



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Inspector's Report PL-501249-WW-26

Development	Change of use for existing guest house to 6 apartments and all with associated site works.
Location	Dunbur Lower, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow
Planning Authority	Wicklow County Council
Planning Authority Reg. Ref.	2637
Applicant(s)	Sean Behan
Type of Application	Permission
Planning Authority Decision	Refuse Permission
Type of Appeal	First Party Normal Planning Appeal
Appellant(s)	Sean Behan
Observer(s)	None
Date of Site Inspection	12/08/2026
Inspector	David Freeland

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1.0 Site Location and Description

The subject site is located at Dunbur Lower, on the eastern side of the R750 regional road, approximately 2.5 km (south) by road to the centre of Wicklow Town. The R750 is the coast road connecting Wicklow Town to Brittas Bay. The site is stated to have an area of 0.20 hectares.

The site is located at the south-eastern extremity of the built-up area of Wicklow Town. The eastern side of the R750 in the vicinity of the site comprises ribbon frontage development onto the regional road which is one-off in character. This includes a single one-off dwelling to the north-west and an under construction one-off dwelling to the south. The site adjoins a further one-off dwelling to the east, with the subject site and that dwelling both having existing access onto a small laneway to the north which adjoins the R750 c. 50m to the north-west. This laneway would appear to provide access to a wider agricultural landholding to the east and south which extends to the coastline and provides the vehicular entrance to Wicklow Head Lighthouse located c. 1.1km to the south-east of the site. Beyond the laneway to the north are two further one-off dwellings, with Wicklow Golf Club golf course beyond. At its closest point the site is c. 400m from the coastline to the north and east.

On the opposite, western side of the R750 is the Seacliff residential estate, a low-density development comprising detached single storey dwellings. This estate adjoins a similar development to the north (Seapoint / Bayside Glen / Yachtsman's Point).

To the south-west and south of the site the built-up area terminates and the surrounding lands are in agricultural use and are characterised by a field pattern with occasional one-off dwellings fronting onto the regional road.

The site is occupied by a two-storey building formerly in use as a guest house, together with a detached two-storey ancillary structure to the rear and a number of storage sheds. The former guest house has a stated floor area of 385 square metres and the detached structure a stated floor area of 80 square metres. The buildings are finished in render under slate roofs, with a ridge height to the main building of approximately 6.05 metres. The remainder of the site comprises a mature landscaped garden and an area of hardstanding used for parking.

The site is currently accessed from the R750 by way of a private laneway which also serves a number of adjoining properties. The laneway is approximately 3 metres in width, has no pedestrian facilities and joins the regional road at a point on a bend. There is a footpath on the western side of the R750. The road in the vicinity of the site is subject to a 50 km/h speed limit and is characterised by a curving horizontal alignment with grass verges to both sides.

The property has been vacant since 2020.

2.0 Proposed Development

Permission is sought for the change of use of the two existing buildings on the site from guest house accommodation to 6 residential apartments, with alterations and revisions to the elevations and internal layout, a new vehicular entrance onto the R750 to replace the original entrance, and all associated site development works.

Details of the Proposed Development outlined within submitted documentation:

The proposed development will be contained within the existing structures. No extension or demolition is proposed. The external alterations are limited to revisions to the exterior of the building. The schedule of accommodation is as follows:

Unit	Location	Type	Floor area	Private amenity space
Apartment 1	Ground floor	2 bedroom	80 sq m	17 sq m patio
Apartment 2	Ground floor	1 bedroom	53 sq m	12 sq m patio
Apartment 3	Ground floor	1 bedroom	50 sq m	10 sq m patio
Apartment 4	First floor	2 bedroom	80 sq m	Communal only
Apartment 5	First floor	3 bedroom	95 sq m	Communal only
Apartment 6	Detached structure (duplex)	2 bedroom	80 sq m	12 sq m patio

A communal garden of over 500 square metres is proposed to serve the development, together with 12 no. car parking spaces. The existing vehicular access onto the private laneway to the north is to be permanently closed to vehicular traffic and retained for pedestrian use. A new vehicular entrance is proposed onto the R750 at the western boundary of the site, together with a pedestrian crossing point

on the R750. The details of the proposed entrance and crossing are considered at section 7.3 below.

Water supply and foul drainage are to be by way of the existing connections to the public mains. Surface water is to be disposed of on site by way of soakpits.

3.0 Planning Authority Decision

3.1. Decision

Wicklow County Council decided to refuse permission for the proposed development for 2 no. reasons. The reasons are set out in full as follows:

1. Having regard to;

- i. The proposal for the change of use for two buildings on site from guest house accommodation to 6 apartments*
- ii. The site size and proposed density at c. 30 units per hectare.*
- iii. Existing character and pattern of development in the vicinity of the site which is predominantly for single dwelling houses.*
- iv. The location of the development on the urban rural fringe of Wicklow Town*
- v. The zoning objective for the site RE: Existing Residential which seeks to protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas.*
- vi. The provision of Objective CPO 6.22 which states that in existing residential areas, small scale infill development shall generally be at a density that respects the established character of the area in which it is located, subject to the protection of the residential amenity of adjoining properties. However, on large sites or in areas where previously unserviced, low-density housing becomes served by mains water services, consideration will be given to densities above the prevailing density, subject to adherence to normal siting and design criteria.*

It is considered the development would not accord with the existing character and pattern of development in the area and would give rise to increased intensity of development at this point. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the zoning objective of the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 which seeks to protect the existing residential amenities, would be contrary to Objective CPO 6.22 of the County Development Plan 2022-2028, and would set a precedent for similar development. The development would therefore be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. The proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of serious traffic hazard because:

i. Given the location of the proposed entrance and road alignment off the R750, inadequate evidence is available to show that the proposed sightlines can be achieved within lands under the control of the applicant in accordance with current TII standards and therefore the turning movements generated would interfere with the free flow and safety of traffic on the regional road.

ii. Inadequate proposals for pedestrian connectivity to the existing footpath have been provided.

3.2. Planning Authority Reports

Planning Reports

There is one planning report on file dated 01/04/2026. The report is summarised as follows:

- The site is zoned RE: Existing Residential. Regard is had to the planning history of the site, the existing development for conversion and the existing cluster of residential development in the area.
- The development proposal is not considered to meaningfully detract from the existing structure on site, nor would it be considered injurious to the visual amenities of the locality.

