ancillary services and amenities in the existing village/area.
  - The existing scale of caravan/mobile home sites in the Curraclloe area.
  - Compliance with waste water treatment capacity
  - The visual impact of the development
  - The quality of the design and layout
  - The carrying capacity of the road serving the development and general road safety
  - The adequate provision of open space/play facilities (quantity and quality)
  - The topography of the site and conservation of existing natural vegetation.
- vii. It is the policy of the planning authority that good quality design and layout principles are adhered to. Reference should be made to Bord Failte's '**Guidelines for Development of Caravan and Camping Sites**' (1982) in this regard. Regard shall specifically be had to the following:
  - Clear access points onto and from the site
  - Attractive frontage
  - Layouts that incorporate cul-de-sacs or other defined layout patterns
  - Good signage within the park area

- viii. The planning authority requires a minimum of 25% of the entire site to be reserved for public open space and to be designed as an integral part of the development. In calculating this requirement the following areas shall not be included: roads, footpath, car parking, and the minimum space standards recommended between caravan/mobile site, boundary, car parking and permanent structures [as set out in Bord Failte's '*Guidelines for Development of Caravan and Camping Sites*' (1982)]. Central to this provision of open space shall be the provision of a play area, the details of which to be agreed by the planning authority prior/during the application for development phase. Emphasis shall be placed on the quality of the play area provided (play equipment rather than open grass) and on it being adequately overlooked.
- ix. Parks and sites should be provided with adequate roads and parking areas with at least one parking space per pitch and an appropriate number of additional spaces for visitors. Clear spacing in all directions must be provided around each pitch. Entrance/reception areas should be provided with adequate parking and turning facilities. Public lighting should be provided at low level and intensity;
- x. Development of contiguous caravan/mobile home facilities will not be permitted. Substantial natural buffers of open lands shall be retained between individual developments.
- xi. All existing unauthorized developments will be required to comply with the above where planning permission is sought for future development of the lands.

#### **Specific objectives**

- TO1** To require the development of mixed unit sizes in holiday home developments to ensure a range of different users and to encourage them to be used year round instead of strictly for summer usage.
- TO2** To provide/facilitate the provision of additional car parking facilities and improve existing facilities.
- TO3** To implement traffic management measures in existing village and new developments.
- TO4** To encourage the provision of weather independent facilities, which do not adversely affect the existing tourism resource.
- TO5** To investigate the possibility of providing improved road and information signage in the village for the beach and other amenity areas.
- TO6** To facilitate the provision of an integrated tourism facility within the tract of land zoned 'To Provide for Recreation/Open Space' and indicated on the Objectives map as T06. This development shall be strictly related to the development for, and continued use of, that tract of land. Conditions relating to this may be attached to any permission granted on this site.

The overall facility shall be open in character (e.g. Golf course & trekking centre) and the vast majority of the site shall be retained in rural based recreation uses. The associated built complex shall include the main buildings serving the development (clubhouse/stables/associated accommodation) and shall be sensitively located in relation to the landscape. The provision of links to the village shall be a priority in order to ensure that the development is beneficial to the village centre and area and is not insular in nature. Accommodation may be provided in the form of a hotel or similar. The planning authority may also consider a limited number of individual holiday units but these units must be clearly ancillary to the main development as their purpose is merely to provide a choice of accommodation to extend the tourism product.

- TO7** To concentrate and consolidate tourism developments in the existing built-up clusters at Coolrainey as well as facilitate development on the designated site east of the village centre.
- TO8** To protect the sand dunes, SAC and the proposed NHA as important elements of the tourism product.

### **3.4 Housing, Rate of growth and Scale of Housing Development**

Settlement patterns in Curraclloe are comprised of the village core area, the development cluster at Coolrainey as well as scattered developments in roadside locations. There are also a number of caravan parks and purpose built holiday villages. In recent years a number of modest housing schemes have taken place in Curraclloe. A new housing estate has recently been constructed and two more are in the process of being constructed in the village centre.

#### **Settlement Strategy**

The settlement strategy seeks to protect the landscape quality and village character and thus adopts a focused village approach to future development. New dwellings should be located such that existing groups of scattered linear development are consolidated. Development proposals that extend or create further ribbon development shall be prohibited.

The area has a number of derelict buildings and under-used farmsteads for which favourable consideration shall be given for conversion or re-use as alternative rural enterprises, holiday cottages or residential use (subject to appropriateness of use, scale, design and traffic generation).

Proposals for development must not diminish the conservation status of the designated European and National Sites and must not contravene the policies set out in the County Development Plan with regard to Coastal Development, Landscape Protection and Nature Conservation.

## **Zoning**

The provision and development of housing in Curracloe must have regard to the Council's Housing Strategy contained in the County Development Plan 2001. Compliance with the Housing Strategy will necessitate the transfer of up to 20% of zoned land, sites or units to the local authority for social and affordable housing. There is currently no local authority estate in the village. It is important to ensure a balance between accommodating permanent residents and meeting the demand for second and holiday homes. Implementation of the Wexford County Council's Housing Strategy will help to consolidate and increase the permanent resident population, thereby fostering a greater sense of place and community spirit, and providing the population base to support the introduction of a range of services and facilities.

### **Housing - Strategic aims:**

- To provide for adequate housing to meet local need within the plan area.
- To balance the number of holiday homes with permanent residences.
- To consolidate the existing settlement pattern.

### **To achieve these aims it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

**HP1** To implement Wexford County Council's Housing Strategy

**HP2** To accommodate new housing development on lands zoned for New Residential Development as indicated on the Land Use Zoning Objectives Map.

**HP3** To encourage the consolidation of the existing spatial pattern through in-fill development, particularly in the vicinity of the designated village core area, having regard also to the need to provide for adequate open space, car parking and other appropriate planning and environmental criteria.

**HP4** To balance the demand for holiday homes with the need to maintain a year round population.

**HP5** To promote a mix of house types to strengthen the vitality of the village particularly during the winter months.

**HP6** To discourage ribbon development on the approach roads to the village

**HP7** To ensure compliance with the Coastal Development Strategy as set out in the County Development Plan 2001, including:

- To prohibit any new building or development including caravans and temporary dwellings within 50m of soft shorelines.
- To ensure that no new habitable structures are permitted below 3 metres (O.D. Malin) in the interests of public safety, the protection of property and residential amenity.
- To open up sea views from the coastal roads and restrict development on the seaward sides of roads where it would be injurious to amenities.

**HP8** To ensure that new housing developments are designed to enhance the appearance of the area and to provide an attractive living environment in accordance with the Design Guidelines as set out in Appendix 2.

**HP9** To encourage well-designed and co-ordinated housing schemes rather than one-off dwellings.

**HP10** To provide or require the provision of, pedestrian linkages into and through existing and new residential developments where they can afford safe access for the community.

**HP11** To encourage cluster type development in groups of approximately eight (8) to fifteen (15) units in order to avoid extensive areas of suburban style housing which would detract from the character, identity and amenity of Curracloe.

**Specific Objectives:**

**HSO1** To require compliance with the Housing Strategy contained in the County Development Plan 2001 and any variations thereto.

