

2022

The Wexford Greenway

PROPOSAL TO THE WEXFORD COUNTY COUNCIL
BY THE WEXFORD GREENWAY GROUP

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Introduction

This is a report detailing the proposal of a 36.6km Greenway between the historical towns of New Ross and Enniscorthy as the Wexford Greenway. With the growing interest of the construction and use of greenways such as the very successful Waterford Greenway and the construction of the South Eastern Greenway to New Ross, it felt necessary to compile a report outlining the benefits of extending the greenway to Enniscorthy. Such a greenway would provide great social and economic benefits to rural areas in County Wexford which this report will discuss in great detail. While also outlining the route and how it can be achieved, it will also discuss the places of scenic and historical interest that will attract tourism along the route.

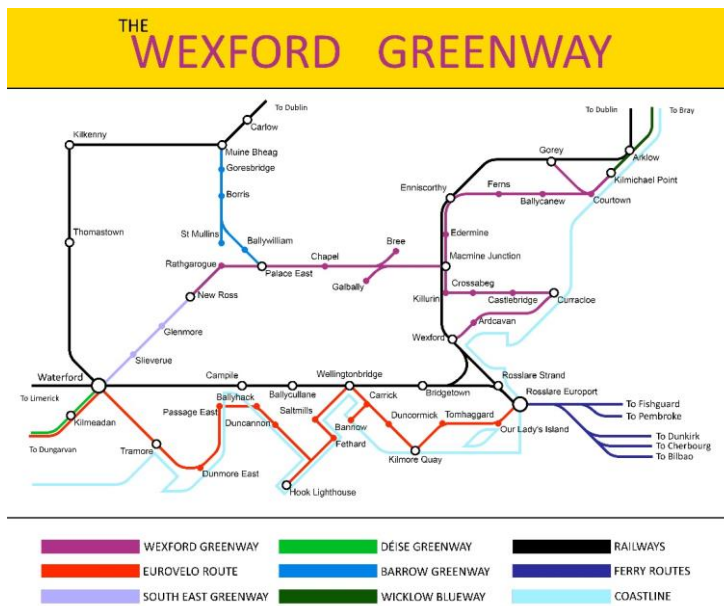


Figure 1 The Wexford Greenway

In recent years, the world has become more environmentally conscious with the growing concerns of climate change. A greenway encourages exercise and mental wellbeing as well as the use of sustainable transport such as cycling for travelling into town from the country. It also encourages people to not be car dependent by leaving the car at home and instead using a combination of using public transport and cycling. It is important to consider integrating with other greenways, walking paths, bus stops, train stations and cycleways within towns and also villages that are off the greenway. With this in mind, this report will talk about the possibility of future extension of the Wexford Greenway from Enniscorthy to Kilmichael Point in connection with the Wicklow Blueway and the future extension from Macmine Junction to Wexford in connection with the Wexford to Rosslare Greenway.

Objectives

The following are the objectives for the Wexford Greenway:

- Create a Safe place to Cycle and Walk
- Encourage Fitness and Wellbeing
- Allow Accessibility for all
- Allow access to local communities, schools, places of interest and clubs
- Encourage Rural Development by facilitating local businesses
- Maintain and Protect Natural Beauty
- Preserve and Restore Historical Features
- Provide users with facilities

A Safe Place to Cycle and Walk

The Greenway should be a safe place for its users to walk and cycle. Therefore, the greenway must have little interference with road traffic and farming practices. This can be achieved with suitable fencing and gates to stop livestock getting onto the greenway and to prevent greenway users trespassing on private land. Crossings or bridges should also be put in place where the greenway crosses a road or laneway and a suitable barrier if the greenway runs parallel with a road. The condition of the greenway path must also be maintained to keep the path clear of potholes, lumps and subsidence as these could have an impact on bike users. All crossings, bridges, barriers, fences, gates and the greenway path must be continuously maintained for the safety of all users. Cameras should be installed in intervals along the Greenway to discourage anti-social behavior. Mechanically driven vehicles such as cars, motorbikes, mopeds and minibikes should be banned from the Greenway.

Encourage Fitness and Wellbeing

The Greenway will naturally attract people of all ages to use the Greenway for fitness, be it for walking, jogging, running or cycling. It's important to allow locals regular access to such an amenity and encourage others to do the same, through posters, events and social media. The Greenway will also be great for social interaction as like minded people might want to exercise as a group and the Greenway will be a safe and spacious place to do so. The Greenway will also encourage Mental Wellbeing as fresh air, green scenery and exercise all help with mental wellbeing.

Accessibility for all

The Greenway will need to be able to allow access for all types of users. These include: walkers, cyclists, users with mobility and visual disabilities, the elderly and users with pushchairs. This means that entrance gates onto the Greenway should be wide enough to facilitate wheelchairs, frames and pushchairs. The Grand Canal Greenway has tight barriers at entrance points and along the greenway to prevent vehicles such as motorbikes, mopeds and minibikes from using the greenway. However, these barriers have become a nuisance for cyclists who have to stop once a kilometer to get through the barriers which ruins the greenway experience. There is also no consideration for users in a wheelchair or frame as the barriers prevent them accessing the greenway. The Wexford Greenway should not have any of these tight barriers on it as access should be given to all users. Vehicles from the greenway should be banned but access should be given to maintenance vehicles.

Local Access

Local access to communities near to the Wexford Greenway is important to safely allow village residents to get to the greenway. This can be achieved by having Access Routes branching off the Greenway to nearby villages and places of interest. By giving nearby villages access to the Greenway, the Greenway can also allow residents along the Greenway and Access Routes to walk and cycle into their nearby village to shop, go to school or go to a club. This will be a healthier and proactive alternative to taking the car. Each Access route should have adequate signage for villages, amenities and places of interest.

Rural Development

Local Access will also encourage Greenway users to branch off the greenway to use amenities such as restaurants, pubs, shops and B&Bs, as well as visit local attractions and places of interest. Having access to the greenway benefits local businesses and tourist attractions in nearby villages but also local businesses can also set up stalls along the Greenway. Rest stops, cafes, ice-cream parlors, market stalls and craft shops are common along other greenways. Many villages in Co. Wexford have suffered economically with shops, pubs, petrol stations, post offices and clubs closing down over the past decade. This has also had an effect socially as people have no longer a place to meet other people. With extra revenue resulting from visitors from the Greenway, it will enhance the local economy, bringing socio-economic reform to local communities, reopening businesses and bringing life back into villages.

Maintain Natural Beauty

A Greenway is, as the name suggests, green. And should be considerate to its surrounding environment, leaving as little impact as possible. During its construction, it should not interfere with any protected species and any interfering trees should be replanted elsewhere or cut down with the intention of planting a tree sapling elsewhere. The Greenway should not build too close the banks of rivers and streams as stress on the river bank may cause it to fall into the river. Having the Greenway away from the river bank also prevents Greenway users disturbing animals along the river such as herons, swans, kingfishers and otters. Fences along the greenway should allow animal species such as rabbits, hares, foxes and hedgehogs to freely cross the Greenway while still preventing farm livestock onto the Greenway. Bins should be placed at regular intervals along the Greenway but should be more common at rivers and streams to prevent rubbish being dumped in what is a water source to many wild animals and livestock.

Preserve and Restoring Historical Features

The Greenway will mostly be going along the route of the old railway which means there will be many railway features along the route. It is important for Greenway users to experience what the railway left behind and understand that this was once a major piece of infrastructure that was important to local communities at the time. These should be preserved and restored if damaged or in disrepair. This includes station buildings, station platforms, station features, stone bridges, girder bridges, signals, mile posts and buffers. The sites of former stations should be the main focus of preservation but along the route of the railway, there might be other smaller artifacts that might be found during construction and should be put aside with the intention of displaying them along the Greenway. Palace East, Ballyanne and Macmine were subject to several arson attacks so it might be possible to find the odd wheel here and there. There should also be information signs at specific points along the route detailing the history of the railway and other local history.

Facilities

Along the Greenway there should be adequate facilities for greenway users. These include toilets, bins, seating, signage, drinking water, bike stands and bike repair stations. These facilities should be placed at regular intervals along the route to provide for all greenway users.

Background History

The route of the proposed Wexford Greenway follows the route of the old North Wexford railway which branched off the Rosslare to Dublin mainline at Macmine Junction and then headed to Waterford via New Ross. The first part of the North Wexford railway was originally built as part of a scheme to build the first railway to Wexford from Dublin to allow limestone in Carlow to be exported to Wexford. In 1855, the Bagenalstown and Wexford Railway (B&WR) started construction but immediately fell into financial problems after building the Borris Viaduct but managed to build as far as Ballywilliam. To make

matters worse for the B&WR, in 1863, they were going to lose its monopoly over Wexford as the Dublin, Wicklow and Wexford Railway (DW&WR) company had just built its railway from Dublin to Enniscorthy with the intention of extending to Wexford. This resulted in a race between the two companies.

While the DW&WR were delayed at Enniscorthy due the construction of the tunnel, the B&WR quickly and cheaply built the line from Ballywilliam through Palace East, Chapel and Sparrowsland in 1870. However, the tables turned and this time the B&WR were delayed by a workers protest to build through a rath. This resulted in the DW&WR reaching Wexford in 1872 and the B&WR reaching Macmine 8 months later. The B&WR had lost the race to Wexford and the bills were piling up and worse still, the railway was considered unsafe due to the reckless construction during the race.



Figure 3 Palace East Station (Joanes, 1963)

The railway was saved by a landlord in Carlow who paid off bills and undertook repairs on the line and by 1876, the railway was in such a good condition that both the GS&WR and the DW&WR each bought half of the line. The DW&WR later extending their half of the line from Palace East to Waterford via New Ross. By this time, the objectives of the B&WR were obsolete. The DW&WR route along the coast was the quickest route to Dublin from Wexford and the development of the Drinagh quarries in Wexford meant there was no need to transport limestone from Carlow. Transport of cattle and pigs were

frequent, but this became obsolete with the construction of the South Wexford Railway between Waterford and Rosslare Harbour. The DW&WR competed heavily with the GS&WR for traffic between Waterford and Dublin but the GS&WR developed better engines so Waterford to Dublin via Kilkenny was the best route. No effort was made by the two companies at Palace East junction to connect services, with passengers waiting for up to three hours for a train to Bagenalstown making a journey between Carlow and Wexford very long.



Figure 2 Macmine Junction (Flanagan-IRRS, 1954)

It continued to get worse for the North Wexford Railway as the War of Independence and the Civil War meant that railways were targeted and destroyed to disrupt the transport of troops and goods. Bridges were blown up, stations were burnt and engines were run off the tracks causing major disruption and financial difficulty for railway companies nationwide. Even after the amalgamation and nationalisation of the railway companies, railways were never the same again. The Palace East and Bagenalstown line had its services ended in 1944 but traffic continued on the North Wexford line with Waterford to Wexford trains via New Ross providing local services and were exceptionally busy during the sugar beet season and for GAA specials. However, with the rising use of articulated lorries, personal car ownership and government cutbacks in the 50s, this was not enough to keep the line going. By 1964 the New Ross to Macmine line was officially closed and lifted. There were protests by locals along the line but none of which made an impact. During the lifting of the line a new Fertiliser Factory in Arklow sought use of the line to get to New Ross but it was too late and Fertiliser traffic instead went around and used the remaining Waterford-New Ross railway, keeping the line alive till 1998 when it closed. This was the end of the North Wexford Railway as a railway.¹



Figure 4 Train derailed by Anti-Treaty Forces on Ballyanne Bank, 1923



Figure 5 South East Greenway under construction (Harney, 2021)

In 2020, the remaining track of the New Ross to Waterford railway was lifted. This was part of a joint initiative of the Wexford County Council, Kilkenny County Council and Waterford City & County Council to construct a designated cyclepath and walkway known as a greenway. This was after the major success of the Waterford Greenway that opened 2017 which used part of the old Waterford to Mallow railway. The success of the Waterford Greenway has created a boom in the construction of greenways across the country which re-purpose the route of old railways which have not been used in over 20 years. The construction of the Waterford to New Ross greenway known as the South Eastern Greenway will be completed in 2022² with high expectations of success in bringing tourists to New Ross while also encouraging outdoor leisure. The construction of the South Eastern Greenway and the extension of the Enniscorthy Promenade in 2006³ is what drove the idea of the possibility of extending the greenway from New Ross to Enniscorthy as the Wexford Greenway, re-purposing the route of the old North Wexford Railway.

¹ Doyle, C., 1996. Palace East to Macmine Railway. *Bree Parish Journal*, (8), pp.19-22.