- The proposed units shall provide an acceptable level of amenity for occupants. The proposal is not deemed to pose any threat to the prevailing neighbouring amenities of the locality by ways of overlooking, overbearance or overshadowing.
- The site is located at the point of delineation between the urban and rural fringe beyond, with the immediate area being characterised by individual dwelling units. The examples provided for other rural fringe sites in which apartment development has been approved are noted, although it is highlighted that the identified apartment developments by and large form a holistic part of larger mixed housing developments within new residential zonings.
- Notwithstanding the content of the submitted planning report and the amendments made to the subject application from that put forward under 25/60146, it is concluded that the development proposal would be out of keeping with the character and pattern of development in the area, noting also that the proposal would rise to a density of 30 units per hectare which would be at variance with the prevailing density of the locality.
- Surface water disposal on site by way of soakpits is permissible subject to condition.
- Having regard to the nature and scale of the development, there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The need for environmental impact assessment can be excluded at preliminary examination and a screening determination is not required.
- Having regard to the nature and scale of the sought permission, which comprises primarily of the change of use of existing structures on site, the proposed development would be unlikely to give rise to any significant adverse impacts on the qualifying interests or conservation objectives of any Natura site. Appropriate Assessment is not required.

The Planning Authority refused permission for reasons set out under Section 3.1 above.

Other Technical Reports

Transportation, Infrastructure Delivery: Request Further Information relating to:

The report required the applicant to demonstrate that the visibility splays of 120m indicated from a 2.4m setback are achievable entirely within lands under the applicant's control; to demonstrate why the existing access arrangement cannot be utilised or improved and why a new entrance onto the regional road is necessary; and to provide details of the pedestrian crossing design, parking compliance and swept path analysis.

Fire Services: No objection subject to standard conditions.

3.3. **Prescribed Bodies**

No reports from prescribed bodies are on file.

3.4. **Third Party Observations**

None received.

4.0 **Planning History**

Subject site

P.A. Ref. 25/60146: Permission sought for the change of use of the two buildings on site from guest house accommodation to 7 apartments. The application was deemed withdrawn. The Planner's Report is however on file which made a draft recommendation to refuse permission. The reasons for refusal within the Planner's draft Report included the following:

- 1. The proposed development would endanger public safety by reason of serious traffic hazard because*
 - i. given the location of the proposed entrance off the R750 at a point in proximity to a number of entrances, the road alignment, and the lack of assessment to show the sightlines would accord with current TII guidance, it is considered the turning movements generated would interfere with the free flow and safety of traffic on the regional road.*
 - ii. Inadequate proposals for pedestrian connectivity to the existing footpath have been provided.*

2. Having regard to

i. The proposal for the change of use for two buildings on site from guest house accommodation to 7 apartments

ii. The site size and proposed density at c. 37 units per hectare.

iii. Existing character and pattern of development in the vicinity of the site which is predominantly for single dwelling houses

iii. The location of the development on the urban rural fringe of Wicklow Town

iv. The zoning objective for the site RE : Existing Residential which seeks to protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas.

v. Objective CPO 6.22 In existing residential areas, small scale infill development shall generally be at a density that respects the established character of the area in which it is located, subject to the protection of the residential amenity of adjoining properties. However, on large sites or in areas where previously unserved, low density housing becomes served by mains water services, consideration will be given to densities above the prevailing density, subject to adherence to normal siting and design criteria.

It is considered the development would not accord with the existing character and pattern of development in the area, would give rise to increased intensity of development at this point, and increased overlooking. The proposed development would therefore be contrary to the zoning objective of the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025 which seeks to protect the existing residential amenities, would be contrary to Objective CPO 6.22 of the County Development Plan 2022-2028, would set a precedent for similar development , and would seriously injure the amenities of the area. The development would therefore be contrary to proper planning and sustainable development

P.A. Ref. 03/9857: Permission granted for the extension of the guest house.

P.A. Ref. EX04/2026: The applicant sought a declaration under section 5 as to whether the proposed change of use constituted exempted development. The planning authority determined that it did not.

Adjoining and nearby sites

P.A. Ref. 21/798: Permission granted for a two-storey dwelling on lands to the immediate south of the subject site, to the same applicant, including a new vehicular entrance onto the R750 and the closing of the existing access.

P.A. Ref. 22/84: Permission granted for 2 no. holiday apartments at Dunbur Lower. Condition 6 attached to the Grant of Permission required the applicant enter into a Section 47 agreement that the apartments shall be for tourism purposes only and shall be for short term letting of a maximum of 4 weeks duration.

5.0 Policy Context

5.1. National Policy

Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework, First Revision (April 2025)

The National Planning Framework promotes a strategy of compact growth and the consolidation of development within the existing built-up footprint of settlements. The following National Policy Objectives are relevant:

- National Policy Objective 7: Deliver at least 40% of all new homes nationally, within the built-up footprint of existing settlements and ensure compact and sequential patterns of growth.
- National Policy Objective 9: Deliver at least 30% of all new homes that are targeted in settlements other than the five Cities and their suburbs, within their existing built-up footprints and ensure compact and sequential patterns of growth.
- National Policy Objective 25: Target the reversal of rural decline in the core of small towns and villages through sustainable targeted measures that address vacant premises and deliver sustainable reuse and regeneration outcomes.
- National Policy Objective 43: Prioritise the provision of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location.
- National Policy Objective 45: Increase residential density in settlements, through a range of measures including reductions in vacancy, re-use of

existing buildings, infill development schemes, area or site-based regeneration, increased building height and more compact forms of development.

Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024)

Wicklow Town-Rathnew is a Key Town. Section 3.3.3(i) sets out the key priorities for the growth of Key Towns and Large Towns as follows:

The key priorities for the growth of Key Towns and Large Towns in order of priority are to:

plan for an integrated and connected settlement overall, avoiding the displacement of development generated by economic drivers in the Key Town or Large Town to smaller towns and villages and rural areas in the hinterland, strengthen town centres,

protect, restore and enhance historic fabric, character, amenity, natural heritage, biodiversity and environmental quality,

realise opportunities for adaptation and reuse of existing buildings and for incremental backland, brownfield and infill development, and

deliver sequential and sustainable urban extension at locations that are closest to the urban core and are integrated into, or can be integrated into, the existing built up footprint of the settlement.

Table 3.5 sets out the density ranges for Key Towns and Large Towns. In relation to the Key Town / Large Town - Suburban/Urban Extension area type, the Guidelines state:

Suburban areas are the low density car-orientated residential areas constructed at the edge of the town, while urban extension refers to greenfield lands at the edge of the existing built-up footprint area that are zoned for residential or mixed-use (including residential) development. It is a policy and objective of these Guidelines that residential densities in the range 30 dph to 50 dph (net) shall generally be applied at suburban and urban extension locations of Key Towns and Large Towns, and that densities of up to 80 dph

(net) shall be open for consideration at 'accessible' suburban / urban extension locations (as defined in Table 3.8).