**HSO2** To encourage the development of in-fill pocket areas in the vicinity of the existing village nodal points in order to create a more compact and sustainable settlement form in close proximity to the services and facilities within the established village core

**HSO3** To require the preparation of Residential Design Statements, setting out the main considerations, design principles and objectives, which have informed the layout and design of the development on housing developments of 10 houses or more.

**HSO4** To encourage the development and promotion of “best practice” advice for new and in-fill development.

**HSO5** Any development on this site shall be designed so as to take account of the landscape. Dwellings shall be sensitively sited, shall be single storey and shall not be located on the elevated portions of the site. The elevated portions shall be used as public/private open space. Roof lines shall not break the skyline when viewed from long views outside the site.

**HSO6** Development on this site shall seek to maintain, in so far as is consistent with the protection and enhancement of the visual amenities of the site, the contours of the site, that is the existing undulating character of kettle and kame landscape which is characteristic of the area. Any development on this site shall be designed so as to take

account of the landscape. Dwellings shall be sensitively sited and shall not be located on the elevated portions of the site. The elevated portions of the site shall be used as public/private open space. Roof lines shall not break the skyline when viewed from long views outside the site.

### **3.5 Infrastructure - Water and Sanitary Services**

#### **3.5.1 Water Supply**

The Sow Regional Water Supply Scheme services the plan area. The supply is from the Sow River with a treatment plant at Kilmallock near the village of Ballymurn. The scheme is currently close to capacity but the development of the Edermine borehole has provided some additional capacity. Further improvements will be carried out over the coming years with additional storage and new distribution mains. It is estimated that supply is sufficient to cater for land zoned under the Local Area Plan.

#### **3.5.2 Sewerage Treatment**

Wastewater treatment within the village of Curracloe comprises of a series of septic tanks with three new housing estate developments located in the village and at Coolrainey (Raven's Point) subject to private treatment. It is proposed to provide a sewerage scheme for the immediate Curracloe Village area.

#### **Water Supply and Wastewater - Strategic Aims:**

- To facilitate the provision of an adequate level of water and sanitary services infrastructure to accommodate current needs in the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- To facilitate the provision of an adequate level of water and sanitary services infrastructure to accommodate in the future a limited amount of sustainable development

#### **To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

**WSP1** To upgrade water and sanitary services infrastructure to serve the area covered by the Local Area Plan.

**WSP2** To ensure that lands designated for development are serviced or serviceable with water supplies. To ensure that lands designated for development in the immediate Curracloe Village area are serviced with public sewerage facilities.

**WSP3** To seek financial contributions from or the provision of infrastructure by developers to service development where existing capacity cannot accommodate the proposed development provided such development is otherwise acceptable.

**WSP4** To ensure protection of bathing water quality to the standards set down by the European Union.

**Specific Objectives:**

**WSO1** To undertake enforcement action and measures to mitigate against the pollution of watercourses and groundwater sources in the interests of public health and amenity.

**WSO2** To ensure that proposals for development provide for adequate levels of surface water drainage including attenuation where required by means of a disposal network of regulated discharge and source control.

**WSO3** To provide a sewerage scheme for the Curraclloe Village area.

### **3.6 Infrastructure - Transport and Communications**

#### **Roads**

The R 742 to Curraclloe from Wexford and surrounding county road are narrow and this presents difficulty in providing footpaths through the village. The roads accessing the beach are subject to congestion during the summer months with cars parking haphazardly presenting an obstruction during periods of peak demand. Further problems relate to the extent of 30 mph speed limits but this problem will be rectified shortly when the signs are moved.

#### **Footpaths**

The provision of footpaths in Curraclloe Village is inadequate. Additional footpaths are required in Curraclloe, particularly in the area around the school. The provision of footpaths in Curraclloe village is difficult, owing to the narrow width of roads and lack of space for footpath provision.

#### **Public Lighting**

Public lighting extends from St. Margaret's National School to Curraclloe crossroads and the Catholic Church.

#### **Car parking**

The Village of Curraclloe has two private car parking areas one of which is located at the crossroads and the other at the Hotel Curraclloe. Provisions for disabled parking should be made within the Village. The area in front of the school is also used as a car park but is insufficient in

size. There are also substantial areas of car parking in each of the beach areas at White Gap and Culletons Gap.

**Traffic and Communications - Strategic Aim:**

To provide for the development of an appropriate hierarchy of roads and pedestrian routes within and around the Plan Area to accommodate

- A range of users including the needs of residents, tourists and commercial enterprises.
- Local and seasonal traffic.
- The safe and convenient movement of vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists.

**To achieve this aim it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

- TRP1** To carry out road and car park improvement works to cater for the social and economic needs of the area.
- TRP2** To ensure that all development proposals meet traffic safety and parking requirements (see County Development Plan).
- TRP3** To examine the feasibility of installing traffic calming measures throughout the settlement and to require the incorporation of similar measures in new development in the interest of traffic safety and pedestrian mobility.
- TRP4** To require the segregation of pedestrian and vehicular traffic where possible and the elimination of traffic hazards at road junctions in new developments.
- TRP5** To promote and accommodate walking and cycling and to carry out road improvements to ensure the safety of pedestrians and cyclists in the area covered by the Local Area Plan.
- TRP6** To ensure that all existing and future housing developments are satisfactorily completed in terms of roads, footpaths, parking and turning areas and serviced with adequate public lighting systems.

**Specific Objectives:**

- TRO1** To investigate the possibility of putting footpaths in the built-up areas of the village particularly between the church and the school.
- TRO2** To improve the provision and condition of public lighting in the built-up areas of the village particularly the village centre and at Coolrainey.
- TRO3** To secure the provision of pedestrian linkages and public lighting between the village core area and adjoining residential developments.
- TRO4** To provide traffic calming measures along the main road on both approaches to the School.



- TRO5** To investigate the possibility of improving the car parking and pedestrian linkages between the Church and the Village Core.
- TRO6** To provide measures to reduce traffic congestion in proximity to the beach.
- TRO7** To improve the provision of car parking, including designated spaces for people with disabilities, particularly on lands in the vicinity of White Gap and Culleton's Gap and also in the vicinity of the school.
- TRO8** To ensure the under grounding of all new service cables and the under grounding of existing service cables where traffic calming and management and general environmental improvement works are being carried out.
- TRO9** To undertake road improvement measures along the main road through the village and beach access routes.
- TRO10** To seek to upgrade existing public toilet facilities and investigate the provision of additional facilities at beach car parks.
- TRO11** To investigate the possibility of improving the provision of car parking, including a drop off facility, at the school.
- TRO12** In developing this land the developer(s) shall be required to provide for permeability of this land appropriate to its village centre location by providing for a vehicular connection and pedestrian connections through the development between the R743 and the County Road leading to the beach. This road should take the format of a street with active frontage and a higher density of development shall be allowed at this location to facilitate the development of a streetscape. The design of the street shall provide for traffic calming and the creation of a public open space and a developed public realm (see design guide in appendix 2). Applicants for permission are advised to consult the planning authority prior to the preparation of planning applications on this site.
- TRO13** These lands shall be designed and developed in an integrated manner, whether they are constructed as one complete development or in a phased manner. The lands not abounding the Regional Road shall not be developed in advance of an appropriate and safe vehicular/pedestrian entrances to the village centre. In developing these lands the developer(s) will be required to provide for permeability appropriate to their village centre location. This shall be achieved by providing for a vehicular connection and pedestrian connections through the development between the lanes identified on Figure 2 (objectives map) as TR013(a) and TR013(b). The route created should take the format of a street with active frontage. A higher density of development shall be allowed at this location to facilitate the development of a streetscape. The design of the street shall provide for traffic calming and the creation of a public open space and a developed public realm (see Appendix 2: Design Guide). As part of the development of these lands the development of the lands which bound the church and cemetery the developer shall

provide an entrance (at minimum a pedestrian and cycling route) onto the Regional road at TR013(c) and a footpath along the frontage of that field. Applicants for permission are advised to consult the planning authority prior to the preparation of planning applications on this site.