² Wexfordcoco.ie. n.d. *South East Greenway | Wexford County Council*. [online] [Accessed 13 June 2021].

³ independent.ie. 2005. *Public to get longer walk on the Prom*. [online] [Accessed 13 June 2021].

Benefits of Greenways

This proposed Greenway will pass through and connect with rural populations throughout North County Wexford. Villages which have greatly suffered over the past 20 years which have resulted in a decline in social and economic activity. Other greenways across the country have provided social and economic reform to rural areas creating additional businesses and leisurely activities along the route. With the construction of motorways and bypasses, such as the Enniscorthy by-pass and the New Ross by-pass, tourists are less inclined to visit towns and rural areas which often hold hidden tourist gems. A Greenway has the opportunity to attract and bring tourists to places where they would never otherwise go, untapping hidden tourist potential while also providing an economic boost to local communities by purchasing from local shops and businesses.



Figure 6 Vacant Shop and Pub in Galbally



Figure 7 Exercise is Healthy

Greenways also play a huge role in healthy living by encouraging people to go outdoors, enjoy the fresh air and escape from the busy towns. Exercise is key to a healthy lifestyle and by walking, running or cycling along the greenway, you're helping your body's performance, muscle strength, endurance and stamina. Exercise along the greenway can also help you mentally as exercising with clean air and a natural setting can reduce stress levels and depression while increasing mental focus and self-esteem. Greenways are not just for athletics, casual exercise and general walking but it can also be a great way for getting children and young adults out of the house, away from the tech and out into the healthy outdoors. It can be a fun family outing or even just a place to practice cycling a bike for the first time, but it encourages young people to exercise and to be outdoors in a safe environment away from road traffic.

Greenways support sustainable travel by encouraging people to safely cycle from their home in the country to places like work, school, sport events, shops, mass and meeting friends. This means people will be encouraged to leave their car at home if the place they are going can be reached by the greenway. This may help people not be too car dependent and instead take the bike for short journeys and possibly take public transport for longer journeys. For this reason, the Wexford Greenway proposes connecting the Greenway with villages along the route with Access Routes. These Access Routes will allow locals to use the Greenway to get to their closest village. Adamstown for example has a secondary school that serves the surrounding area. Young adults can use the greenway to cycle safely to and from their school without depending on their parents to drive them there.



Figure 8 Greenways encourage young people to go outdoors



Figure 9 The Waterford Greenway has been very successful

The 46km Waterford Greenway has been very successful since its opening in 2017 and has received great media coverage with 248,000 users coming to use it from all over the country within the first eight months of opening. A survey⁴ showed that out of 1177 people, 53% of which were people from along the greenway, 45% of people were from outside the greenway and 2% were from overseas. 27 people were from overseas where 12 of which were from the UK. The survey also showed that 43% of

people were regular users and that 52% came part of a family. During the survey, people from outside of Waterford were asked how important the greenway was for deciding a trip to Waterford; 68% of people said it was the sole reason for their trip to Waterford. 40% of the people for were visiting the greenway from outside of Waterford, paid for overnight accommodation. Users were also asked how much money did they spend on the greenway for bike hire, food, accommodation and amenities in with 1038 people responded; 46% didn't spend anything, 54% spent a total of €9,473, resulting in an average spend of €16.90 per person.

⁴ <https://www.waterfordcouncil.ie/media/greenway/WaterfordGreenway-BaselineSurveyReport-Jan2018.pdf>

Places Served

This Greenway is named the Wexford Greenway because the route passes through the very heart of Wexford. The route starts in New Ross at the end of Mountelliot Tunnel and from there it passes through valleys and hills across Wexford and finishes alongside the River Slaney, overall connecting the two towns of New Ross and Enniscorthy. The old Railway alignment will facilitate the route of the greenway as far as Macmine, providing many features along the route including bridges, stations and engineering features making use of the route of the old railway which was lifted and abandoned 60 years ago. From Macmine to Enniscorthy, it will travel parallel to the River Slaney and the existing Wexford-Dublin railway. The route of the greenway will be a development of the existing Enniscorthy promenade walk and will terminate at the Riverside Hotel with the future intention of extending the greenway to Arklow.

New Ross



Figure 10 The Railway Bridge over the River Barrow at New Ross

The historical town of New Ross is currently seeing the construction of the South Eastern Greenway, named after the former Dublin and South Eastern Railway company. This greenway will start at Ferrybank, Waterford and then head through Slieverue and Glenmore experiencing the rolling hills of south Kilkenny before heading into the inland port town of New Ross. From here the greenway heads through the site of the old New Ross Station to the two highlights of the greenway, the magnificent engineering structure that is the Red Bridge and the monumental achievement that is

the Mountelliot Tunnel. The 180m long Red Bridge spans the Barrow River and although officially known as the Barrow Bridge, its red appearance has made it an icon to the area giving it the Red Bridge name. After the bridge is the curving Mountelliot Tunnel which is 680m long, making it a very thrilling experience to any visitor. At the eastern portal of the tunnel, the proposed Wexford Greenway will continue along the route of the former railway line to Enniscorthy while the South Eastern Greenway will loop back to New Ross town along the old Enniscorthy-New Ross Road.

New Ross is already a major tourist attraction, being home to the iconic Famine Ship, the Dunbrody and houses the always burning Emigrant Flame. The most famous of the emigrants that left New Ross was of course the Kennedys, whose homestead is around 8km outside of New Ross and John F Kennedy's visit will always be remembered in New Ross with the brass statue of him displayed on the Quay. New Ross is also home the Ros Tapestry, a tapestry that depicts the vast history of New Ross and County Wexford.



Figure 11 New Ross Town

New Ross has a population of around 8,000 people⁵. Hotels include the Kennedy Boutique Hotel, the Brandon House Hotel and Inishross House B&B. There's a vast number of restaurants, shops and pubs. There is four primary schools and five secondary schools. New Ross is also home to the O'Hanrahans GAA Club, New Ross RFC, New Ross Celtic Soccer Club, New Ross Town Soccer Club and the New Ross Boat Club. There is Wexford Bus services to Waterford and Wexford. Bus Éireann has services to Waterford, Duncannon, Campile, Kiltealy Enniscorthy and Wexford. Local Link has a bus service to Tullow via Enniscorthy and Bunclody.

⁵ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

Ballyanne

~~Leaving Towards~~ New Ross, the former railway crossed over the Ballyanne Bank which once towered over the surrounding landscape. The railway embankment was so wide at the base that two tunnel like bridges were built for the New Ross-Enniscorthy Road to pass underneath. This road was once the main road between Waterford and Dublin at the time. Ballyanne Bank has since been lowered to accommodate the construction of the N30 road in 1986. Interestingly though, the two tunnel like bridges were kept as they were long enough to support the width of the new road.



Figure 12 One of the arches under Ballyanne Bank (Google Street View)

The Wexford Greenway will follow the route of the old railway, even maintaining the height of the original Ballyanne Bank in order to reach an observation point. This will let users experience the views across the county, similar to what early train travelers experienced when travelling over the Ballyanne Bank. The observation point will also be where information boards will explain the troubled history of Ballyanne Bank where several trains were sabotaged and run off the rails during the Civil War. There will also be a loop route that follows the path of the old main Dublin-Waterford trunk road. This will allow users to exhibit the two tunnel like bridges under the N30.

Near Ballyanne is the Ballyanne Bar, the Maple Tree Nursery, Somer's Cosy Cottage homestay, the Ballintober Equestrian and the Berkeley Costume and Toy Museum which consists of a vast collection of 18th and 19th Century costumes and toys all housed in the 1780 Berkeley Forest House⁷. Ballyanne has its own bus stop where Bus Éireann has services to New Ross, Kiltealy and Enniscorthy. Local Link has a bus service to New Ross, Enniscorthy, Bunclody and Tullow.

⁶ [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N30_road_\(Ireland\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/N30_road_(Ireland))

⁷ <https://www.familyfun.ie/berkeley-costume-and-toy-museum-wexford/>

Rathgarogue

Rathgarogue is a small village 6km outside of New Ross. It has the Rathgarogue Church and nearby is the the Rathgarogue National School which will have direct access to the Wexford Greenway. The old station building still survives today but looks like it is currently being used as a shed, it would be wonderful if it was beautifully restored with an information board providing the history of the station and how it served the area.



Figure 13 Rathgarogue Church

Palace East

Palace East is a townland 10km outside New Ross and was once an important railway junction station where it was heavily used to transport sugar beet from Wexford to the Carlow Sugar Factory. Just like the railway, there are plans to make Palace East an important Greenway Junction where the Barrow Valley Greenway will join onto the Wexford Greenway.



Figure 14 John Moore's House (Google Street View)

Palace is named after one of the palaces built by McMurrough, King of Leinster. There are sadly no remains of the palace but the ruins of a nearby large house called Palace House still survive. Also nearby is Moore's Crossroads, home of John Moore. In 1793, John led a large crowd of men to Wexford to demand the release of some local men that had been arrested. They were met by British Forces led by Captain Vallotton who during negotiations, stabbed Moore with his sword, and Moore swiped back with his scythe and both later died as a battle broke out around them. A Vallotton's monument

was erected in 1793 at the top of Hill Street in Wexford Town to appease the British and is still there today. It is said that this bloody battle was the [starting](#) point of the 1798 rebellions across Wexford.

Palace East Station still retains many railway features including the Signal Cabin, Platforms, Goods Bank, Station Building and Station Masters House. Both the Station Building and the Station Masters House are now private residences and consultation with the owners will be given. An information board will provide the history of the station and how it served the area. The village used to have a petrol station, shop and post office, all of which have gone in recent years.



Figure 15 Palace East Station

Ballagh Bridge

The Ballagh Bridge crosses over the Aughnaglaur River and the old railway. The trackbed is still clearly visible, so clear that you could probably walk it today. The trackbed is lined with pine trees where the railway went through a large plantation forest. Near to Ballagh Bridge is the Secret Valley Wildlife Park and Zoo, home to many animals and great fun for the family. The Secret Valley Wildlife Park and Zoo will have an Access Route connecting it to the Greenway to allow users access. Nearby is also the Berry Farm Shop, the Ballagh Court B&B as well as the Cloughbawn Football Club.

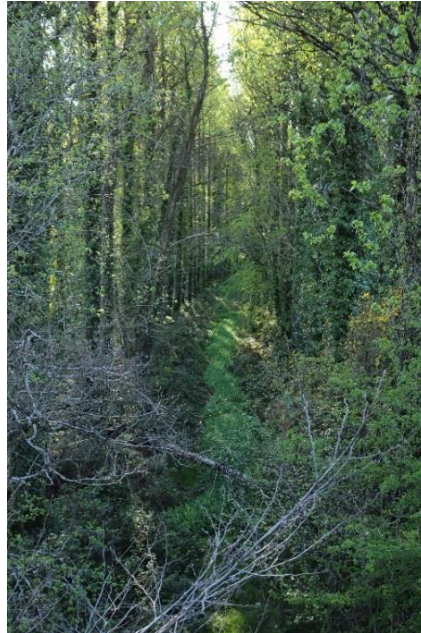


Figure 16 The Pine Tree Lined path of the former railway trackbed

Chapel



Figure 17 Chapel Station

Chapel Village is a small townland right in the centre of county Wexford. It got its name from an old chapel that has since gone and is now the site of a circular graveyard. The only indication of this small village is a unique triangular pillar which marks the centre of a crossroads displaying the nearby townlands of Raheen, Coolroe and Chapel. Chapel was once an important settlement with a 52m diameter ringfort that still remains there today. In the late 19th Century, the importance of the village was still recognised as a railway station was built to serve the area. The station building has been beautifully

preserved and is now a private residence. An information board will provide the history of the station and how it served the area. For any anglers that would like to test out their fishing skills, there is the nearby Loch Mann Fishing Lakes who are willing to provide all the equipment needed as long as you release the fish back.

As the station is now a private residence, any greenway plan will deviate around the property, most likely along the bank of the nearby Aughnaglaur River. Near to the station is an old Pub called Furlongs, which could be restored into a new rest stop for the Greenway. In the submission plan, there will also be designated cycle/pedestrian path between the two large villages of Clonroche and Adamstown to allow access to the Wexford Greenway at Chapel.



