



Proposed Variation No. 7 to the Wicklow County Development Plan Submission Report

Submission Details

Ref	VAR7-144132
Who Are You?	Private Individual
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Proposed Variation Parts

Topic	Part 1: Proposed Variation to town / settlement zoning maps and, where relevant, proposed new or amended site specific policy objectives.
Submission	1. Level 3: Greystones-Delgany

Write your observations here:

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a submission regarding the proposed open space strategy within the GSD 2 Concept Plan.

I welcome the inclusion of significant areas of open space, sports facilities, green links and natural areas within the scheme. However, I am concerned that the principal southern amenity park is too limited in extent relative to the scale of the proposed development and the existing and future population of Greystones.

While the concept plan identifies a substantial overall quantity of open space, much of this provision comprises sports facilities, ecological buffers, linear green corridors and fragmented parcels of land distributed throughout the development. These elements are important and contribute to the overall green infrastructure network. However, they do not provide the same recreational value as a large, contiguous and easily accessible public park.

The southern amenity area appears to be the principal opportunity within the scheme to create a true destination park. It has the potential to accommodate informal recreation, woodland walks, biodiversity enhancement, community activity, relaxation and health and wellbeing uses within a landscape setting distinct from surrounding residential development.

Based on a review of the concept plan, using the adjacent soccer pitches as a guide to scale, the southern amenity area appears to extend to approximately 10 hectares. While this would represent a valuable community asset, parks of this scale are generally more characteristic of neighbourhood or district-level facilities than the principal park serving a growing town the size of Greystones.

Recognised open-space guidance highlights the importance of larger, accessible green spaces. Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard recommends that communities should have access to at least one natural greenspace of 20 hectares within 2 kilometres of home. This benchmark reflects the value of larger parks in supporting walking, running, informal recreation, nature engagement and broader health and wellbeing objectives.

Similarly, the Fields in Trust Standards (2024), which have influenced open-space

planning standards for almost a century, emphasise the need for accessible, multifunctional green spaces capable of meeting the recreational needs of communities over the long term.

Although it may be argued that a larger network of open space is available across the wider GSD 2 lands, the practical recreational experience is different. Residents seeking longer walking routes, jogging circuits or general leisure activity will often be required to move through residential streets, around development parcels, between sports facilities or along connecting corridors. In effect, the overall open-space provision is fragmented.

A high-quality town park should function as a coherent recreational destination in its own right. The quality, continuity and usability of public open space are at least as important as the overall quantity provided.

Greystones has experienced substantial population growth over recent decades and is expected to continue growing. It is therefore important that the town secures a significant and enduring public park capable of serving future generations. A larger southern amenity park would provide greater flexibility for:

- Walking and leisure recreation;
- Informal open-air activity and play;
- Community events;
- Nature-based recreation;
- Biodiversity enhancement;
- Health and wellbeing activities including walking, jogging and running; and
- Future recreational needs that may emerge as the population continues to grow.

I therefore respectfully request that Wicklow County Council consider increasing the extent of the southern amenity park through a reduction in adjacent development lands and the incorporation of additional lands into the park area.

In my view, consideration should be given to increasing the park from its currently indicated area of approximately 10 hectares to at least 20-25 hectares. This would move the park closer to recognised benchmarks for significant natural green spaces and would create a more substantial destination amenity for Greystones.

Such an approach would deliver a stronger and more enduring public asset,

enhance the overall quality of the development, provide greater ecological and recreational benefits, and leave a lasting legacy for existing and future residents.

Thank you for considering this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Alan Moriarty

References

- Natural England, Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard (ANGSt): recommendation for access to a 20 ha natural greenspace within 2 km of home.
- Fields in Trust, Standards: Creating Great Spaces for All (2024).