

From:
Dermod Dwyer

To:
Wicklow County Council
Planning Section
County Buildings
Whitegates
Wicklow Town
A67 FW96

16th June 2025

By URGENT email – acknowledgment of receipt requested please.

RE: SUBMISSION TO THE GREYSTONES/DELGANY AND KILCOOLE LOCAL PLANNING FRAME WORK 2022 – 2028

Dear Sir/Madam,

This submission is made on my own behalf is a personal note to add to the submission of the Greystones Town Team (of which I am the former Chair) which outlines several priority areas with specific requests.

FOR CLARITY MY COMMENTS ARE ADDED IN BOLD.

1. Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk

It is noted that there are several references in the draft LPF to the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk. We would suggest that a Specific Local Object (SLO) to reopen, maintain, fund, enhance and protect the Bray Head to Greystones Cliff Walk is included in the LPF.

This facility is a key amenity for both residents and tourists. When open the Cliff Walk is a significant recreational and tourism asset, which brings positive economic impact to both Bray and Greystones and in fact the wider North Wicklow area. Cliff Walk

An open and well-maintained Cliff Walk is more than just a scenic route; it is vital to local businesses, a key recreational resource, and a source of deep community pride.

I WOULD DRAW YOUR ATTENTION TO THE RECENTLY PRESENTED INDEPENDENT ECONOMIC IMPACT STUDY BY JIM POWER. SPECIFICALLY, MR. POWER OUTLINED THE ESTIMATED ANNUAL AND CUMULATIVE LOSSES DUE TO THE CLOSURE. NAMELY, A CUMULATIVE LOSS TO THE IRISH ECONOMY OF OVER €70,000,000 OVER 4 YEARS; THAT EQUATES TO A DAILY LOSS OF €50,000 PER DAY FOR EVERY DAY THE CLIFF WALK REMAINS CLOSED. MR. POWERS ESTIMATES ARE BASED ON THE METHODOLOGY USED BY FAILTE IRLAND AND THE IRISH TOURISM CONFEDERATION. HE NOTED THE LOSS FROM JUST LOCAL USE IS €10,000 PER DAY.

2. Greystones to Wicklow Green Way (East Coast Greenway)

Again, it is suggested that the LPF includes a Specific Local Objective to providing a continuous, easily accessible greenway linking Greystones to Kilcoole and on to Wicklow Town. This supports the principle of healthy place making, active travel tourism and encourages walking and cycling.

We further comment and request;

Objective Request

- That the LPF commits to the delivery of the East Coast Greenway as a strategic, continuous, and accessible route linking Greystones and Wicklow Town, with strong connections to Kilcoole, Charlesland, and the wider regional network. The LPF should specifically support a route selection that avoids the Murrough Special Area of Conservation (SAC) and prioritises inland field boundary options, in line with recent planning precedents and environmental protection requirements.

Justification and Reference

- The East Coast Greenway committee, a joint initiative of Greystones Town Team and Wicklow Town Team, fully supports the proposed greenway being developed by Wicklow County Council to connect the two towns. This project is currently at Phase 2 (Options Selection), with WCC engineers examining potential routes and further public consultation scheduled for the second half of 2025.
- The LPF encourages “the development of a coastal route from Greystones to Wicklow Town as well as links between this potential route and Kilcoole and the R761” (Section B.4), supporting healthy placemaking, active travel, and sustainable tourism.
- Recent decisions by An Bord Pleanála, including the refusal of the Blessington Greenway, have highlighted the need to avoid routing greenways through or adjacent to European protected areas, such as Special Areas of Conservation (. The East Coast Greenway route selection is therefore considering both coastal and inland options, with a strong recommendation from GTT that the preferred route should avoid

- the Murrough SAC and instead focus on field boundary alignments to ensure compliance with national and EU environmental directives.
- This approach aligns with the LPF's commitment to environmental protection, sustainable development, and the delivery of strategic green infrastructure, while also supporting the objectives of the County Development Plan and the needs of local communities.
- The project is being advanced in partnership with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, with ongoing feasibility studies, public engagement, and environmental assessments to ensure the chosen route maximises community benefit and minimises ecological impact.

3. County Wicklow Blue Way

Further to items 1 and 2 above, we suggest that a Specific Local Objective be included in the LPF, to assess the impact on the LPF area of the Wicklow Coastal Blueway Project to identify potential coastal amenity enhancement to support funding opportunities.