Figure 18 Old Furlongs Pub at Chapel

Clonroche



Figure 19 Cloch Bán Pub at Clonroche

Known mostly for its Glanbia Mill, Clonroche has a population of around 330 people⁸ and has its own primary school, health centre and Millennial Park as well as number of small businesses such as the Boro Inn bar, the Village Takeaway, the Cloch Bán bar, Daybreak and Gala shops. Local Link has a stop here with a bus service to New Ross, Enniscorthy, Bunclody and Tullow.

Adamstown

Adamstown is home to the popular Adamstown Agricultural Show and with a population of around 300 people, has its own Primary School, Secondary School, GAA Club, Community Centre and Football Club that serve the local area as well as local businesses such as Adamstown's Kebabish Takeaway, Brad Ógs Bar and Takeway, Cullen's Bar and Gala Shop. Adamstown has a bus stop with Bus Éireann services to New Ross and Wexford.



Figure 20 Blossom in Adamstown

⁸ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

Ballybrennan's Bridge



Figure 21 The overgrown Ballybrennan's Bridge

Here at Ballybrennan, two roads crossed but with the arrival of the railway, the two roads were lifted over the railway by a bridge. However, since the railway closed, the roads were re-routed away from the bridge, making the bridge redundant. The bridge still stands today and with the Wexford Greenway going underneath, the bridge will be renovated as an observation point for looking at the surrounding landscape. Nearby is St. Cowan's Well.

Sparrowsland

Sparrowsland may be a small townland, yet is still received a station in 1870 and the Station Building still survives today as a private residence. An information board will provide the history of the station and how it served the area. This little place is ideally nestled between Bree Hill (179m) and Raheenahoon Hill (152m), making it the perfect place to turn off and do a bit of hill walking. This will be achieved by having a designated cycle/pedestrian path between the two villages of Bree and Galbally to allow access to the Wexford Greenway at Sparrowsland. Sparrowsland is also home to the oldest recorded structure in Wexford, the Ballybrittas Dolmen, dating from the Neolithic period between 4000-2500BC. Sparrowsland also has a bus stop with a Bus Éireann service to Wexford.



Figure 22 Bree Hill stands at 179m above sea level

Bree



Figure 23 The village of Bree

The village of Bree, with a population of around 200 people⁹, is located right next to Bree Hill. Bree has a local Spar Shop, and The Huntsman's Rest, Bar and Lounge and would be a great place for refreshments after a long day of walking up Bree Hill. Bree is also where the first Irish Countrywomen's Association meeting took place. The ICA campaigned heavily for the improvement of living in rural areas from 1910 onwards and a Garden was built in the village to commemorate the ICA and Annita Lett, the founder. Bree Hill has a designated walking trail that takes hikers around the hill which is populated by trees

planted by Coillte¹⁰ and provides excellent views of the county. Bree is also home to the Ballyhogue GAA Club, a community centre and a local school. Bree has a bus stop nearby at Clonmore with a Bus Éireann service to Wexford.

Galbally

The village of Galbally is located near Raheenahoon Hill and is home to the iconic St. John the Baptist Church with its green oxidised copper spire that can be seen for miles around. Galbally also has a local school and a community centre. Galbally did have its own pub, petrol station and shop, all of which have gone over time, the vacant shop lies dormant waiting for a possible development opportunity. A designated cycle/pedestrian path between Galbally and Bree will allow users to come to Galbally and also allow Galbally residents access to the Wexford Greenway at Sparrowsland. Galbally has a bus stop with Bus Éireann services to New Ross and Wexford.



Figure 24 St. John the Baptist Church in Galbally

⁹ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

¹⁰ <https://wexfordwalkingtrail.ie/bree-hill/>

Ballyhogue



Figure 25 Ballyhogue Crossroads

Ballyhogue, a village with a population of 270 people¹¹, has a local National School and a vacant shop premises located right at the crossroads which could be used, great for future development. Ballyhogue will have a designated cycle/pedestrian path to allow access to the Wexford Greenway. There is also the beautiful Bellevue Chapel that was once part of the Bellevue Estate Manor. In the Civil War in 1923, the Manor was set on fire but luckily the men involved separated the Manor from the Chapel. This beautiful little Chapel is a major must for weddings as the view from the Chapel over

the River Slaney is truly breathtaking and a must see on the Wexford Greenway.

Macmine Junction

Macmine Junction was once a bustling railway junction, where passengers and goods would diverge from the banks of the River Slaney, inland through the centre of County Wexford to New Ross and Waterford. Macmine Junction will once again be an important junction with Greenways heading to New Ross, Waterford, Wexford, Enniscorthy and in future, possibly Arklow, Dublin and Cork. This major interchange will have car parking, facilities and could also have a seasonal station halt erected here for those arriving on the Dublin-Rosslare train. Nearby is the ruins of the impressive Macmine Castle which will be seen from an over bridge that allows the Greenway over the railway.



Figure 26 The ruins of Macmine Castle

¹¹ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

Edermine



Figure 27 Edermine Bridge over the River Slaney

Edermine is neatly located on the banks of the River Slaney, just 5km outside of Enniscorthy. This small townland is mostly known for the Edermine Ferry Rowing Club which can often be seen out on the water by passing cars crossing over the Edermine Bridge. Nearby is the beautifully restored Wilton Castle, a once burnt down ruin that is now an elegant B&B accompanied by the nearby Wilton Gardens. As well as Wilton Castle, Kilcarbry Mills has also been restored into a lovely B&B. Nearby is also the spectacular Borodale, considered the secret gem of County Wexford. It is a beautiful walk that runs parallel to the River Boro and is

planned to be part of a new walk from Borodale, through Kilcarbry to the existing Enniscorthy Promenade Walk. The Enniscorthy Promenade Walk will be incorporated into the Wexford Greenway, making it wider to accommodate cyclists and pedestrians along this beautiful stretch of scenery on the banks of the River Slaney to Enniscorthy.

Enniscorthy



Figure 28 Enniscorthy Town

Enniscorthy Town is a beautiful town on the banks of the River Slaney. The town has a population of around 11,400 people¹² and it has a wide variety of shops, restaurants, pubs, accommodation, four secondary schools, four primary schools, a public swimming pool, GAA Club, Football Club, Rugby Club, Sports Hub, Golf Course, Greyhound Track, a train station and bus services. Enniscorthy Castle and Museum towers over the town and holds a vast collection of Enniscorthy's History including items from the 1916 Rising. There is also the 1798 Rebellion Centre which tells the story of the battle between the British and Irish that took place

on top of Vinegar Hill. Vinegar Hill with an old windmill ruin on top, looks over Enniscorthy and is a great place for hill walking and a great spot to look over the town. Enniscorthy is also known for hosting the Tour de France in 1998 and holds the title of being an official Tour de France city¹³. What a wonderful way of living up to that title by having a greenway to Enniscorthy to encourage people of all ages to get on their bike and cycle through this beautiful county that we have.

¹² https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

¹³ <https://www.independent.ie/regionals/enniscorthyguardian/news/this-is-a-wonderful-opportunity-enniscorthy-secures-tour-de-france-cycling-city-status-40410237.html>

Future Expansion

The first proposed phase of the Wexford Greenway is the New Ross to Enniscorthy section which is a straightforward route that goes along the alignment of the old railway route and the bank of the River Slaney. However, from this route, the greenway can be expanded from to reach places such as Wexford, Curracloe, Gorey and Arklow. The extension to Arklow would complete what could be a chain of greenways linking Dublin to Cork and would provide a major boost in economic activity. The route of the proposed extensions of the Wexford Greenway are just suggestions and further study will be required.

The Wexford Extension

The Wexford Extension will extend from Macmine Junction towards the historic maritime town of Wexford, passing through many places of interest along the way. There are two route options for the Wexford Extension.

- Route 1: Passes through Killurin, Crossabeg, Castlebridge and Ardavan with an Access Route to Curracloe.
- Route 2: Passes through Killurin, Glynn and Ferrycarrig.

Killurin



Figure 29 Kayaking at The Deeps, Killurin

Killurin is a small village that lies on the bank of the River Slaney which has carved through the landscape creating this beautiful setting known as The Deeps. It is here where the Killurin bridge crosses over the river towards Crossabeg. There is always a hive of activity on the river as the Killurin Rowing Club are often seen practicing offshore and it is the perfect location for kayaking and boating as there is a public dock and slipway here. Killurin also has a bit of history as the ruins of the Deeps Castle overlook the river are said to be where King James II went into hiding after his defeat at the Battle of the Boyne. Killurin was also the target

of Anti-Treaty Forces who sabotaged rail services by blowing up bridges, derailing trains and dumping them in the Slaney. Facilities nearby include Marty B's Bar, Julie's Takeaway, an XL Garage Shop, the Declan Roche Pub and the Killurin Lodge B&B. Killurin has a population of around 170 people.

Crossabeg



Figure 30 Edenvale

Crossabeg is a townland just outside of Castlebridge. It has its own National School, Church and Crossabeg Community Pitch. Nearby is Foley's Pub and the ruins of Artramon Castle. There is also the beautiful walk to Edenvale which follows the nearby River Sow through a thick forest before finally reaching the Edenvale waterfalls, great to visit.

Castlebridge



Figure 31 Castlebridge Mill

This large village is located on the Wexford-Gorey road with a population of around 1,800 people¹⁴. Famous for its preserved Watermill that is in the centre of the village, Castlebridge has a number of restaurants, takeaways, café, its own Community Garden, National School and Football Club.

Curracloe



Figure 32 Curracloe Beach

Curracloe will have access to the Wexford Extension by having an Access Route to Curracloe village and Curracloe Beach. Curracloe village itself has numerous restaurants, accommodation, caravan sites, a Centra, Curracloe National School and Curracloe United Football Club. But Curracloe is more famous for its beautiful beach which sees a massive increase in visitors during the summer as people from Wexford and across Ireland come to this beautiful beach. The beach is 11km long and is perfect for long walks, having a tan, playing in the sand or going for a

swim. It's hard to believe that this International Blue Flag beach was once the filming location for the Hollywood blockbuster, *Saving Private Ryan*. Down along the beach is the incredible Raven Nature Reserve. Consisting of several species of Pine Trees over an area of 600 acres, this reserve is a haven for birds, animals and plants including the Red Squirrel.

¹⁴ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

Wexford



Figure 33 Wexford Bridge over the River Slaney

Wexford Town is a maritime town at the end of the River Slaney at the entrance of Wexford Harbour. The town has a population of around 20,200 people¹⁵ and it has a wide variety of shops, restaurants, pubs, accommodation, five secondary schools, multiple primary schools, a ~~TUSEIT~~ Campus, a public swimming pool, GAA Club, Football Club, Golf Course, Horse Racing Track, a train station and several bus services. The town is pecked with the twin churches, the friary and Whites Hotel. The ruins of Selskar Abbey, Westgate Tower and the Town Wall within the town can date back to Viking times when Wexford was first

founded, giving the town its iconic narrow streets leading down to the Quay. The Quay is an amazing waterfront and is a great place for walking and chilling while looking across the Harbour and the iconic Wexford Bridge. Wexford is also well known for the Wexford Opera Festival which commences with spectacular fireworks display over the Harbour.

Ferrycarrig



Figure 34 Ferrycarrig Castle

Ferrycarrig is on the second Option for the route of the Wexford Extension and is one of the most iconic parts of County Wexford with Ferrycarrig Castle overlooking the River Slaney on one side, and on the other side the Ferrycarrig Round Tower. These monumental engineering achievements welcome all visitors to Wexford as they drive past in their car or on the train and hopefully one day, cyclists on the Wexford Extension. Nearby is Ferrycarrig Hotel and the Irish National Heritage Park which takes visitors back in time to show how our Irish ancestors lived throughout history.

Glynn



Figure 35 Heathfield Manor

The village of Glynn is a lovely small village just off the R730 road. It is home to the Glynn Barntown GAA Club, Glynn National School, its own Post Office and the Heathfield Manor, an estate house which is a lovely holiday home that has stunning views of the River Slaney.

¹⁵ https://www.citypopulation.de/en/ireland/towns/WX__wexford/

Arklow Extension



Figure 36 The ruins of Ferns Castle

The route of the Arklow Extension is undefined but it is proposed that the route will continue from Enniscorthy and through Ferns, Ballycanew, Courtown and Kilmichael Point where it will join onto the Proposed Wicklow Blueway to Arklow and further on to Wicklow, Bray and Dublin. An Access Route between Courtown and Gorey is also proposed. With extension to Arklow, it will allow users to visit many sights along the way including the historic ruins of Ferns Castle that was attacked by Oliver Cromwell. Just outside the lovely village of Ballycanew is the Ballymore Historical Features, which comprise a collection of local and family history. There is also the bustling seaside town of

Courtown, which has a lovely beach, a golf course, several holiday homes, the Pirates Cove entertainment centre and the Seal Rescue Centre where you can help feed the seals that have been rescued. The Arklow Extension will then pass under the shadow of Tara Hill before going around Kilmichael Point and joining onto the proposed Wicklow Blueway.