### **3.7 Amenities and Open Space**

The village core area requires a proper civic amenity space, which could provide a focal point for the village and meeting place for residents. There is a children's playground beside Hotel Curraclloe and although there is the benefit of a car park at the crossroads - some landscaping would improve the visual quality of the village centre. Due to the absence of pedestrian walkways throughout the village, the quality of the public realm is severely diminished in Curraclloe. The beach provides an excellent amenity space for residents and visitors to Curraclloe.

#### **Amenity and Open Space - Strategic Aims**

- To ensure the provision of adequate public and private open space within the Plan Area to meet the current and future social and recreational needs of the community.
- To protect structural open space.
- To facilitate the improvement of opportunities for passive and active recreation.
- To ensure the protection and maintenance of amenity areas.

#### **To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

- AP1** To ensure provision of a variety of public open spaces with a variety of functions to meet amenity, recreational and environmental needs.
- AP2** To ensure that all new housing developments allow for recreational opportunities by requiring the provision of useful open space.
- AP3** To ensure that existing landscape and site features such as stands of mature trees, hedgerows, streams and watercourses are properly identified and retained in site layouts and open space plans where appropriate.
- AP4** To facilitate and participate in the improvement of existing open space areas through hard and soft landscaping and, where practicable, create additional opportunities for recreation.
- AP5** To secure the conservation and protection of the Natural Heritage Area.
- AP6** To protect the rural character of the village approach roads.
- AP7** To prohibit any development within 50m of soft shorelines, with the exception of coastal protection works initiated by the local authority or other public agencies.
- AP8** To prohibit the removal of sand dunes, beach sand, builders gravel or other material from coastal lands.

**AP9** To prohibit the development or siting of structures so close to beaches or the coastline as to intrude on the enjoyment of the beach by the public or which detract from views, prospects and the special amenity value of the coastline.

**AP10** To preserve public rights of way to coastal areas/beaches

**AP11** To develop all year round recreational and tourist facilities which do not detract from the natural amenities of the area

**AP12** To encourage the development of boating and other water based activities in the area

**AP13** To provide assistance, technical or otherwise, and to co-operate with individuals, community groups and organisations who wish to improve the appearance of the area covered by the Local Area Plan.

### **Specific Objectives**

**AO1** To ensure that all new development proposals incorporate adequate functional public and private open space areas. On all developments of more than 25 houses an active space shall be required (e.g. tennis court, basketball court, playground).

**AO2** To improve beach access points by the replacement of damaged walkways.

**AO3** To improve sign posting in the area particularly for the beach and other amenity areas.

**AO4** To facilitate and participate in the planting of indigenous trees and shrubs in open space areas and on approach roads to the village, where appropriate.

**AO5** To secure the protection of the mature trees, hedgerows and riparian ecology in the area covered by the local area plan through the development control process.

**AO6** To consult with the Heritage Section of the DOEHLG with regard to the development proposals in proximity to the proposed Natural Heritage Area and to areas of Archaeological Importance/Potential listed in the Sites and Monuments Record for County Wexford.

**AO7** To protect Curraclloe's Blue Flag status.

**AO8** To identify and protect high quality views of the coastal area.

**AO9** To ensure compliance with Beach Bye-Laws at Curraclloe.

## **3.8 Conservation: Protecting Village Form, Character and Built Heritage**

### **Architectural Heritage**

The Village Centre of Curraclloe does not contain many buildings of architectural merit apart from the historic church. The village crossroads observes a triangulated form, which is worthy of being retained. The area surrounding the village contains some traditional vernacular thatched

dwellings, which are included in the 'Record of Protected Structures' included in Appendix 1. The nineteenth century Curraclloe House, which is not included, is worthy of protection.

### **Natural Heritage**

Natural Heritage refers to the interrelationship of landscape, habitat and wildlife. It includes flora, fauna, their habits, biodiversity, geology and land-cover. The protection of the natural environment relies heavily on the 'precautionary principle'. In Curraclloe the proposed Natural Heritage Area and the adjacent Special Area of Conservation are important and must be protected. All new developments in proximity to the proposed NHA and S.A.C. shall be required to take account of this.

### **Legislation**

Natural Heritage is protected under European and National legislation. In the context of the development plan the following are the most relevant:

- Planning and Development Act 2000
- Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Directive 1992
- European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997 (which transposed the 1992 Directive into Irish Law)

The *European Communities (Habitats) Directive 1992*, established a network of sites throughout Europe, which are of international importance, comprised of Special Protection Areas (S.P.A.) and Special Areas of Conservation (S.A.C) they are known as Natura 2000 sites. Special Protection Areas aim to protect birds and this designation originates from the Birds Directive. There is an S.P.A. adjacent to the Plan Area. Special Areas of Conservation (S.A.C.) protect habitats and species. There is a Special Area of Conservation adjacent to the plan area.

The *Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000* established Natural Heritage Areas (N.H.A.). These are sites that are of national importance by reason of their flora, fauna, geological or geomorphologic importance. A significant portion of the area of the Local Area Plan is designated as an NHA.

### **Conservation- Protecting Village Form, Character and Natural and Built Heritage - Strategic Aims**

- To conserve and protect Curraclloe's natural and built heritage in terms of its rural vernacular qualities and the visual context of the settlement, particularly the landscape quality of the natural environment.

- To seek to reconcile the needs of conservation with the social and economic needs of the community and local enterprises.

**To achieve these aims, it will be the policy of Wexford County Council:**

- CNP1** To secure through the development control process the protection and enhancement of buildings throughout the settlement that are of a rural vernacular quality.
- CNP2** To ensure that all new and in-fill development is compatible with the scale and character of the village.
- CNP3** To encourage and assist individuals, voluntary organisations, commercial enterprises and others in the conservation of structures.
- CNP4** To co-operate with voluntary groups and other community organizations in upgrading the visual and environmental quality of the village centre
- CNP5** To secure the conservation and the sustainable use of natural heritage in the Curraclloe area and to ensure that it is taken into account at the earliest possible stage in the development process.
- CNP6** To secure the protection and enhancement of natural heritage sites where they are of importance as independent habitats or as part of a network of habitats. Furthermore to prohibit development that would seriously damage or threaten the integrity of sites of national or international importance.
- CNP7** To require applications for major development within or adjacent to the N.H.A, and/or adjacent to the S.A.C or S.P.A, to address the potential impacts of the development on the designated area. This may include survey and inventory work and mitigation measures and monitoring.