Section 3.3.6 sets out exceptions to the density ranges. Section 3.3.6(c) states:

In the case of very small infill sites that are not of sufficient scale to define their own character and density, the need to respond to the scale and form of surrounding development, to protect the amenities of surrounding properties and to protect biodiversity may take precedence over the densities set out in this Chapter.

Table 3.8 defines Accessible, Intermediate and Peripheral locations. A Peripheral location is defined as:

Lands that do not meet the proximity or accessibility criteria detailed above. This includes all lands in Small and Medium Sized Towns and in Rural Towns and Villages.

The proximity and accessibility criteria referred to are that an Accessible Location comprises lands within 500 metres (i.e. up to 5-6 minute walk) of existing or planned high frequency (i.e. 10 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus services, and that an Intermediate Location comprises lands within 500-1,000 metres of such services, or within 500 metres of a reasonably frequent (minimum 15 minute peak hour frequency) urban bus service.

Section 3.4.2 relates to Step 2 of the process of refining density, being Considerations of Character, Amenity and the Natural Environment. It states:

While considerations of centrality and accessibility will have a significant bearing on density, it is also necessary to ensure that the quantum and scale of development at all locations can integrate successfully into the receiving environment. New development should respond to the receiving environment in a positive way and should not result in a significant negative impact on character (including historic character), amenity or the natural environment.

Section 3.4.2(a) states:

The evaluation of impact on local character should focus on the defining characteristics of an area, including for example, the prevailing scale and mass of buildings, urban grain and architectural language, any particular

sensitivities and the capacity of the area for change. While it is not necessary to replicate the scale and mass of existing buildings, as most urban areas have significant capacity to accommodate change, it will be necessary to respond in a positive and proportionate way to the receiving context through site responsive design.

SPPR 3 - Car Parking states at (iii):

In intermediate and peripheral locations, defined in Chapter 3 (Table 3.8) the maximum rate of car parking provision for residential development, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority, shall be 2 no. spaces per dwelling

The Guidelines further state that applicants should be required to provide a rationale and justification for the number of car parking spaces proposed and to satisfy the planning authority that the parking levels are necessary and appropriate, particularly when they are close to the maximum provision.

Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025)

Section 2.3 (Implementation) states:

In general terms, apartments are most appropriately located within urban areas. As outlined in the SRDCSGs, densities should increase in relation to proximity to urban centres and public transport services. In this regard, city and town centres and public transport nodes where high capacity public transport services are provided (or planned) are particularly suited to higher densities including apartment developments. Other locations close to public transport services, locations of employment and a range of urban amenities including parks/waterfronts, shopping and other services, may also be suitable locations for apartments.

The same section provides that identification of the types of location in cities and towns that may be suitable for apartment development will be subject to local determination by the planning authority, with regard to the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines, based on the national settlement hierarchy, the appropriate density range for the locale as defined in

Tables 3.1 to 3.7 of those Guidelines, accessibility to public transport services as defined in Table 3.8 of those Guidelines, and considerations of character, amenity and the surrounding environment as per section 3.4.2 of those Guidelines. It continues:

When identifying areas suitable for higher densities, consideration should also be given to the mix of housing typologies that can be provided. A key focus on the SRDCSGs are innovations with regard to compact forms of 'own door' housing that can deliver more diverse and affordable forms of housing at medium densities. This will reduce the need for apartments in locations where access to public transport services are more limited in nature or where a more bespoke low-rise design response is warranted.

Section 3.3 provides that the requirement that the majority of all apartments in a proposed scheme exceed the minimum floor area standard by a minimum of 10% does not apply to any proposal with less than ten residential units, or to building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size, or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha.

Section 3.4 provides that for building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, the dual aspect requirements may be relaxed in part, on a case-by-case basis, subject to overall design quality. SPPR 3 provides that a minimum of 25% of units within a development shall be required to be dual aspect, and that for building refurbishment schemes on sites of any size or urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25ha, planning authorities may exercise further discretion to consider dual aspect unit provision at a level lower than the 25% minimum on a case-by-case basis, subject to the achievement of overall high design quality in other aspects.

Section 3.8 provides for equivalent relaxation in respect of private amenity space. SPPR 2 sets out the minimum apartment floor areas, being 45 sq m for a one bedroom unit, 73 sq m for a two bedroom (4 person) unit and 90 sq m for a three bedroom (5 person) unit.

5.2. Regional Policy

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031

Wicklow Town-Rathnew is identified as a Key Town in the settlement hierarchy at Table 4.2. In relation to residential development in Wicklow Town-Rathnew, the RSES states:

Redevelopment and opportunity sites within the core areas of Wicklow-Rathnew will be promoted in the first instance for new residential development, with sites close to transport infrastructure, recreational and education amenities and employment being prioritised thereafter.

The RSES also records that Wicklow-Rathnew has high levels of car-based commuting to Dublin with issues in relation to public transport capacity, and that Wicklow is situated between the protected conservation sites of the Murrough cSAC/SPA and Wicklow Head SPA.

5.3. Development Plan

Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028

The operative statutory plan is the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028. The land use zoning for the site derives from the Wicklow Town-Rathnew Local Area Plan 2025, the zoning maps of which were integrated into the County Development Plan by Variation No. 2, made and effective 12 May 2025.

Zoning

The site is zoned RE: Existing Residential. The zoning objective is:

To protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas. Uses that will be considered include house improvements, alterations and extensions and appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity.

The lands to the immediate north, east and south-east of the site, comprising the golf course and the coastal lands running to Wicklow Head, are zoned AOS: Active Open Space and OS1: Open Space, with OS2: Natural Areas along the coast. The settlement boundary is located within close proximity beyond the Seacliff Housing estate to the west and the golf course coastal lands extending to coastline to the east and south-east.