Land Ownership

After the railway was lifted, CIÉ then went along the line trying to sell the land as quickly as possible as they no longer wanted the responsibility of maintaining fences and dikes along the line. The asking price of land varied from £20/acre to nothing at all. Some farmers were happy to pay the £20 pounds but many farmers refused to purchase the land because most of the land was considered useless as the track foundation was still to be removed. The foundation consisted of clay and ballast which meant the farmers would have to extract the clay and thousands of fist sized rocks. Farmers also refused to buy the no-good land as the extra useless land meant higher land rates to pay and also, they would have to pay for the maintenance of fences and dikes themselves when it used to be paid by CIÉ.¹⁶

This left the land of the former track bed in various conditions where ownership of the land was uncertain, this will have to be examined during a feasibility study to determine who owns the land of the former track bed as land ownership falls under three categories, Registered Land under the Land Registry, the Registry of Deeds and Abandoned Land.

There is a public registry that shows all registered land in Ireland, this can be viewed on landdirect.ie¹⁷ Viewing this reveals that a lot of the former track bed is unregistered. Registered land is where all relevant details about the property and its ownership are entered on documents known as folios which form the registers maintained in the Land Registry. Property that is registered at the Land Registry is known as registered land, as every transaction on a property is registered on a folio. The folio is guaranteed by the State to be a confirmed record of the title to the property that it refers to.

However, unregistered land could also be registered under the Registry of Deeds. The Registry of Deeds was established in 1708 to register and file memorials of deeds or transfers of unregistered land. When a deed is lodged in the Registry of Deeds, it is not filed there permanently, it is returned to the party who lodged it for registration. The new signed deed becomes the latest deed showing the ownership of the property, adding to a chain of deeds that go back to when the property was first registered.¹⁸

If the land is not registered under the Land Registry or the Registry of Deeds, then it was most likely formally abandoned by CIÉ resulting in the surrender of land to the Local Authority which in this case would be the Wexford County Council.¹⁹

¹⁶ Doyle, C., 2002. Palace East to Macmine Railway. *Bree Parish Journal*, (8), pp.69-71.

¹⁷ Landdirect.ie. n.d. *landdirect.ie*. [online] Available at: <<https://www.landdirect.ie/pramap/>> [Accessed 13 June 2021].

¹⁸ Citizensinformation.ie. n.d. *Property deeds*. [online] Available at: <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/housing/owning_a_home/buying_a_home/property_deeds.html> [Accessed 13 June 2021].

¹⁹ Citizensinformation.ie. n.d. *Derelict sites*. [online] Available at: <https://www.citizensinformation.ie/en/environment/buildings_and_structures/derelict_sites.html> [Accessed 13 June 2021].

Current State of Route

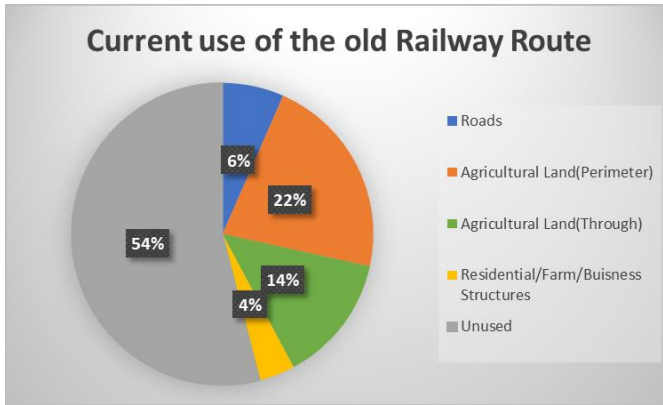


Figure 39 Pie Chart showing the Current use of the old Railway

After the sale of the railway land, large sections of the former railway line were leveled and repurposed. From looking at Google Maps, a pie chart was created to show the current use of the old railway line, from New Ross Tunnel to Macmine Junction, a total of 26.5km. This will help us understand what kind of land the route of the Wexford Greenway will be going through and where to make deviations to avoid going through valued land. Over half of the former railway line is still unused land which has overtime become overgrown with trees, briars and hedgerows and clearly shows the



Figure 38 Route of the railway still unused



Figure 37 Route of Railway that now passes through houses, farm buildings and a car dealership

route of the railway that used to occupy it. This unused land might have been the land that was unable to be sold or land that had been bought but never developed. 6% of the railway line was developed as part of the new Enniscorthy-New Ross road which took advantage the railways straight profile across Ballyanne bank to easily cross the land. 4% of the route had been built on by houses, businesses, expanding farms and includes former station buildings that are now private residences. If the greenway was to follow the exact path of the railway, it would have to go through several buildings and private residences.

A large chunk of the former railway line is now uses for agriculture and we have split this into two types, Perimeter and Through.

Agricultural land that is Perimeter, is when a landowner owned a field on one side of the railway and when the landowner bought the neighboring land of the railway, the landowner expanded the perimeter of the field to include the land of the railway. The red line shows the route of the railway and the blue lines show the former railway boundary which was leveled to expand neighboring fields to include the railway land.



Figure 40 Where fields were expanded to include former railway land



Figure 41 The route of the railway going through two large fields

Agricultural land that is Through, is when a landowner owns fields on both sides of the railway so that when the landowner bought the railway land in between, the landowner would level the railway land in order to connect the two fields. This would create one large field. If the greenway was to follow the exact path of the railway, it would have to go through this large field, reducing its productivity. When building the greenway, there should be as little destruction as possible. This means creating a greenway route that avoids going through any houses, businesses, farm buildings and other structures. This can be

done by deviating the greenway around the properties. Likewise, where the route of the old railway goes through agricultural land, the greenway will deviate around to avoid splitting large fields into two. To avoid these sections of the former railway line, the route of the greenway will have to deviate away from the railway route by using roads, other unused land and along the perimeters of fields. By going along roads, the roads used might need to be widened to accommodate the greenway and by going along the perimeters of fields, this will create the least impact on fields rather than going through them. This will mean that between New Ross Tunnel and Macmine Junction, the pie chart now changes to show the least destructive route that the greenway will use.

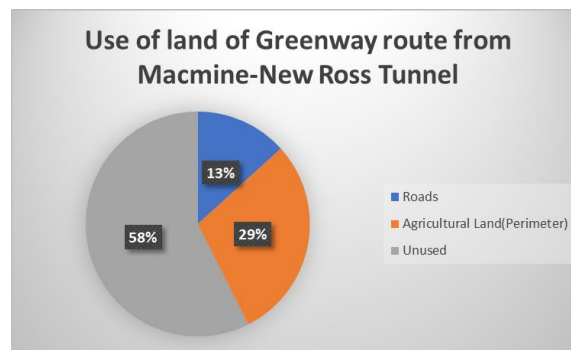
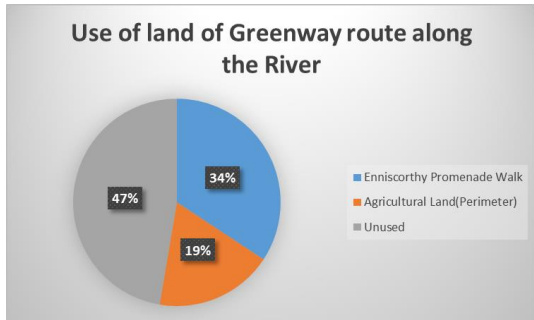


Figure 42 Use of land of Greenway route from New Ross Tunnel-Macmine



The Greenway also goes along the River Slaney between Macmine Junction and Enniscorthy. So a pie chart was created for this section as well. Most of it is unused land as the route goes along the river bank but does sometimes go along the perimeter of adjacent agricultural land. The route will also use the existing Enniscorthy Promenade Walk which takes up 34% of this section.

Figure 43 Use of land of Greenway along the River

By combining the two sections, the overall use of the Wexford Greenway is shown in this pie chart. The majority of land is unused, forming mostly of the old railway line but also river banks. The Wexford Greenway will also go along roads, including the N30 road at Ballyanne but also other minor roads where the greenway has to make deviations around residential properties and farms. This may mean widening of minor roads to accommodate the greenway in a safe manner. The Wexford Greenway will use the Enniscorthy Promenade Walk for 9% of the route whereby the walk may require upgrades. For just over a quarter of the route, the greenway will be going along the perimeters of agricultural lands. This is the least destructive way possible for the greenway to bridge the gaps between the unused sections of the greenway.

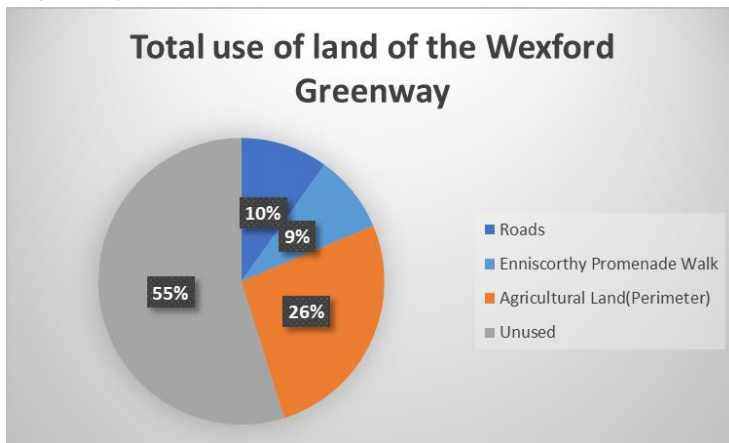


Figure 44 Total use of land of the Wexford Greenway

Construction

Construction of the Wexford Greenway will be very typical of other greenways being built around the country. The width of the Wexford Greenway will be 3m wide with an asphalt base and will have a mesh fence border to prevent greenway users from going off the greenway and onto private land.



Figure 45 The Waterford Greenway with a farmers crossing

At points along the greenway where local farmers may need to cross the greenway, a gated crossing will be provided. The gates will be as long as the greenway is wide, this is so that when the gates are open and locked for farming purposes, the greenway will be fully sealed off. This is to prevent any greenway users from crossing while the crossing is in use for farming purposes such as the transfer of machinery or livestock. The gates will also provide a barrier to prevent livestock from breaking out onto the greenway when the crossing is being used for the transfer to livestock. The base of the crossing will be concrete to prevent wear from farm machinery and livestock crossing.



Figure 46 The Waterford Greenway crossing a public road

For when the Wexford Greenway crosses over roads on the level, there will be gates on the approach to the crossing, this will mean that cyclists will have to dismount to prevent cyclists from cycling straight onto the road. When crossing the road, the crossing can be marked by a zebra crossing.



Figure 47 The Waterford Greenway going under a private lane



Figure 48 The Waterford Greenway going under a dual carriageway

The Wexford Greenway will cross many busy roads and private lanes and it may be preferred for greenway users and local land owners for the route of the greenway to pass underneath rather than on the level. This can be done by building a concrete underpass.



Figure 49 The Waterford Greenway going over a dual carriageway

Alternatively, the Wexford Greenway can pass over using an over bridge.

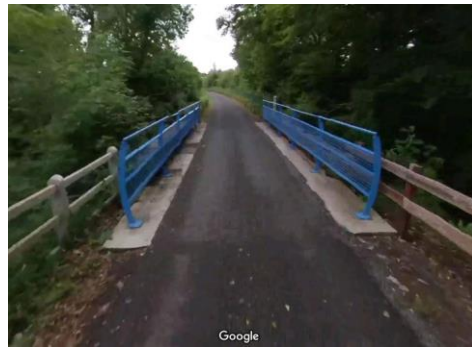


Figure 50 The Waterford Greenway going over a small river

The Wexford Greenway will also be crossing many small roads, lanes, ditches and small rivers. Originally, the railway would have crossed over them using girder bridges but most of these were lifted so new bridges will have to be put in place.



Figure 51 Types of designated Cycle/Pedestrian Paths

There are several points along the Wexford Greenway and the Access Routes where a designated cycle/pedestrian path runs parallel to a road. To keep greenway users safe from road traffic, a barrier between them needs to be put in place. This can be done using several methods such as fencing, bollards or an elevated cycle/pedestrian path.



