

Greystones to Wicklow Greenway - Objection Submittal

From [redacted]
Date Tue 2/10/2026 5:12 PM
To Wicklow Greenway <wicklowgreenway@wicklowcoco.ie>

1 attachment (166 KB)

[redacted].pdf;

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Dear Sirs / Madam,

Please find attached my submission objecting to the above greenway preferred route.

Regards,

[redacted]

On May 7, 2024, at 4:08 PM, [redacted] wrote:

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find attached letter re The Proposed Wicklow Greenway route

Kind Regards,

[redacted]

<Wicklow Greenway Letter lk.pdf>

**To Senior Executive,
Transport & Infrastructure Delivery Department,
Wicklow County Council,
County Buildings,
Whitegates,
Wicklow Town**

Date 09th February 2026

Re: Objection to Proposed Greenway Route at Five Mile Point

I wish to make a formal submission objecting to the proposed preferred greenway route at Five Mile Point, specifically where the alignment runs along the boundary of my family farm.

My family and I reside at this location and actively farm these lands. The current preferred alignment raises serious concerns in relation to drainage, biodiversity, farm safety, road safety, environmental protection, and the failure to properly examine reasonable alternatives.

1. Drainage and Flood Risk

The proposed route runs over and adjacent to a natural drainage channel that forms an essential part of the land's drainage and flood management system. Interference with this feature through construction works, culverting, surfacing, or regrading presents a significant risk of:

- Obstruction and localised flooding
- Soil erosion and sedimentation
- Long-term degradation of agricultural land
- Deterioration of downstream water quality

Any alteration of natural drainage patterns in this location would be contrary to proper planning principles and the objectives of the EU Water Framework Directive.

2. Impact on Biodiversity and Ecological Connectivity

The proposed route passes through intact rural farmland and semi-natural habitats, including hedgerows, field margins, and watercourses that function as important ecological corridors.

These habitats support protected and priority species including bats, otters, badgers, birds, and pollinators. Hedgerows in particular act as nesting sites, bat commuting routes, and critical biodiversity corridors. Their removal or fragmentation would result in permanent ecological loss. Replanting cannot replicate the ecological value of mature hedgerows for decades.

Construction and operational impacts would include:

- Hedgerow removal and habitat fragmentation
- Increased disturbance from lighting, noise, and year-round human activity

- Disruption of nocturnal wildlife corridors
- Pressure on nearby designated sites, including the adjacent SAC

Under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive, the Planning Authority must be satisfied beyond reasonable scientific doubt that the integrity of the SAC will not be adversely affected. That standard has not been demonstrated

3. Livestock Welfare, Farm Safety and Liability

The proximity of a public greenway to active farmland raises serious concerns regarding:

- Stress and disturbance to livestock from noise, dogs and uncontrolled access
- Risk of livestock escape or injury
- Increased liability exposure for the landowner
- Biosecurity risks

This is of particular concern where young horses are present, as being flight animals, they may react unpredictably to sudden disturbance. The removal of mature hedgerow screening would further increase this risk.

In addition, litter presents a direct and serious threat to livestock. Plastic or foreign objects ingested locally in the field or through contaminated haylage can cause fatal obstructions. The proposed alignment runs along land used for haylage production.

4. Littering, Trespass and Anti-Social Behaviour

Experience from other Irish greenways demonstrates recurring issues including:

- Persistent littering and dumping
- Trespass onto adjoining farmland
- Vandalism of fencing and gates which are not maintained by local County Council.
- Loitering and anti-social behaviour in poorly monitored sections

Such impacts place an ongoing maintenance and security burden on adjoining landowners.

The proposed inland routing, with access via public transport and limited natural surveillance, increases these risks. There is no evidence of a robust, permanently funded management or enforcement plan.

5. Traffic Management and Rural Road Safety

The proposed greenway would rely on narrow local roads with limited visibility, soft verges, and frequent agricultural use.

There are only limited public roads accessing this stretch between Greystones and Wicklow Town. Five Mile Point is a single-lane access road with minimal parking capacity. No detailed or enforceable traffic management plan has been presented addressing the following:

- Adequate parking provision
- Road widening or visibility improvements at junctions.
- Protection of farm entrances and livestock crossings
- Emergency vehicle access 24/7

Experience from the Great Western Greenway, Royal Canal Greenway and South Kerry Greenway demonstrates that visitor numbers often exceed projections, leading to roadside parking, blocked gateways, congestion and safety risks.

Introducing substantial visitor traffic onto narrow constructed rural roads represents a fundamental and unsafe change in their function.

6. Failure to Properly Examine Reasonable Alternatives

It is notable that Iarnród Éireann is undertaking, or planning, coastal protection works along vulnerable rail corridors in the area. There is no evidence that meaningful consideration has been given to co-locating the greenway within or alongside this already disturbed and publicly owned corridor.

Routing the greenway along an existing rail or coastal protection corridor could:

- Avoid unnecessary impact on intact farmland
- Minimise habitat fragmentation
- Reduce traffic pressures on rural roads
- Limit exposure of private land to anti-social behaviour

The failure to adequately assess this reasonable alternative undermines the route selection process and appears inconsistent with best practice and the requirements of environmental assessment legislation.

7. Climate and Sustainability Concerns

Constructing a greenway through sensitive farmland and drainage systems, where less impactful alternatives may exist, contradicts stated environmental and climate objectives. The embodied carbon in construction materials, drainage works and long-term maintenance must be considered in the context of route selection.

8. Process and Engagement

Since initial consultation and my previous email dated 7th May 2024, there has been no meaningful engagement or clear explanation as to how this preferred route was selected. It is unclear whether the IFA Code of Practice for Greenway Development has been fully adhered to.

Landowners directly affected by the preferred route have not been provided with adequate transparency regarding alternatives assessment, environmental screening, or traffic modelling.

Conclusion

For the reasons outlined above, the proposed greenway route at Five Mile Point:

- Will result in significant and avoidable biodiversity loss and habitat fragmentation;
- Poses serious risks to drainage integrity and water management;
- Creates unacceptable liability and farm safety concerns;
- Introduces substantial traffic and road safety risks on this narrow rural road where I reside;
- Exposes our family farm to foreseeable littering, trespass and anti-social behaviour impacts;
- Failing to adequately assess reasonable alternative alignments along existing publicly owned corridors.
- Failing to determine the most economically advantageous option will result in excessive costs being imposed on a non-essential public infrastructure project.

Accordingly, I respectfully request that the proposed development be turned down in its current form and alternative routing options be fully and transparently examined which avoid natural drainage systems, sensitive habitats, and the crossing of working farms.

Yours sincerely,

A series of six horizontal black bars of varying lengths, used to redact the signature of the sender.