Relevant policy objectives

- CPO 4.3: Increase the density in existing settlements through a range of measures including bringing vacant properties back into use, reusing existing buildings, infill development schemes, brownfield regeneration, increased building height where appropriate, encouraging living over the shop and securing higher densities for new development.
- CPO 4.5: To ensure that all settlements, as far as is practicable, develop in a self-sufficient manner with population growth occurring in tandem with physical and social infrastructure and economic development. Development should support a compact urban form and the integration of land use and transport.
- CPO 4.9: To target the reversal of town and village centre decline through sustainable compact growth and targeted measures that address vacancy, dereliction and underutilised lands and deliver sustainable renewal and regeneration outcomes.
- CPO 6.13: To require that new residential development represents an efficient use of land and achieves the densities as set out in the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoHLGH 2024) - Table 6.1. In promoting higher densities and more compact development, new development should demonstrate compliance with: the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoHLGH 2024); Quality Housing for Sustainable Communities; Design Standards for New Apartments Guidelines for Planning Authorities; Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets; and any subsequent Ministerial guidelines.
- CPO 6.15: Higher density proposals should be designed to a high standard, incorporate a mix of housing types and sizes and deliver compact urban forms that enhance the local built environment and contribute towards a sustainable mix of housing options. Proposals should provide an appropriate design response to the site, be designed to a high quality and afford adequate protection for residential amenity of neighbouring properties.
- CPO 6.22: In existing residential areas, small scale infill development shall generally be at a density that respects the established character of the area in

which it is located, subject to the protection of the residential amenity of adjoining properties. However, on large sites or in areas where previously unserved, low density housing becomes served by mains water services, consideration will be given to densities above the prevailing density, subject to adherence to normal siting and design criteria.

- CPO 6.27: To require new multi-unit residential development to provide an appropriate mix of unit types and sizes to ensure that there is a range of unit types available to suit the needs of the various households in the county, in accordance with the Design Standards for new Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2020).
- CPO 6.28: Apartments generally will only be permitted in settlements Levels 1 to 6 and in accordance with the location requirements set out in Section 2.4 of the Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2020). All apartment development should be served by high quality usable open space.
- CPO 6.34: Support the change of use of vacant commercial premises in town / village centres to residential purposes outside of the retail core areas as identified in Chapter 10, subject to CPO 10.9.
- CPO 12.48: New means of access onto regional roads will be strictly controlled and may be considered if one of the following circumstances applies: The regional road passes through a designated settlement and a speed limit of 50km/h or less applies; where the new access is intended to replace an existing deficient one; where it is demonstrated, through the submission of a site access engineering report prepared by a competent engineer, that the proposed entrance will not interfere with the free flow and safety of traffic on the regional road; where it is demonstrated that the entrance is essential and no other means of access is available.

Appendix 1 (Development and Design Standards) sets out standards in relation to car parking, private and communal open space and apartment design.

5.4. Natural Heritage Designations

The site is not located within or adjacent to any European site or (proposed) Natural Heritage Area. The site is located c. 370m to the Wicklow Head SPA (Site Code 004127) located to the north; c. 1.6km to the Wicklow Reef SAC (Site Code: 002274) located to the east and c. 280m to the Wicklow Head pNHA (Site Code: 000734) located to the north. The Murrough SAC and SPA are located to the north of Wicklow Town.

5.5. EIA Screening

The proposed development has been subject to preliminary examination for environmental impact assessment (refer to Form 1 and Form 2 in Appendices of this report). The proposed development is of a CLASS specified in Part 2, Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but is sub-threshold being a Class 10(b)(i) 'Construction of more than 500 dwelling units'. Having regard to the characteristics and location of the proposed development and the types and characteristics of potential impacts, it is considered that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. The proposed development, therefore, does not trigger a requirement for environmental impact assessment screening and an EIAR is not required.

5.6. Water Framework Directive

An assessment of the proposed development has been carried out in accordance with Article 4 of the Water Framework Directive and relevant EPA guidance, including best practice in sustainable drainage design.

The development incorporates appropriate surface water management measures. These measures ensure that there will be no increase in pollutant loading, no alteration of the receiving waterbody's hydrological regime, and no risk of deterioration in water quality or ecological status. Any residual risks identified during the assessment are capable of being addressed through standard mitigation measures and best practice construction management.

The proposed development will not impact on the achievement of environmental objectives for any water body and is therefore considered compliant with the requirements of Article 4.

6.0 The Appeal

6.1. Grounds of Appeal

A first party appeal has been submitted by OTE Solutions on behalf of the applicant, accompanied by a Site Access Engineering Report prepared by David Dempsey Consulting Engineers dated 21/04/2026, revised drawings and an OSI site location map. The grounds are summarised under the following headings:

- **Assessment of the application:** The proposal was not assessed in principle or on its merits against national, county and local policy. The number of units was reduced from 7 to 6 to address the concerns raised under 25/60146, but the application was refused for near identical reasons.
- **Vacancy and reuse of the building:** The property was converted to 13 bedroom guest accommodation in 2000 and has been vacant since 2020. It is too large to rent as a family home, regulations rule out short term letting, and it failed to sell either as guest accommodation or as a dwelling. Conversion to apartments is a logical means of returning it to use, and accords with the compact growth strategy of the National Planning Framework and NPO 25 and NPO 45, with Housing for All, Town Centre First and the Bringing Back Homes manual, and with section 1.3.2 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines and Objectives CPO 4.3, CPO 4.9 and CPO 6.34.
- **Density, character and zoning:** Table 3.5 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines provides for densities of 30 to 50 dph at suburban and urban extension locations of Key Towns, and the proposal at 30 units per hectare is at the lower end of that range. The site represents a large site for an existing residential area at 0.20 hectares and the development is confined within the existing structures. As no material external alterations are proposed there would be no negative impact on the character and pattern of development. The Local Area Plan identifies apartments among the uses generally appropriate for RN and RE zoned areas.
- **Location and accessibility:** The site lies within the urban boundary of Wicklow Town, a Level 2 settlement, approximately 1.66 km from public transport and less than 1.7 km from the town centre, and within 500 metres of

a range of amenities including the beach, GAA club and golf club. The apartment guidelines identify suitable apartment locations as generally within urban areas and approximately 1,500 metres from public transport. The Local Transport Assessment forming part of the Local Area Plan confirms a continuous public path from the site to the town centre.