The route of the old North Wexford railway is now either wasteland or used as agricultural land or residential property. Greenways are very flexible and can avoid Residential properties and the division of agricultural land, by changing the route of the greenway to deviate around the property by going along the perimeter of the property or by using roads, lanes and small rivers to get around. This means that the route of the greenway can be built without the hassle of disturbing residents and disrupting agricultural practices.

Figure 52 An example of a Greenway using a local road to deviate around a private residence

Funding

In order to build the Wexford Greenway, a feasibility study must be undertaken to gather information regarding the route of the greenway and the challenges and costs of the greenway's construction. Looking at Carlow's Barrow Valley Greenway, which is approximately the same length and in the same condition as the Wexford Greenway. The Barrow Valley Greenway is 38.8km long and mostly consists of unused land that was the former railway line, which was lifted in the 1960s. The Barrow Valley Greenway does still go through sections of farmland and has several structures such as bridges, viaducts and station buildings that will need to be examined. Carlow County Council received €60,000²⁰ for a feasibility study for the Barrow Valley Greenway and since the Wexford Greenway is very similar to the Barrow Valley Greenway, a feasibility study would cost approximately the same.

²⁰ <https://www.stickybottle.com/latest-news/irish-greenways-funded-next-year-2022-county-breakdown-projects/>

Integration

Greenways have become extremely popular over the past few years resulting in many greenways being built, but the Wexford Greenway will be part of something much more than that. The Wexford Greenway would be part of a chain of greenways between Dublin and Cork. As the Wexford Greenway is part of such an important route of connecting Ireland's two biggest cities, the Wexford Greenway will be a link in a greenway highway resulting in a large amount of traffic and users creating a huge benefit to County Wexford communities. It is integral to integrate with other greenways, walking paths, public transport and cycleways within towns and also villages that are off the greenway. One of the benefits of a greenway is that it is sustainable travel and in order to promote sustainable travel the Greenway must be connected to villages and public transport to encourage people to cycle instead of driving to and from the Greenway and to not be car dependent.



Figure 53 Map of connecting greenways

As the Wexford Greenway starts in New Ross, integration with the South Eastern Greenway is a must with no barriers or obstacles of any kind. This will allow users to freely travel across the Wexford Greenway to the South Eastern Greenway and the Deise Greenway to New Ross, Waterford, Kilmacthomas and Dungarvan. The South Eastern Greenway is currently under construction and will not be open to the public till the end of 2021²¹. New Ross is also the start of the Norman Way, a walking trail that goes from New Ross to Hook Head and across Wexford's south coast to Kilmore Quay and Rosslare Europort²² running parallel to the Euro Velo Route 1²³.

²¹ <https://www.wexfordcoco.ie/community/recreational-and-community-development-projects/south-east-greenway>

²² <https://thenormanway.com/>

²³ <https://en.eurovelo.com/ev1>

The Deise Greenway has been very successful over the past few years and has been the inspiration of many greenways across the country and its success can only grow with the construction of the Wexford Greenway. Currently the Deise Greenway ends at Dungarvan but there are plans for the Deise Greenway to be extended to Ballyduff by the Waterford County Council and extended again to Mallow by the Cork County Council²⁴. The construction of a greenway between



Figure 54 The Deise/Wateford Greenway

Youghal and Middleton also opens up an opportunity to connect the two greenways and possibly extend to Cork City, this network of greenways would allow the Wexford Greenway to connect with Waterford and Cork.



Figure 55 The Borris Viaduct, part of the proposed Barrow Valley Greenway

At Palace East there is plans to build the Barrow Valley Greenway by the Carlow County Council. The Carlow County Council has already received €60,000 for a feasibility study of the Barrow Valley Greenway which is currently ongoing²⁵. The Barrow Valley Greenway will serve Palace East, Ballywilliam, St. Mullins, Borris, Goresbridge and Muine Bheag. The Barrow Valley Greenway connects with the Barrow Way, a walking route which runs alongside the River Barrow which connects to places such as Graiguenamanagh, Carlow, Athy and Lowtown. At Lowtown, the Barrow Way walk connects to the Grand Canal which serves Shannon Harbour,

Tullamore, Edenderry, Sallins and Dublin²⁶.

²⁴ <https://waterford-news.ie/2020/07/29/feasibility-study-to-examine-potential-waterford-greenway-extension/>

²⁵ <https://www.stickybottle.com/latest-news/irish-greenways-funded-next-year-2022-county-breakdown-projects/>

²⁶ Waterwaysireland.org. n.d. *Waterways Ireland | Places To Go | Activity Type*. [online] [Accessed 13 June 2021].

There is also the Wexford-Rosslare Greenway that is currently under feasibility study, this will connect Wexford, Rosslare, Kilrane and Rosslare Europort. In Wicklow, there is the Wicklow Blueway which has also received a feasibility study for building a Blueway along the Wicklow coast from Kilmichael Point, through Arklow, Brittas Bay, Wicklow, Greystones and Bray where it joins the Booterstown Greenway. The Booterstown Greenway has already been built and goes from Bray through Shankill, Cornelscourt, Blackrock and Booterstown. From Booterstown there is several cyclepaths to bring people into Dublin.

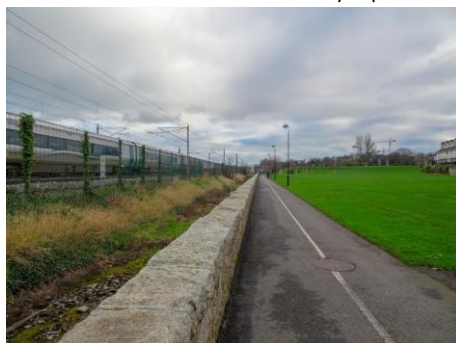


Figure 56 The Booterstown Greenway



Figure 57 Iarnród Éireann/Irish Rail Intercity Train

The Wexford Greenway must have good access to Public Transport in order to promote sustainable travel by using public transport instead of driving to and from the Greenway and to not be car dependent. For the Wexford Greenway, the Rosslare Europort to Dublin train service has train stations at Enniscorthy and Wexford.

Some bus services allow bikes onboard but are limited to many how bikes they can carry onboard, but commuter trains can carry a lot more and intercity trains are soon to have new carriages that are specifically designed to carry

more bikes. This will make rail travel easier for cyclists who wish to use the train to reach the greenway²⁷. It must be remembered that although Ireland is not a railway centric country, countries across Europe are. European tourists would be more inclined to use the rail network to travel around Ireland and to places such as the greenway. There should be a valid rail connection between either side of the greenway, specifically the use of the Wexford-Waterford Railway. This will allow users who, for example, have spent the whole day cycling from Enniscorthy to Waterford and wants to get back home to Enniscorthy. They can do so by getting the train back from Waterford to Enniscorthy. Likewise, if the user wanted to pick up from where they left off at Waterford, they can get the train from Enniscorthy to Waterford and continue cycling down the Waterford Greenway. Rail connectivity is essential for the productivity of the Wexford Greenway.

²⁷ <https://irishcycle.com/2021/07/29/irish-rail-trains-to-get-extra-bicycle-space/comment-page-1/>

There are three bus companies along the Wexford Greenway. Wexford Bus has stops at Enniscorthy and New Ross. Bus Éireann has bus stops at Enniscorthy, Ballyhogue, Sparrowsland, Galbally, Adamstown, Ballyanne and New Ross. Local Link was bus stops at Enniscorthy, Clonroche, Palace, Ballyanne and New Ross.



Figure 59 Bus Éireann Service



Figure 58 Cycle path in Dublin

Currently, only Wexford town has a few cycle paths however none of them reach into the town centre. If the Greenway is to bring economic growth to New Ross, Wexford and Enniscorthy, they must have integrated cycle paths to bring greenway users off the greenway and into the town to visit local attractions, shops and restaurants.

Route in Detail

The following shows the route of the Proposed Wexford Greenway in full, showing the way of the route, the places served and places of interest. This will include a string of maps that follow the proposed route of the Wexford Greenway starting in New Ross and ending in Enniscorthy. The Wexford Greenway is shown as purple, Access Routes are shown in blue and places of interest are shown in red. Along the route, there are a few places where an issue with the proposed route might occur, if this happens, an alternative route might have to be taken that deviates from the original planned route. These Alternative routes will also be shown in the following map images and will be displayed in orange, pink and yellow. All the following images are sourced from Google Maps, all rights reserved.

The Route of the Wexford Greenway



The South Eastern Greenway will come up from New Ross, across the Red Bridge and through Mountelliot Tunnel. Emerging from the Mountelliot Tunnel East Portal, the Wexford Greenway will start and will continue on the railway alignment while the South Eastern Greenway heads back towards New Ross Town. The Wexford Greenway will head towards the site of Ballyanne Bank, which is now the route of the N30 road. The Wexford Greenway will keep to the south side of the N30 road where most of the railway alignment still remains and will also maintain the original height of the Ballyanne Bank. A turn off will be possible for visitors who would want of take the Ballyanne Loop. The Ballyanne Loop follows the route of what used to be the main Dublin-Waterford Trunk Road, T7, before it was made obsolete by the construction of the N30 Road. As the road was made obsolete, the Ballyanne Loop would be very quiet, with only local traffic. The route would pass by the Ballyanne Bar and underneath the two giant railway arches that went underneath Ballyanne Bank. The route then rejoins the Wexford Greenway at Ballintober Bridge.

The



Greenway will maintain the original height of the Ballyanne Bank till a designated Observation Point which will provide visitors the views of the surrounding landscape similar to the views experienced when travelling by train back in the day. At the Observation Point, there will be information boards explaining the history of Ballyanne Bank where multiple railway sabotages took place during the Civil War. The Wexford Greenway will then gradually descend to the same level as the N30 Road and continue to run parallel to it. This map shows where the Ballyanne Bank Railway Arches are which are visible when using the Ballyanne Loop.

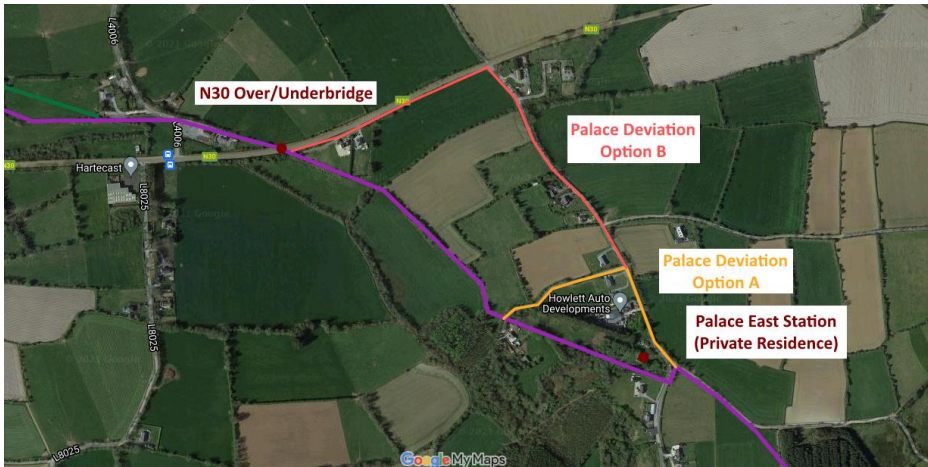


Near Ballintober Bridge, the Wexford Greenway will cross over the N30 road with an overbridge and the Ballyanne Loop will rejoin the Wexford Greenway. Ballintober Bridge is a stone arch bridge that once carried the L8032 road over the railway. The bridge itself is half buried and will need to be assessed if a greenway can travel underneath the L8032 road. An alternative route, the Ballintober Bridge Deviation, would be to cross the L8032 road on the level, however safety measures will have to be made due to being so close to this T-Junction.

The Wexford Greenway then passes through the Ballintober Equestrian, which has trekking paths surrounding the old railway cutting. The trekking paths, highlighted in red, cross paths with the route of the greenway twice. For the safety of the greenway users and the safety of the horses and their riders, the trekking paths and greenway should be kept separate with bridges crossing over the old railway cutting to allow the trekking paths over the greenway. Consultation with Ballintober Equestrian will be required. Nearby is the Berkeley Costume and Toy Musuem as well as the walking paths of Lacken Hill, site of the Lacken Hill 1798 Camp Site.