**Specific Objectives**

- CNO1** To include Curraclloe House in the “Record of Protected Structures” contained in the County Development Plan 2001.
- CNO2** To ensure the preservation of the historic church and graveyard and the visual context thereof.
- CNO3** To secure the protection of the structures set out in the Record of Protected Structures and to protect their settings from incongruous and inappropriate development.
- CNO4** To provide advice and guidance to the community, designers and developers with regard to the Design Code contained in Appendix 2 of this plan.
- CNO5** To facilitate pre-submission discussions with developers and designers with regard to the preparation of Residential Design Statements in respect of individual sites.
- CNO6** To facilitate and participate in the upgrading of the village centre through environmental improvements particularly at the village crossroads.

- CNO7** To require applications for major development within or adjacent to the Natural Heritage Area and/or the Special Area of Conservation to be accompanied by an ecological impact assessment report. The report should examine impacts, propose appropriate mitigation measures and, where possible, measures to enhance the natural heritage of the area. On smaller developments these may be required as ‘further information’ following consultation with the Parks and Wildlife Section of the Department of Environment, Heritage, and Local Government.
- CNO8** To refer all planning applications within or adjacent to the Natural Heritage Area or the Special Area of Conservation to the Heritage and Planning Division of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government for comment.
- CNO9** In developing this land the developer(s) shall be required to provide for permeability of this land appropriate to its village centre location by providing for a vehicular connection and pedestrian connections through the development between the R743 and the County Road leading to the beach. This road should take the format of a street with active frontage and a higher density of development shall be allowed at this location to facilitate the development of a streetscape. The design of the street shall provide for traffic calming and the creation of a public open space and a developed public realm (see design guide to rear). Applicants for permission are advised to consult the planning authority prior to the preparation of planning applications on this site.
- CNO10** In developing this land the developer(s) shall be required to provide for permeability of this land appropriate to its village centre location by providing for a later/possible connection to the lands/lane identified on this map as TR013(a). Provision shall be made for both pedestrian and vehicular access. This road should take the format of a street with active frontage and a higher density of development shall be allowed at this location to facilitate the development of a streetscape. The design of the street shall provide for traffic calming and the creation of a public open space and a developed public realm (see design guide to rear). Applicants for permission are advised to consult the planning authority prior to the preparation of planning applications on this site.

## **4.0 Development Control Principles**

### **4.1 Guides to the Contents of a Planning Application**

To obtain planning permission it is necessary to submit a comprehensive planning application, which complies with the Planning Acts and Associated Regulations, to Wexford County Council. The details that must be contained in the planning application will vary depending on the type of planning permission applied for. Advice and guidance on making a planning application is available from the planning authority.

### **4.2 Land Use Zoning**

The purpose of land-use zoning is to help ensure that development within the Village is guided towards the most appropriate location therefore enhancing both the social and commercial stability, and the environment of the village. There are 8 different land use zones indicted in this plan:

1. New Residential development: "To Provide for Residential Densities in the range of 15 –20 units per hectare".
2. Existing Residential: "To Provide and Protect Residential Amenities"; 15 – 20 units per hectare
3. Institutional Uses: "To provide for school and church expansion".
4. Tourism Facilities; "To Provide for Tourism related development and facilities".
5. Village Centre Facilities: "To Provide for Village Centre Uses".
6. Recreation and Open Space Amenities; "To Provide for a Mix of Land Uses for Recreation and Amenity".
7. Agriculture / Rural Character; "To provide for Agriculture and related development".
8. Conservation Area; "To provide protection for areas of environmental importance such as proposed Natural Heritage Areas and Special Areas of Conservation".

The Use Zoning Matrix is intended as a general guideline in assessing the acceptability or otherwise of developments proposed for each zoning. This matrix is a guideline and the listed uses are not exhaustive.

### **4.3 Non-Conforming Uses**

Existing established uses will remain undisturbed by the proposed zonings, however the zoning provisions will apply to large-scale extensions to existing non-conforming uses. Consideration

will be given to allowing reasonable extensions to these developments. Factors such as density, height, design, visual amenity, traffic generation, public health, etc are not determined through land use zoning. All these factors are significant when determining the proper planning and development of the area and will be assessed during the application stage for each individual development proposal.

Permitted in Principle (P)

A use, which is Permitted in Principle, is one which the Local Authority accepts in theory in the relevant zone, however, it is still subject to the normal planning process including policies and objectives and policies outlined in the Plan.

Open for Consideration (O)

An Open for Consideration use is one which the Local Authority may permit where it is satisfied that the suggested form of development will be compatible with the policies and objectives for the zone, will not conflict with the permitted uses and conforms with the proper planning and development of the area. Particular attention will be given to the nature and scale of the development when assessing compatibility.

Not Normally Permitted (N)

Development that is classified as Not Normally Permitted in a particular zone is one that will not normally be permitted by the Local Authority. This may be due to its perceived effect on existing and permitted uses, its incompatibility with the policies and objectives contained within this Plan or the fact that it may be inconsistent with the proper planning and development of the area.



#### 4.4 Use Class Related To Use Zone

USES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Advertisement	N	N	O	O	O	N	N	N
Amusement <sup>2</sup>	N	N	N	O	O	N	N	N
Apartments <sup>1, 2</sup>	O	O	N	P	P	N	N	N
Bed and Breakfast	O	O	N	P	P	N	O <sup>4</sup>	N
Car park	O	O	O	O	P	N	N	N
Caravan park – Touring holiday	N	N	N	O	N	N	N	N
Casual trading	N	N	O	N	O	N	N	N
Cemetery	N	N	P	N	N	N	N	N
Childcare facilities (crèche/nursery)	O	O	P	P	P	N	N	N
Education	N	N	P	O	P	N	N	N
Funeral home	N	N	N	O	P	N	N	N
Garage /car repair	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N
Hostel <sup>2</sup>	O	O	N	P	P	N	N	N
Hotel	N	N	N	P	P	N	N	N
Shop (comparison)	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N
Shop <sup>2</sup> (convenience)	N	N	N	O	P	N	N	N
Take-away	N	N	N	N	P	N	N	N
Office	O <sup>2, 3</sup>	O <sup>2, 3</sup>	O	P	P	N	N	N
Petrol station	N	N	N	N	O	N	N	N
Public house	N	N	N	P	P	N	N	N
Dwelling House	P	P	N	P	P	O <sup>4</sup>	O <sup>4</sup>	O <sup>4</sup>
Restaurant	N	N	N	O <sup>2</sup>	P	N	N	N

Note: Development of the 'integrated tourism development' referred to in objective T06 shall not be strictly subject to this matrix, but in accordance with this objective and the emphasis will be on a quality mix of development at an appropriate scale.

<sup>1</sup> The Planning Authority would prohibit excessive development of apartments – small-scale apartments permitted only.

<sup>2</sup> Subject to assessment of impact on residential amenity of adjoining dwellings, proximity to facilities, visual amenity and traffic generation.

<sup>3</sup> Home Offices allowed but only used by residents and not visited by members of public.

<sup>4</sup> Rural Housing will be considered in accordance with Chapter 5 the County Development Plan.