- **Precedent:** Permission has been granted for apartment development at comparable or greater distances from the town centre, including 24/311 at Ballynerrin for 22 no. one bed units granted to the planning authority itself, where its own appraisal accepted 30 to 50 units per hectare as suitable, 24/60631, 25/60554 and 25/223 at Broomhall, 24/325 at Tinahask, Arklow, and 22/84 at Dunbur Lower. Such development should not be confined to new residential sites requiring entirely new infrastructure.
- **Exempted development:** A declaration was sought under EX04/2026 as to whether the change of use was exempted development. The planning authority determined that it was not, on the grounds that the change of use would be material in character and would contravene condition 4 of 03/9857. All changes of use from commercial to residential are materially different in character, and it is inconsistent to contend that reversion from short term letting to long-term residential use would be out of character in an existing residential area.
- **Design standards, amenity and parking:** All units achieve the minimum standards of the Planning Design Standards for Apartments 2025, which may in any event be relaxed in part for a refurbishment scheme. A mature landscaped garden of over 500 sq m provides communal amenity space and existing sheds can provide storage for bicycles and bins. 12 no. car parking spaces are provided against a stated requirement of 9 under Appendix 1 of the Development Plan.
- **Access and traffic safety:** Sightlines of 120 metres from a 2.4 metre setback are achievable in both directions, exceeding the 45 metres required in a 50 km/h zone, as shown on drawings at 1:500 scale and without reliance on third party lands. The new entrance is proposed because the senior planner found the existing laneway deficient in width, without footpaths and with a

substandard entrance and inadequate sightlines. The proposal satisfies each of the circumstances in CPO 12.48. On pedestrian connectivity, a raised table, a defined crossing point with dropped kerbs and tactile paving and a connection to the existing footpath are proposed in accordance with section 4.4.7 of DMURS. A new entrance was approved to the south under 21/798 without objection. Should the Commission consider the existing entrance preferable, the appellant requests that this be conditioned.

- **Housing need:** There is an acute housing shortage and the refusal of a small scale development of this kind, at a time of extensive vacancy and dereliction, is contrary to Government policy.

6.2. **Planning Authority Response**

No response to the appeal from the planning authority is on file.

6.3. **Observations**

None.

7.0 **Assessment**

- 7.1.1. Having examined the application details and all other documentation on file, including all of the submissions received in relation to the appeal, the reports of the local authority, and having inspected the site, and having regard to the relevant local/regional/national policies and guidance, I consider that the substantive issues in this appeal to be considered are as follows:

- Principle of Development and Zoning
- Density, Character and Location
- Traffic Safety and Access
- Residential Amenity and Apartment Standards
- Services and Other Matters

7.2. **Principle of Development and Zoning**

- 7.2.1. The site is zoned RE: Existing Residential, the objective for which is to protect, provide and improve residential amenities of existing residential areas. Uses to be considered under the zoning include appropriate infill residential development in accordance with principles of good design and protection of existing residential amenity.
- 7.2.2. Residential use is acceptable in principle on the site and neither the zoning objective nor the Development Plan excludes apartments from lands zoned RE. The zoning provides for infill development which is appropriate, and the Development Plan contains specific objectives governing the density of infill development within existing residential areas (CPO 6.22) and the location of apartment development (CPO 6.28). The proposed development is acceptable in principle subject to an assessment against Developments policies and criteria and relevant guidelines.

7.3. Density, Character and Location

- 7.3.1. The proposed development would provide 6 residential units on a site of 0.20 hectares, a density of 30 units per hectare.
- 7.3.2. The appellant submits that this accords with Table 3.5 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines, which provides for densities in the range 30 dph to 50 dph at suburban and urban extension locations of Key Towns, and that the proposal sits at the lower end of that range. The planning authority concluded that the development would be out of keeping with the character and pattern of development in the area and that the density would be at variance with the prevailing density of the locality.
- 7.3.3. The Guidelines approach density as a two-stage exercise. Table 3.5 establishes the density range for the settlement and area type. Section 3.4 then provides for that range to be refined, at Step 1 by reference to proximity and accessibility to services and public transport, and at Step 2 by reference to considerations of character, amenity and the natural environment. Section 3.3.6(c) provides that in the case of very small infill sites that are not of sufficient scale to define their own character and density, the need to respond to the scale and form of surrounding development may take precedence over the density ranges. On a straight reading of Table 3.5, a density of 30 units per hectare complies with the range for this area type.

- 7.3.4. Taking Step 1 first, Table 3.8 defines an accessible location as one within 500 metres of a high frequency urban bus service, and an intermediate location as one within 500 to 1,000 metres of such a service or within 500 metres of a reasonably frequent service. Lands which do not meet either criterion are peripheral.
- 7.3.5. A review of the Transport for Ireland mapping indicate that the closest bus stop within Wicklow Town is c. 1.8km from the subject site at the junction of Market St and Summer Hill and is c. 3.7km from the Wicklow Train Station. The walking distance to the site is, by a clear margin, a peripheral location. Access to the town centre, to public transport and to day-to-day services is car dependent. On Step 1 alone, the appropriate density would fall at the lower end of the range rather than above it.
- 7.3.6. Having regard to Step 2 and to section 3.3.6(c), the site is 0.20 hectares in area and comprises a single plot within a short ribbon of frontage development. It is a very small infill site and is not of a scale at which it could establish its own character or density. The development proposed is a change of use and the fabric of the buildings would be substantially unaltered. The proposal would introduce six separate households onto a plot presently accommodating a single building in a single use. The proposed change of use therefore increases density (intensity of use is discussed below) and alters the nature and character of the existing site and structures.
- 7.3.7. As to the receiving context, the site is located on the eastern side of the R750 and is adjoined by one-off dwellings to all sides, the dwelling to the south-west being under construction. The pattern of development on this side of the road is a ribbon of individual detached dwellings backing onto lands zoned for open space. On the opposite side of the road the Seacliff estate comprises detached dwellings at a low density. The lands to the east and south-east are zoned OS1: Open Space and are in agricultural use, extending to the coastal lands at Wicklow Head which are zoned OS2: Natural Areas. The lands to the north are zoned AOS: Active Open Space and are in use as a golf course. The settlement boundary is within close proximity of the site and the lands beyond to the south-west are unzoned and in agricultural use. The prevailing character is one of low density detached housing at the outer edge of the settlement, within an area characterised by extensive open space designations and unzoned rural lands. I note the permission granted under Reg. Ref. 22/84 for 2 no.

holiday apartments in the vicinity. While noted, that permission provides for a non-residential use, being short stay tourist accommodation.

