

CHAPTER 6

Economic Development Strategy



6.1 Introduction

The economic wellbeing of the county underpins its general wellbeing by enabling people to be employed in a job of their choice, in a location of their choosing and provide an income which is acceptable to them.

This chapter sets out the Council's broad Economic Development Strategy and provides details on how this will be supported by the Council's functions and activities and the planning process. The Plan seeks to promote the county as a nationally and internationally attractive and distinctive location in which to conduct business due to its significant strategic location and other significant environmental attributes and factors. Continued economic development and job creation with enhanced regional accessibility will be supported by the work of the Planning and Economic Development Directorate and Local Enterprise Office (LEO) and guided by this Plan. The Strategy has been devised having regard to the policy documents set out in Section 6.4 and baseline conditions which exist in the county as set out in Section 6.5.

In recent years Ireland's economy has been performing strongly. Living standards had been continually rising and employment had reached the highest levels in years. However, in light of the on-going circumstances that surround the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the economy, vulnerabilities may become evident in the domestic economy such as declining productivity levels in SMEs, skills deficits and labour availability, as well as concentrations in some sectors. Furthermore international trade, Brexit, growing trade protectionism and other geopolitical risks provide further complexities. Technological advances and the transition to a low carbon economy present challenges but also numerous opportunities as our businesses and workers adapt in a changed economy.

6.2 The Role of the Council in Economic Development

The 'Action Programme for Effective Local Government – Putting People First' and the Local Government Reform Act, 2014 together set the platform for a stronger role for local government in economic development. This role includes the preparation of a six year evidence based Local Economic and Community Plan (LECP), the promotion

and support of economic development through general local authority powers and functions, the operation of the LEO, the appointment of Economic Development Officers, the requirement that local authorities engage with the Government's 'Action Plan for Jobs' and the pursuit of economic development action in line with regional priorities.

The Council has been proactive in setting up an LEO, an Economic Development Unit (EDU) and a Special Projects Office (SPO). The LEO offers support to start ups and small businesses including training programmes, advice and information and selective financial assistance while the EDU supports new and existing Irish and international businesses throughout the county. The SPO has responsibility for delivering property solutions to address identified needs. The Council has also aligned its planning services, financial functions and infrastructure provision to ensure that the Local Authority as a whole operates in a manner which facilitates sustainable economic development.

6.3 Climate Action and Economic Development

The Council, will inter alia,

- Support businesses and activities to transition to a low carbon economy, finding ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in their work practices such as Work Travel Plans and improving energy efficiencies in their operations, and to support them to become climate resilient.
- Support the development of the green economy including appropriate renewable energy and bioenergy economic developments that will assist in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and assist with the transition to a low carbon economy.
- Support the agriculture sector to transition to economically and environmentally viable farming methods that reduce greenhouse gas emissions, are beneficial for local biodiversity and rural communities whilst still delivering high quality food and providing a high standard of animal welfare.
- Continue to create job opportunities within our county to counteract unsustainable commuting out of the county for work, to focus on developing jobs in the four main

towns, reducing the distance that people have to travel to and from work and to develop more sustainable modes of travel.

- Ensure economic activity is directed away from areas vulnerable to coastal erosion and/or flood risk.

6.4 Policy Context

Economic and enterprise policy transects many Government departments, regional bodies and local agencies, resulting in a wealth of policy documents, plans and guidelines. This policy context focuses on economic development policy from a spatial planning perspective.

National Planning Framework

All of the NSOs relate either directly or indirectly to economic development and creating the conditions to support growth in the economy and employment while protecting our urban and rural areas, our environment and the natural and built assets.

NSO 6 aims to develop a strong economy, supported by enterprise, innovation and skills. This is dependent on creating places that can foster enterprise and innovation and attract investment and talent. It can be achieved by building regional economic drivers and by opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, to leverage the potential of places. This outcome will require the co-ordination of growth and place making with investment in world class infrastructure, including digital connectivity, and in skills and talent to support economic competitiveness and enterprise. NSO 3 recognises that rural areas play a key role in driving our economy and they must be a part of our country's strategic development to 2040.

NSO 2 and NSO 4 are focused on achieving enhanced regional accessibility (transport) and high quality international connectivity (digital), opening up opportunities to attract investment and growth. The remaining NSOs include a focus on creating the conditions to make places more attractive to live and work in and to ensure that supporting social infrastructures, such as childcare and education, are in place to attract workers, enable people to work and provide an educated workforce.

‘Realising our Rural Potential: The Action Plan for Rural Development’ (Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, 2017)

This is the Government’s rural development policy document and it aims to unlock the potential of rural Ireland through a framework of supports at national and local level, which will ensure that people who live in rural areas have increased opportunities for employment locally, and access to public services and social networks that support a high quality of life. The Plan is focused around five key pillars, all of which will directly or indirectly improve the rural economy: supporting sustainable communities, supporting enterprise and employment, maximising rural tourism and recreation potential, fostering culture and creativity in rural communities; and improving rural infrastructure and connectivity.

Future Jobs Ireland 2019; Preparing Now for Tomorrow’s Economy (Government of Ireland)

The focus of this policy document is to create highly productive, sustainable jobs and it focuses on five key pillars in the areas of innovation and technological change, improving SME productivity, enhancing skills and developing and attracting talent, increasing participation in the labour force and transitioning to a low carbon economy. There are 26 ambitions under these pillars that will enhance the resilience of our economy and ensure we are well placed to exploit future economic opportunities.

Enterprise 2025 Renewed: Building Resilience in the Face of Global Challenges (Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation, 2018) sets out a portfolio approach to sector development, recognising that sectors contribute in different ways to the economy, delivering added value, export growth and quality of employment as illustrated in Figure 4.2 of the RSES.

Other key **national** economic policy documents and initiatives which have informed this plan include:

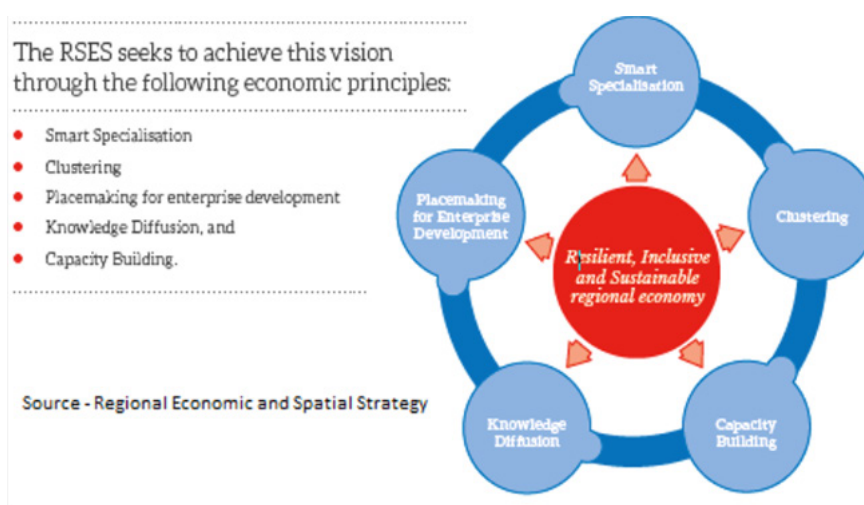
- The development of the agri-food sector (Food Wise 2025)
- The delivery of high speed broadband (National Broadband Plan)

- Developing the marine economy (Harnessing our Ocean Wealth and the National Marine Planning Framework).
- Realising the opportunities of the Bio economy and Circular economy (DBEI, 2019)
- Forestry (Growing for the Future and Business Area Unit Strategic Plans);
- Energy (White Paper-Ireland's Transition to a Low Carbon Energy Future 2015-30);
- Tourism (Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartland's initiatives)
- IDA Ireland's regional enterprise development (Winning: Foreign Direct Investment 2015-19), Enterprise Ireland (Regional Enterprise Development Fund) and the Regional Enterprise Plan for the South-East to 2020 (see below).

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region (RSES)

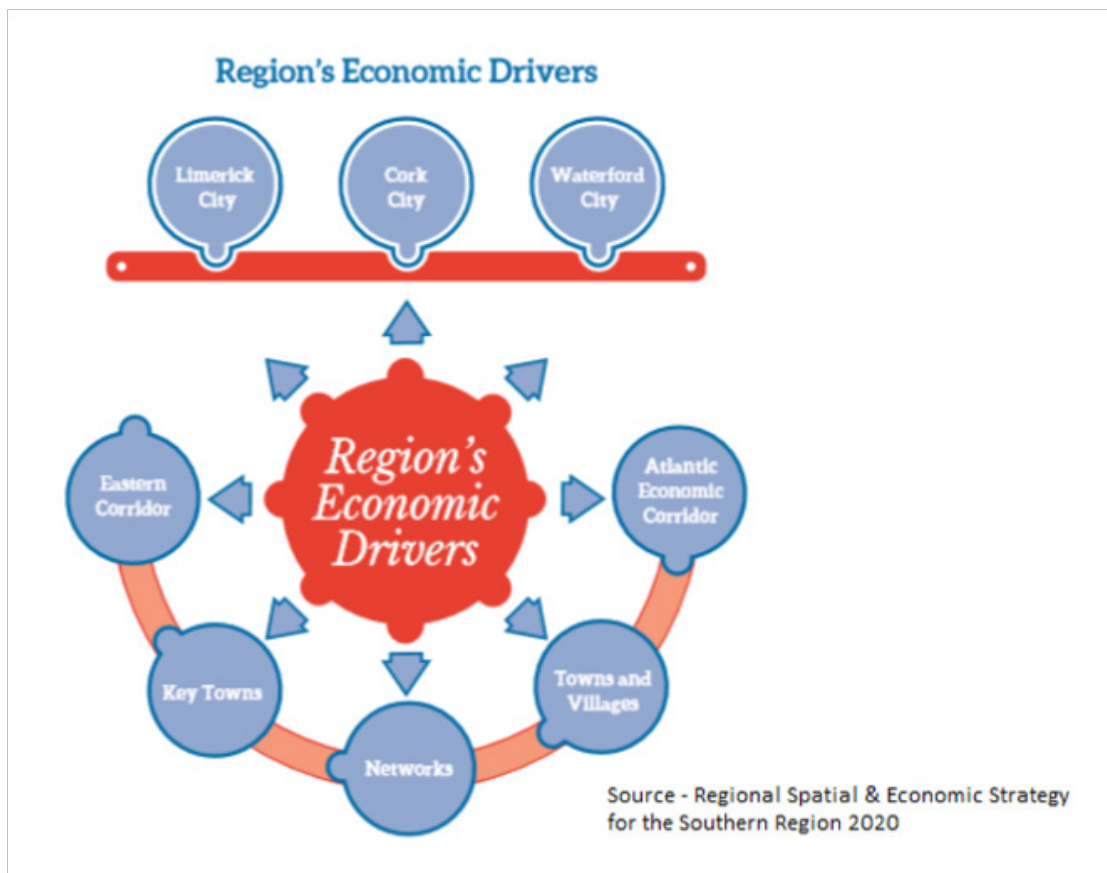
Element 5 of the Strategy is focused on building a competitive, innovative and productive economy. The economic vision for the region is to enable sustainable, competitive, inclusive and resilient growth. The economic principles to achieve this vision are highlighted in Figure 6-1.