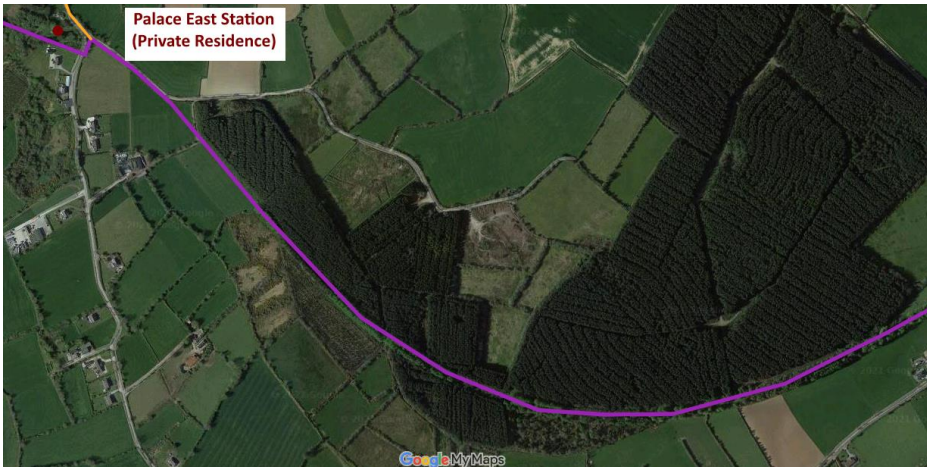


Approaching Ballinveggia, the greenway branches off the local road to follow the edge of a small field before crossing another local road at the point where the railway level crossing used to be. The greenway continues alongside a farm lane before running alongside the edge of a forest until meeting the L40021 road. Going parallel to the road just like the railway did, the greenway will continue before crossing the road at yet another site of a railway level crossing before continuing along the railway alignment to where the Wexford Greenway meets the proposed Barrow Valley Greenway, currently under a feasibility study by the Carlow County Council. As the greenway gets very close to multiple fields, a few deviations are suggested if needed: Option A sticks to the local roads before following the edge of a field back to the top of the forest. Option B keeps the route entirely on the road.

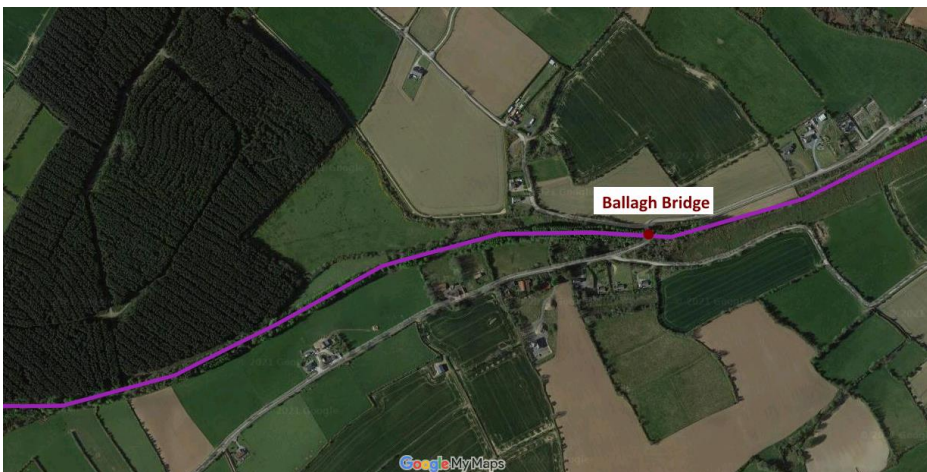


After joining the Proposed Barrow Valley Greenway, the route of the Wexford Greenway passes over the L4006 road before following the edge of a few fields and then crosses over/under the N30 road. The N30 road is on an embankment so an under bridge might be logical however might involve heavy earth works and disruption to road traffic. An over bridge avoids this but will mean a steep gradient for the greenway.

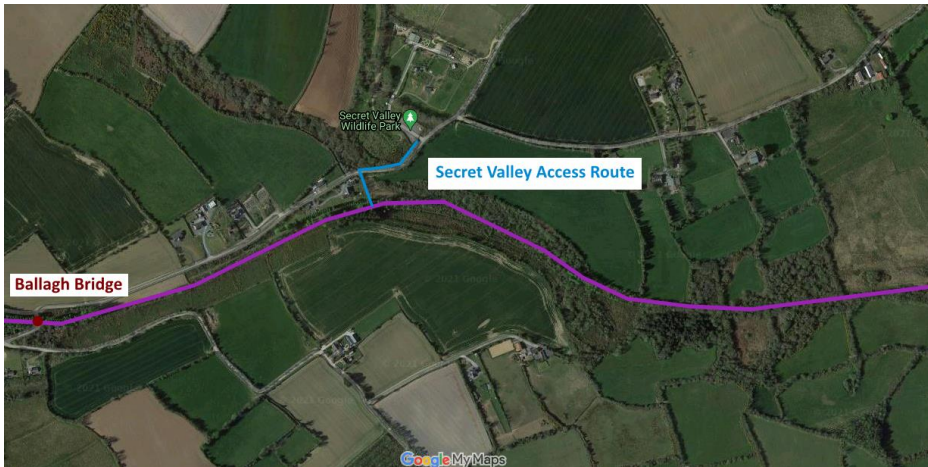
The route of the greenway then follows the edge of a few fields until coming to an old railway bridge which allows a residential lane over the railway. The greenway will go underneath the bridge and follow the railway alignment towards Palace East Station, passing the remains of the railway signal cabin, goods bank as well as the preserved Palace East Station building and platforms. Here there will be information given on the history of the station. The current owner is very co-operative with the Wexford Greenway going through their property and is open to the idea of a CPO of the entire property, including the station building on the condition that all railway structures are fully restored and maintained and that the station building finds a new lease of life as a museum, shop, restaurant or café. The greenway then continues along the edge of a field while also using a farmers lane to get back to the old railway alignment. Consultation must be given to the residents of Palace East Station. If landowners are unhappy with suggested route, two alternative options are suggested. Option A uses the residential lane mentioned previously to get the greenway to the local road. Option B uses an all road approach.



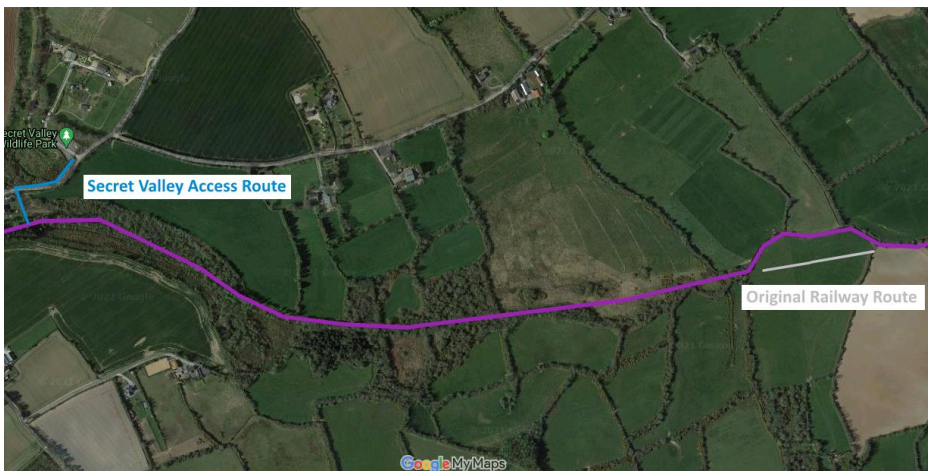
The greenway then follows the route of old railway alignment through Ballagh Forest.



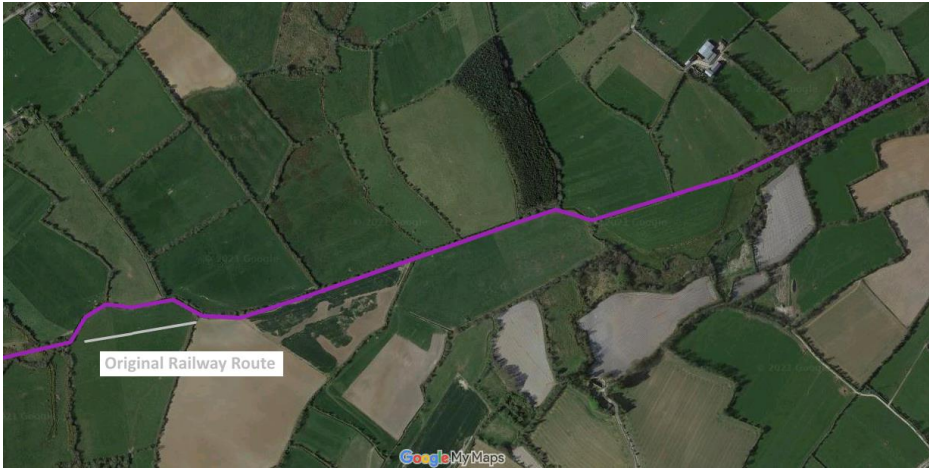
The greenway continues to follow the route of old railway alignment after emerging out of Ballagh Forest and running parallel to the Aughnaglaur River towards Ballagh Bridge which carries the local road over the old railway.



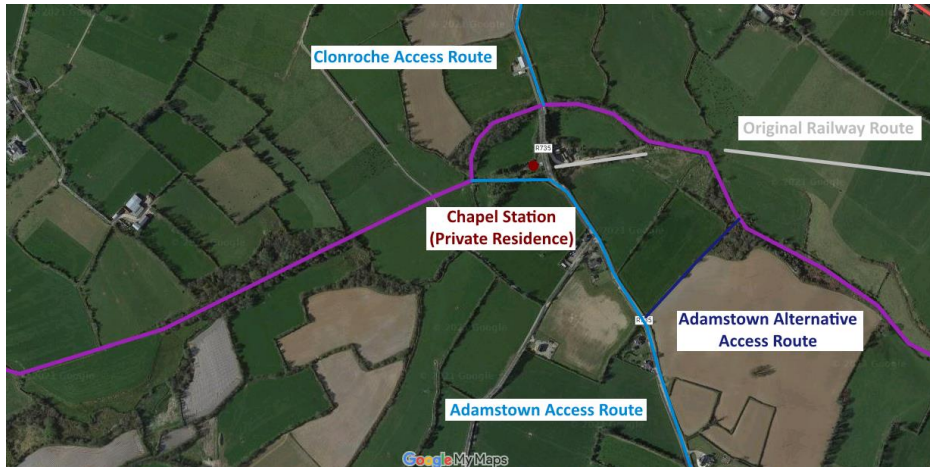
From Ballagh Bridge, the greenway follows the old railway alignment. Nearby is the Secret Valley Wildlife Park and Zoo, where an access route will be provided to allow greenway users to visit. The access route will run parallel to a nearby stream before following the local road to the entrance to the Park and Zoo.



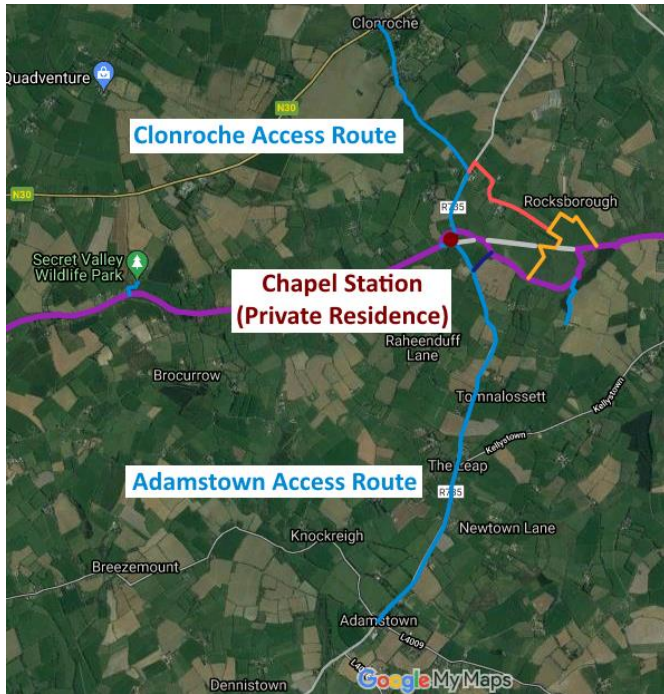
The greenway continues to follow the route of the old railway alignment until reaching a point where part of the railway alignment has been converted into a field. Here the greenway will run parallel to the Aughnaglaur River while also running along the edge of the field.



