



Greystones-Delgany & Kilcoole Local Area Plan Submission - Report

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Topic

Compact Growth - Housing - Population Growth

Submission

See file attached

Topic

Heritage - Biodiversity- Green infrastructure- Climate Action- Energy

Submission

See file attached

Topic

Other topics for you to have your say on! - Environmental Assessment - Plan Implementation -Plan Delivery

Submission

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File

MK Submission Kilcoole Greystones Delgany Area Plan 140124.pdf, 1.19MB

Kilcoole, Greystones, Delgany area plan

greystones-delgany-kilcoole-lap-wicklow.hub.arcgis.com/pages/submission

Submission by Michael Kunz

Ballyphilip, Kilcoole, Co. Wicklow

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Overdevelopment as indicated on Map of Ireland at Night

Page 249 in Pat Liddy's book 'History of Ireland in Maps' (Appendix, Plate 1) showing Ireland lit up at night indicates what is wrong with Irish planning and development. The high concentration of development in Greater Dublin and along the east coast in a near-empty Ireland should be a cause of grave concern, but it does not appear to be so.

- a) Outward development has left the centre of Dublin city in decay.
- b) Outward development has over-run the traditional food production area which used to supply Dublin with fresh fruit, vegetables, dairy, eggs, bacon etc., which now must be imported at great expense. Since we cannot live on butter and beef, our staple food-growing skills have been lost.
- c) Ever-longer commute times are not socially, culturally or economically viable. Urban rural sprawl creates additional long-term needs.
- d) One can only conclude that planning and development in Ireland is speculator- and developer-led. Neither gives a hoot about the local environmental, historical, cultural or social impact that development imposes upon communities.
- e) It appears that we adhere to the worst aspects of raw American capitalism without ever being exposed to viable alternatives.

Coastal Erosion and Global Warming

Page 252 in Pat Liddy's book 'History of Ireland in Maps' (Appendix, Plate 2) shows Ireland under sustained threat from global warming and rising sea levels. This should be of special concern for those living on the Murrough section, from Ballygannon to Wicklow Town. The narrow blue strip indicates the actual Murrough marshlands which is under imminent threat of loss to rising sea levels.

It is said that up to seven miles of coastal Leinster has been lost to the sea since the last Ice Age, 10,000 BC. In my time [age 75] I have seen 30-50 metres of former gallops/upper beach maghara lost. Recently I found a car wreck deeply embedded in the shingle below Newcastle beach where we as youngsters used to race bangers in the 1960s.

Without the on-going protection of the railway, strong storm surges could easily overwhelm the sandspit and railway, as has happened on numerous occasions, e.g. 1927, 1932, 1968, 1974 and 1985.

If the railway is moved inland to service Newtownmountkennedy, Ashford and Rathnew, as is mooted, then the coastal strip from Kilcoole to Wicklow will surely be lost, abandoned as being unviable to protection from rising sea levels.

Rennicks-Seibulite 1990

In mid-1990, I, Michael Kunz, made the one and only appeal to An Bord Pleanala against the granting of planning permission by Wicklow County Council for the proposed Rennicks-Seibulite [toxic] factory to be located next to our family farm at Ballyphilip, Kilcoole.

Amongst the many alarming points of interest mentioned in the Environmental Impact Statement [EIS] were the following:

- a) That the air in and around Kilcoole would smell of Superglue.
- b) That due to the build-up of solvents on the Kilcoole marshes, the wildlife there could move down to Wicklow's Broadlough.
- c) That valuable crops grown close to the proposed factory would not be affected as they are grown under glass.
- d) That sheep grazing on nearby grasslands would not be too badly affected compared to cattle, as sheep have a shorter life span,
- e) The Office of Public Works [OPW] submitted that there were no significant places of historical interest in the Kilcoole area, and they consented to the proposed toxic factory.

- f) The OPW wildlife department agreed that the wildlife could relocate, and they consented to the proposed toxic factory.
- g) The Department of Fisheries saw no harm in the toxic run-off into local streams, which would have had a negative effect on fish life [nursery streams for trout, sea trout, eels, etc.]; or into the sea, in spite of Kilcoole beach being a national and international venue for sea angling. The Department also gave their consent.
- h) The Department of Transport were assured that the passage of toxic chemicals on the then narrow rural roads were of little concern, compared with the Ammonia trains from Arklow to Ballina. The Department also granted approval.
- i) The Department of Health declared that constant personal hygiene [washing with soap and water, and constant change of clothing] would minimise toxic contamination of workers on both the factory site, and of locals.
- j) Smoke from the proposed chimney stack would be scrubbed of toxins, and with constant wind-blow ever changing direction, contamination of crops, livestock and wildlife would be minimised.
- k) The Establishment collectively gave their approval. So much for people.