Figure 6-1 Regional Economic Principles



Section 4.4 of the Strategy focuses on the development of key regional economic engines (Figure 6-2) identified as the MASPs, the Atlantic Economic Corridor and Eastern Economic Corridor followed by Key Towns, towns and villages. RPO 42 supports development of the Eastern Economic Corridor as a strategic economic driver in the region, extending economic and transport links from the Dublin-Belfast Corridor, to the South-east extending to Rosslare Europort.

Figure 6-2 Regional Economic Drivers



Keys town are also highlighted as regional economic drivers, with a need to develop centres of scale in these towns to perform this role, and to attract further economic development and investment. Large towns perform sub-regional economic roles, and the RSES supports the strengthening of their service and employment functions.

The RSES contains a range of supporting objectives to guide economic development including: Locations for economic development (RPO 62), developing the region's

tourism potential (RPO 53), developing the low carbon economy (RPO 56) developing skills and talent in the region through investments in education (RPO 63), supporting entrepreneurship (RPO 64 and 65) and growing the blue economy (RPO76-86).

The RSES also focuses on the economic role of the rural economy, and while it remains dependent on the traditional sectors of agriculture, forestry, construction and fishing, there is a need to focus on rural diversification, optimising the many opportunities offered by tourism, leisure and recreation and renewable energy production.

The Regional Enterprise Plan for the South East Region to 2020 is developed around five key strategic objectives focused on: enhancing the existing environment for enterprise and activity; establishing the South-East as a 'learning region' and a place for choice of talent and investment; developing a regional engagement strategy that is aligned with the RSES; highlighting the critical infrastructural developments required to enhance the economic potential in the South East; and developing the South-East as a region that is attractive to both domestic and international visitors with a sense of place and connected tourist amenities.

At the local level, the **County Wexford LEC** identifies three high level goals which underpin the Economic Development Strategy. These are:

- **HLG4** Develop and market County Wexford as an outstanding business environment for starting, growing and attracting business.
- **HLG5** Continue to protect and enhance our infrastructure and promote resource efficiency in order to create the right conditions for long-term sustainable economic growth.
- **HLG6** Protect and sensitively utilise our natural, built and cultural heritage and together with the Arts, realise their economic potential.

6.5 Economic Profile of County Wexford

6.5.1 Socio Economic Baseline

Labour Force Participation and 'At Work'

In Census 2016 the total labour force in the county was 69,237 people. Labour Force Participation (LFP) measures the percentage of all people aged 15 or over who are available for work, that is either at work or unemployed. The LFP rate for Wexford was 59.3% which was the 12th lowest rate in the State. However, there are significant variations at sub-county level with highest LFP evident in Gorey at 63.5% and lowest rate in Campile at 49.4%.

Table 6.1 Labour Force in County Wexford

	2011	2016
Total Labour Force	67,477	69,237
Total in Employment	51,307 (76%)	57,759 (83%)

According to Census 2016, 83.4% of the total Labour Force was 'At Work'. This figure varies significantly across the county with the highest 'At Work' rate evident in Castlebridge (85.4%) and the lowest rate in Clonroche (59.1%). While the county's overall percentage was relatively low (5th lowest nationally) the total number of persons 'At Work' is the 14th highest in the State.

Labour Force Unemployment

In Census 2016 the total population classed as unemployed (both unemployed and looking for their first job) was 11,478 people. This has dropped from 16,170 people in Census 2011. This represents an unemployment rate of 16.6% compared to the national employment rate of 12.9%. Wexford has the 5th highest rate of unemployment in the country¹.

¹ This is an improvement since 2011 when the County had the 3rd highest rate of unemployment.

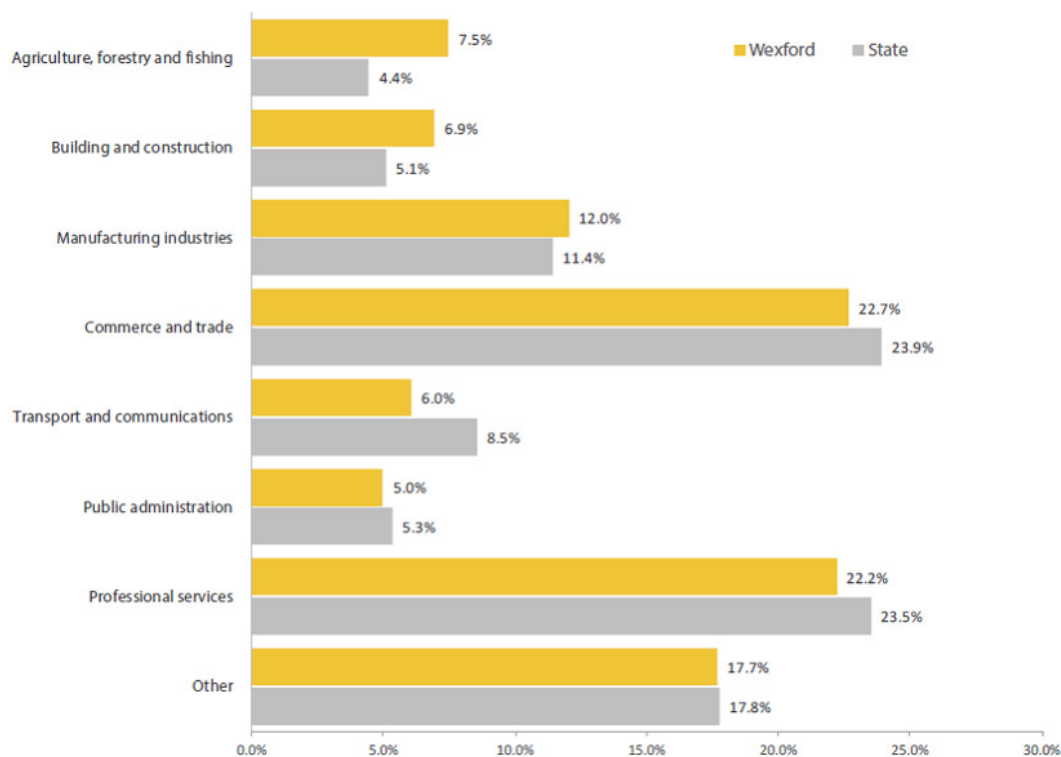
The spatial distribution of unemployment is varied with Kiltalea recording an unemployment rate of 7.5% compared with 28.3% in Bunclody, 38.1% in Taghmon and 40% in Clonroche. According to Census 2016 there are three unemployment blackspots² in the county. These were Enniscorthy Urban (32.1%), Rosbercon Urban (30.8%) and Killincooly (27.2%).

In April 2020, live register figures for County Wexford indicated that there were 8,855 people on the Live Register in 2020. However, in light of the current economic environment, it is likely that this number will increase significantly.

Industry of Employment

The most dominant sectors of employment of resident employees in the county are 'Commerce and Trade' (22.7%) and 'Professional Services' (22.2%), representing almost 50% of employment of total residents. Employment is characterised by a higher than average dependence on 'traditional' sectors such as Agriculture, Forestry, Building and Construction and Manufacturing, when compared to State averages.

Figure 6-3 Industry of Employment

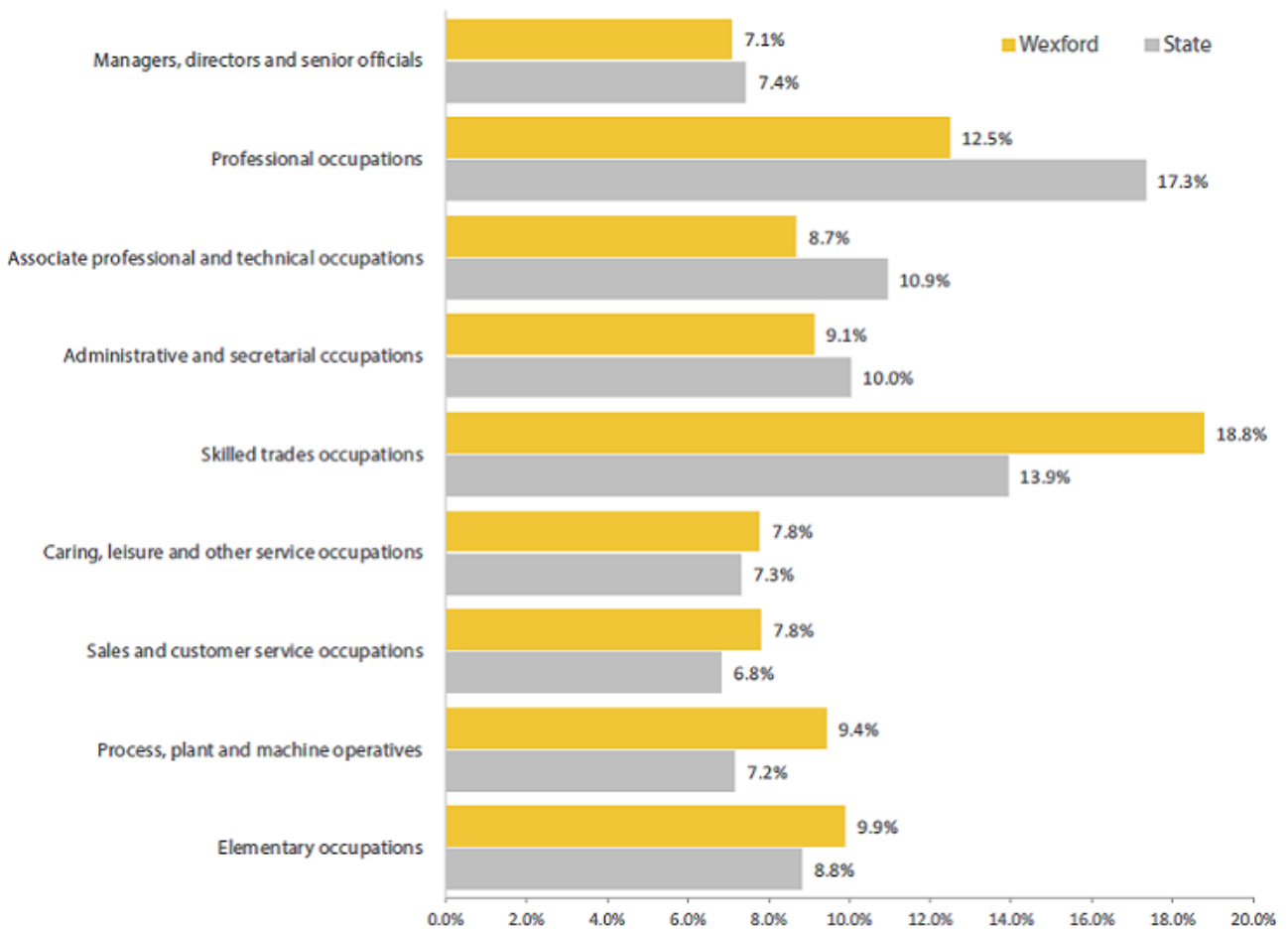


² An unemployment blackspot was defined as an Electoral District whose labour force exceeded 200 persons and where the unemployment rate (on a Principal Economic Status basis) exceeded 27 per cent.

Occupations

Within any given sector there are a variety of employees performing different kinds of work and this section describes the kind of work performed, irrespective of the location of that work. Of the nine Occupational groups detailed in Figure 6.4 Wexford records considerably higher-than-average rates for three occupational groups; 'Skilled Trades Occupations' (18.8%), 'Process Plant and Machine Operatives' (9.4%) and 'Elementary Occupations' (9.9%). These three groups account for almost 40% of the labour force in the county. Since 2011, the 'Caring, Leisure and Other Service Occupations' occupational group has witnessed the highest rate of increase at 16.8% (763). The 'Professional Occupations' group has also increased significantly by a total of 8.8% (687) since 2011.