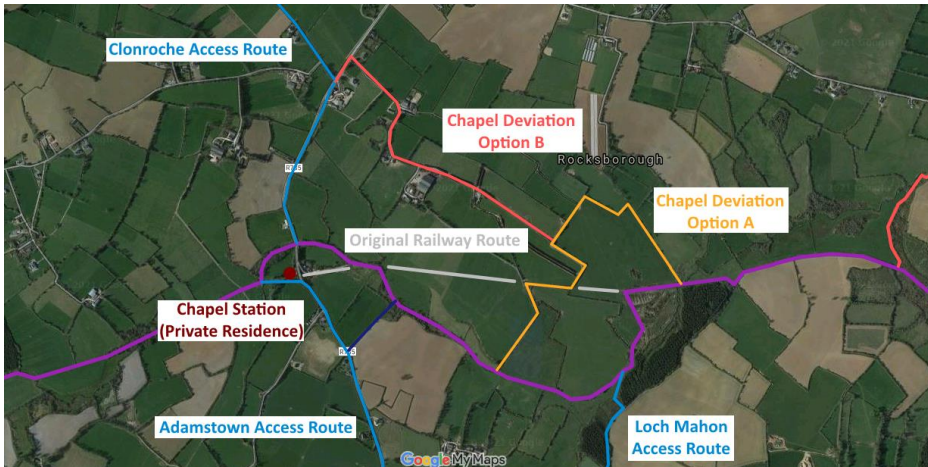
The route of the old railway alignment is now partially removed leaving only the boundaries behind. The route of the greenway will follow these boundaries while also running alongside the edges of fields before joining back to the old railway alignment.



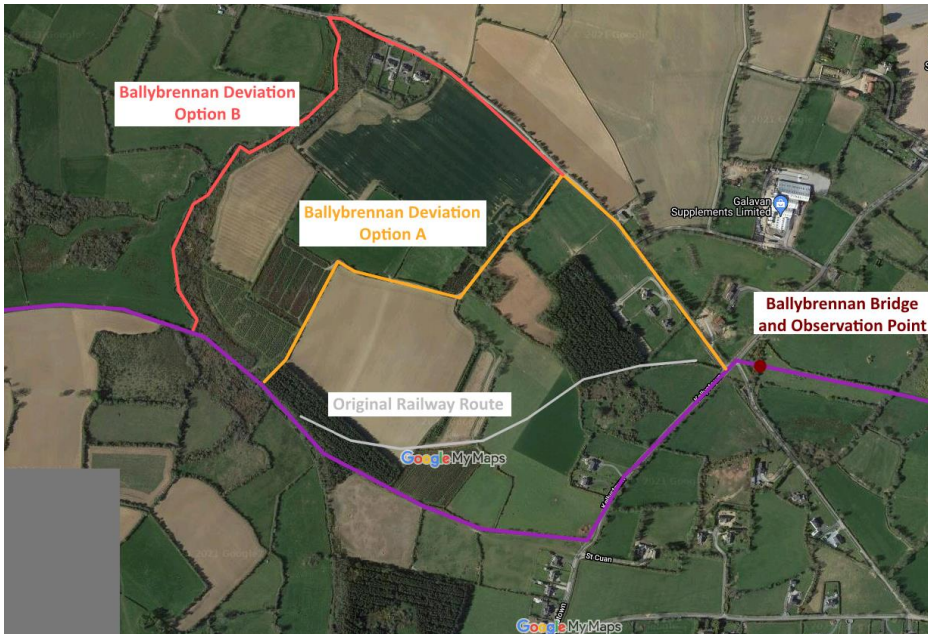
The route of the greenway then approaches Chapel Station. Chapel Station is now a private residence and on the other side of the R735 Road, there is a nearby farm and the route of the old railway is now mostly fields, which should all be avoided. To avoid this the greenway follows the path of the Aughnaglaun River which curves around the station, the farm and the nearby fields. Chapel is also where the Access routes to Adamstown and Clonroche meet whereby the Adamstown Access Route uses the lane way to the old Chapel Station Goods yard to join onto the Wexford Greenway while the Clonroche Access Route joins at the bridge over the Aughnaglaun River. It is important to make sure the routes don't cross over the Chapel railway bridge as it is a dangerous narrow section of road. Consultation may be required for access via the old Chapel Station Goods yard and if the present owner is not satisfied with the proposal, an Alternative Access Route for Adamstown has been suggested. Information boards explain the history of the station should be provided.



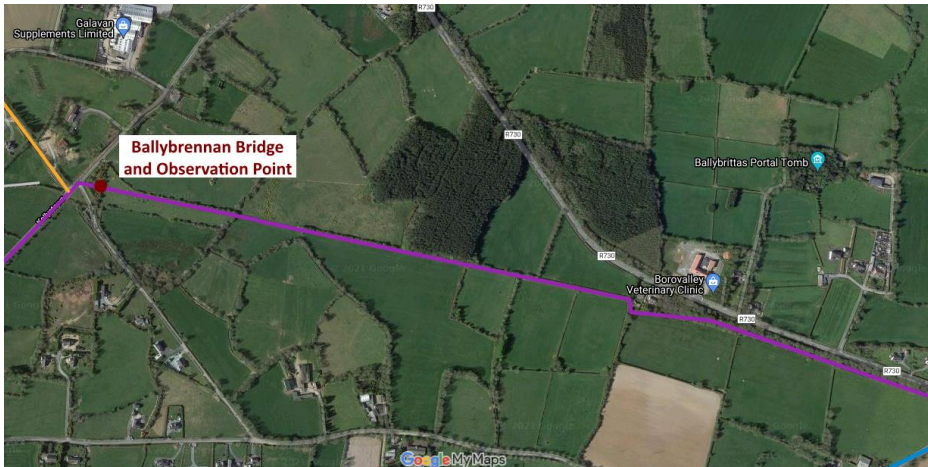
For the Clonroche and Adamstown Access Routes, both roads will have cycle/pedestrian designated lanes. The Clonroche Access Route is 3km long, starting at the Clonroche National School and continues through Clonroche, down the L4005 and R735 roads to join the Wexford Greenway at the bridge over the Aughnaglaur River. The Adamstown Access Route is 4.6km long, starting at Coláiste Abbain with access to Adamstown National School and Adamstown GAA Club. From Adamstown it follows the R735 road through the Leap and joins on the Wexford Greenway using the old Chapel Station Goods yard.



Beyond Chapel, a lot of the former rail line is now used for farmland. To avoid disrupting the farmland, the route of the greenway runs alongside the Aughnaglaur River with an access route to the Loch Mahon Fishing Lakes. If local land owners are not satisfied with the proposed route, two alternative deviations are suggested: Option A goes along nearby field boundaries before joining back to the old railway alignment. Option B uses a mostly on-road approach using the Clonroche Access route and local laneways through Chapel Village before partially using the Option A route to join back to the originally proposed greenway route.



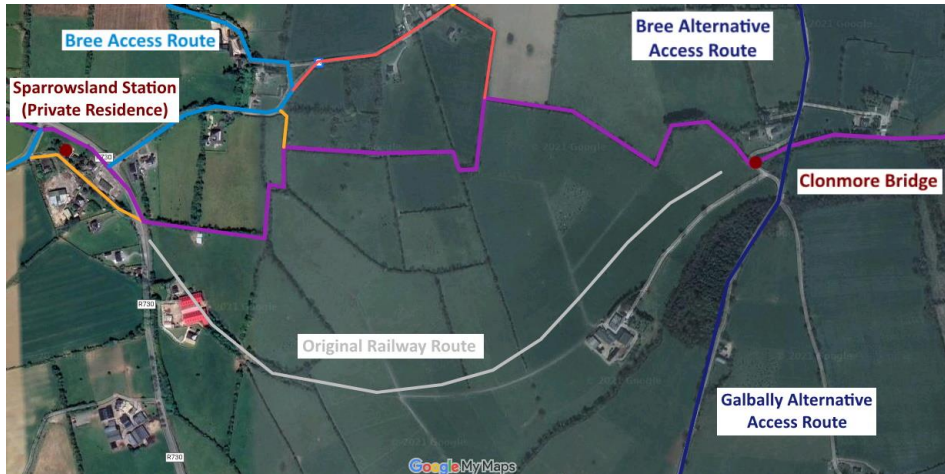
The greenway continues to follow the old railway alignment but on the approach to Ballybrennan Bridge, the old railway alignment has been turned into farmland. To avoid this, the greenway goes along the edge of field boundaries to join onto the Kellystown Road which it follows to Ballybrennan Bridge. If this option does not suit, two deviation options are suggested: Option A uses a farm lane to join the L8019 which it uses to get to Ballybrennan Bridge. Similarly, Option B goes along the Aughnaglaur River to access the L8019 which it uses to get to Ballybrennan Bridge.



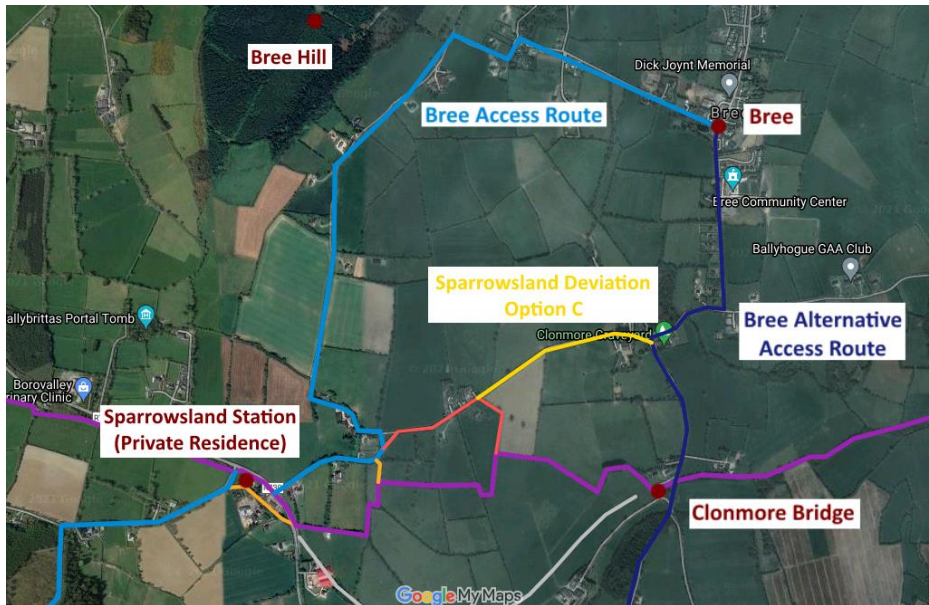
Ballybrennan Bridge used to carry a local road over the railway but after the railway closed, the road was re-routed leaving the bridge redundant. The intention is for the Wexford Greenway to go under the Ballybrennan Bridge just like the railway did and using the top of the Ballybrennan Bridge as an observation point over the surrounding landscape. The route of the greenway continues along the old railway alignment with only a slight deviation around two residences opposite the Borovalley Veterinary Clinic before continuing along the old railway alignment parallel to the R730 road.



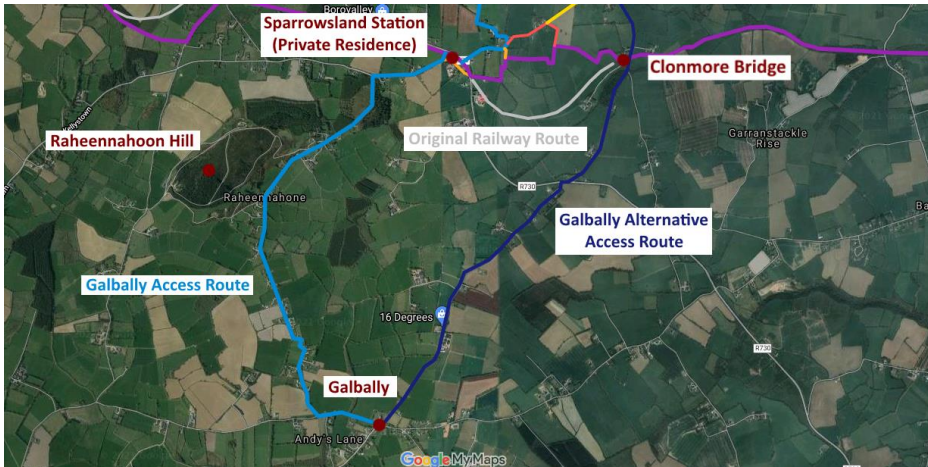
The Wexford Greenway approaches Sparrowsland Station which is now a private residence and where the Bree Access Route and Galbally Access Route meet the Wexford Greenway. At Sparrowsland, the old railway alignment is now part of a residence and a car dealership, so the route of the greenway goes around using the R730 road. However, this road can be busy so an alternative deviation is suggested using the much quieter back road behind Sparrowsland Station. Information boards that explain the history of the station should be provided. The old railway alignment then passes through a large farm and several fields to reach Clonmore Bridge. To avoid this, the route of the greenway zig-zags along the boundaries of several fields to reach Clonmore Bridge, this is shown in full in the next map image. If this route is not suitable, three alternative deviations are suggested: Option A uses the Bree Access Route before branching off using an old farm lane to join back to the proposed greenway route. Option B also uses the Bree Access route but stays on the L2048 road before joining onto the proposed greenway route. Option C is shown in full in the next map image and takes an all-road approach, staying on the L2048 road to Clonmore before heading towards Clonmore Bridge to join back onto the old railway alignment.



