

Wicklow to Greystones Greenway

From: [REDACTED]  
Date: Fri 1/30/2026 10:50 AM  
To: [REDACTED]; Wicklow Greenway <wicklowgreenway@wicklowcoco.ie>

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[REDACTED]

I met you at the Wicklow public consultation, where I requested access to further documentation prior to making my submission. I understand that a number of other attendees have made the same request.

It is essential that stakeholders, including affected landowners, have access to the information and analyses that informed the summary report presented during the consultation process.

I request that the following documents be made available:

- The Constraints Report
- The full Route Options Selection Report
- Any report relating to the selection of the Emerging Preferred Route
- Any environmental surveys carried out to date

In my view, these documents should have been available from the outset of the consultation period. Withholding such material from key stakeholders and the wider public significantly undermines the integrity of the consultation process.

I would appreciate it if these documents could be provided by close of business on Tuesday, 3 February, to allow sufficient time for review prior to submission.

Thank you in advance,

Kind regards,

[REDACTED]

Wicklow to Greystones Greenway Project  
Transportation and Infrastructure Delivery  
Wicklow County Council,  
Whitegates,  
Wicklow Town,  
A67 FW96

18th January 2026

**RE: SUBMISSION WITH REGARDS TO WICKLOW TO GREYSTONES GREENWAY**

To the committee,

Our family has farmed [REDACTED] for generations, and it remains a single, actively managed working farm. The holding lies adjacent to the coast and [REDACTED]. A large portion of the farm lies within the Murrrough Wetlands Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA). The Emerging Preferred Route proposed through our lands would cut directly across the middle of the farm, dividing it into two separate parcels and fundamentally damage the viability of the farm. We object to this route on environmental, agricultural, practical and public-interest grounds, particularly given the availability of a clear coastal alternative that avoids farm severance and consolidates infrastructure within an existing corridor.

We wish to make it clear at the outset that we are not opposed to the Greenway in principle. Our objection is to the proposed inland route. Our land includes the grassy strip between the railway and the beach. We recognise the public value of this coastal path and are open to discussing its improvement as part of a properly planned coastal Greenway, particularly if it is developed in conjunction with the much needed coastal protection.

We object to the proposed “field boundary” route as detailed in letter dated 5th January 2026 on the following grounds:

## 1. Environmental Impact

The proposed route has been selected to deliberately skirt the western boundary of the SPA and SAC, with the apparent intention of avoiding direct encroachment into designated land. While this may appear acceptable on a map, it fails to understand the ecological reality.

The farmland is not environmentally separate from the protected areas. It forms part of the same connected ecosystem of bogland, wet grassland, drainage channels and that wildlife moves between on a daily and seasonal basis. Placing the route just outside the mapped boundary of a protected site does not remove ecological impact.

The proposed route passes directly through areas of wet grassland that are known habitat for snipe and other many other ground-nesting waders associated with the SPA. These species are highly sensitive to repeated disturbance from paths, dogs and human presence.

The lands affected by the route also contain established otter runs along drains and wet field margins. Otters rely on continuous cover and undisturbed movement corridors between feeding and resting areas. A greenway would significantly reduce the permeability of the landscape for this protected species.

By introducing a continuous, linear corridor along the western edge of the SPA/SAC, the proposed route would effectively isolate the protected areas from the wider rural landscape. This creates a hard edge where there is currently a gradual ecological transition, reducing habitat connectivity and resilience.

The impact is cumulative. The railway already forms a transport corridor along the coast. Adding a second, parallel corridor inland narrows the remaining undisturbed space between the two, increasing fragmentation and limiting movement of birds and mammals between inland habitats and the coast.

The severance of the protected wetland from the wider rural landscape would be nothing short of an **environmental catastrophe** for the protected habitat.

## 2. Failure to Consolidate Infrastructure Within an Existing Corridor

A defining weakness of the proposed inland route is its failure to make use of an existing coastal infrastructure corridor. The railway line already forms a centuries-old linear corridor along this stretch of coast, accompanied by an informal pedestrian route that is used daily by the public.