Figure 6-4 Occupations



Pobal HP Deprivation Index

This Index is a method of measuring the relative affluence or disadvantage of a particular geographical area using data compiled from various censuses. According to the Pobal HP Deprivation Index (Census 2016), Wexford was the 4th most disadvantaged local authority in the country, improving by one position from 3rd since 2011.

6.5.2 Existing Employment in Wexford

Key Sectors and Employers

Wexford has established a broad based enterprise sector with a solid reputation in Information Communication Technology (ICT), International Financial Services, Life Sciences and food production.

The ICT sector is responsible for 40% of national exports. Indigenous and multi-national technology firms are experiencing growth in terms of export figures and employment levels. Wexford has a vibrant tech start-up scene with companies such as Sonru, Innovate Technologies Ltd and Scurri all originating in the county. These companies have significantly expanded both nationally and internationally in recent years. Datapac, located in Enniscorthy Town, is Ireland's largest indigenous ICT solutions and services provider.

The International Financial Services sector is targeted as part of the South East Action for Jobs. Wexford Town is home to a number of global players in this field including BNY Mellon and Zurich Insurance.

The Life Sciences sector has grown steadily in the county, forming part of the South-East life sciences cluster. Companies include BD Enniscorthy³ in Enniscorthy Town, Waters Technologies and CRI Medical Devices in Wexford Town and Interger⁴ in New Ross Town.

Primary and secondary food production plays a key role in providing employment and contributing to the county's economic output. The success of Irish Country Meats, Slaney Foods, Kavanagh Meats, Stable Diet, J. Donohoe Beverages and Killowen Farm demonstrates the continued and growing strength of the food sector. The 'Wexford

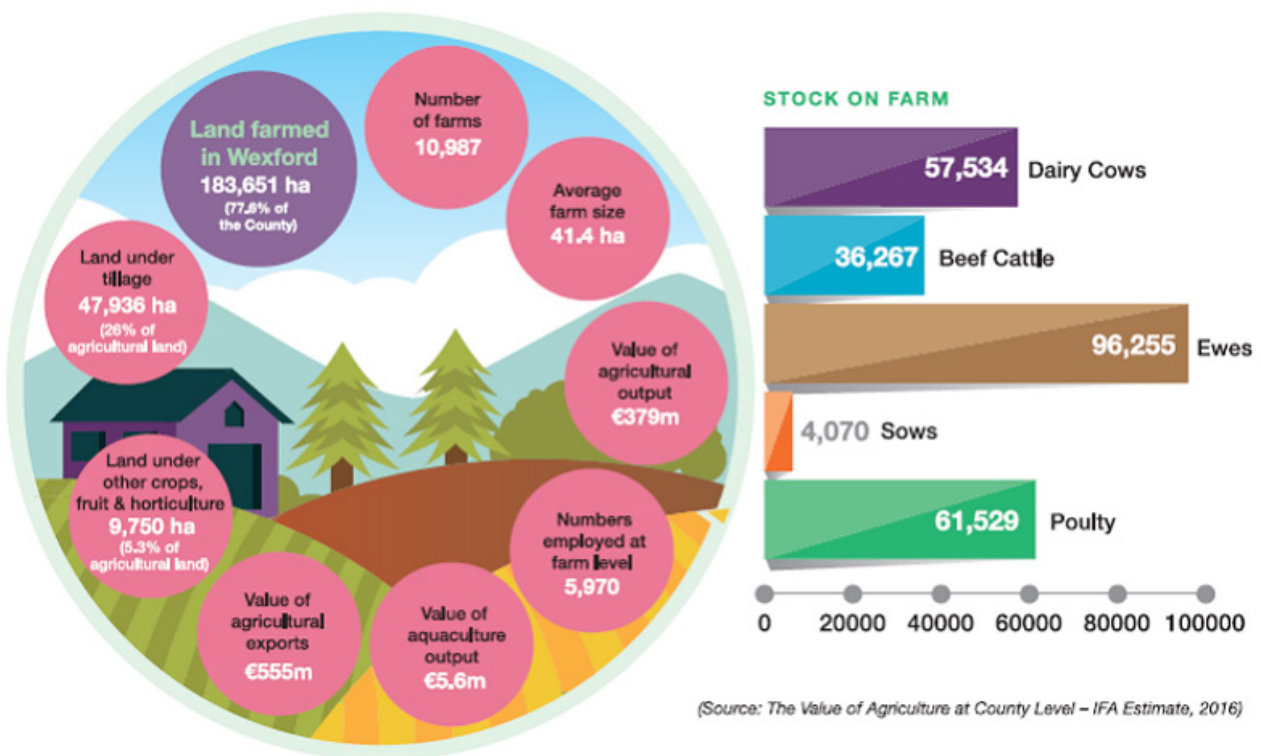
³ Formerly known as Clearstream Technologies

⁴ Formerly known as Lake Region

Food Family' brand showcases the modern value-added, entrepreneurial nature of this industry in Wexford.

Direct employment in agriculture and the value of economic output from agriculture and related rural industries are also vital to the economic wellbeing of the county. The value of agriculture is illustrated in Figure 6-5.

Figure 6-5 Value of Agriculture to the County



Business Typologies

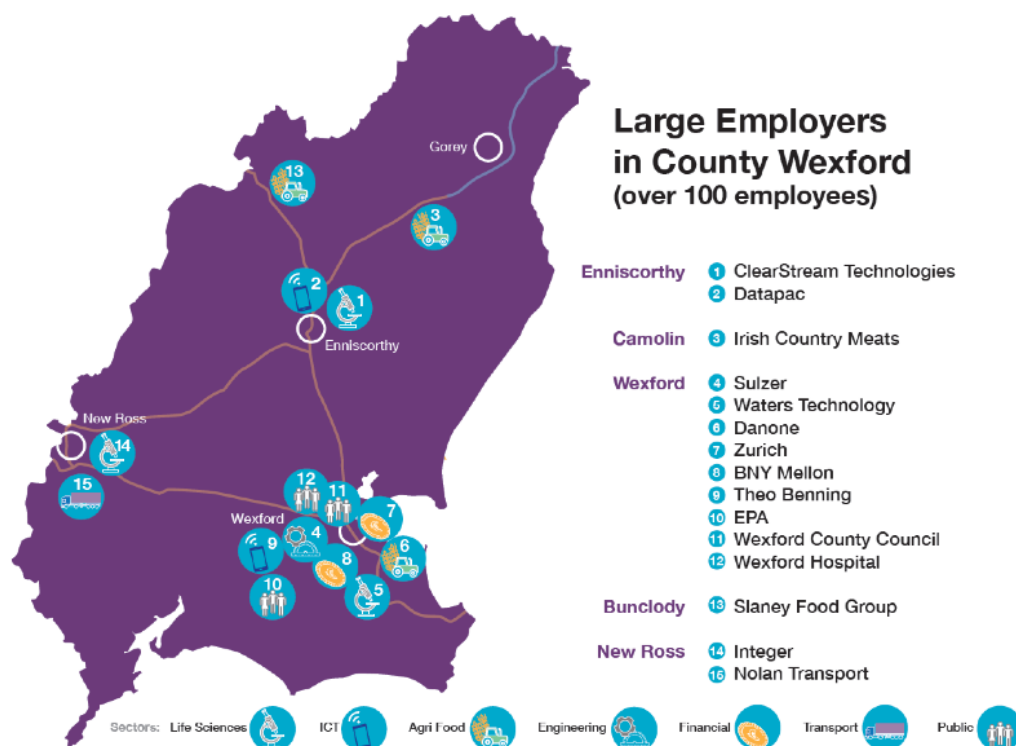
Businesses can be categorised by their scale (e.g. large, SME etc.) and origin (indigenous/FDI). They are primarily promoted and supported by three agencies depending on these typologies. The IDA is responsible for attracting FDI. Enterprise Ireland supports internationally competitive indigenous firms. The Council supports all sectors and types through its general workings but specifically has a support and development role for the SME sector through the LEO and it supports all other sectors through the EDU/Invest Wexford.

The South East accounts for 10.7% of the national population but has only 6.7% of IDA jobs⁵. Similarly, in terms of Enterprise Ireland funding, the South East secured only one of forty four new investments, accounting for just 2.15% of total investment in the most recent round of the Seed and Venture Capital funding (2013-2018)⁶. There are twelve IDA FDI companies located in the county. There are seven in Wexford Town, two in New Ross Town, two in Enniscorthy Town and one in Gorey Town.

Wexford is home to a number of successful indigenous businesses including Nolan Transport, Celtic Linen, Danone, Innovate, Sonru, Scurri, Eishtech, DoneDeal and Datapac. Indigenous Wexford companies such as Wexford Creamery, Kent Group Ltd., Sofrimar Ltd. and Atlantis Seafoods have gained an international reputation for their products.

There is a strong concentration of micro-enterprises (companies who employ ten or less people) in Wexford and a significantly lower level than the State rate are employed within large enterprises (>250). While this demonstrates a small dynamic and entrepreneurial base in the county, it also highlights the low level of large employers.

Figure 6.6 Large Employers in County Wexford



⁵ South East Economic Monitoring Report (WIT, July 2017)

⁶ ibid

6.6 Economic Development Strategy

This Strategy aims to increase opportunities for access to high quality, suitable employment for our residents and to improve fiscal conditions to allow investments in making Wexford an ever better place to live and work. This will be achieved through implementing the objectives of the NPF, Future Jobs Ireland 2019, the LECP, the RSES and this Strategy.

The Strategy is based around five key elements: People, Profile, Property, Place and Pillars (Figure 6.7). It will be delivered by the LEO, the EDU, the Local Community and Development Committee (LCDC), by managing development in accordance with this Plan and the general functions of the Council, together with various public bodies and employment agencies and the business community. The ‘People’ and ‘Profile’ elements will mainly fall within the remit of the LEO, EDU and the LCDC/LECP and will primarily sit outside the realm of this Plan.

Figure 6-7 Economic Development Strategy



Strategic Economic Development Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED01

To facilitate sustainable economic development, increase and improve job opportunities and ensure that County Wexford provides an outstanding business environment.

Objective ED02

To develop a strong economy in the county supported by enterprise, innovation and skill by building competitive regional economic drivers, supporting opportunities to diversify and strengthen the rural economy, supporting entrepreneurialism, sustaining and developing skills and talent and the development of high quality infrastructure, including digital connectivity.

Objective ED03

To sustainably develop, deepen and enhance the county's regional economic resilience by widening economic sectors and boosting innovation, export diversification, and productivity and increasing access to new markets.

Objective ED04

To facilitate and participate in the implementation of the Regional Enterprise Plan for the South East to 2020 and any future update of that plan, and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region.

Objective ED05

To develop the extended Eastern Economic Corridor and the towns and settlements on the corridor as a significant driver of economic growth in the Southern Region,

linking Rosslare Europort and the Southern Region with Dublin and Belfast. The Council will consult relevant stakeholders including other local authorities, the Southern Regional Assembly and the Eastern and Midlands Regional Authority in order to plan and optimise economic development.

Objective ED06

To work with infrastructure providers to ensure that economic development land and employment related uses are effectively serviced by all infrastructures and that new and existing uses are accessible by sustainable transport modes.