4. Beach Amenity Enhancements

It is noted and welcomed that the Greystones South Beach area is designated for enhanced access and facilities. We request that similar upgrades be extended to include the North Beach, the Cove, and the Kilcoole beach. It is requested that these enhancements include fully accessible toilets, changing facilities, and showers, with direct disabled access to the waterline, and real-time noticeboards providing tide and weather data.

5. Cycling and Pedestrians Walkways

We would suggest that an integrated network of cycling tracks be included across the district. We suggest this should include a specific objective for a pedestrian walkway through Coolagad to Kindlestown Woods.

6. Wind Energy (Offshore and Onshore)

It is noted that the LPF supports and promotes renewable energy, and it is therefore requested that the LPF explicitly supports offshore development and the development of an onshore support hub in Greystones, possibly in the Harbour/Marina area. This should focus on job creation in services and facilities.

Greystones coastal location and the current marina infrastructure presents an opportunity for employment creation.

WHEREAS I AM A SUPPORTER OF SUNSTAINABLE AND RENEWABLE ENERGY, I, TOGETHER WITH MANY OTHERS ARE NOT CONVINCED BY THE ACCURACY OF PRESENTATIONS MADE BY CODLING OR DUBLIN ARRAY. IN THIS REGARD I UNDERSTAND THAT AN BORD PLEANALA ISSUED A 70 PAGE REPORT SEEKING FURTHER STUDIES AND CLARIFICATIONS.

7. Public Realm

We suggest/request that the LPF includes a programme for public improvements in the town centre, Greystones harbour area and as noted above, enhancement of key pedestrian cycling routes.

A town mobility plan is requested to be included as an objective to inform further public realm priorities and safe walking / cycle routes. Including the following:

- enhancement of existing pedestrian links from the town to the seafront; from Trafalgar Road, Bow Lane, South Beach access points from Mill Road should be specifically noted.
- pedestrian cohesion and dominance of the route from the South Beach carpark (potentially new Greystones – Wicklow Greenway)/ Dart carpark to the marina (Cliff / Walk)
- Identification of potential enhancement of new pedestrian links through back land developments to increase permeability.

It is acknowledged that the existing temporary public realm interventions during covid have improved the usability of Church Road which now requires upgrading, a specific objective should be included to construct a permanent design solution. SOME OF THESE INTERVENTIONS WERE PIECE MEAL DURING THE COVID CRISIS AND THEY HELPED AT THAT TIME. HOWEVER IT IS NOW WIDELY ACKNOWLEDGED THEY ARE POORLY DESIGNED AND NOW MAKE THE MAIN STREET LOOK SHABBY. COMPARE GREYSTONES TO MALAHIDE OR SIMILAR.

It is acknowledged that Opportunity sites (OP) identify several underutilised sites for potential development. There are many underutilised sites in the town which should be identified for example:

- The Railway Station carpark on Church Road (THIS IS CERTAINLY NOT AN UNDERUTILISED SITE. IT IS A VERY IMPORTANT SITE FOR VISITOR CAR PARKING, TEMPORARY CAMPER VAN TOILETS AND FOR ACCESS TO GREYSTONES RAILWAY STATION.0
- Lands adjacent Bow Lane

We request a land use survey to be included as a specific objective to identify underutilised sites to form part of this LAF.

The report *Greystones Public Realm 2020* highlighted the need for good quality public spaces and a lack of public green spaces. A specific objective should be included to identify potential public / green spaces within the town core. OUR 2020 PLAN WAS ADOPTED BY GMD AND WCC.

The above will promote healthy place making and encourage walking and cycling.

8. Economic Development/Job Creation

We suggest that the LPF includes a clear target for job creation in Greystones,

I NOTE THAT GREYSTONES HAS THE LOWEST PERCENTAGE OF PEOPLE EMPLOYED LOCALLY OF ANY TOWN OR SETTLEMENT IN WICKLOW. THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE AND REFLECTS VERY BADLY ON ALL STAKEHOLDERS.

Delgany and Kilcoole in order to increase the job ratio to above 75% by 2030. TO PROVIDE JOBS FOR THE THOUSANDS OF STUDENTS IN OUR SCHOOLS AND TO REVERSE COMMUTING FROM THE AREA – THIS NEEDS TO BE A TARGET OF AT LEAST A MULTIPLE OF 5 or MORE.

This can be achieved by supporting tourism, re-opening the Cliff Walk, providing a coastal greenway, encouraging the film industry and the provision of co-working hubs.