## 5.0 Environmental Impact Assessment

Section 19(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 states that a Local Area Plan shall contain information on the likely significant effects implementing the Plan. This requirement is in accordance with the EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment for plans and policies. By highlighting the significant effects of the Plan's strategy, policies and objectives, it is possible in the plan making and implementation process to:

- Avoid unnecessary harm to the local community and the natural and built environment.
- Reduce the effects of harm where it cannot be avoided (mitigation).
- Identify positive benefits for the local community, the natural and built environment that can be provided.
- Ensure that the Plan is moving towards sustainable development.
- Make a major contribution to the future monitoring process by allowing resources to be focused on key areas of uncertainty.

In general terms the development strategy for the area covered by the Local Area Plan has incorporated the principle of sustainability as a central theme. In this respect the protection of the environment has been integral to the Plan's preparation and is in accordance with:

- The Strategic Vision for the planning and development of County Wexford as set out in the County Development Plan 2001 (Reference Section 3.1)
- Government policy as set out in 'Sustainable Development—A Strategy for Ireland' (Department of the Environment 1997).

Change resulting from economic and social development will have inevitable effects, both positive and negative on the local communities in Curracloe, and on their natural and built environments. It is the purpose of this Local Area Plan to manage this change and to ensure that adverse impacts on the integrity of the environment and quality of life are mitigated and minimised. The following sections set out in more detail the identified significant effects of implementing the Plan, and what measures are available to minimise and mitigate and adverse effects.

### Human Beings

The Local Area Plan provides for the consolidation and enhancement of the existing village, rather than village expansion. The lands indicated for development relate to the immediate requirements of the plan area, correspond to the function of the village as a service centre for the surrounding rural community and acknowledge Wexford Town as the primary growth centre for the area. Nonetheless the development of additional lands as outlined in the Local Area Plan will

have significant effects on the local community in Curracloe. The mix of land uses to cater for the needs of the existing and future population of the area including the provision of homes, shopping, tourism and recreational facilities will have significant effects in terms of the way the local community experience the village settlement and on the spatial character of the village. On the other hand, by providing an attractive place in which to live, work, visit and recreate, the Local Area Plan can help to create a positive impact on the future of the community. An increased year round population which the Plan seeks to achieve, will create the critical mass and vitality needed to give rise to investment in services and amenities which will benefit the whole community. The provision of additional residential development in the context of the Council's Housing Strategy will provide for local residential need and contribute towards minimising the pressure for one-off housing on the approaches to the villages. The strategy of seeking to consolidate development in and around the village core, using existing and proposed infrastructure will have less negative effects and is more sustainable than haphazard, uncoordinated development in the village environs where services and environmental capacity are limited. Negative effects resulting from new residential development can be further mitigated by careful layout and design, the sensitive use of existing site features, screening, landscaping and the planning control and enforcement system.

**Flora**

The Local Area Plan identifies the important habitats and amenity areas in Curracloe and its environs. As the important habitats including the proposed Natural Heritage Area, coastal amenity areas and the sand dune systems are to be maintained free from development, it is unlikely that there will be any negative impacts on the flora of the area. Those areas that have been identified for development consist almost exclusively of green-field sites within the village core or agricultural grasslands/tillage land, which are considered to be of least importance in terms of habitat.

**Fauna**

This is closely related to flora and the habitats referred to in Section 11.5 above and the likely impacts are as previously discussed.

**Soil**

No special or noteworthy soil conditions have been identified in areas designated for development. Soils in areas such as proposed Natural Heritage Area, sand dunes or coastal amenity areas would not be impacted upon, as these areas will be kept free from development. Impacts on soil will occur in development areas due to removal construction work, excavation and re-profiling. Impacts will be mitigated in landscaping, screening and planting of developed sites.

**Water**

Primary impacts on the area's water resources will result from demand created by new development. These demands are identified in the Local Area Plan, which also contains detailed policies and objectives to meet this demand through the provision of infrastructure. Foul water treatment impacts will also be addressed through the provision of appropriate infrastructure identified in the Plan, i.e. the provision of treatment facilities to cater for existing and proposed development. While the rate of surface water run-off has the potential to increase in development areas, any adverse impacts will be addressed by the provision of appropriate storm water infrastructure and through careful design, siting and site development to be addressed in the development control process.

Water Quality Objectives under various EU Directives and Irish Statutory Instruments provide guide and mandatory standards of water quality. Compliance with these standards regarding all waters, (i.e. rivers, lakes, transitional waters, coastal waters, ground waters) will assume a high priority in considering development proposals.

The Water Framework Directive (2000/60/EEC), which was transposed into Irish law in December 2003 ties together existing legislation while repealing other directives on a phased basis. The general objective of the Water Framework Directive is to prevent deterioration of water status and to secure at least "good status" in relation to all waters by 2015.

**Air**

Increased levels of development will result in air quality changes from both vehicles and properties. However, increases in residential density, the provision of cycle and pedestrian networks, and the provision of local facilities and services and more energy efficient houses, will help reduce emissions over the longer term. Extensive tree planting will also assist in air purification.

**Climate**

There are no likely or significant impacts on climate anticipated from the Local Area Plan.

**Landscape**

Implementation of the Plan involves the urbanisation of land previously used for agricultural purposes or green-field lands close to the village core. Significant long-term changes will occur to the traditional village landscape of the area as a result. This is deemed to be acceptable as future growth in housing, jobs, services and facilities needs to be accommodated and the lands

identified are as close as possible to the built up areas. Those lands and areas that represent the most important ecological habitats and sensitive or vulnerable landscapes have been reserved in the interests of bio-diversity; visual amenity and public open space. Significant change in proposed development areas can be mitigated through the planning control process and through the application of the village design criteria by requiring sensitive landscaping of new development and the creation of new landscapes.

**Material Assets**

This includes both natural and man-made assets. Natural assets have been addressed in foregoing sections and some of the material assets that relate to heritage are addressed in the following section. Other material assets include the area's existing infrastructure e.g. roads, water supply, sewerage infrastructure and built fabric. No significant impacts that would affect these assets are anticipated, while improvements to existing infrastructure of the road network will benefit the area.

**Cultural Heritage**

Cultural heritage is the term used to describe the combined components of archaeology, architecture, urban design, monuments and decorative features. It also includes sites or areas of religious or folklore interest. The Local Area Plan and the overall County Development Plan address the nature and extent of such cultural assets in the Curracloe area. The protection of these assets will be major objective through the development control process through its requirement for well-planned, designed and sensitive development. Close consultation with the Heritage Section of DOEHLG also ensures that any adverse impacts on the cultural heritage are avoided or mitigated.

## Appendix 1

### Vernacular Houses for Protection

1. **Ballinesker**  
Five-bay, single storey, thatched house.
2. **Ballinesker**  
Long, thatched house at right angles to, and on the east side of the main road.
3. **Coolrainey**  
Small thatched house with whitewashed walls.
4. **Coolrainey**  
Three-bay, thatched cabin.
5. **Curracloe**  
Two-storey thatched farmhouse.
6. **Kilmacoe**  
Well-preserved thatched cottage with whitewashed walls.

## Appendix 2

### Curracloe Design Guidelines

#### 2.1 THE AIM OF THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The aim of these design guidelines is to help improve the overall appearance of Curracloe Village and environs in order to create a better sense of place and enhance its attractiveness for both residents and visitors.