Objective ED07

To develop our towns to a sufficient scale and quality to be drivers of regional economic growth, investment and prosperity.

Objective ED08

To develop our urban and rural communities as engines of economic growth, establishing Wexford as a great place to set up a new business.

Objective ED09

To support a positive presumption in favour of locating appropriate employment where it would address unemployment blackspots, support sectoral and location-based strengths and synergies with existing employers and take advantage of 'ready to go' property solutions.

Objective ED10

To implement and facilitate implementation of the objectives and actions of the Wexford Local Economic and Community Plan 2016-2021, where appropriate and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED11

To protect the natural resources, amenities and heritage of our county and ensure that economic development does not significantly impact on this heritage, the environmental capacity or on the amenity of the residents of the county.

Objective ED12

To support the delivery of the National Broadband Plan as a means of developing further opportunities for enterprise, employment, education, innovation and skills development in the county, and in particular for those who live and work in rural areas.

6.6.1 People

Capacity building will be crucial to building economic resilience and responding to emerging challenges. The development of an economy which is diverse, resilient and responsive will ensure that the county is prepared for challenges and shocks such as those recently presented by Brexit and Covid-19.

As well as resilience there is a need to ensure sufficient capacity to bid for and win funding. Working together with the Council's partners in the region, using shared information, resources and knowledge will ensure that the combined resources of the region can be utilised to develop mass and add weight to bidding capacity.

The ability to develop, nurture, retain and attract talent is critical and education and training institutions are needed to develop our people's skills and talent. The development of a Learning Region, envisaged in the RSES, will build our citizen's skills base to succeed in life and business. This is critical to securing greater economic resilience.

The Council will support Life-long Learning and the initiatives of the Regional Skills Forums to match the diverse skills of our people with a choice of employment opportunities.

The availability of an educated and highly skilled labour force is critical for a county's economic success and the development of high quality education infrastructure is a key enabling component. The Plan must therefore ensure that the differing land and property needs of the various types of education and education providers are available at the right locations. This includes conventional third and fourth level education, mentoring programmes and on-the job training and apprenticeships –both in traditional skills and in non-traditional areas such as finance, sales, ICT and back to work and other community schemes.

It is also vital that the Council facilitates developments which will help foster close linkages between education providers and employers. Future LAPs will ensure that education and economic development are located where such benefits can be maximised.

While we are fortunate to have a strong local Campus of Carlow IT in Wexford Town, the absence of a University in the South-East is a regional weakness. In Census 2016, County Wexford placed 3rd lowest in the State and lowest in the South East in terms of the numbers obtaining a third level education. The absence of a University in a region can also inhibit employers looking for a continual supply of graduates.

The UN has recently identified Wexford as one of three locations worldwide along with New York City and Vancouver to establish of Centres of Excellence in the global challenge to curb carbon emissions. This Centre of Excellence is in Enniscorthy Town. This is a sector which can provide jobs for those involved in cutting edge research as well as traditional fields of employment such as construction related professionals and trades.

The Education and Training Boards (ETBs), and other providers of adult education and training in the County, provide responsive and job specific training over a wide variety of employment sectors. Their role in the business ecosystem, and, in particular, their ability to tailor courses and provide opportunities for reskilling in response to challenges in the economy and employment market is crucial to the economic resilience of the County.

Furthermore, national policy requires that we develop the skills that our enterprise base requires and there is an obvious need to future proof employment, identifying those sectors that are vulnerable and those that provide opportunities for the future

and take steps to make sure that our people are as well-equipped as possible to take up the jobs of the future.

People Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED13

To engage and invest in capacity building, including bidding capacity, at County and regional level to ensure economic resilience and responsiveness to emerging challenges and potential future economic shocks.

Objective ED14

To support the development a Learning Region as envisaged in the RSES and further strengthen our higher and further education and training sector, research, development and innovation capacity.

Objective ED15

To support the establishment of the South-East Technological University and facilitate the development of the Wexford Campus in Wexford Town.

Objective ED16

To support and facilitate the development and expansion of Carlow IT, Wexford Campus.

Objective ED17

To support and facilitate the development of the Centre of Excellence for Sustainable Construction in Enniscorthy Town.

Objective ED18

To continue to identify specific opportunities for education development which serve the needs of existing employers, attract new employers and provide up-skilling including apprenticeship and third level facilities and development opportunities for the existing workforce and ensure that synergies between the two are facilitated through the land use planning process.

Objective ED19

To foster links between industry and education establishments and research and development uses by adopting adaptable land use zonings at appropriate locations.

Objective ED20

To seek to address the skills shortages challenges through improvements in lifelong learning rates in the county and explore the attraction and absorption of incoming talent, with emphasis on accommodation, education and integration. The Council will support the initiatives of the Regional Skills Forums to match the diverse skills of our people with existing and potential employment opportunities in the region.

Objective ED21

To support and facilitate the development of adult education in the County, including the Education and Training Boards, and to work with providers to facilitate development which will serve the needs of existing employers, attract new employers and provide up-skilling opportunities for the existing workforce.

Objective ED22

To support, through the Local Economic Office and the Council's Economic Development Unit, mentoring, learning, education and training initiatives, economic regeneration initiatives and enterprise to address unemployment and deprivation legacies in the county.

Objective ED23

To continue to deliver, through the Local Economic Office and the Council's Economic Development Unit, mentoring and supports for start-ups and small businesses.

Objective ED24

To foster entrepreneurship by supporting new start-up companies and supporting the identification of suitable sites to enable these businesses to be established.

Objective ED25

To facilitate, through the support offered by the Local Economic Office and the Council's Economic Development Unit, new business formation, growth and industrial re-organisation by removing business start-up obstacles.

6.6.2 Profile

The Council's economic support structures such as the LEO, Invest Wexford, Visit Wexford and the Economic Strategic Policy Committee (SPC) ensure, through their developing plans and strategies, that the many attributes of the county are publicised and that raising the county's 'profile' is prioritised. The Council works closely with IDA, Enterprise Ireland and Fáilte Ireland to increase investment for Wexford.

Smart Specialism is a developing EU, national and regional approach which brings together key stakeholders to identify the competitive advantages of the area with the view to developing economic opportunities. It focuses on measures to improve the attractiveness of a location for national and foreign investment and increasing entrepreneurial activity. It has significant potential to raise the profile of the County as a place to operate a business and a place to do business with. The Council is committed to working with local communities, national enterprise bodies, higher education institutes and private enterprises to undertake the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process and evaluate how best to utilise these opportunities to raise the profile of the region and develop the identified specialisms.

The RSES highlights the importance of fostering entrepreneurship as it creates new businesses, jobs and wealth. Wexford has a strong tradition in entrepreneurship with some of our most successful businesses starting out as small ventures. We will continue to raise the profile of the county, and develop a business environment where like-minded people can collaborate, network and co-work with access to experienced mentors, which will stimulate entrepreneurship.

Profile Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED26

To raise the profile of the county as a competitive, forward thinking and flexible place to do business and an attractive place to start and grow businesses.

Objective ED27

To raise the profile of the County as an attractive location for financial services, ICT, sustainable construction and green and blue growth and life-sciences.

Objective ED28

To highlight in the economic marketing of the County, the wide variety of qualities that make Wexford a great place to live compared to more congested locations in order to attract employers and employees seeking a better quality of life.

Objective ED29

To encourage multinational corporations and indigenous industry connections, e.g. the Global Sourcing Initiative, trade missions to Ireland and peer networks for lean initiatives.

Objective ED30

To map, monitor and evaluate our economic ecosystem of entrepreneurship and innovation and monitor and benchmark the county against other relevant jurisdictions nationally and overseas.

Objective ED31

To maintain and leverage existing enterprise ecosystems to support enterprise development.

Objective ED32

To work with key stakeholders including local communities, national enterprise bodies, higher education institutes and private enterprises to identify the competitive advantages of the area with the view to developing Smart Specialisms and measures to improve the attractiveness of the County as a location for national and foreign investment.

Objective ED33

To identify Smart Specialisms through the Entrepreneurial Discovery Process to evaluate how best to utilise opportunities to raise the profile of the County and region and develop the identified specialisms.

6.6.3 Pillars

It is proposed to focus on a number of pillars or sectors in order that benefits will accrue from market forces such as agglomeration and specialisation. In turn pursuing such a strategy will assist in creating clusters of high skilled individuals who are attracted together as firms agglomerate. The pillars, which are identified in Figure 6.8, were selected based on existing employers and existing sectoral strengths which have potential for expansion and which are well suited to our existing work force.

The retail sector is an important economic sector in the County, and it has an important role in maintaining the vitality and vibrancy of the County's towns and villages. To this end a detailed Retail Strategy has been prepared to support its development. The Retail Strategy is included in Volume 8.

Figure 6.8 Pillars for Growth



Pillars Objective

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED34

To facilitate the development of enterprises related to the identified pillars for growth at appropriate locations and facilitate the provision of facilities and infrastructure which will enable clustering and specialisation in the county as set out in Section 6.7 (locations for economic development).

Objective ED35

To identify and pursue opportunities for enterprise growth, innovation and diversity within our county's sectors of strength, including the potential of enterprise ecosystems in sectors identified in the Regional Enterprise Plans (REPs) and their successors.

6.6.4 Property

'Property' is concerned with ensuring that there is adequate zoned serviced land and buildings at appropriate locations to facilitate economic development. It is also concerned with targeted interventions which the Council will make to provide solutions where these have not been embraced by the market or where difficulties such as complex land ownership patterns are inhibiting economic progress. It is also concerned with ensuring that policies are tailored to allow the provision of the variety of property types required by the different business typologies and identified 'Pillars'.

The Council is pursuing an evidence based approach to identify deficits in the provision of specific types of property required in the main towns, the opportunities based on the available workforce and, in particular, those commuting out of the county for work and the interventions required to maximise Wexford's existing assets and natural advantages. The responding measures will be achieved by a variety of methods including the use of Council assets and land banks, direct purchase, build and lease, the development of serviced sites in business and technology parks and joint ventures with the private sector.

Research commissioned by the Council found that there is a shortfall in large-scale modern office accommodation and good quality industrial property. This has led the Council to identify a number of property solutions in the four main towns. Further details on the projects being pursued are contained in Section 6.7 of this chapter.

The preparation of future local area plans will ensure that sufficient lands are zoned to accommodate all types of economic development. There will also be a focus on the repurposing and adaptation of existing vacant and underutilised buildings to provide property solutions.

Property Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED36

To identify and invest in property solutions that will directly facilitate the creation of new jobs, improve the character of areas and reduce dereliction, regenerate areas and ensure the efficient use of well-located and serviced land.

Objective ED37

To continue to audit and monitor the quantum and quality of zoned and serviced land and, to resolve any identified deficit through the variation of this Plan or local area plan(s) and during the preparation of new local area plans.

Objective ED38

To ensure that the economic development and employment related land use zonings contained in this Plan and future Local Area Plans, reflect the variety of modern use types, the skills of the labour force and the variety of plot size to suit the variety of land use types and intensities.

Objective ED39

To protect land zoned for economic development, industry and employment related uses from inappropriate development that would undermine future economic activity or the sustainable development of such areas.

Objective ED40

To continue to audit and monitor the availability of the different types of property required to facilitate appropriate economic development and, where deficits are identified, make appropriate interventions. Priority will be given to high employment generating interventions, those which utilise brownfield sites and improve the public realm and those which provide solutions for start-ups and in areas where disadvantage militates against opportunities for entrepreneurship.