- 7.3.8. CPO 6.22 of the Development Plan provides that in existing residential areas small scale infill development shall generally be at a density that respects the established character of the area. The objective provides for an exception on large sites, and in areas where previously unserviced low density housing becomes served by mains water services. The site, at 0.20 hectares, is not a large site. While the site is connected to public services, the exception is directed at areas in which previously unserviced housing becomes serviced, and the site and the surrounding development have been connected to public water and foul services for many years. I am satisfied that the general rule in CPO 6.22 applies.
- 7.3.9. Having regard to the above, I consider that the density range in Table 3.5 is not appropriate to apply to the site in this instance. The site is a peripheral and car dependent location, it is a very small infill site which is not of a scale to define its own character, and the surrounding pattern of development is one of low density detached housing at the settlement edge bounded by open space designations. I am satisfied that 6 apartments at a density of 30 units per hectare would exceed the prevailing density of this locality and would not respect the established character and pattern of development of the area.
- 7.3.10. I have had regard to the fact that the development is contained wholly within the existing buildings, that no extension or demolition is proposed and that the ridge height is unaltered. The planning authority found that the proposal would not detract from the existing structure or be injurious to the visual amenities of the locality, and I agree with that finding. The objection to the development is not related to visual impact. The absence of external change does not of itself establish that the intensification of use aligns with the established pattern of development in the area.
- 7.3.11. The suitability of the location for apartment development is considered under CPO 6.28. That objective provides that apartments will generally only be permitted, firstly, in settlements at Levels 1 to 6 of the settlement hierarchy and, secondly, in accordance with the location requirements set out in the apartment guidelines. Wicklow Town-Rathnew is a Level 2 settlement and the first of those requirements is met. Relating to the second, section 2.3 of the Planning Design Standards for

Apartments 2025 provides that apartments are most appropriately located within urban areas, that densities should increase in relation to proximity to urban centres and public transport services, and that suitable locations are to be identified having regard to accessibility to public transport as defined in Table 3.8 and to considerations of character and amenity under section 3.4.2. The same section provides that compact forms of own-door housing at medium densities will reduce the need for apartments in locations where access to public transport services is more limited in nature or where a more bespoke low-rise design response is warranted. For the reasons set out above the site is a car dependent peripheral location not readily accessible to public transport, services and amenities, and I am satisfied that it is not a suitable location for an apartment development located having regard to the small infill scale of the site and the adjoining one-off dwelling context and open space designations.

7.3.12. Vacancy, Compact Growth and the Existing Use

- 7.3.13. The appellant submits that the proposal returns a substantial vacant building to productive use without greenfield land take or new infrastructure. The building has been vacant since 2020, having operated as a 13 bedroom guest house from 2000. The appellant states that the property is too large to rent as a family home and failed to sell either as guest accommodation or as a dwelling.
- 7.3.14. The relevant policy support is substantial. NPO 25 and NPO 45 of the National Planning Framework address vacancy and the reuse of existing buildings. CPO 4.3, CPO 4.9 and CPO 6.13 of the Development Plan are to similar effect. Section 3.3.3(i)(d) of the Compact Settlements Guidelines identifies the realisation of opportunities for adaptation and reuse of existing buildings among the key priorities for the growth of Key Towns. The return of a large vacant building to residential use is acknowledged and the above provisions support the principle of returning the building to residential use. These NPO's and Development Plan policies do not determine the form which that reuse should take.
- 7.3.15. NPO 43 provides for the prioritisation of new homes at locations that can support sustainable development and at an appropriate scale of provision relative to location, and the requirements of CPO 6.22 and CPO 6.28 continue to apply as assessed above. A refusal of the present scheme would not preclude the reuse of these

buildings in a form which responds to the character of this location. The buildings are of a scale capable of accommodating a smaller number of larger units, whether by subdivision or by renovation and extension, and the pattern of development in the vicinity, including the permission granted under Reg. Ref. 21/798 immediately to the south of the site, indicates that satisfactory access arrangements to serve such a development are capable of being achieved. I do not consider that the vacancy of the buildings is such that the development now proposed is the only means by which they may be returned to use.

- 7.3.16. The permitted use of the site is 13 bedroom guest accommodation. Guest accommodation is a transient tourism use, and the position of the site at the edge of the settlement adjoining the coast and the golf links and its accessibility to the wider Wicklow County is consistent with that use. I do not necessarily consider that the proposed change of use to present as an increase in intensity of the site, rather I have concerns relating to the form of the development and its suitability to this site and location.
- 7.3.17. The Compact Settlements Guidelines provide that residential development should be located so that day-to-day needs, including food, healthcare, education, sports and professional services, can be met within a short walk of the home, and that day-to-day services and amenities should be accessible within walking distance (Section 1.3.2). Section 2.3 of the apartment guidelines identifies suitable locations for apartment development by reference to proximity to urban centres, to public transport services, to employment and to a range of urban amenities including shopping and other services. The subject site is not within comfortable walking distance of the town centre or of any such services, and the future occupants of the proposed apartments would be reliant on the private car to meet day-to-day needs. Apartment development is characterised by reduced private amenity space and by reliance on shared facilities, which in appropriate locations is offset by ready access to services and amenities in the surrounding area. That offset is not available at this location, and I am not satisfied that the future occupants would be provided with an adequate level of amenity in this respect.
- 7.3.18. I am satisfied that a grant of permission would be likely to give rise to pressure for the similar intensification of other large detached properties along this stretch of the R750 and at comparable edge of settlement locations. I consider that the

development is likely to set an undesirable precedent and I consider that permission should be refused.

7.4. Traffic Safety and Access

Vehicular Entrance

7.4.1. The second reason for refusal is that inadequate evidence was available to show that the proposed sightlines can be achieved within lands under the control of the applicant, and that inadequate proposals for pedestrian connectivity were provided. The appellant relies on the Site Access Engineering Report submitted with the appeal and on revised drawings. Having regard to the principle of a new access, CPO 12.48 provides that new means of access onto regional roads will be strictly controlled and may be considered if one of four circumstances applies. Of relevance to the proposed development, a new means of access onto a regional road may be considered where the road at this point is within a designated settlement and subject to a 50 km/h speed limit. I am satisfied that the principle of a new access is capable of being considered under CPO 12.48.

7.4.2. The Site Access Engineering Report of David Dempsey Consulting Engineers submitted with the appeal was not before the planning authority. The report states that sightlines of approximately 120 metres are achievable in both directions from a 2.4 metre setback, exceeding the DMURS requirement of 45 metres for a 50 km/h speed environment, and that all sightlines are achievable within lands under the ownership and control of the applicant with no reliance on third-party lands. The report states that minor boundary adjustments, where required, are within the applicant's control. It is accompanied by a topographical survey and revised drawings at 1:500 scale. Having reviewed the submitted plans, I am satisfied, having regard to the 50km/hr speed limit and the demonstrated sightlines at a 2.4m setback, the provision of an access at this location is acceptable.