The value of good urban design ensures that areas are developed in a way, which respects their local context while improving the quality of the built environment. It also ensures that people feel a greater connection with their area so that ease of movement and safety for citizens is ensured. These guidelines respect and highlight the visual qualities that already exist in Curracloe and seek to promote good design, which is in keeping with the villages' rural and coastal setting while still allowing for innovative design solutions.

These guidelines should provide guidance to landowners, developers and their architects or designers in the creation of attractive places, which are distinctive and well designed. They should also provide clear views as to how sites should be best developed in the interests of the surrounding village and countryside and assist the Planning Authority when assessing planning applications.

#### 2.2 THE STRUCTURE OF THESE DESIGN GUIDELINES

The structure of these design guidelines is set around the implementation of both good urban design principles and architectural detail for individual structures. Both concepts are defined below:

##### *Urban Design Principles*

Urban design is the art of making places. It involves the design of buildings, groups of buildings, spaces and landscapes, in villages, towns and cities, and the establishment of frameworks and processes, which facilitate successful development. Implementation of good urban design principles ensures that future single developments are not taken in isolation but in the context of developing the village as a whole. Curracloe has advantages such as its coastal location, its thatched houses and its rural landscape although it is in close proximity to Wexford town. It is important that the village should incorporate these advantages so that its future development is sympathetic to its past development whilst also being modern, progressive and forward moving.

### *Architectural Detail*

Architectural Detail relates to the design principles used for an individual structure that part of a bigger development and/or the existing village. The use of good architectural principles in the design of the individual development enhances both the overall appearance of the structure and the visual quality of the village of Curraclloe. Good architecture employs high quality design principles that respect and build on the existing village characteristics. Attention to detail in the design of an individual structure is therefore very important in ensuring that future development in Curraclloe creates a better sense of place and enhances the attractiveness of the village for both residents and visitors.

This document outlines the set of principles to give guidance on two broad forms of development for the village of Curraclloe;

- New Residential Development
- Village Centre Development

## **2.3 NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS**

Too often housing schemes and new developments are copied from one estate to another or from one town or village to another, lacking local distinctiveness and resulting in rather bland and monotonous layouts and house types. The design and layout of residential development proposed for the Curraclloe area must reflect the specific qualities of its rural and coastal location, whilst seeking to enhance the existing village character.

### **2.3.1 Urban Design Principles for New Residential Developments**

- Examination of Site Characteristics
  - Site Layout and Permeability
  - Mix of House Type and Tenure
  - Creating Neighbourhoods
  - The Public Realm
  - Design and Orientation
  - Open Spaces
  - Landscaping

#### Examination of Site Characteristics

In order to decide on the type of development suited to the location, it is important to identify and map all features (environmental and archaeological) on the site in question. Such features may



include streams, trees, hilltops, ridges, stonewalls or other features (Identification of Archaeological features may be aided by looking up the Record of Monuments and Places available at the Council Offices). In particular, account must be taken of the potential impact of the building on views into, over and out of the site, while opportunities should be availed of to enhance existing views and/or open up new views.

New buildings should be located to sit sympathetically into its surrounds, by the use of landscaping, so that jarring between the urban and rural landscape is minimised. It is also important to be aware of the existing built form surrounding the site, this maybe used to influence the design of the development. However it need not necessarily replicate the style of design, but may take cues from it.

Each site has unique characteristics, so it is advisable that prior to submitting a planning application, an applicant should consult with the Planning Authority as to the appropriate type of development that may suit the site in question.

#### Site Layout and Permeability

Future residential developments should be permeable. They should allow easy access to local services and facilities, and should be designed so that they encourage people to integrate into their community. This may be done by the provision of pedestrian footpaths and cycle ways, and by ensuring that pathways and cycle ways are overlooked by residential developments and are well lit for security. An offset grid layout in residential design is more preferable than cul-de-sac development in meeting this aim. These provide for through routes in a perimeter block system, within which cul-de-sac and courtyard type development can be provided. The following principles will apply:

- Through-routes are to be encouraged as they provide greater permeability and legibility.
- Poorly designed cul-de-sac developments will not be permitted.
- Linkages to adjoining developments, community facilities and/or neighbourhood centres are to be provided. These linkages can take the form of open space connections with walking trails, pedestrian paths, designated cycle routes and/or road links.
- Principal pedestrian and cycle routes are to be provided along natural 'desire lines' (i.e. the most convenient and direct routes).

#### Mix of House Type and Tenure

It is important to ensure that there is variety of residential units within a development. In Ireland in the past, it has been an acceptable practice to have blocks of similar style housing. Mixed house

types and styles in a development will make the scheme an attractive option to a much wider range of people. It is also important that housing schemes cater for a range of different uses such as year round housing as well as housing for holidaying. This mix results in more security.

#### Creating Neighbourhoods

Buildings within development schemes should be grouped to create semi-private or public space, to strengthen the visual character and to avoid the appearance of sprawl. Ultimately, the design process in creating residential developments should be striving to create vibrant communities. One measure of success of such a scheme is if it can be determined that the neighbourhoods created are considered to be friendly and safe places to live. They must also be designed to meet the needs of the residents while integrating carefully into the existing community infrastructure. It is vital that isolated neighbourhoods are not created from new developments.

#### The Public Realm

The quality of the public realm depends on the arrangement of its open space, paving, planting, lighting, orientation, shelter, signage, street furniture and the way it is overlooked, as well as the routes which pass through it, and the uses in and next to it. In terms of housing estates these elements should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way. Open space is arguably the most important element and is discussed in more detail below. A successful public realm is generally attractive, interactive, easily accessible, well supervised and contains interesting features.

#### Design and Orientation

Dwellings should provide an active frontage onto the street/road/courtyard (i.e. they should provide windows of habitable rooms, doors and entrances) that engage the public and provide opportunities for natural surveillance as well as being more visually pleasing to the user and to the passer-by. Buildings on corner sites at road junctions should be designed to face each street so as to provide overlooking. The orientation of a building, that is whether it is north or south facing, is also important as it serves to increase passive solar gain.

#### Open Spaces

Open space provision should be provided in a comprehensive and linked way, graded from large areas of open space to small play areas and incidental open spaces for amenity throughout the estate. The objective behind the provision of public open space is that the space is an amenity for the residents of the development and not a pointless exercise and waste of space. It should be overlooked by dwellings for security and should have access to it for all users. Hard landscaping

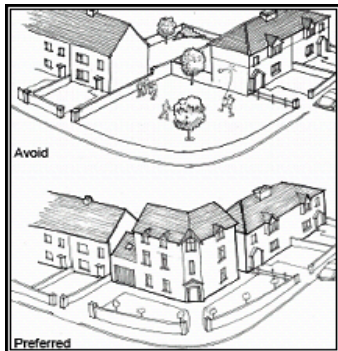
for cycle links and walkways should be provided and should take account of desire lines. Existing environmental features should be maintained and incorporated into the design of the open space.