Objective ED41

To provide and support the provision and improvement of infrastructure required to facilitate economic development including water, waste, transport (including rail lines and Rosslare Europort) and communications infrastructure to serve land and property.

Objective ED42

To facilitate and participate in works to regenerate and revitalise existing business parks and industrial estates within towns and promote the regeneration of obsolete and/or under-utilised buildings and lands that could yield economic benefits, with appropriate uses subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED43

To support investments in energy efficiency of existing commercial and public building stock with a target of all public buildings and at least one-third of total commercial premises upgraded to BER Rating 'B'. Local authorities shall report annually on energy usage in all public buildings and will achieve a target of 33% improvement in energy efficiency in all buildings in accordance with the National Energy Efficiency Action Plan (NEEAP).

Objective ED44

To support the development of remote working hubs in settlements.

6.6.5 Place

Place is concerned with ensuring that economic development is located in the right locations and that the places we make are high quality and attractive to employers and the resident workforce and attract people with skill sets which are under-represented in the county.

6.6.5.1 Locations for Economic Development

The primary location for new commercial development will be in the four main towns. Commercial development in other small towns and villages shall be commensurate with their level in the Settlement Hierarchy. Our ports and harbours are critical assets and offer an opportunity for port-related and new development. Rural areas are vital for sustainable economic development and require careful management to ensure that competing pressures do not compromise their development and their unique character. Section 6.7 outlines the objectives in relation to economic development in each of these areas.

6.6.5.2 Place Making

The attractiveness of an area and a sense of place are important elements in realising economic development potential and attracting new investment and employees. The Council will actively pursue place making activities and local improvement measures such as support for Tidy Town efforts, public realm improvements, protection and enhancement of historical features and buildings, regeneration of urban areas and other measures to enhance the local environment.

The quality of new development and refurbishment / extension of existing structures is also fundamental in creating attractive places. The Council will, through the objectives and development management standards set out in this Plan, promote and facilitate high quality residential developments with supporting social and community facilities, ensure that the town centres are vibrant and provide for a mix of uses and a range of retail and retail services, identify measures to improve the public realm and increase the range and quality of recreational, amenity and cultural facilities in each of the towns and villages. This is further discussed in Chapter 5 Design and Place-making in Towns and Villages.

Place Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED45

To direct commercial development to the settlements identified in the Settlement Hierarchy. Economic development proposals will be permitted within settlements on suitably zoned land or within towns and villages defined within the Core Strategy / Settlement Hierarchy, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. Exceptions to the objective will be permitted in accordance with those outlined in this chapter, Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning, Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Volume 8 Retail Strategy and Volume 10 Energy Strategy of the Plan.

Objective ED46

The scale of a commercial development shall be commensurate with the scale of the settlement. In general large scale employers⁷, that is, those employing more than 50 employees should be located on serviced zoned land in the county's four main towns - Wexford Town, Enniscorthy Town, Gorey Town and New Ross Town.

Objective ED47

To ensure employment locations follow the hierarchy set out in Chapter 3 Core Strategy, and ensure they are built fit-for-purpose. This includes the provision of access to utilities, connectivity, and other enterprise development factors; to identify future locations for strategic employment development having regard to accessibility by sustainable transport modes and environmental constraints, and support a positive presumption in favour of locating appropriate employment where it would address unemployment blackspots, support sectoral and location-based strengths and synergies with existing employers, take advantage of 'ready-to-go' property solutions and local ambition.

Objective ED48

To ensure that commercial development is located in the optimal location depending on whether it is 'people intensive' (customer and employee), 'land or space' intensive or is tied to a particular resource or dependent on a particular type of infrastructure

⁷ Which are not covered by the other sections of this Plan such as the Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Volume 8 Retail Strategy etc

(that is connection to the grid network which cannot be accommodated in the Settlement Hierarchy) and where such uses are compliant with the other location specific objectives of this Plan and land use zoning of the Local Area Plans.

Objective ED49

To ensure that commercial development in rural areas is related to agriculture, horticulture or other rural related resource or activity. Exceptions to this objective are detailed in Section 6.7.6 of this chapter, Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning, Volume 8 County Retail Strategy and Volume 10 Energy Strategy.

Objective ED50

To ensure retail development is located in accordance with the objectives contained in the Retail Strategy contained in Volume 8.

Objective ED51

To ensure that, where economic development uses bound sensitive uses such as residences, natural and built heritage assets or community and education uses, that an appropriate buffer is maintained to protect the sensitive use.

Objective ED52

To ensure that all planning applications for new development achieve a high standard of design in terms of contribution to the streetscape, layout, architectural design, building format, materials, finishes, conservation of features of architectural and historical merit and high quality public realm. All future development should make a positive contribution to the distinct identity of its settlement and succeed in enhancing a sense of place.

Objective ED53

To promote the re-use and regeneration of vacant buildings and the regeneration of

obsolete and/or under-utilised buildings and lands that could yield economic benefits with appropriate uses, subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED54

To facilitate remote working and consider the development of home office units for use by the occupiers of the dwelling. The unit shall be attached to the dwelling. In certain circumstances and subject to Section 5.4 Home Based Economic Activity in Volume 2 Development Management Manual the Council will consider detached units.

6.7 Specific Locations for Economic Development

6.7.1 Eastern Economic Corridor

The Eastern Economic Corridor is a critical element of the spatial components of the economic strategy of the County. Its designation in the RSES of both the Southern and Eastern and Midlands Regional Assembly places Wexford in a pivotal position in extending the Belfast-Dublin Corridor and in linking the Southern Region with the Eastern and Midlands Region. The Council will pursue a strategy of strengthening and consolidating economic development and transport infrastructure and services on this corridor.

Objective ED55

To strengthen economic development opportunities and transport along the Eastern Economic Corridor from Belfast to Rosslare Europort and in particular in the settlements along the corridor.

Objective ED56

To encourage clustering and the development of specialisations along the Eastern Economic Corridor both within the County and with other towns/cities on the Corridor outside the County.

6.7.2 Key Towns and Large Towns

The primary location for commercial development will be Wexford Town, Enniscorthy Town, New Ross Town and Gorey Town.

The RSES identifies Wexford Town and Gorey Town as Key Towns. Key Towns have an economic function that provides employment for their surrounding areas and wider sub regional catchment. Enniscorthy Town and New Ross Town are Large Towns and play an important part of the region's economic fabric.

This approach aims to ensure that the Key Towns achieve the 'Centres of Scale' to fulfil their roles, that the density of employment is achieved, to encourage firms to agglomerate, to maximise the efficiency of existing infrastructure and to mitigate against unsustainable travel patterns. The RSES also identifies the Trinity Wharf lands in Wexford Town as a Strategic Employment location for the town and county.

The LAPs for each town will ensure that adequate land in appropriate locations is zoned for economic development. The varying types of economic uses have different requirements in terms of land type, location, accessibility and availability of a skilled workforce. The location of new enterprises will largely depend on whether they are people intensive (customer intensive or employee intensive) or land intensive. These factors are critical in deciding the location of the facility, for example, customer intensive facilities should generally be located in the most accessible central locations.

The Council has been pursuing a progressive strategy to stimulate economic development in each of the four towns. This strategy is based on utilising specific attributes of each settlement including its existing commercial base, existing assets and workforce characteristics.

Key Towns and Large Town Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED57

To finalise and implement an Economic Development Strategy for each of the four main towns which provides detailed proposals for the strategic economic development of each town and outlines the objectives, actions and initiatives to achieve optimal development.

Objective ED58

To include an economic development spatial strategy in the Local Area Plans for each town to ensure that:

- i. The town fulfils its strategic economic role in accordance with the Regional Economic and Spatial Strategy for the Southern Region.
- ii. Economic development is located in the optimal location depending on whether it is people intensive (customer and employee), land or space intensive or tied to a particular resource. People intensive activities, particularly those with large customer numbers, should be located in the most accessible locations where public transport is available.
- iii. The sequential approach is utilised in selecting land for economic development purposes to ensure that urban consolidation and brownfield regeneration is encouraged over greenfield development.

The preparation of the spatial strategy shall have regard to the principles of Health Place Audits and the guiding principles for the location of employment development as set out in the RSES.

Objective ED59

To prioritise the provision of waste, water, ICT and transport infrastructure for the four towns and ensure that the areas identified for economic development in each town are adequately and appropriately served.

Wexford Town

It is the objective of the Council to:

Objective ED60

- Develop the Trinity Wharf lands as a Strategic Employment Location for the town and the county, and to maximise the economic development opportunities that this development will bring forward for the town, both directly and indirectly.
- Maximise the economic development opportunities offered by the strategic location of the town on the Eastern Economic Corridor.
- Further develop and expand the presence of the Financial Services, Life Science and ICT industries in the town.
- Further develop manufacturing industries in the town.
- Maximise the tourism potential of the town through the development of the Wexford Town 'Maritime Town' brand, the planned greenways and the vibrant arts and cultural scene in the town.
- Focus on the regeneration of key sites in the town including the regeneration of the Commercial Quay and Monck Street area.

Gorey Town

It is the objective of the Council to:

Objective ED61

- Maximise the economic development opportunities offered by the strategic location of the town on the Eastern Economic Corridor.
- Support the expansion of existing industries in the town.
- Support the expansion of ICT related employment in the town.
- Facilitate the future development of the M11 Business Park.
- Promote the Hatch Lab and support the provision of similar property

solutions as a means of providing office space for start-ups and providing commuters with office space near to their homes.

- Further develop the spin off potential offered to the town by its proximity to the popular tourism destinations in north Wexford.
- Support the further development of the town as destination for retail including niche boutiques.

Enniscorthy Town

It is the objective of the Council to:

Objective ED62:

- Maximise the economic development opportunities offered by the strategic location of the town on the Eastern Economic Corridor.
- Support the development of the National Centre of Excellence in Sustainable Construction at Killagoley and develop synergies and research and development opportunities around the theme of sustainable construction and NZEB.
- Maximise the opportunities offered by the Business and Technology Park and utilise it as a platform to attract new small and medium enterprises to the town.
- Support the designation of Enniscorthy as a Smart Town and utilise this designation to develop economic opportunities.
- Maximise the economic opportunities offered by developing the tourism potential of the town, both direct and indirect.
- Facilitate the expansion of existing industries in the town and support the development of new industries and employment opportunities.

New Ross Town

It is the objective of the Council to:

Objective ED63:

- Maximise the tourism potential of New Ross town as a key economic driver for the town and county.
- Maximise economic development opportunities that may arise due to the town's proximity to the Waterford MASP, and its connection to the Southern Region and the Atlantic Economic Corridor.
- Develop the role of New Ross Port and associated port related economic development subject to compliance with the Habitats Directive.
- Support the development of existing industries in the town including manufacturing, transport and logistics, maximising the opportunities offered by New Ross Port, the N25 By-pass and close proximity to Belview Port, Rosslare Europort and Dublin via the M11.
- Support the expansion of the Life Sciences industry in the town, and to support the development of new industries.
- Support the development of business hubs and flexible working spaces to provide start-up companies with office space and commuters the opportunity to work in an office environment close to their homes in the town.

