
Wicklow to Greystones Greenway

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Dear Councillors,

I am writing to highlight my concerns regarding the currently proposed inland route for the Greystones–Wicklow Greenway.

I strongly support the development of safe walking and cycling infrastructure. However, the proposed inland alignment appears, to me, to be insufficiently considered when compared with the existing coastal walking path already used by the public and where plans already exist to install protection works.

The inland route would require extensive fencing and physical barriers through private land. These would fragment habitats, restrict wildlife movement, and significantly alter the visual landscape for walkers and cyclists. Wildlife in this area is both diverse and sensitive, and even small environmental changes can have lasting effects. Local landowners and farmers have spent decades preserving this environment.

The EPA's "State of the Environment Report 2024" notes that Ireland's overall assessment for nature is "very poor," with continued declines in habitats and bird populations. I am concerned the proposed route may add to these pressures and would welcome clarification on any existing consultation with either the the EPA or indeed the NPWS.

Many members of the public appear unaware of the full visual and ecological impacts of the inland option. Some local residents from around Wicklow that I have spoken with assumed a coastal route would be the obvious option particularly as there are already informal coastal and quiet road connections between the towns.

A coastal alignment would offer a more direct, scenic, and publicly accessible route with clear recreational and tourism benefits. Coastal protection works, including rock-armour sea walls,

are already anticipated in the coming years to safeguard rail infrastructure and prevent flooding. Aligning the greenway with these unavoidable works could minimise overall disruption while delivering tangible public benefit.

A coastal route would also reduce the need for habitat-fragmenting fencing and, with appropriate seasonal wildlife protections, is likely to result in less long-term ecological disturbance than the inland alternative. As a relative of numerous local farmers I can tell you the serious and long lasting negative effect these latest developments are having on citizens who have worked their entire lives on this land, and indeed generations before them.

I also wish to note recent media reports that appear to justify the project on the basis of encouraging additional hotel development. This argument is unconvincing, considering the need for hotel accommodation in the area has existed for many years and is clearly not dependent on the greenway. Greystones is a hive of tourist activity no matter the time of year and has been for over a decade.

I respectfully ask the council to reconsider the routing of the greenway, or at minimum ensure that the full visual and ecological implications of the inland option are clearly communicated to the public before final decisions are made. I remain fully supportive of a greenway between Greystones and Wicklow, but I believe the current proposal has not received the level of examination and stakeholder engagement that this unique landscape deserves.

Thank you for your time.

Yours sincerely,


Newcastle Resident

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