WE MUST NOT SHIRK FROM THE FACTS THAT THE 46-ACRE IDA LANDS HAVE FULL SHOVEL READY PLANNING PERMISSION FOR OVER 750,000 SQ FEET OF DEVELOPMENT – FOR THE GREYSTONES MEDIA CAMPUS. THIS LAND IS VALUED AT OVER €60,000,000 AND A FURTHER €24,000,000 OF IRISH STATE INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDS (ISIF) ARE ALSO INVESTED IN THIS SITE. THE JOBS PROMISE IS 700 JOBS DURING CONSTRUCTION AND 1,500 JOBS THEREAFTER. IT WOULD BE TOTALLY REMISS IF THE LOCAL AREA PLAN FAILS TO SUPPORT THIS PROJECT AND SPECIFICALLY LISTS THE JOBS ANNOUNCED. A RECENT INTERVIEW CONFIRMS HUGE DEMAND FOR THE FILM AND MEDIA INFRASTRUCTURE. (TO BE SENT TO FOLLOW)

We note and welcome the provision of a mixed-use zoning in the Woodlands area (THIS PROJECT TO INCLUDE MUCH NEEDED RESIDENTIAL AND A HOTEL IS STALLED FOR NO APPARENT REASON FOR ALMOST 3 YEARS. I ALSO NOTE THAT THE MUCH PROMISED PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE HAS STILL NOT BROKEN GROUND AFTER OVER 6 YEARS.) but would suggest that more employment zoned lands may be required in order to avoid Greystones, Delgany and Kilcoole becoming (REMAINING)0 dormitory towns with low job ratios.

9. Community Infrastructure

We note that the population of Greystones, Delgany and Kilcoole is approaching 30,000. Currently the youth population is approximately 33% of the population, this will and is currently putting pressure on sports facilities, community facilities, and youth centres.

We suggest that more facilities are and will be required, we further suggest that the area would benefit from a combined resource centre and enhanced sporting facility. We note the proposal to provide same adjacent to the new secondary school and existing facilities at Shoreline Sports Park and running track and welcome same.

We suggest the reference to ‘catch-up’ infrastructure noted in *A2.2 Role and function of the settlements Greystones-Delgany*, pg. 5. should be defined in a SLO with clear action / set of actions.

10. Built Heritage

We note that the LPF and CDP support the Natural and Architectural Heritage, we emphasise that Greystones has a unique historic character as a 19th century seaside resort and its notable railway heritage. We suggest the LPF strengthen this

commitment to support heritage led regeneration as a driver for town character, tourism, and identity.

A specific Objective for the following historic structures at risk should be included:

- the old Holy Faith Convent on Kimberly Road,
- Captain Tarrant's Farmhouse

It is requested that the LPF supports the development and implementation of the Greystones Town Team Shopfront and Signage Guidelines, ensuring that all new shopfronts and signage within the town centre and architectural conservation areas respect the established character, materials, and proportions, in line with best practice in heritage-led regeneration.

On my own behalf, in support of the Greystones Town Team, I also look forward to the ongoing partnership and dialogue with Wicklow County Council and the Greystones Municipal District Councillors to deliver a thriving, sustainable and inclusive Greystones, Delgany and Kilcoole area.

With warm regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'DERMOT', written over a horizontal line.

Dermot Dwyer

Dermot Dwyer
Greystones Resident
(Former) Chair Greystones 2020
(Founder and Former) Chair Greystones Town Team

Greystones Media Campus and Jobs. Need movie infrastructure. JOBS

Staging growth: John Gleeson on bringing international productions to Ireland

John Gleeson has helped bring global productions to Irish shores. The leading film finance advisor argues that strategic infrastructure investment – and political vision – are now critical to sustaining momentum.

BY Alison Cowzer

Have you ever stayed on in the cinema after the end of the movie to read the credits roll through the names of the hundreds of people involved in any major film?

Maybe it's just me, but I find it fascinating to read the business-like titles of so many of those involved – production accountants, funding partners, banks, tax advisors and the many more who are now a huge part of the machine that funds and develops a cinema release.

The film and TV industry is an important one for Ireland, estimated to contribute approximately €1 billion to the Irish economy with about 16,000 jobs associated with this most glamorous of sectors.

One of Ireland's leading experts in film and TV financing is accountant John Gleeson of the boutique accountancy firm Saffrey. The financial and tax advisors sat down with me recently to explore the significant opportunities the sector offers our economy.

His work on landmark productions, including Game of Thrones and Star Wars, means he is sought after by those looking to develop the huge pipeline of projects in development here every year.