6.7.3 Service and Strategic Settlements and Villages

Rural towns and villages are the local drivers for their surrounding areas. Their roles and scale vary across the region from large commuter-based settlements to towns with a strong service and employment function. The RSES emphasises the importance of networks between towns and villages including cross-boundary connections. These settlements are a focus of local services and can play an important role in the provision of local employment opportunities. Such employment can offer an alternative to persons commuting to large towns. The provision of other commercial or industrial employment generating uses in these settlements also has an invigorating effect on these settlements by providing day time trade and activity. These towns and villages can play an important role for their rural hinterland with local professional services, childcare, post office, retail and, in some cases, banks and

other lending institutions. Such development, which provides both local opportunities and at the same time provides services which are required by the rural community, will be encouraged.

The local authorities' Digital Strategy are critical in promoting and guiding on the new economic opportunities arising from digital connectivity and indigenous innovation and enterprise. This should complement the more traditional natural and resource assets (e.g. food, energy, tourism) underpinned by the quality of the offering.

Service and Strategic Settlements and Villages Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED64

To facilitate commercial development, including office, industrial and commercial development, at a scale appropriate to the nature and scale of the settlement.

Objective ED65

To ensure that commercial development takes places in a sequential manner, with development such as local services, shops and professional services located in close proximity to the centre of the settlement. Where industrial or business park development is being considered, the location selected should minimise impacts on the public realm but should adjoin the settlement.

Objective ED66

To facilitate the extension of an existing commercial development facility within a town or village provided the resultant scale and form of the enterprise is compatible with the character and scale of the area and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED67

To facilitate the conversion of existing buildings, including residences where appropriate for employment generating uses, subject to Chapter 4 Sustainable Housing and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED68

To ensure that new development is appropriately designed, adds positively to the public realm of the settlement, is connected by footpaths and lighting and does not negatively impact on residential amenities.

Objective ED69

To support the strengthening of the viability of Service and Strategic settlements and villages including the protection of essential commercial rural services.

Objective ED70

To seek investment and initiatives that deliver smart technologies, revitalisation of mixed-use town and village centre streets, and pilot initiatives for regional good practice in renewal and re-use of buildings, in particular, for appropriate commercial developments.

Objective ED71

To seek investment, the timely delivery and the sustainable delivery of holistic infrastructures in towns and villages to support their service role, in particular, along the region's tourism corridors, greenways and blueways.

6.7.4 The Blue Economy

The planning of the country's marine area is currently undergoing an ambitious programme of reform, with an impending new regime for the management of development and activities in Ireland's Marine Area (See Section 12.3 in Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning).

The National Marine Planning Framework (NMPF) promotes the sustainable development of a thriving marine economy and the development of vibrant, accessible and sustainable rural coastal and island communities while realising the potential of marine resources in a fair, balanced and transparent manner. The Framework focuses on the development of key marine assets including aquaculture and fisheries, energy, marine aggregates and mining, ports, harbours and shipping and tourism.

The RSES recognises that as an island we are dependent on our seas for trade, fishing, energy and tourism, and it supports the development of the marine resources and the Blue economy, while conserving biodiversity and ecosystem health.

The sea has, and will continue to be, a very important economic asset for our county. It provides employment to many people in coastal areas making a valuable economic contribution to local communities in the county. Dominant marine economic activities in County Wexford include ports, harbours and shipping, seafood and fisheries and tourism.

The Wexford coastline is 275km long and presents significant opportunities in terms of marine related development, continuing in the traditional sectors while exploring opportunities offered by off-shore energy production and marine biotechnology.

The opportunities offered by energy production are discussed further in Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning and Volume 10 Energy Strategy. The tourism opportunities are discussed in both Chapter 7 Tourism Development and Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning.

Ports, Harbours and Shipping

Rosslare Europort is a major port in the south-east of Ireland, located on the N25 and connecting with the N11 outside Wexford Town. The port, the State's second largest in terms of passengers, is a hub for all the major Roll on Roll Off (RORO) passenger and freight services and provides a gateway from Britain and continental Europe. The Port is operated by Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail).

Two separate railway lines run from the harbour - north to Dublin and west to Waterford. The Waterford railway was closed in September 2010 but the line is being retained to enable services to resume when circumstances demand. These lines offer a significant opportunity to move to Lift On Lift Off (LOLO) rail freight - a measure which could pay significant dividends in the reduction of GHG production associated with transport.

The RSES identifies Rosslare Europort as a Strategic Economic Location, and advocates for its elevation to Tier 1 Port Status. The port is now located on the Eastern Economic Corridor which provides significant economic development opportunities to expand the port's function and to support the development of other towns in the county along the Corridor.

The Europort provides opportunities for development at the harbour itself and also export related development throughout the county and South East. It has become apparent that Dublin Port's development is physically limited by the city and bay but these constraints do not exist in Wexford. The port has potential to relieve pressure on Dublin and provide a viable alternative. Existing development in the area includes motor and transport related industries, as well as tourism related services and facilities. Specific objectives relating to economic development of Rosslare Europort and port-related developments is discussed in Volume 3 Settlements Plan which includes land use zoning for Rosslare Harbour.

New Ross Port is Ireland's only inland port located approximately 32km from the sea on the River Barrow. The port specialises in handling dry and liquid bulk. The Council recognises the considerable potential that exists to develop existing commercial ports in terms of value-added shore based economic activity. This would contribute substantially to the economic development of the region.

Aquaculture and Fisheries

The Council aims to maximise the long term contribution of the sea-fishing sector and inland fisheries to the county's economy and to the maintenance of the social fabric of rural and coastal communities. Aquaculture activity is carried out in Wexford Harbour and Bannow Bay. Most aquaculture activity in Bannow Bay involves intertidal oyster cultivation, in addition to some mussel cultivation.

Growth opportunity in the seafood sector lies in developing greater processing scale so as to capitalise on the supply of raw material. The sector has significant potential for sustainable growth in terms of value-added product in the areas of food ingredients, health and sport nutrition markets.

The marine sector presents many opportunities for new development which can be located in rural villages and towns. Kilmore Quay has established itself as a successful maritime village and is home to Sofrimar, Atlantis and Errigal Bay, successful indigenous seafood companies.

Marine Aggregates and Mining

Marine aggregate are sedimentary sand or gravel materials located on the seabed. Extraction of marine aggregates typically involves dredging of the deposit to remove it from the seabed. Sands and gravels sourced from the seabed may be used in the construction of infrastructure such as buildings, roads and bridges. In line with the NMPF, the Council will ensure that mineral exploitation is required to be carried out to the highest environmental standards.

Blue Economy Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED72

To support the sustainable growth and development of the marine sector and marine economy through the implementation of the National Marine Planning Framework and by facilitating marine related development at appropriate locations

in the towns, villages, ports and harbours of the county subject to compliance with relevant Directives, the relevant objectives in this Plan including Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Chapter 8 Transportation Strategy, Chapter 9 Infrastructure Strategy, Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning, and normal planning and environmental criteria. Marine development in rural areas will be considered in accordance with the section of this chapter on Rural Economy.

Objective ED73

To support the development of new coalitions amongst productive sector enterprises, coastal communities and public agencies to support the sustainable development of the marine resource and the marine economy. Any supports arising, which result in further expansion of or new enterprise, will be subject to the outcomes of the required appraisal, planning and environmental assessment process.

Objective ED74

To strengthen and develop the strategic international, national and regional economic role of Rosslare Europort and to support the achievement of Ports of National Significance Tier 1 Status for Rosslare Europort.

Objective ED75

To protect the marine related functions of ports in the county including landside accessibility to ensure the future role of ports as strategic marine assets is protected from inappropriate uses.

Objective ED76

To support the export, fisheries, marine tourism and marine economy potential of ports and harbours in the county. All development proposals will be subject to environmental assessment, implementation of mitigation measures outlined in applicable SEAs and AAs and feasibility studies to establish that any expansions can be achieved without adverse effects on any European sites and the carrying capacity of the receiving environment of the ports.

Objective ED77

To support the role of ports, where appropriate, in facilitating the sustainable development and operation of off-shore renewable energy development, and to support sustainable and enabling infrastructure development to harness marine wealth including grid, pier and port facilities to support renewable energy and export potential.

Objective ED78

To ensure that any economic activity which utilises the marine resource shall have regard to compliance with the Marine Strategy Framework Directive which requires achieving and maintaining 'Good' Environmental Status of coastal and marine waters.

Objective ED79

To ensure that adequate and appropriate land is zoned in Rosslare Harbour and New Ross to facilitate a variety of scales of economic development and have regard to the land extensive nature of uses such as distribution, logistics and other related sectors in Rosslare Harbour and New Ross.

Objective ED80

To provide, or facilitate, the provision of appropriate infrastructure to ensure that economic potential arising from Rosslare Europort and New Ross Port for the region can be realised.

Objective ED81

To facilitate the sustainable development of the fisheries and aquaculture and support its diversification at appropriate locations having regard to best environmental practice in order to maximise its contribution to employment and the economic well-being of rural coastal communities.

Objective ED82

To facilitate and support the development of facilities for the catching and processing of fish at existing ports and harbours, subject to the protection of the environment and natural heritage and biodiversity.

Objective ED83

To ensure that adequate measures are taken to protect designated shell fish areas as an important economic and employment sector.

Objective ED84

To ensure that the highest environmental standards and controls are maintained in dealing with proposals relating to the extraction of marine aggregates and the mining sector and protects the amenities of local communities.

6.7.5 The Green Economy

The green economy encapsulates a wide range of economic activity from increasing renewable energy delivery to more energy efficient buildings to driving the bio-economy. Globally, it is a sector in transition with strong drivers for growth such as climate change targets, rising energy costs and more stringent environmental regulations and standards.

The transition to a low carbon economy offers many opportunities to develop economic activity in this area, such as the development of green technologies, sustainable construction and renewable energy developments, and the county has a number of enterprise strengths to ensure that it is well-placed to capture job opportunities in this area.

County Wexford is becoming a leader in the area of sustainable construction, facilitated by the NZEB training centre in Enniscorthy Town. There are opportunities to expand this sector to provide quality jobs and to develop synergies with third level institutions and research partners, providing quality jobs.

The strong agri-food industry in the county also offers opportunities to develop in partnerships with research centres such as the EPA and Teagasc in Johnstown Castle.

Renewable energy opportunities are explored in the Energy Strategy in Volume 10.

Green Economy Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED85

To develop the county as a leading innovator in the green economy in areas such as sustainable agriculture, sustainable construction, the production of renewable energy and the bio-economy, and to support development of enterprises and technologies that employ green technologies and support a low carbon economy.

Objective ED86

To support the development and expansion of the Sustainable Construction campus in Enniscorthy Town.

Objective ED87

To develop social enterprises and the circular economy within local communities to benefit environmental protection, employment generation and community development.

Objective ED88

To support the National Policy Statement on Bio-economy (2018), subject to the implementation of mitigation measures outlined in the SEA and AA undertaken where necessary and the exploration of opportunities in the circular resource-efficient economy including undertaking a bio-economy feasibility study for the Region to identify areas of potential growth (including opportunities presented in the EU Bio-economy Strategy updated in 2018 for urban bio-economies and piloting circular bio economy cities) to inform investment in line with the national transition objective to a low carbon climate resilient and circular economy.

6.7.6 Rural Economy

The Government's Charter for Rural Ireland (2016) states that frameworks will be put in place "To support enterprise creation and development, maintain and restore the rural cultural heritage, support and protect existing towns and settlements, facilitate safe and secure rural communities and foster an increased quality of life for all rural dwellers".