Naturally having read this alarming EIS which allowed degradation of all forms of life in and around Kilcoole, and north-eastern coastal Wicklow, I consulted with a number of locals and appealed to An Bord Pleanála.

Within a week of lodging that one and only appeal, a leading Fianna Fail TD from County Wicklow was at my door, offering bribes and inducements to me to withdraw my appeal. I refused.

Word soon got out of the attempted bribe in the nearby Newcastle pub, with the TD, myself and Rennicks executives in heated argument. The following evening a monster meeting was held in Byrne's pub in Kilcoole. The Kilcoole Concerned Group was formed to back my appeal.

It was disgraceful that the County Manager, Secretary and Executive, along with nearly all of Wicklow's elected TDs and County Councillors, supported that proposed toxic factory, which would have had a detrimental effect on the people of Kilcoole, on agriculture and on the environment. [Only County Councillor Johnny Fox supported the Concerned Group.]

Kilcoole Concerned Group had to raise substantial funds to retain environmental and planning experts to protect ourselves from the Establishment. Thankfully, the Kennealy family came to our aid and carried that burden.

Supporters of Fianna Fail and Fine Gael were openly racist towards me. A Garda tap was put on my phone to record the abuse. Institutionalised racism, discrimination, exclusion etc. hindered my applications for rural development funding. Judicial dispossession followed.

History and Archaeology

Due to the failure of the OPW and other State bodies to undertake a meaningful assessment of Kilcoole's history and archaeology, I am making my own submission. Many of the structures are visible on Google Earth, but authorities and developers appear to be blind to them.

- f) Stone-Age flints can be found in the fields around Ballygannon, Ballynerrin and Ballydonarea. These bring our history back to 5000 BC, i.e. 7,000 years.
- g) In the mid-1960s, two Stone-Age caves and a Bronze-Age barrow were bulldozed at Rock Valley, west of the Convent grounds, Kilcoole [5000-2000 BC] (Appendix, Plate 3).
- h) A Bronze-Age crannog exists in the bog of Glenroe farm. It was probably a berthing place for ancient trade boats (Appendix, Plates 3 & 4).
- i) The fortress rock of Kilcoole still has portions of remains of a large circular enclosure which enclosed approximately 150 acres (Appendix, Plate 5).
- j) Kilcoole/Dun Ardos was probably the location of the Epic of Da Derga's Hostel, given that many of the place names mentioned in it are in and around Kilcoole and north-east coastal Wicklow.
- k) There were three tidal lagoons giving sea access to the Kilcoole area:
 - Scotts of Ballygannon where an old harbour and boat house are still visible (Appendix, Plate 6).
 - Ballydonarea which has a Bronze-Age crannog at its northern section.
 - The Breaches estuary has tidal access to the north Murrough.

- l) Each point of tidal access to Kilcoole had its chapel:
- Ballynerrin at Scotts,
 - Cell Comgall 640 AD,
 - Kilfornock on the Leabeg river.
- m) These entry points linked up as the start of an ancient pilgrim, trade and slave route to Castle Kevin, and on to Glendalough and the Midlands.
- n) A castle was recorded at Kilcoole Rock in 1170 at the time of the Norman invasion. A castle was listed in 1603 in the Inventory for County Wicklow, and the ruins of a castle was mentioned in 1641 in the Battle of Kilcoole.
- o) Kilcoole is marked 'Ardroim' on German, French and Spanish Rutter maps/sea charts 1300-1600: they knew more about Wicklow than the Dublin government -- Wicklow being amongst the wild Irish and beyond the Pale. It appears to be like that still.
- p) Two areas of grey/white show up as places of interest:
 South-west of Scotts Harbout at Ballygannon.
 West of Ballydonarea silted up tidal lagoon.
 Were they Norse, Norman or other fortifications?
- q) Captain Hopton Scott on the ship 'Mary' ran aground at Cobblers Bulk entrance to a tidal lagoon, 1690. A troop carrier that survived a sea battle with the French at Beachy Head. Scott married Randelia O'Byrne, daughter of Theig. Survivors settled locally.
- r) The boathouse and harbour at Scotts were used by Revenue to collect and store valuable wreckage [tobacco, spices, rum, brandy etc.] from locals.
- s) Tidal lagoons silted up after the arrival of the railway in 1850. The landlords had forced the railway company to take the coastal route, thereby forcing the company to protect the railway and the landlords' lands from tidal surges.
- t) With the coming of the railway, the British Army leased salt marshes as summer grazing for horses. Large horse stables were built at Scotts and at Clonmannon. Horses were trained and tested on gallops from Scotts to the Breaches. Wagers were taken by locals. Similarly, at Broadlough.

