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WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL  
CUSTOMER SERVICE

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Time Received 13.38

### Individual Submission / Objection

#### Proposed Wicklow Greenway – Wicklow County Council (Part 8)

Date 05<sup>th</sup> February 2026

#### 1. Nature of Submission

I am a local resident in the Wicklow area and I wish to make a formal submission/objection to the recently proposed Wicklow Greenway scheme currently being advanced by Wicklow County Council.

My concerns relate to the likely environmental, landscape and flood-risk impacts of the proposal, and to the fact that there are reasonable alternatives available which would deliver public benefit with materially less ecological disturbance.

#### 2. Impact on Mature Trees, Hedgerows and Biodiversity

My primary concern is that the proposed greenway appears likely to require the removal and/or significant pruning of long-standing mature trees and established hedgerows. These features are a critical part of the local ecological network, providing habitat, shelter and food sources for birds, bats, pollinators and other wildlife.

The loss or fragmentation of these habitats would diminish biodiversity and undermine the integrity of the landscape. I respectfully request that the Council demonstrate, with clear drawings and an independent ecological assessment, exactly which trees/hedgerows would be affected, the level of intervention proposed, and how biodiversity loss would be avoided in the first instance (rather than 'mitigated' after the fact).

#### 3. Landscape Character and Amenity

This area is widely recognised for its exceptional scenic quality and high amenity value. It is an area of outstanding natural beauty in the everyday sense of the term, and any development should be exceptionally sensitive to visual impact, landscape character and the experience of the place.

I am concerned that a widened, engineered route (and associated fencing, lighting, signage, surfacing and drainage works) could suburbanise a rural and coastal landscape that should be protected, not intensified.

#### **4. Floodplain Constraints and Suitability of the Route**

I am also concerned that parts of the proposed alignment are on, or adjacent to, a floodplain and are seasonally wet and flood-prone. In this context, placing new path infrastructure here may increase flood risk, require ongoing maintenance, and present foreseeable public safety issues during periods of heavy rain and high water.

Given increasing climate volatility, it is not clear that this represents the best or most resilient use of the land. The proposal should clearly demonstrate compliance with OPW flood-risk guidance, including a robust flood risk assessment and design that does not displace water, impede natural flood storage, or create new hazards.

#### **5. Availability of a Reasonable Alternative (Existing Coastal Walkway)**

There is a perfectly good existing walkway along the coast which already provides a safe and highly attractive route for walkers and visitors. In my view, the Council should prioritise maintaining and improving this existing coastal route (including targeted upgrades, signage, accessibility improvements and maintenance), rather than introducing a new corridor that risks avoidable ecological harm and flood-related constraints.

Where upgrades are required to meet greenway standards, these should be pursued in a manner that minimises habitat disturbance and avoids unnecessary tree removal.

#### **6. Information Gaps and Need for Robust Assessment**

Based on the information available to date, it is not clear that the proposal has provided sufficient detail or assessment to demonstrate that impacts on habitats, trees and landscape character can be avoided. I request that the Council provide:

- A clear schedule/map of all trees and hedgerows affected (with an arboricultural assessment);
- A comprehensive ecological impact assessment, including seasonal surveys where relevant;
- A robust flood risk assessment and climate-resilience strategy;
- A transparent alternatives assessment demonstrating why lower-impact routes (including the coastal walkway option) are not being prioritised.

#### **7. Conclusion and Request**

For the reasons set out above, I respectfully request that Wicklow County Council does not proceed with the greenway as currently proposed, and that the scheme be redesigned and/or re-routed to avoid the removal of mature trees, protect biodiversity, and avoid floodplain constraints.

I would welcome meaningful engagement on route selection and design options that achieve public access benefits while safeguarding the natural environment and landscape character that make Wicklow unique.