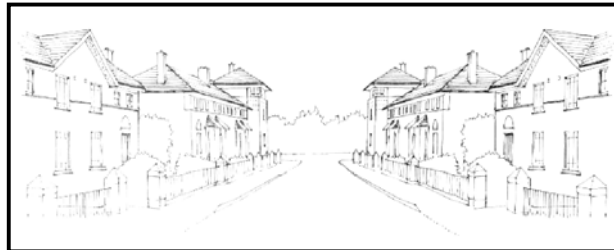
*These sketches show open space that is useable, well lit and well maintained.*

#### Gateways, Focal Buildings & Corner Site Treatment

“Gateways” can be created at the entrance to a housing estate with an accentuation of building forms, as shown below, or other feature such as a sculpture, which can act as a local landmark. Corner treatments mean that areas are not left abandoned and not overlooked. Buildings or sites aligned along the principal axis of a road or street are known as ‘focal buildings’ or focal sites. Such sites are worthy of a higher architectural treatment and/or detailing.



*Corner treatment*



*Residential Development creating focal buildings and a gateway location (end buildings)*

#### Landscaping

Landscaping is often forgotten or not considered important in the design process. A well-designed garden will not only significantly enhance the appearance of the development, but will also improve the quality of life of the inhabitants. Good landscaping can lessen the impact of a development on the surrounding countryside. Where possible existing hedgerows should be maintained or indigenous plants should be used in any landscaping programme.

### 2.3.2 Architectural Detail for New Residential Developments

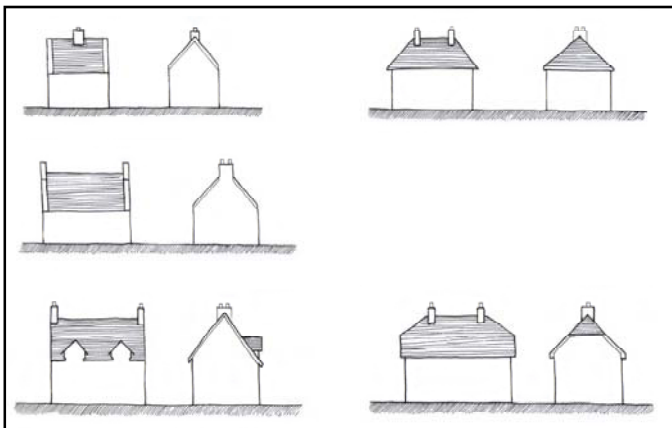
- Orientation
- Building Forms
- Modern Design
- Building Composition and Façade Design
  - Roofs
  - Materials
  - Windows, Dormers and Roof Lights
  - Doors
  - Porches
  - Chimneys
  - Front Boundaries

#### Orientation

Dwellings that provide an active frontage onto the street, road, courtyard or open space provide surveillance as well as being more visually pleasing to the user and passer-by. Open space should be designed in unison with both the new development and the existing environment, so that it is integrated, accessible and usable. The orientation of a building, that is north or south facing, is also important to increase passive solar gain.

#### Building Forms

The form of the individual dwelling is one of the most important aspect of the overall design of the residential development. There are some forms that have evolved naturally in Curracloe over the years. These, therefore, are the building forms that will best settle into the landscape and are the forms that are easy to imagine lasting generations. It is not expected that exact replicas of past buildings be used, but it is expected that these well-established forms be recognised and referred to when designing a new dwelling.



*Examples of  
Established Building  
Forms*

### Modern Design

In general, in relation to residential or commercial buildings, a good modern design will be acceptable to the Planning Authority. The aim should be a design that is in keeping with its surrounds, whilst not mimicking buildings around it.

### Building Composition and Façade Design

Designs of dwellings vary enormously, and the County Council does not wish to be over prescriptive in terms of design detail. Instead, when assessing new house designs, the emphasis will be on scale, density, height, massing, landscaping, access and road frontage. It is expected that any new dwellings will, however, take the following design details into consideration:

#### *Roofs*

In considering the roof of a development, the forms of adjacent roofs to the development should be given consideration. The roof treatment should be in keeping with its surroundings. Roofs should follow the traditional “A” roof shapes. Flat roofs or roofs with a low pitch are not to be encouraged. Recommended material to use is natural slate or a high quality manufactured substitute. Materials not recommended included tiles or felt.

#### *Materials*

The use of materials in building design contributes to the distinctiveness of regional and local architectural character and should therefore be used or incorporated where possible. New buildings should be constructed of/finished with materials typical of and used in similar proportions to, those traditionally used in Curraclloe. Stone was, and still is to a large degree, used also for paving, boundary walls and landscaping. The stonework can be left open to the elements with pointing, or can be whitewashed, as was done in traditionally.



*Traditional white-washed thatched cottage in Curraclloe*

### *Windows, Dormers & Roof Lights*

Windows are one of the most predominant features on most houses. As a general principle, windows should have vertical proportions, subdivided if necessary to keep the emphasis vertical. They should ideally be made from timber and painted for protection from the elements, with a generous cill depth. They should be designed so as to match into the existing form of the building. Windows made from aluminium or with a horizontal emphasis should be avoided in Curraclloe.

### *Doors*

The entrance to a dwelling is important and as such should be a strong feature. Simple timber doors that emulate traditional forms as shown below, are preferable. White PVC doors are best avoided.



### *Porches*

The best porch designs are simple and in character with the whole house. Modern porch designs are becoming popular, which have retained the simple form but through the use of materials have a contemporary feel to them. Porches define the entrance to a house. They should be strong in character and in keeping with the overall look of the house. Avoid classical columns. These features create architecturally weak style in the Wexford landscape.



*Porches define the entrance to a house. They should be strong in character and in keeping with the overall look of the house.*

*Avoid classical columns. These features create architecturally weak style in the Wexford landscape.*




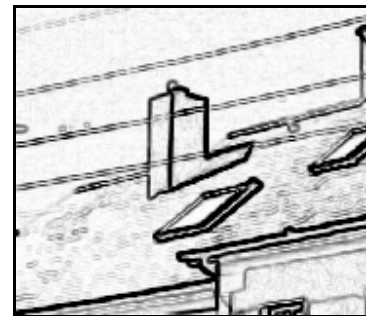
### *Chimneys*

Chimneys should be constructed using traditional designs with squat proportions and a robust appearance. Chimneys that are thin or too tall can be out of proportion with the rest of the building.




**Plate 3.3**

 Acceptable design and proportions of chimney



**Plate 3.4**

 Chimney too thin

### *Front Boundaries*

Ideally, manmade front boundaries and entrances should remain as inconspicuous as possible. If there are trees or hedgerows existing, these should be retained and reinforced. Entrances should be well designed to maximise on efficiency (i.e. ensure adequate sightlines and no creation of traffic hazards), yet blend in with their natural environment. The retention of hedgerows or

stonewalls is strongly recommended, but as this may not always be possible, the creation of new hedgerows or stone walls will generally be approved.



*A traditional stonewall with cylindrical piers and traditional style of gate.*

## **2.4 DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE VILLAGE**

The insertion of a new building into an older village requires a very sensitive design approach. However good a new building, there must be proper attention given to its effect on its surroundings, in particular the manner in which it relates to its adjacent buildings, streetscape and natural surroundings. This calls for a contextual approach, i.e., examining the local context in Curracloe, in terms building height, established building lines, fenestration type, roof profile, materials or other distinctive features. In designing a new building, the designer should not slavishly adhere to all aspects of context, so that they replicate the old in some form of pastiche, rather they should view these aspects of context and select elements in the creation of new designs.

