
Fwd: Greystones to Wicklow Greenway Submission

From [REDACTED]
Date Tue 2/10/2026 4:50 PM
To Wicklow Greenway <wicklowgreenway@wicklowcoco.ie>

📎 1 attachment (240 KB)

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Dear Sir / Madam

Please find attached submission for the above greenway project

Regards

[REDACTED]

**To the Planning Authority
Wicklow County Council**

10th February 2026

Re: Objection to Proposed Greenway Route at Five Mile Point

I am writing to formally object to the proposed greenway route from Greystones to Wicklow, specifically the section that runs directly along the boundary of our family farm and home.

My family lives here. We farm this land every day. It is not simply a field on a map or a corridor between two towns — it is our home, and part of a landscape that has been carefully managed for years. The current preferred alignment causes us very real and ongoing anxiety because of the risks it poses to our land, our animals, our safety and our way of life.

Drainage and Flood Risk

The proposed route runs alongside and across a natural drainage channel that is essential to how this land functions. That drain is not incidental — it protects the land from flooding and ensures the ground remains workable.

Interfering with it through excavation, culverts, surfacing or construction brings a genuine risk of flooding, erosion and long-term damage. Once natural drainage patterns are disturbed, the consequences are rarely temporary. For a working farm, that kind of disruption is not minor — it directly affects productivity, soil health and financial viability.

It is deeply concerning that such a sensitive feature would even be considered for development.

Biodiversity and the Character of the Land

This is intact rural farmland with mature hedgerows, field margins and watercourses that support wildlife every day. We regularly see bats feeding along the hedgerows, birds nesting, pollinators working the field edges, and evidence of badgers and other wildlife moving through the land.

Those hedgerows are not decorative — they are living ecological corridors. Removing or cutting through them fragments habitats that have taken decades to establish. Replanting cannot replace that ecological value for generations.

There is also an adjacent SAC in this area. Developments in or near such designated sites should meet the highest environmental threshold. I do not believe it has been demonstrated beyond reasonable doubt that the integrity of the SAC and surrounding habitats will not be affected.

Fragmentation in a farmed landscape is a serious issue. Once these corridors are broken, they are not easily restored.

Livestock Welfare, Safety and Daily Farming Reality

A public greenway immediately beside livestock is not a minor inconvenience — it changes everything.

Increased footfall, cyclists, dogs, noise and unpredictable activity create stress for animals. This is especially concerning where young horses are present. Horses are flight animals. A sudden movement, a barking dog, or an unexpected noise can cause them to bolt. That risk is real and it carries consequences not only for the animals but for members of the public and for us as landowners.

The removal of mature hedgerow screening would increase exposure and make that situation worse.

There is also the issue of litter. Anyone who farms knows the danger plastic poses to livestock. Even small amounts of foreign material caught in long grass or haylage can be fatal if ingested. The proposed route runs along land used for fodder production. That is not a theoretical concern — it is a daily risk.

The liability and biosecurity implications of having a public access route directly along an active farm boundary cannot be overstated.

Littering, Trespass and Anti-Social Behaviour

Experience from other greenways in Ireland shows that littering, trespass and vandalism are not rare occurrences. Fencing and gates are damaged. Waste accumulates. People wander off designated paths.

When that happens, it is the adjoining landowner who lives with the consequences.

The proposed inland routing, with access from public transport and limited natural oversight, raises legitimate concerns about anti-social behaviour. While greenways are promoted as family amenities, the reality in secluded sections can be very different, particularly outside peak hours.

There is no clear evidence of a permanently funded and enforceable management plan that would protect residents and landowners from these impacts.

Traffic and Rural Road Safety

The roads serving this stretch between Greystones and Wicklow Town are narrow, lightly constructed rural roads, used by agricultural machinery and local residents.

Five Mile Point in particular is a single-lane road with extremely limited parking. There has been no detailed, binding traffic management plan addressing parking, junction safety, farm access, or guaranteed emergency vehicle access.

During COVID, the influx of visitors to coastal areas caused serious congestion on this road, to the point where Gardaí had to intervene. That experience demonstrated how quickly rural infrastructure becomes overwhelmed.

Introducing substantial visitor traffic onto these roads would fundamentally and permanently alter their function, with clear safety implications for residents, pedestrians, farmers and emergency services.

Failure to Properly Examine Coastal Alternatives

We were originally led to believe that the preferred route would follow the coastline, where there is already an established walkway and publicly owned rail infrastructure. It is difficult to understand why a corridor that is already disturbed and publicly owned was not prioritised.

Iarnród Éireann is undertaking coastal protection works in the area. Integrating a greenway alongside those works would seem logical, sustainable and far less damaging to intact farmland.

Routing the greenway inland through private working farms instead represents an avoidable impact. It feels like a missed opportunity for integrated planning.

Climate and Sustainability

Constructing new infrastructure through sensitive farmland and drainage systems, when potentially less harmful alternatives exist, does not sit comfortably with climate and sustainability objectives.

The embodied carbon of construction, drainage alteration and long-term maintenance should be carefully weighed against route alternatives.

Lack of Engagement

Since my previous correspondence in May 2024, there has been no meaningful engagement or explanation as to how this preferred route was selected. It is unclear whether the IFA Code of Practice has been followed in full.

For landowners directly affected, the lack of transparency is deeply frustrating.

Conclusion

This proposal is not being considered from the perspective of a map or policy document alone. It affects a home, a family, a livelihood and a landscape that has been responsibly managed for years.

The current alignment:

- Risks permanent ecological damage and habitat fragmentation;
- Interferes with essential drainage systems;
- Creates serious livestock, liability and safety concerns;
- Introduces unacceptable traffic pressure onto narrow rural roads;
- Exposes a working family farm to littering, trespass and anti-social impacts;
- Fails to properly examine reasonable alternatives along existing public corridors.

For these reasons, I respectfully request that the proposed greenway route at Five Mile Point be refused in its current form and that meaningful consideration be given to alternative alignments that avoid working farmland, natural drainage systems and sensitive habitats.

This is not opposition to a greenway in principle. It is an objection to this route, in this place, with these consequences.

Yours sincerely,

A series of seven horizontal black bars of varying lengths, completely obscuring the signature and any text that might have been present below it.