Rural areas are facing challenges which vary from place to place but include urban generated pressures, declining and ageing population, difficulties in accessing sustainable employment opportunities, access to infrastructure and demands from new land uses including renewable energy. Realising our Rural Potential: The Action Plan for Rural Development (Department of Arts, Heritage, Regional, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs, 2017) recognises that the changing nature of rural areas means that rural economic development is not amenable to single sector strategies but requires new integrated approaches to economic development.

Rural economic development incorporates a broad range of sectors and land uses including agriculture, forestry, energy production, extractive industry and maritime activities. There are also areas of economic activity which are dependent on rural resources but which are not necessarily best located in our rural areas – such as industrial scale agrifood. Wexford, known as the 'Model County' based on its model agricultural practices, has the potential to become a leader in agricultural and rural related development.

As outlined in Objective ED45 and Objective ED49 it is the Council's policy to direct commercial development to the settlements identified in the Settlement Hierarchy. Exceptions to these objectives will be permitted in accordance with those outlined in this chapter, Chapter 7 Tourism Development, Chapter 12 Coastal Zone Management and Marine Spatial Planning, Chapter 14 Recreation and Open Space Strategy, Volume 8 Retail Strategy and Volume 10 Energy Strategy. Developments referred to in Objectives ED89 to ED98 must comply with the location specific objectives of the Plan.

Rural Economy Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED89

To support the Action Plan for Rural Development led by the Department of Rural and Community Development and to support the development of priority areas under the Rural Development Programme 2014-2020 led by the Department of Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

Objective ED90

To enhance the competitiveness of our rural areas by supporting innovation in rural economic development and enterprise through the diversification of the rural economy into new sectors and services including ICT based industries and those addressing climate change and sustainability.

Objective ED91

To facilitate the development of the rural economy through supporting a sustainable and economically efficient agricultural and food sector, together with forestry, fishing and aquaculture, energy and extractive industries, the bio-economy and diversification into alternative on-farm and off-farm activities, while at the same time noting the importance of maintaining and protecting the natural landscape and built heritage which are vital to rural tourism.

Objective ED92

To leverage funding from sources such as the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund to help develop the rural economy in the county.

Objective ED93

To develop innovation hubs and centres of excellence (with particular opportunities for innovation in agri-food, agri-tech, marine research, creative industries, knowledge economy etc.) as local drivers for growth.

Objective ED94

To support innovation, enterprise start-ups and the competitiveness of our rural economy.

Objective ED95

To develop a diverse base of smart economic specialisms in our rural economy, including innovation and diversification in agriculture (agri-Tech, food and beverage), the marine (ports, fisheries and the wider blue economy potential), forestry, peatlands, renewable energy, tourism (leverage the opportunities from the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands brands), social enterprise, circular economy, knowledge economy, global business services, fin-tech, specialised engineering, heritage, arts and culture, design and craft industries as dynamic divers for the rural economy.

Objective ED96

To support and facilitate the development of vibrant rural areas with a diverse rural economy and to ensure that economic development in rural areas protects the natural and built heritage and environment of the area.

Objective ED97

To ensure that all buildings are appropriately sited and sympathetic to their surroundings in terms of scale, design, materials and colour. The grouping of buildings will be encouraged in the interests of visual amenity. In general, the removal of hedgerows to accommodate agricultural buildings will generally not be permitted.

Objective ED98

To ensure all developments permitted in rural areas in accordance with Objective ED49, including agricultural, horticultural and rural diversification do not impact negatively on the quality of the environment or character of the rural area or rural settlement. Applications for all such developments will be required to submit details to demonstrate that the proposed development:

- Will not result in the contamination of potable water, surface or ground waters, or impact on natural or built heritage;
- Is appropriate in terms of scale, location, design and that the character of the farm or settlement is retained and enhanced where possible;
- When located on a farm, it is located within, or adjacent to, existing farm buildings, unless the applicant has clearly demonstrated that the building must be located elsewhere for essential operational or other reasons;
- Is appropriately sited so as to benefit from any screening provided by topography or existing landscaping and does not seriously impact on the visual amenity of the area;
- Will not result in an unacceptable loss of residential amenity by reason of noise, odour or pollution;
- Will not result in a traffic hazard,
- Will provide for adequate waste management; and
- Where possible will restore and/or enhance built and/or natural heritage.

The Council will monitor and report on the number, nature and impacts of applications for economic development granted in rural areas outside of settlements. Reporting will take place as part of the 2 year review of the County Development Plan and as part of SEA.

6.7.6.1 Agriculture Development

Agriculture includes horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing, dairy farming, the breeding and keeping of livestock (including any creature kept for the production of food, wool, skins or fur, or for the purpose of its use in the farming of land), the training of horses and the rearing of bloodstock, the use of the land as grazing land, meadow land, osier land, market gardens and nursery grounds. Agriculture is hugely important to the County's economy (see Figure 6.5).

Agricultural practices are continually changing and modernising. The increasing scale of farming, together with increasing use of chemicals, and new methods of production mean that there is pressure on the environment, in particular through soil

contamination, ground and surface water pollution⁸ and impacts on natural and built heritage. Agricultural methods also have the potential to both add to and mitigate climate change. The Council will facilitate and encourage best practice in terms of new agricultural development.

The traditional form of agricultural buildings, farm layouts and field patterns are a valuable part of the character of our rural areas and are worthy of protection. New farm buildings are generally large in size and can have the appearance of industrial buildings and as a result there is potential for negative visual impacts. While the Council acknowledges that new farm buildings must be functional and efficient, they will also be required to be sympathetic to their surroundings and should be sited and designed to assimilate with the rural landscape.

Agriculture Development Objectives

It is the objective of the Council;

Objective ED99

To facilitate the development of sustainable agricultural practices and facilities within the county, subject to complying with best practice guidance, normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards in Volume 2.

Objective ED100

To protect good quality agricultural lands from development which could be accommodated elsewhere and that would undermine the future agricultural productivity of the lands or irreversibly harm the commercial viability of existing or adjoining agricultural land.

Objective ED101

To facilitate the modernisation of agriculture and to encourage best practice in the design and construction of new agricultural buildings and installations to protect the environment, natural and built heritage and residential amenity. Planning

⁸ 'Ireland's Environment - An Assessment' (EPA, 2016) highlights that improvements in water quality will not be seen if agricultural pressures are not adequately managed. The on-going and planned expansion in the agricultural sector under Food Wise 2025 may threaten improvements in water quality, if not adequately managed. The challenge is to target management measures to prevent any increases in nitrate and phosphorus concentrations in waters.

applications for new agricultural structures must clearly outline the use of the structure (livestock / equine / pig / poultry / storage) subject to Objectives ED97 and ED98.

Objective ED102

To ensure agricultural waste is managed and disposed in a safe, efficient and sustainable manner having regard to the environment and in full compliance with the European Communities Good Agricultural Practice for the Protection of Waters Regulations (2014) and relevant best practice guidelines.

Objective ED103

Intensive agriculture units will only be considered where it is clearly demonstrated by the applicant to the Council that the proposed development will not give rise to negative impacts on animal welfare, the environment, natural or built heritage or residential amenity. The scale and intensity of operations, including the cumulative impact of similar type developments in close proximity, shall be clearly detailed in the application and shall inform the assessment. All applications for such development shall be required to demonstrate that the proposal complies with Objective ED97 and Objective ED98 and

- Is located more than 500 metres from any residential property not located on the holding, or at a greater distance if there is potential for significant impacts on residential amenity, particularly in terms of odour.
- An assessment and modelling of odour has taken place where required.

6.7.6.2 Rural Diversification including Agri-food

The diversification of the rural economy can both supplement existing rural incomes and add to the richness of the rural area. The Planning Authority recognises that a balance needs to be maintained between facilitating appropriate forms of rural development and protecting the rural environment. Farm based enterprise including agri-tourism proposals, open farms/pet farms and equestrian activities will be facilitated subject to environmental and development management standards. Agri-tourism proposals are dealt with under Chapter 7 Tourism Development.

Agri-food describes a wide variety of food production based on agricultural produce. The appropriate location for the processing of the raw material will generally depend on the scale of the facility and the source of the raw material. Small scale agri-food businesses, such as cheese production, have huge potential to provide value added income on existing farms. At the larger end of the spectrum are the industrial scale agri-food producers, such as Glanbia, which source food from a large area and these facilities are considered similar to any industrial type development and should be located in towns and villages. The many opportunities for growth are highlighted in Food Wise 2025.

There will be a general presumption against shops in rural areas outside of towns and villages. Exceptions are detailed in the Retail Strategy and may include small scale shops attached to a permitted tourist or recreational development or retail outlets associated with other rural activities where the retail aspect is secondary to the operation - shops selling agricultural produce, crafts, farm enterprises that incorporate a tea room / craft shop. In all such cases, the retail element will only be acceptable provided it remains ancillary to, and fully incorporated within, the primary rural enterprise/farm practice. Retailing in rural areas is dealt with under the Retail Strategy in Volume 8.

Rural Diversification Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED104

To support the continued development of the agri-food industry as a lead sector in the green economy and a key growth sector for the county, through the implementation of Food Wise 2025, by facilitating food production and processing at appropriate locations and subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED105

To facilitate farm or rural resource related enterprises, including food production and processing on farm holdings, where the key resource is produced on the

farm (or other nearby rural resource) or a number of farms in the locality subject to Objectives ED97 and ED98 and normal planning and environment criteria. The scale of the facility should be appropriate to the rural character of the area and will be assessed having regard to a number of factors including source of material, scale of the operation, building size, number of employees and hours of operation, waste generation, traffic movements to and from the site, water and wastewater requirements, environmental impacts including but not limited to noise and odour, and impacts on natural and cultural/built heritage and water. The restoration of vernacular farm buildings to facilitate such enterprises will be encouraged.

Objective ED106

Where an extension to/intensification of an existing development referred to in Objective ED105 is proposed, it must remain of a scale which is appropriate to the rural area and it should not detract from the environment, rural character, natural or built heritage of the area. Development, from which the majority of the raw material is not from the farm (or other nearby rural resource) or within a reasonable distance thereof, will be required to locate on appropriately zoned lands in a town or village.

Objective ED107

Development of the type referred to in Objective ED105 and Objective ED106 shall be required to submit adequate information to demonstrate that the proposed development:

- i) Will make a positive contribution to the local rural economy;
- ii) Will not adversely affect the character and appearance of the landscape and where possible, involves the reuse of redundant or underused buildings that are of value to the rural landscape; and
- iii) The design, layout, materials and boundary treatments are of a high quality and appropriate for a rural setting.

Objective ED108

To permit a retail element as part of a rural diversification proposal in exceptional

circumstances, such as a small scale shop attached to a permitted tourist or recreational development or agri-food enterprise where the retail aspect is secondary to the operation - shops selling agricultural produce, crafts, farm enterprises. In all such cases, the retail element will only be acceptable provided it remains ancillary to and fully incorporated within the primary rural enterprise / farm practice and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria.

Objective ED109

To control advertising structures in rural areas and to prohibit signage where it would damage the rural character and scenic amenity of the area or result in a proliferation of unnecessary signage. Advertising signage in rural areas shall be limited to official directional signage outside the village only. This shall be of a scale and size appropriate to the location and shall not be unduly obtrusive and should not give rise to a traffic hazard. Plastic and neon signs shall not be permitted in rural areas.