### **2.4.1 Urban Design Principles for New Developments within the Village**

- **Harmony and Streetscape**
- **The Importance of Conservation**
- **Ease of Movement**
- **Legibility**
- **Quality of the Public Realm**



### Harmony and Streetscape

'Streetscape' refers to the overall composition of buildings, materials and textures that exist in a street or built-up area. New buildings should relate positively and sympathetically with those around them. Innovative designs and spatial arrangements can add interest and variety but should not be significantly out of keeping with the overall streetscape. Elements such as shop fronts, signage, colours, lighting and other features along the street help to create harmony within the streetscape.

The village of Curraclloe suffers from a lack of definition with development taking place in a haphazard fashion with little regard for the sense of a traditional village street. It is important that future development within the village serves to create a better sense of a village street. Frontage development of terraced housing should be used wherever possible to emulate the traditional village street and enhance the sense of place.

### The Importance of Conservation

Where relevant and possible (structurally and financially) consideration should be given to the existing building fabric, for it is the existing pattern and appearance of these buildings, related to its geographic location, that makes Curraclloe unique and different from other villages.

### Ease of Movement

Ease of Movement concerns accessibility and ease of movement through a place. A key objective of good urban design is that accessibility and local permeability should be promoted so that places connect with each other and are easy to move through, putting people before traffic.

Ease of Movement in Curraclloe is particularly poor. There is an absence of pedestrian walkways throughout the village, which restricts mobility. Traffic currently has priority in the village, which is contrary to the principle of putting people before traffic. The improvement of facilities for pedestrians would improve the overall sense of mobility and is therefore a major design consideration when assessing new development proposals for the village.

### Legibility

Legibility concerns a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand. Landmarks, gateways and focal points help people find their way. Places where form, layout and signage make them easy to understand are likely both to function well and to be pleasant to live in or visit. A sense of place often depends on the design of the public realm and its contribution to an area's character and identity.

There is a need to improve the Legibility of Curraclloe as the village lacks a central focus and definite village core. The majority of new development has taken place east of the village and on the village approach roads in a scattered linear form. It is important that the village form is consolidated so that a definite village core is created. Proposals for new development at the village edge should incorporate design treatment such that an entrance to the village is clearly defined and a sense of arrival is created.

#### Quality of the Public Realm

The village crossroads fails to render a sense of enclosure and thus is unsuccessful as an active public space. Streetscape improvements to include under-grounding of overhead wires, tree-planting, footpaths and street furniture would help improve the quality of the public realm.



The absence of footpaths and adequate street lighting reduces mobility by pedestrians and detracts from the overall appearance of the streetscape. The village crossroads could be improved with the addition of attractive seating and street lighting (examples below).



#### 2.4.2 Architectural Detail for Developments within the Village

- **Proportion**
- **Scale, Massing & Composition**
- **Building Lines**
- **Building Heights**
- **Roof Line**
- **Building Composition and Façade Design**

##### Proportion

New buildings should be well proportioned and relate to the scale of adjoining properties for example extensions should be in scale and character with the original building; they should not dominate. Excessive bulk should be avoided. Windows and doors should be similar in proportion to those in the existing building and in sympathy with its architectural style. They should reflect the existing solid/void relationship. Shop-fronts should reflect the character and architectural style of the existing building and be of appropriate matching materials and colours. Modern shop fronts will be permitted where clearly developed from good architectural principles and vernacular architecture.

##### Scale, Mass & Composition

An appreciation of scale is one of the key elements in the design consideration for new buildings: the building's size must relate to its location and neighbouring buildings. Building scale essentially refers to the size of plot and average storey height. If these two components of a building's design are excessively large when compared to neighbouring buildings along a particular street, then the scale, mass or bulk of the building is likely to be out of place and could be an intrusion on the streetscape.

Exceptions may be permitted, but will be dependant on use, particularly if it is a building of major importance or if the use demands such a building and the location is deemed to be the most appropriate because of site characteristics or the degree to which it can contribute to the economic vitality of the town centre.

##### Building Lines

Building line refers to the position of the front of the building along a street edge. The aim in most new village developments will be to either maintain or create a new building line or building edge.

This is important as the position of the building determines the space between the street and gives a sense of enclosure. The following principles will apply:

- Generally, maintain existing and established building lines where they exist.
- Create new building lines where they do not already exist.

Building lines may be relaxed in the following circumstances:

- For innovative design solutions where it can be demonstrated that the design will positively enhance the townscape.
- Where important areas of public or civic space is to be provided.
- To accentuate an important building.

### Building Heights

Determining the appropriate building height is heavily dependent on the location of the development and the height of existing neighbouring structures. A uniform building height is not customary in most traditional Irish village settlements, with the exception of a few streets that were rebuilt in Georgian times. Variation of building heights creates a distinctive rhythm in the streetscape. The following principles will generally apply:

- Stepping up of corner buildings or buildings creating significant landmarks will be permitted.
- In general, the difference in a building's height should not exceed one and a half storeys.

The following factors will be considered in assessing applications for relatively high buildings:

- The degree of intrusion or obtrusion of the building on the skyline.
- The degree to which its prominence is justified in the townscape - traditionally, only significant public buildings (i.e., churches and abbeys, etc.) received such prominence.
- The extent to which the building detracts or enhances important landmarks.
- Issues of shadow, significant loss of light and microclimatic impacts.
- Impact on protected structures and archaeological conservation areas

### Roofline

The height and form of a building will have a direct influence on the roofline or the skyline of the town. Traditionally, rooftops had pitches and were constructed of slate. Features such as chimneys also added interest and variety to the skyline. Designers shall have regard for the following:

- In many modern architectural solutions, roof tops tend to be flat and where this feature extends over a considerable distance (i.e., a building with a long façade) it can result in monotony and therefore should be relieved with variations in building height at appropriate locations (i.e., stepping up heights at the centre of a uniform composition, or at street corners).
- Materials should be chosen for their compatibility with the existing roof tops of the town (i.e., red dyed tiles would be inappropriate in the town centre where dark grey slate predominates).
- Machine and mechanical plant rooms should be designed as an integral part of the building and should not cause a disruption in the rooftop.

#### Building Composition and Façade Design

The simplest distinction in village buildings is between typical buildings (usually shops, offices and houses) and special buildings, which because of their distinctiveness, stand out from the others (usually churches, schools, public/community buildings). As discussed already, Curracloe village is lacking in streetscape but does have a number of 'special buildings'. The building composition and façade design for new developments should therefore have regard to the following:

- Ensure new development does not encroach on views and established landmarks.
- Recognise when a new building will be a landmark building and precede design with a careful analysis of the existing village form.
- Creativity in façade design where it results in a coherent streetscape shall be encouraged.
- Analysis of the surrounding context is necessary.
- Entrances and fenestration openings are considered key design features in the context of creating an overall coherent streetscape.
- The provision of adequate on street landscaping in larger individual schemes is considered necessary.
- Creative re-interpretation rather than mimicry of the traditional shopfront is desirable.
- Avoid cluttering of shopfronts with advertisements.