Pedestrian Connectivity

7.4.3. On pedestrian connectivity, the appellant has submitted details of a raised table at the entrance, a defined crossing point with dropped kerbs and tactile paving, and a connection to the existing footpath on the western side of the R750. The raised table is relied upon as according with DMURS. DMURS provides that the use of raised tables should generally be limited to Local streets and to Centres, and that their use

across Arterial and Link streets should be limited to sections where speeds are to be lowered for a particular purpose. The R750 is a regional road and the site is not located within a Centre. DMURS further describes raised tables as measures to be placed strategically throughout a network. I am not satisfied that the introduction of a raised table on the regional road to serve a development of this scale has been justified. These works are located within the public road and the planning authority's Transportation report sought further information on the design of the crossing, which was not provided. A request for further information would have been the appropriate course. Given the recommendation set out below it is not necessary to determine whether an acceptable pedestrian crossing arrangement could be achieved at this location.

Car Parking and Cycle Parking

- 7.4.4. 12 no. car parking spaces are proposed for 6 no. units, a rate of 2 spaces per unit. The appellant assesses this against Section 3.1.5 of Appendix 1 of the Development Plan, which is stated to give rise to a requirement for 9 spaces, and submits that the provision exceeds that requirement.
- 7.4.5. SPPR 3 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines provides that in intermediate and peripheral locations the maximum rate of car parking provision shall be 2 no. spaces per dwelling, where such provision is justified to the satisfaction of the planning authority. As a specific planning policy requirement, SPPR 3 takes precedence over any conflicting standard in the Development Plan. For the reasons set out at section 7.2 above the site is a peripheral location. The proposal therefore stands at the maximum permissible rate rather than above a minimum, and the Guidelines require a rationale and justification for the number of spaces proposed, particularly where the provision is close to the maximum. No such justification has been provided. Notwithstanding, having regard to the peripheral location, I consider that the car parking provision to be appropriate.
- 7.4.6. On cycle parking, SPPR 4 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines and section 4.5 of the 2025 apartment guidelines apply. The appellant relies on existing storage sheds said to be capable of providing secure storage for bicycles and bins. No detail is provided and no such provision is shown on the site layout plan. I consider

appropriate cycle parking may be agreed by way of condition in the event of a grant of permission.

7.5. Residential Amenity and Apartment Standards

- 7.5.1. I have examined the proposed units against the Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2025.
- 7.5.2. All six units meet or exceed the minimum floor areas set out in SPPR 2. The requirement that the majority of units exceed the minimum floor area by 10% does not apply, the scheme comprising fewer than ten units and being a building refurbishment scheme on a site of less than 0.25 hectares. Aggregate living, dining and kitchen areas, bedroom widths and areas, and storage provision are met.
- 7.5.3. Apartments 4 and 5 at first floor have no private amenity space, no balconies being proposed. Section 3.8 of the Guidelines permits relaxation of the private amenity space requirements for building refurbishment schemes and for urban infill schemes on sites of up to 0.25 hectares and provides that a reduced provision of balconies may be accepted where high quality usable communal open space is provided. A communal garden of over 500 square metres is proposed. Having regard to the scale and quality of that provision I am satisfied that the absence of private amenity space to these two units is acceptable in this instance.
- 7.5.4. The mix of 2 no. one bedroom, 3 no. two bedroom and 1 no. three bedroom units is appropriate for a scheme of this size and satisfies CPO 6.27.
- 7.5.5. The planning authority found that the proposal would not pose any threat to neighbouring amenities by way of overlooking, overbearance or overshadowing, and that the units would provide an acceptable level of amenity for occupants. Having inspected the site and examined the drawings I agree. The external alterations are confined to fenestration, no balconies are proposed and the ridge height is unaltered.
- 7.5.6. I am satisfied that the proposed development would not seriously injure the residential amenities of adjoining property and that the units would provide an acceptable standard of accommodation.

7.6. Services and Other Matters

- 7.6.1. Water supply and foul drainage are by way of existing connections to the public mains. Surface water is to be disposed of on site by way of soakpits, which the

planning authority accepted as permissible subject to condition. No increase in hardstanding is proposed. I am satisfied that the site is adequately serviced.

- 7.6.2. The appellant raises a number of matters in relation to the section 5 declaration issued under EX04/2026. That declaration has not been referred to the Commission and is not a matter to be addressed by way of this appeal.

7.7. Conclusion

- 7.7.1. The subject site comprises a one-off dwelling which was extended over time and converted to use as a guest house. They are located on a stretch of the R750 characterised by ribbon development of one-off dwellings at the edge of the Wicklow Town settlement. The area immediately adjoining the site includes unzoned lands and lands zoned Open Space, Active Open Space and Natural Areas, and the prevailing density of development is low. Having regard to the distance of the site from the town centre and from public transport services, the development would be car borne in nature.
- 7.7.2. Section 3.3.6(c) of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines provides that in the case of very small infill sites that are not of sufficient scale to define their own character and density, the need to respond to the scale and form of surrounding development may take precedence over the density ranges set out in Chapter 3 of those Guidelines. I consider this to be such a site. CPO 6.22 requires that small scale infill development in existing residential areas be at a density which respects the established character of the area, and I do not consider that 6 no. apartments at a density of 30 units per hectare would do so. CPO 6.28 requires that apartment development align with the location requirements of the apartment guidelines, which direct apartment development towards urban locations proximate to urban centres and to public transport services. The site is a peripheral location as defined at Table 3.8 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines and does not meet those requirements.
- 7.7.3. On balance, and notwithstanding the matters in favour of the proposal set out above, I do not consider that apartment development within the subject site and at this location is acceptable. I recommend that permission be refused.

8.0 AA Screening

I have considered the proposal for the change of use of the guesthouse to 6no. apartments and all associated siteworks in light of the requirements of S177U of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended.

The subject site comprises existing two-storey buildings and ancillary structures previously used as a guest house located to the south-east end of the Wicklow Town settlement.

The closest Natura 2000 site to the subject site includes

- Wicklow Head SPA (Site Code 004127) located c. 370m to the located to the north;
- Wicklow Reef SAC (Site Code: 002274) located c. 1.6km to the located to the east;
- The Murrough cSPA (Site Code: 004186) located c. 2.1km to north-west;
- The Murrough Wetlands SAC (Site Code: 002249) located c. 3.1km to north
- Magherabeg Dunes SAC (Site Code: 001766) located 3.8km to south;
- Buckroney-Brittas Dunes and Fen SAC (Site Code: 000729) located 7.9km to south;
- Deputy's Pass Nature Reserve SAC (Site Code: 000717) located 9.7km to west; and
- Vale of Clara (Rathdrum Wood) SAC (Site Code: 000733) located 13.2km to west.