6.7.6.3 Horticulture

Horticulture includes the production of fruit and vegetables, in addition to amenity products such as Christmas trees, nursery stock and cut foliage. The importance of horticulture to Wexford's rural economy is recognised and the potential for further growth and development of this sector will be facilitated in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the County.

Horticulture Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED110

To facilitate the establishment of new horticulture enterprises and the expansion of existing enterprises in rural areas subject to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED111

To ensure that applications for horticulture related development include adequate measures to mitigate impacts on soil water contamination, adopt sustainable practices in terms of soil and peat use and the use and management of pesticides and insecticides and adopt sustainable practices for the sustainable management of water from roofs by incorporating sustainable drainage systems and retention areas within the developments.

6.7.6.4 Forestry

Forestry plays an increasingly important role in terms of rural development as a form of farm diversification and as a source of rurally based employment. Food Wise 2025 acknowledges that the Irish sawmilling and board manufacturing sector is competitive internationally and further growth is anticipated. In addition to economic benefits, forests are natural resources that provide recreational and environmental opportunities. After wind energy, wood fuels are the largest contributor to renewable energy in Ireland. Sustainably managed forestry can also become an important tourism asset.

Forestry Objectives

It is the objective of the Council;

Objective ED112

To facilitate the sustainable development of forestry in the county provided that no significant adverse impacts are caused to natural waters, wildlife habitats and biodiversity and that it does not have a significant adverse visual impact on the local landscape. Forestry developments should include environmental enhancement and restoration where possible.

Objective ED113

To encourage the establishment of a self-sustaining forest industry based on a variety

of species and a wide range of post-felling services in proximity to large forested areas which are used for source material, subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED114

To facilitate the establishment of primary, secondary and tertiary forest based processing industries at appropriate locations subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED115

To ensure that existing native woodlands are protected and enhanced and, where appropriate, encourage the conversion of coniferous forest to native woodlands with a focus on opportunities for habitat linkage and wider eco-services.

6.7.6.5 Aggregate Resources and Extractive Industry

Quarrying and mineral extraction is a valuable resource to the county in terms of construction, employment and revenue. Wexford sand is much sought after for equestrian and sporting facilities. However, these considerations must be balanced against the significant impacts quarrying can have in terms of noise, dust, vibration, visual intrusion, on ground and surface waters, traffic generation and on the county's natural and built heritage (including archaeological).

The Council will assess each planning application for quarrying activity on its merits having regard to its site specific environmental capacity, landscape, natural and built heritage, residential and visual amenity and available infrastructure, such as an adequate road network. There should be an emphasis on extraction in locations which avoid impacts rather than locations where significant mitigation and restoration is required.

The exploitation of these materials and minerals, together with the decommissioning and restoration of all sites, must be carefully managed in order to minimise the

potential impact on the environment and amenities of the area. Where the proposal would directly, or indirectly, affect areas which are identified as being of European or national ecological and geological importance, that is, SACs, cSACs, SPAs, NHAs, pNHAs and County Geological Sites (CGS), a strict precautionary approach will be taken. Extraction from beaches and river banks will generally not be permitted.

The Council's considerations on quarrying matters will have regard to 'Quarries and Ancillary Activities' Section 28 Guidelines issued in 2004. The detailed matters which will be taken into account in the assessment of planning applications for extractive and processing developments are set out in Volume 2 Development Management.

Aggregate Resources and Extractive Industry Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED116

To require extractive and processing industries to be appropriately sited, designed and managed to avoid significant adverse impacts on their surrounding environment, amenities, road/public safety, and built and natural heritage. The Council will have regard to 'Quarries and Ancillary Activities' (DEHLG, 2004) in its considerations on quarrying (as may be updated in the lifetime of this Plan).

Objective ED117

To prohibit extractive industry development where it has not been demonstrated that adverse effects on the environment, landscape, heritage and surrounding residential, recreation or tourist amenities will not be generated, even if significant aggregate resources are identified. A strict precautionary approach will be taken where designated sites, proposed designated sites or protected species such as Special Areas of Conservation, candidate Special Areas of Conservation, Special Protection Areas, National Heritage Areas, proposed National Heritage Areas or County Geological Sites may be affected.

Objective ED118

To ensure that all extractive industry development complies with the relevant objectives of this Plan, including those in Chapter 8 Transportation Strategy, Chapter 10 Environmental Management, Chapter 13 Heritage and Conservation and all relevant standards in Volume 2 Development Management Manual including, but not limited to, the specific standards for the extractive industry contained in Section 5.8 Aggregate Resources and the Extractive industry.

Objective ED119

To ensure that the road network to serve the extractive industry development is adequate in respect of its condition, width and horizontal and vertical alignment to carry the anticipated number and types of vehicles generated by the operation of the development without unduly impacting on the capacity or function of the road and / or effecting the safety of other road users including walkers and cyclists.

Objective ED120

To ensure that an effective buffer is provided for between proposed quarry operations and adjoining dwellings, landholdings, water courses, built and natural heritage (including archaeology), roads and other public infrastructure.

Objective ED121

To restrict the removal of material, sand and gravel from beaches and river banks.

6.7.6.6 Commercial Development in Rural Areas

This section deals specifically with commercial development in the open countryside which is not related to agriculture, rural resources, rural diversification or tourism. In exceptional circumstances, it may be necessary to consider proposals for major industrial development on rural or un-zoned land where the specific characteristics of the industry such as noise, odour, resource requirements or unique energy requirements make it unsuitable for a town or village or a location proximate to residential properties⁹.

⁹ Further details on the location of waste facilities are contained in Chapter 9 Infrastructure Strategy.

There are also limited circumstances where it may be necessary to consider proposals for economic development on lands not zoned for economic development based on their unique location requirements such as power supply or exceptional extensive land requirements which would not be an appropriate or efficient use of serviced zoned land. There are a number of brownfield sites in rural areas where the use has ceased. The re-use of brownfield sites is sustainable where it can utilise existing infrastructure. However, it is not appropriate where a rural related use is replaced with a use that would be more appropriately located on serviced land such as businesses which are customer or employee intensive or where the new development is replacing an existing non-rural related use and the new use would result in an intensification of this use.

In both such cases, the Council will require an evidence based report justifying the proposed location and demonstrating why the proposal cannot be located on zoned land in a town or village and that it will not be likely to have an unacceptable impact on the rural area in which it is located.

In recognising the importance of entrepreneurial spirit in setting up small businesses, the Council will permit the development of small workshops within the curtilage of a dwelling subject to the normal planning criteria and assessment of impacts on neighbouring properties. These units will be linked to the occupier of the dwelling and accessed through the same vehicular access to the dwelling. Such developments will be considered as commercial properties and subject to additional controls.

Commercial Development in Rural Areas Objectives

It is the objective of the Council;

Objective ED122

To consider proposals for major commercial development in rural areas in exceptional circumstances where:

- i. The specific characteristics of the proposed development such as noise, odour, resource requirements or unique energy requirements makes it unsuitable for a town or village location or a location proximate to residential properties: and

- ii. Where relevant, it is a development necessary to meet national or regional waste management or climate change objectives and targets.

The development will only be considered where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the requirements of Objective ED124 have been complied with and the resultant assessment by the Planning Authority has concluded that the location is appropriate and the development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED123

To consider proposals for economic development with unique location requirements in rural areas in exceptional circumstances and where the applicant has clearly demonstrated that the proposal meets the following criteria:

- i. The development is of regional, and/or national, economic significance, is a development of very significant economic investment and a form that is specialist in nature;
- ii. The development has specific location requirements in terms of access to the grid network and/or ready access to fibre infrastructure connections; and
- iii. The direct employment relative to site area is not high and therefore the use would not represent an efficient use of zoned serviced land.

The development will only be considered where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the requirements of Objective ED124 have been complied with and the resultant assessment by the Planning Authority has concluded that the location is appropriate and that the development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Objective ED124

To require planning applications for development proposals referred to in Objective ED122 and Objective ED123 to be accompanied by a detailed evidence based report which:

- i. Demonstrates compliance with the criteria in either Objective ED122 or Objective ED123 respectively;

- ii. Contains an assessment of zoned lands in the county and a justification as to why those lands are not suitable for the proposed development;
- iii. Identifies and assesses impacts on all sensitive receptors including residences, natural and built heritage, landscape, rural character and shall also examine the impact of the proposal on other rural related and rural dependant economic activities;
- iv. Demonstrates that the proposed development will not have a negative impact on these receptors; and
- v. Contains a Traffic and Transport Assessment/Road Safety Audit/Travel Plan to address the issue of accessibility by various modes of transport and demonstrate that the road infrastructure has capacity to cater for the proposed development. Developer funded infrastructural improvements will be conditioned, where deemed necessary.

Objective ED125

To consider the development of a replacement commercial use on a brownfield site in a rural area where an existing use has ceased and subject to compliance with Objective ED124 (iii), (iv) and (v). In general, the Planning Authority will not consider development which is people intensive (either employee or customer), the subdivision of the property or an increase in the intensity of activity on the site. The applicant will also be required to submit proposals to ensure that the proposal will have a positive impact on the visual character of the area.

Objective ED126

To consider the extension of an established commercial enterprise in the open countryside provided the resultant scale and form of the enterprise is compatible with the character and scale of the area and subject to compliance with the other relevant objectives of this Plan, compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2. The Planning Authority will not permit an extension or intensification of the use where it would render the scale of the enterprise no longer appropriate in a rural area. The scale of the enterprise/use will be assessed having regard to a number of factors including impacts on the character of the rural area and impacts arising for residents

and other rural related activities from traffic movements to and from the site, water and wastewater requirements and emissions including noise and odour.

Objective ED127

To facilitate new development and/or the conversion of part of a dwelling to an appropriate home-based economic activity in rural areas, where the dwelling remains as the main residence of the practitioner, and the economic use is clearly ancillary to the residential use and subject to compliance with normal planning and environmental criteria and the development management standards contained in Volume 2.

Objective ED128

To facilitate the development of small workshops within the curtilage of a dwelling to facilitate the setting up of a small business subject to the criteria set out Objective ED98. The Council will monitor and report on the number and nature of such applications granted.

6.7.6.7 Equine Industry

There is a very rich history of breeding and racing horses in Wexford. There are a considerable number of people employed both directly and indirectly in the equine industry which is an important economic contributor in County Wexford. The Breeding and Racing industry supports a diverse workforce encompassing the core industry, directly related industries such as vets and farriers and secondary employment.

There is a racecourse in Wexford Town and various point-to-point venues throughout the county. There are also many equestrian schools and facilities located throughout the county for related leisure and sporting activities.

Equine Industry Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED129

To support and promote the equine industry in the county as an economic and employment provider.

Objective ED130

To support the racecourse and associated facilities at Bettyville, Wexford Town and other racing events throughout the county to ensure that they remain viable for long-term development for employment and economic activity.

6.7.6.8 Creative Industries

The Council will support the development of the creative media industry to capitalise on the economic, cultural and artistic potential of this sector in County Wexford. This will include supporting the continued development of the county as a location for the film industry and facilitating the creation of new film studios to maximise the benefits of the county's location and the existing creative industry in the region.

Creative Industries Objectives

It is the objective of the Council:

Objective ED131

To facilitate the development of film studios and media production facilities within the county.

Objective ED132

To facilitate and support the film industry in the county for film locations, including the erection of temporary structures and services.