Best practice in environmental planning is to consolidate new infrastructure alongside existing corridors where disturbance already exists, rather than introducing new features across open land. This approach minimises fragmentation, reduces cumulative impacts and avoids unnecessary land take.

Instead of following this principle, the proposed route creates a second, parallel corridor inland through farmland, resulting in duplication of infrastructure across the landscape.

The failure to consolidate infrastructure is particularly concerning given the planned coastal erosion and rail protection works under the East Coast Coastal and Rail Protection Programme. These works present an opportunity to deliver a single, integrated coastal corridor combining rail protection, coastal resilience and a Greenway. Advancing an inland route instead represents an enormous missed opportunity.

From both an environmental and land-use perspective, concentrating infrastructure within the existing coastal corridor would significantly reduce impacts on farmland, preserve ecological connectivity inland, and deliver a more coherent and sustainable outcome.

### 3. Loss of Agricultural Viability

The proposed route cuts through the middle of multiple working farms, dividing holdings into separate parcels and destroying their viability. This is not a peripheral impact at field boundaries but a structural intervention that fundamentally alters how farms operate.

These impacts are being imposed despite the existence of alternative route options that would avoid severing farms entirely. From a land-use and agricultural policy perspective, the unnecessary fragmentation of productive farmland represents a significant and unjustified harm.

### 4. Not in the Public Interest

The proposal results in two parallel routes serving the same purpose: an existing informal coastal path that is already used daily by the public, and a new, large-scale Greenway running inland through farmland. This duplication represents poor planning.

Public support for the Wicklow–Greystones Greenway was originally built on the clear and widely understood presupposition that the route would follow the coast. Early petitions, promotional material and public discussion framed the Greenway as a coastal route, running alongside the shoreline and railway. It is doubtful that the greenway would have received such support if the public were made aware at an early stage that it was not likely to run along the coast.

Public preference for a coastal route is further supported by a recent informal poll on the Wicklow Open Forum, in which 117 people (93%) of respondents stated that, given the choice, they would prefer to walk along the sea rather than along field boundaries. (Appendix 1) The proposed route gives users no access to the sea, the beach, and all the activities associated.

From a usability perspective, it is difficult to see how the proposed inland route would be attractive to most casual walkers. For Example: A return journey from Wicklow to Newcastle is approximately 22 km, equating to roughly four hours of walking. Despite this length, there are no toilets or facilities of any kind

along the route. There are also no public transport options to support a one-way journey. Crucially, there is only a single point of public access or egress along the route, at the public road near Five Mile Point, which severely limits flexibility and further reduces its practicality for everyday use.

Taken together, these factors point to a route that is misaligned with public behaviour, unlikely to achieve high levels of use, and poorly justified in terms of planning logic. A coastal route, by contrast, would build on existing use, align with public preference, and deliver a more coherent piece of infrastructure.

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In summary, the proposed inland alignment represents a fundamental failure of planning judgement. It would inflict severe and permanent environmental damage, sever productive farmland, and deliver a poor and impractical experience for users. It also fails to integrate with planned coastal protection and rail resilience works, missing a critical opportunity to deliver a single, coherent piece of infrastructure in the appropriate location. Public support for the Greenway was secured on the basis that it would follow the coast, and current public sentiment continues to strongly favour that outcome. Proceeding with an inland “field boundary” route in these circumstances is neither environmentally responsible, nor agriculturally sustainable, nor in the public interest. For these reasons, we strongly urge that the Emerging Preferred Route through [REDACTED] be abandoned.

We trust that you will take this submission seriously.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]  
[REDACTED]

APPENDIX 1.

*(Poll results as of 28th Jan 2026)*



**NEW Wicklow town open forum**

SeaSwim1855 · January 15 at 7:18 PM · 🌐



**Wicklow to Greystones Greenway. With the recently proposed inland route, I'm interested to know peoples views. If you had a choice would you rather walk/cycle along the coast or inland through fields?**



**Coastal Route along the sea**

**93%** >



**Inland route following field boundaries**

**7%** >



1

127 Votes 11 comments 3 shares