Apart from the underlying groundwater, there are no water features within the zone of influence of the development that would provide a hydrological connection to any Natura 2000 sites. The appeal site is not suitable as an ex-situ habitat.

The proposed development comprises the change of use of the two existing buildings on the site from guest house accommodation to 6 residential apartments, with alterations and revisions to the elevations and internal layout, a new vehicular entrance onto the R750 to replace the original entrance, and all associated site development works. The development will be serviced by existing connections to Uisce Eireann networks. No concerns about impacts on Natura 2000 sites were raised in this case. The planning authority determined that there is no direct hydrological link to a Natura 2000 site and that the development, individually or in combination with other plans and projects, would not have a significant effect on any European Sites.

Having considered the nature, scale and location of the project, I am satisfied that it can be eliminated from further assessment because it could not have any effect on a European Site. The reason for this conclusion is as follows:

- No additional buildings are proposed within the subject site.
- Relatively small scale and nature of the proposed development.
- The distance between the appeal site and the nearest European site and the lack of connections;
- The screening determination by the planning authority.

I conclude, on the basis of objective information, that the proposed development would not have a likely significant effect on any European Site either alone or in combination with other plans or projects. Likely significant effects are excluded and therefore Appropriate Assessment (under Section 177V of the Planning and Development Act 2000) is not required.

9.0 Recommendation

I recommend that permission be refused for the reasons and considerations set out below.

10.0 Reasons and Considerations

The site is located at the outer edge of the built-up area of Wicklow Town. The established character and pattern of development in the vicinity is one of low density detached dwellings fronting onto the R750. The adjoining lands are zoned for open space, active open space and natural areas, and the lands beyond the settlement boundary to the south-west are unzoned. Having regard to Table 3.8 of the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2024), the site is a peripheral and car dependent location. Having regard to sections 3.3.6(c) and 3.4 of those Guidelines, it is a very small infill site which is not of sufficient scale to define its own character and density.

It is considered that the proposed development, comprising 6 no. apartments at a density of 30 units per hectare, would exceed the prevailing density of the area. It

would not respect the established character of the area, contrary to the zoning objective for the site, RE: Existing Residential, and to Objective CPO 6.22 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028, the exception provided for in that objective not being engaged. It is further considered that the site does not meet the location requirements for apartment development within Objective CPO 6.28 of the Development Plan and set out at section 2.3 of the Planning Design Standards for Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2025). Having regard to section 1.3.2 of the Compact Settlements Guidelines, the site is not within walking distance of day-to-day services and amenities and the future occupants of the development would be reliant on the private car. The reduced private amenity space associated with apartment development would not be offset by ready access to services and amenities at this location. The proposed development would also set an undesirable precedent for similar development on small infill sites at comparable locations. The proposed development would, therefore, be contrary to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

I confirm that this report represents my professional planning assessment, judgement and opinion on the matter assigned to me and that no person has influenced or sought to influence, directly or indirectly, the exercise of my professional judgement in an improper or inappropriate way.

David Freeland
Planning Inspector

14/08/2026

Appendix 1 - Form 1 - EIA Pre-Screening [EIAR not submitted]

An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference	PL-501249-WW-26		
Proposed Development Summary	Change of use for existing guest house to 6 apartments and all with associated site works.		
Development Address	Dunbur Lower, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow		
1. Does the proposed development come within the definition of a 'project' for the purposes of EIA? (that is involving construction works, demolition, or interventions in the natural surroundings)		Yes	X
		No	
2. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 1 or Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and does it equal or exceed any relevant quantity, area or limit where specified for that class?			
Yes			EIA Mandatory EIAR required
No	X		Proceed to Q.3
3. Is the proposed development of a class specified in Part 2, Schedule 5, Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) but does not equal or exceed a relevant quantity, area or other limit specified [sub-threshold development]?			
		Threshold	Comment (if relevant)
No		N/A	No EIAR or Preliminary Examination required
Yes		10(b)(i): Construction of more than 500 dwelling units.	Proceed to Q.4
4. Has Schedule 7A information been submitted?			
No	X	Preliminary Examination required	
Yes		Screening Determination required	

Inspector: _____ Date: _____

Appendix 2 - Form 2 - EIA Preliminary Examination

Case Reference	PL-501249-WW-26
Proposed Development Summary	Change of use for existing guest house to 6 apartments and all with associated site works.
Development Address	Dunbur Lower, Wicklow Town, Co. Wicklow
This preliminary examination should be read with, and in the light of, the rest of the Inspector's Report attached herewith.	
Characteristics of proposed development (In particular, the size, design, cumulation with existing/ proposed development, nature of demolition works, use of natural resources, production of waste, pollution and nuisance, risk of accidents/disasters and to human health).	The proposed development comprises the change of use of the two existing buildings on the site from guest house accommodation to 6 residential apartments, with alterations and revisions to the elevations and internal layout, a new vehicular entrance onto the R750 to replace the original entrance, and all associated site development works. The development will be serviced by existing connections to Uisce Eireann networks. The development comes forwards as a standalone project, does not require the use of substantial natural resources, or give rise to significant risk of pollution or nuisance. The development, by virtue of its type, does not pose a risk of major accident and/or disaster, or is vulnerable to climate change. It presents no risks to human health
Location of development (The environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by the development in particular existing and approved land use, abundance/capacity of natural resources, absorption capacity of natural environment e.g. wetland, coastal zones, nature reserves, European sites, densely populated areas, landscapes, sites of historic, cultural or archaeological significance).	The site is not located within or immediately adjacent to any designated site. The proposed development will retain existing connections to public water and wastewater. It is considered that the proposed development would not be likely to have a significant effect individually, or in-combination with other plans and projects, on a European Site and appropriate assessment is therefore not required.
Types and characteristics of potential impacts (Likely significant effects on environmental parameters, magnitude and spatial extent, nature of impact, transboundary, intensity and complexity, duration, cumulative effects and opportunities for mitigation).	Having regard to the nature of the proposed development, its location removed from sensitive habitats/features, likely limited magnitude and spatial extent of effects, and absence of in combination effects, there is no potential for significant effects on the environmental factors listed in section 171A of the Act.

Conclusion	
Likelihood of Significant Effects	Conclusion in respect of EIA
There is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment.	EIA is not required.

Inspector: _____ Date: _____