- u) Sonas TB Sanatorium was a large timber structure on the left side of the Sea Road from 1895 to approximately 1910.
- v) The Marconi Brothers experimented with radio/telegraph at Greyfort, Kilcoole, over Bray Head, to Bray.
- w) Kilcoole Gun Running, 2 August 1914.
- x) Kilquade well disaster, Christmas 1932. Charley O'Leary was trapped and died amid great rescue attempts.
- y) RTE 'Glenroe' series ran from 1982 to 1994. Initially Bord Failte would not support local agri-tourism ventures because 'Glenroe' gave a poor image of rural Ireland.
- z) 1990 Rennicks-Seibulite toxic factory campaign.

Rapid urbanisation has overwhelmed rural villages such as Shankill and Kilcoole, who have lost their traditions, culture, history and identities to 'progress'. They have been blindsided by politicians and developers.

We look in horror at what has happened to Greystones, Delgany and Newtownmountkennedy, and await our upheaval and destruction with dread.

Sources

Book of Leinster, Greystones Library

History of Place Names of Co Wicklow by Liam Price [lived in Kilcoole]

History booklets by Prof Donal McCracken, South Africa [ex Kilcoole]

Appendix



Plate 1: Light pollution in Northwestern Europe.



Plate 2: Coastal erosion indicated in blue.

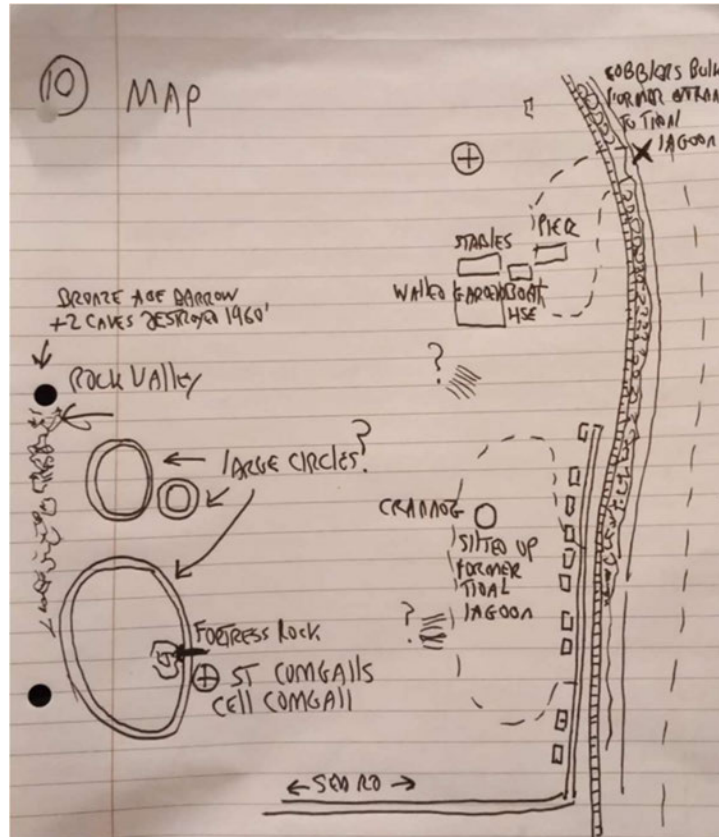


Plate 3: Hand drawn map showing historical point of interest in the vicinity of Kilcoole.

