

An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Commission Order
PL-500903-WW-26

Planning and Development Acts 2000, as amended

Planning Authority: Wicklow County Council

Planning Register Reference Number: 2560857

APPEAL by Padraig Smith against the decision made on the 6th day of February 2026 by Wicklow County Council to refuse permission for the proposed development.

Proposed Development: Construction of four dwellings, together with associated site works on lands recently zoned RN under objective RT, Rathdrum, County Wicklow.

Decision

REFUSE permission for the above proposed development in accordance with the reasons and considerations set out below.

Reasons and Considerations

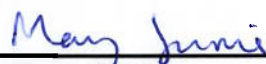
Having regard to the location of the site on serviced lands, zoned RN new residential within the settlement boundary of Rathdrum, to the character and pattern of development in the area, and the planning history of the overall RN zoned lands at this location, it is considered that the proposed density of 5.8 units per hectare would not accord with Table 6.1 Density Standards of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, which sets a density range of 25-40 dwellings per hectare in Self Sustaining Towns, and Objective CPO 6.13 of the development plan which requires new residential density to represent an efficient use of land and to achieve the densities as set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2024.

The Commission noted Objective RT1 of the Rathdrum Town Plan which seeks to provide a maximum of four units on the lands of circa 0.8 hectares zoned RN – New Residential at this location, of which this site consists of 0.68 hectares, but considered that this objective conflicts with the overall development plan objectives in support of increase densities and compact growth within settlement boundaries and with Section 6.3.5 of the development plan which states that ‘it is important that minimum densities are achieved and exceeded where local conditions allow, except where insurmountable impediments arise’.

The Commission noted the location of the site, within the overall town area, which is readily accessible from the established road and footpath network, and with no constraining external limitations (such as, for example, direct proximity to sensitive land uses, protected structures) and further noted that, other than the steep nature of the site, the applicant had not identified any specific constraints on the site or surrounding area which would constitute an insurmountable impediment to achieving a density range closer to that expected in Table 6.1 of the plan. It is considered, therefore, that the proposed development would comprise an inefficient and unsustainable use

of these zoned serviced lands, would not be in accordance with current Ministerial Guidelines, nor with the relevant provisions of the Wicklow County Development plan by reference to the entirety of the applicable policies on density and would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

In deciding not to accept the Inspector's recommendation to grant permission, the Commission noted and agreed with the Inspector's observation that the proposed density of 5.88 is significantly lower than the density range of 25-40 dwellings per hectare outlined in Table 6.1 of the development plan. The Commission did not share the opinion of the Inspector that the density was appropriate for the site's periphery location within the Rathdrum settlement boundary, noting that Objective RT1 of the Rathdrum Town Plan conflicts with the required densities and objectives set out in the development plan and with Table 3.6 of the Compact Settlement Guidelines which provides for densities in the range 25-40 dph to generally be applied at the edge of small to medium sized towns.



Mary Gurrie

Planning Commissioner of An Coimisiún

Pleanála duly authorised to authenticate
the seal of the Commission.

Dated this 27 day of July 2026