"The sector has developed significantly in the last 10 years, in particular, through big demand, maturing of the creative sector around it and the availability and reliability of employment. It has really come of age, especially in the last five or 10 years, but there's a lot of pent-up opportunity as well going forward," he told me in this episode of Arts Matters, a podcast series sponsored by HLB Ireland.

Ireland has developed a raft of tax incentives, including the Section 481 tax relief, focused on bringing large-scale productions to shoot and develop projects in this country.

Gleeson suggests that while the tax incentives are important, other factors play a part.

"We've an impressive depth of creative talent here from writers, directors, actors, producers. We've also incredibly skilled crews, we've got crews that UK producers, US producers want to work with and have experience of working with and we've got a really good reputation. So, we've got a really solid foundation both creatively and industrially within the sector at the moment," he says.

To avail of Section 481, a project must pass what is called a culture test, demonstrating that it promotes Irish and European culture, a fact that may be hard to spot in some of the blockbusters filmed here recently.

Infrastructure and investment

Ireland competes well for inward investment with other jurisdictions, but is somewhat hampered by our lack of infrastructure. The large productions need access to vast sound stages, where much of the action is filmed. Currently, we are falling behind in the provision of infrastructure, Gleeson explains.

"In the UK, they've about four million square feet of sound stage, and within the last five years, planning permission was granted for an additional four million square feet, of which about two million is now available. There are also other projects looking like they'll go into construction. So, six million square feet in the UK and we have only about 400,000 square feet here in Ireland," he says.

A number of large-scale projects are under development to deliver more capacity, but Gleeson believes the investment in infrastructure must be accompanied by an overarching strategy for the sector to drive real growth.

“My personal view is that I think there’s a huge opportunity based on the demand that I and others see over the next five years, in particular, to attract more inward investment into Ireland. Now, that only gets unlocked with the delivery of infrastructure,” he says.

His optimism bodes well for a sector in high growth that can yield significant benefits for Ireland – he’s hoping the new minister for the arts is supportive of “an over-arching strategy” which “is vital to pull all of the agendas in the sector together”.

With warm regards

Dermod

Dermod Dwyer

(Former) Chairman - Greystones Town Team - Greystones LivCom Global Gold Medal award winners 2021.
www.greystones.ie

Report on economic impact of Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk closure concerns County Council

Eoin Mac Raghnaill
Bray People
June 9 2025 12:47 PM

Wicklow County Council has expressed its concern about an external report stating that the closure of sections of the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk has resulted in a contraction of economic activity in Greystones, and “even more concerning”, that it is being reported that it is affecting individual businesses.

The report in question, produced by economic advisor to the Irish Tourism Industry Jim Power, was launched in Greystones Sailing Club on June 3 by the community group, Friends of the Cliff Walk.

Using national and international economic models, including Failte Ireland data, as well as information from local businesses, the report found that the closure, now in its fifth year, has cost the national economy tens of millions of euro in lost revenue, with a corresponding negative financial impact on Wicklow, and Greystones in particular.

The report also showed how the closure runs counter to Wicklow County Council’s (WCC) own policies and objectives, including access to a public right of way, as well as national goals relating to exercise, fitness and combating obesity.

Report into Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk finds closure ‘has cost national economy tens of millions in lost revenue’

In a statement released by WCC in response to the report, the local authority noted that it has initiated the procurement of independent consultants to assess the safety issues relating to the Bray to Greystones Cliff Walk and to advise on both short-term and long-term sustainable solutions.

“The tender process requires a standstill period, which was extended in accordance with statutory procedures,” the statement reads.

“In accordance with the procurement process, the successful consultant will be appointed in the coming week, if no further queries or observations are received, and will commence work immediately.

“Wicklow County Council will then seek the considerable resources that will be required for a sustainable solution, which may include permanent re-routing of the walk.”

The statement went on to say that WCC only closed the sections of the Cliff Walk that were “dangerous and only where the safety concerns left no alternative”, adding that, in the meantime, it has signposted an alternative walk from Greystones to Bray utilising other pathways on Bray Head.

WCC chief executive Emer O’Gorman commented: “The consultants will advise as to whether there are any feasible immediate actions that could be undertaken relatively quickly in order to reopen the route to the public such that it could be deemed safe to do so”.

WCC cathaoirleach, Cllr Paul O’Brien, added: “Wicklow County Council, as part of the cliff walk task force, are working together to drive the re-opening of the Bray Greystones Cliff Walk.”

With warm regards

Dermot
Dermot Dwyer
(Former) Chairman - Greystones Town Team - Greystones LivCom Global Gold Medal award winners 2021.
www.greystones.ie