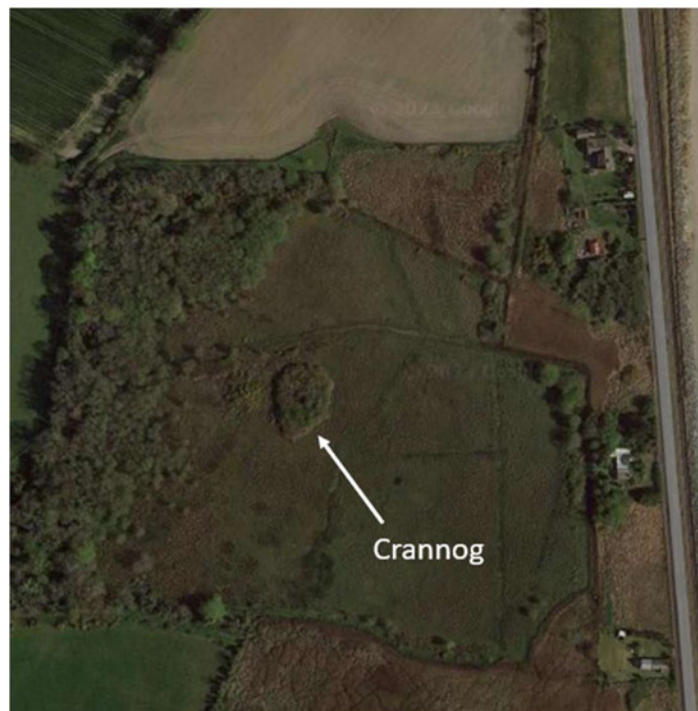


Plate 4: Bronze Age Crannog in the bog of Glenroe farm.

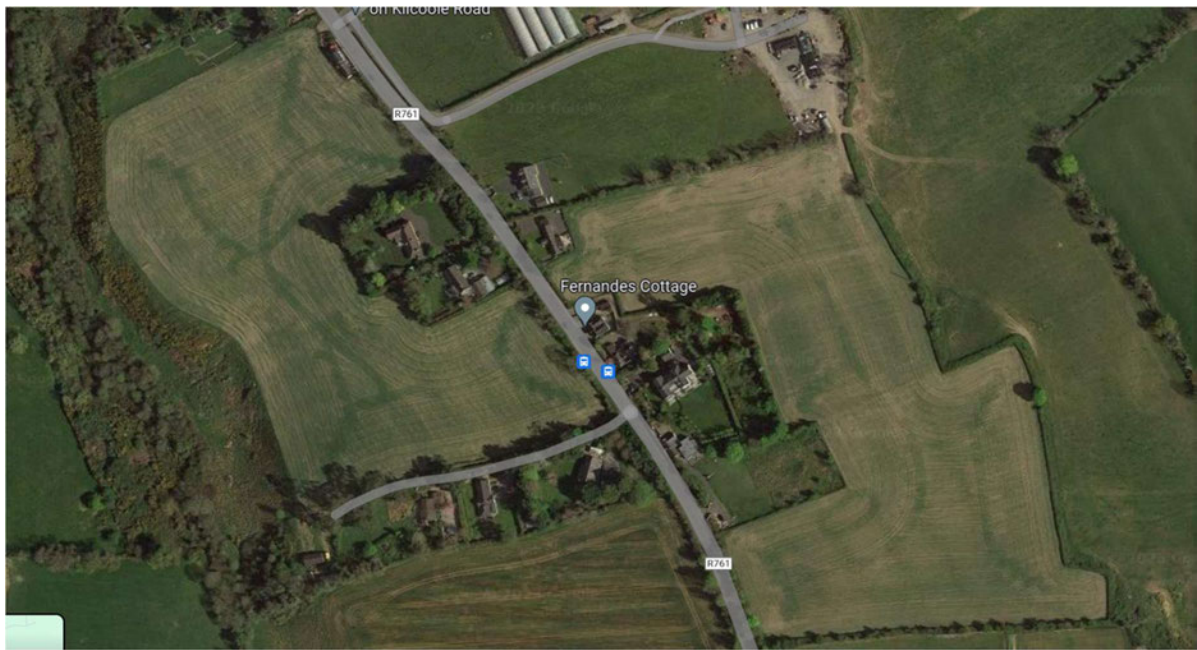


Plate 5: Circular Enclosures.



Plate 6: Scotts of Ballygannon.