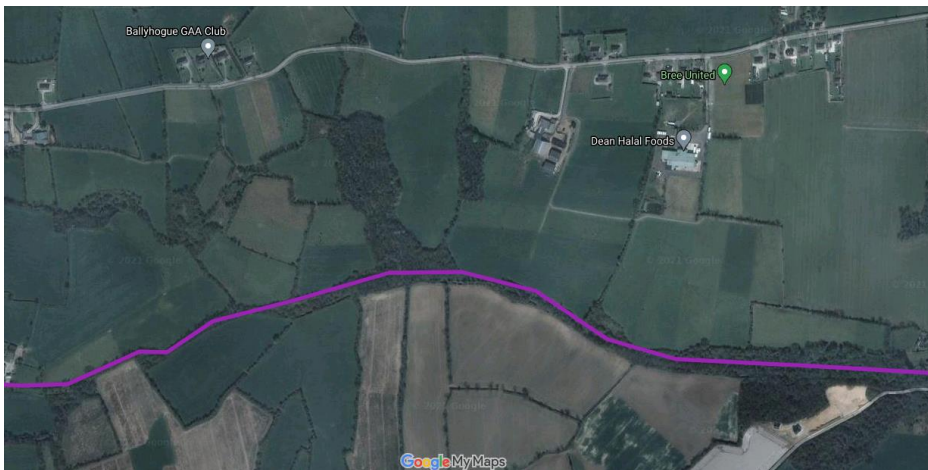
After Zig-zagging across the edge of fields to avoid splitting agricultural land, the Greenway reaches Clonmore Bridge where it joins back onto the old railway alignment. Clonmore Bridge had its metal girders removed but the stone abutments are still there and can provide support for a new bridge to be installed. The Greenway then continues to follow the old railway alignment.



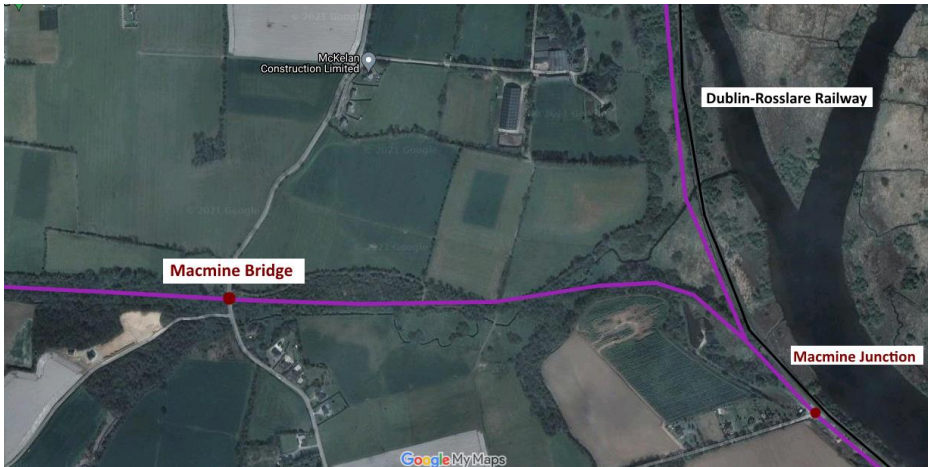
The Bree Access Route is 3.1km long, starting at Bree National School before going through Bree towards Bree Hill and using a local road to go through Sparrowsland to join the Wexford Greenway. The Bree Access Route goes along quite local roads and allows users to access Bree Hill for its walking trails. However, this route may be too narrow to allow designated cycle/pedestrian lanes to be built along the road. A Bree Alternative Access Route is suggested using a wider but busier road. The route is 1.4km long and starts at Bree and goes through Clonmore to Clonmore Bridge where it joins onto the Wexford Greenway. If the Alternative Access Route is chosen, it is highly recommended that the route should not pass through the hairpin bend under Clonmore Bridge as it is a dangerous bend.



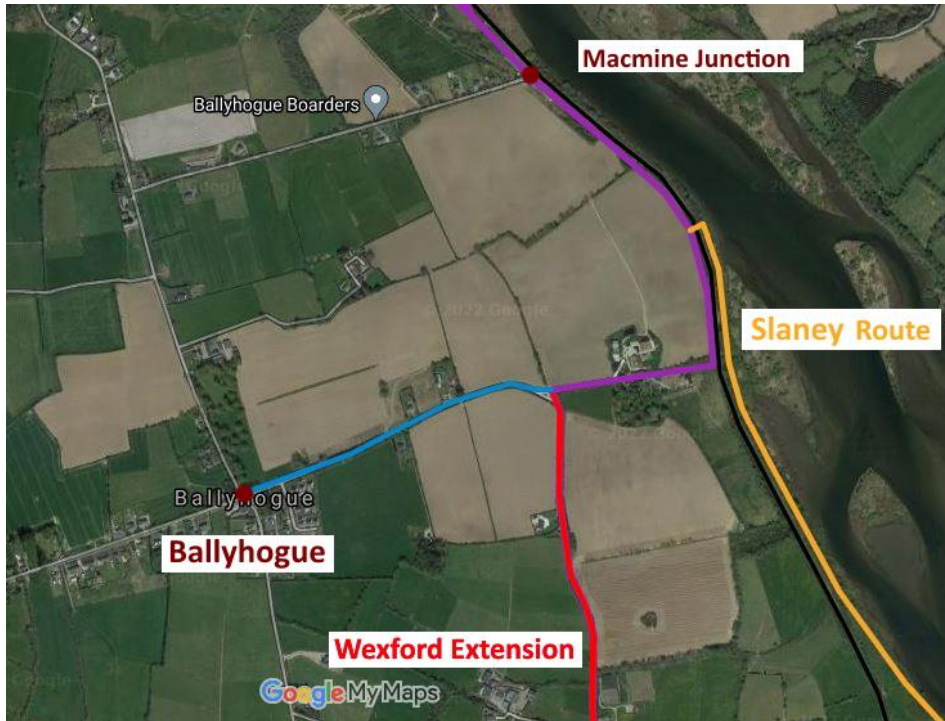
The Galbally Access Route is 4.4km long and starts at Galbally National School and heads through Raheennahoon and then joins onto the Wexford Greenway at Sparrowsland. The Galbally Access Route goes along quite local roads and allows users to access Raheennahoon Hill for its walking trails. However, this route may be too narrow to allow designated cycle/pedestrian lanes to be built along the road. A Galbally Alternative Access Route is suggested using a wider but busier road. The route is 3.7km long and starts at Galbally National School and goes towards Clonmore Bridge where it joins onto the Wexford Greenway. If the Alternative Access Route is chosen, it is highly recommended that the route should not pass through the hairpin bend under Clonmore Bridge as it is a dangerous bend.



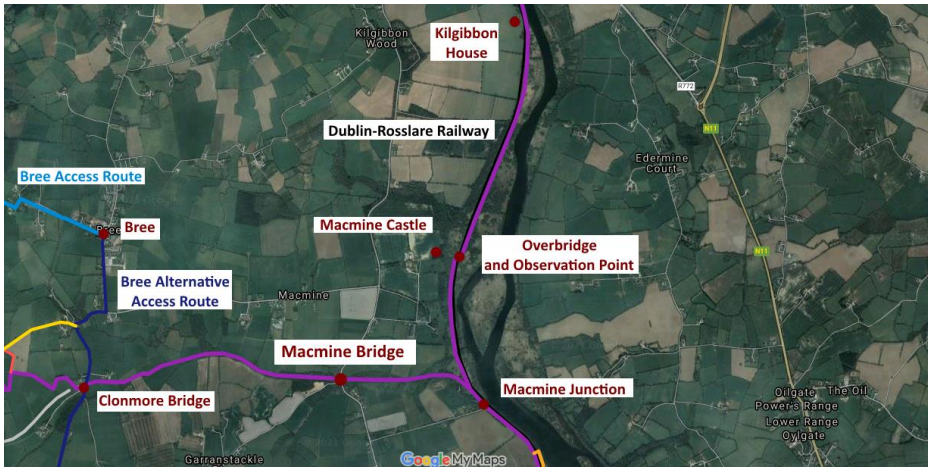
Continuing from Clonmore Bridge, the route of the greenway follows the old railway alignment which is parallel to the Clonmore River.



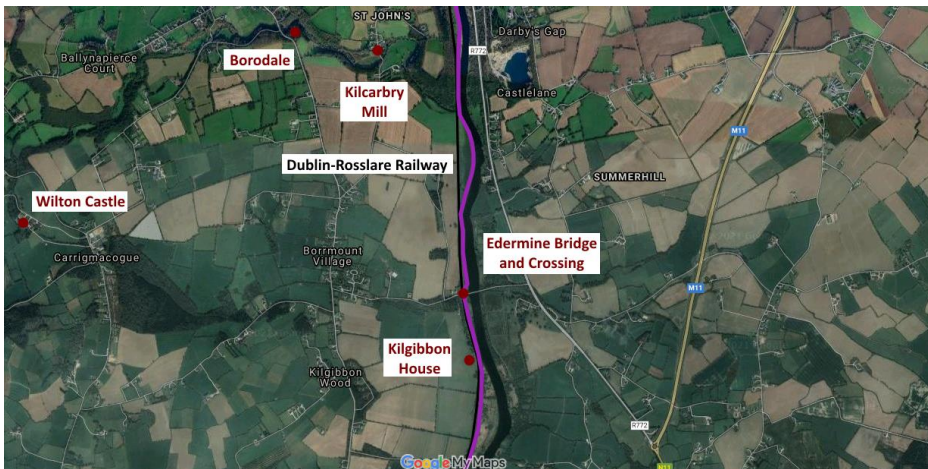
The route of the greenway continues to follow the old railway alignment parallel to the Clonmore River as it goes under the Macmine Bridge and towards the site of the Macmine Junction Station. It is here where the old railway joined the Dublin-Rosslare Railway. Only one of the stations platforms survives making ample space for facilities. Information boards that explain the history of the station should be provided. The Wexford Greenway then heads north to Enniscorthy parallel to the Dublin-Rosslare Railway but there is also an access route for Ballyhoge.



The Wexford Greenway will continue slightly past Macmine Junction where it heads south, running parallel to the railway before heading inland past an old watermill and joining onto a local road. At this point a kilometre-long Access Route branches off to Ballyhogue. The future proposed Wexford Extension then continues towards Bellevue and onto Wexford. The Slaney route which runs along the bank of the River Slaney will also be part of the future proposed Wexford Extension.



Leaving Macmine Junction, the Wexford Greenway runs in parallel to the Dublin-Rosslare Railway. With the railway being so close by, the greenway must be a suitable distance away from the railway and the danger of passing trains throughout the length of the greenway. The greenway crosses over the railway by an over bridge which allows people to view the ruins of Macmine Castle as well as King Island and the River Slaney. Information boards on the history of Macmine Castle should be provided. The greenway continues parallel to the railway and passes the ruins of Kilgibbon House on the way towards Edermine.



On reaching Edermine, the greenway crosses the L2050 road on the level before continuing along the banks of the River Slaney towards Enniscorthy. Once crossing over the River Boro, the Wexford Greenway will meet the proposed extension of the Enniscorthy Promenade Walk which proposes to extend the walk along the River Boro to Kilcarbry Mill and Borodale.



The Wexford Greenway proposes that the Enniscorthy Promenade Walk be upgraded to allow pedestrians and cyclists to use the walk as part of the Wexford Greenway. This will mean that the Wexford Greenway will go along the River Slaney with views of St. Senan's Hospital before arriving at Enniscorthy. The end of the Wexford Greenway will be at the new Enniscorthy Bridge opposite Abbey Square where cycle paths within the town will take visitors to places of interest such as Enniscorthy Castle, the 1798 Rebellion Centre, Vinegar Hill, schools, restaurants, shops, pubs, accommodation and leisure. The construction of the Wexford Greenway will consider the future extension towards Arklow as the final step of completing a chain of Greenways connecting Cork to Dublin.