THIRD-PARTY PLANNING APPEAL

Request for modification of the Ballinalea residential layout to protect existing residential amenity, safe access and supporting village infrastructure

FINAL THIRD-PARTY APPEAL • 1 NOVEMBER 2026

Planning file	26/60290 (ePlanning 2660290)
Planning authority decision	Wicklow County Council - Notification of Decision to Grant with 29 conditions, 8 October 2026
Applicant / development	Rycroft Estates Limited - 87 homes and associated crèche, roads, parking and landscaping, Ballinalea, Ashford
Appellants	John and Eileen Snelgrove, 1 Ashford Oaks, Ballinalea, Ashford, Co. Wicklow, A67 YP02
Appeal to	An Coimisiún Pleanála

Our principal request

We ask the Commission to facilitate a suitably revised scheme which omits Units 47–51 and incorporates the released land into an enlarged, landscaped recreational open space extending towards Unit 52. Subject to an acceptable redesign and necessary safeguards, this would leave a development of 82 homes instead of 87.

We support the principle of new homes on appropriately planned land in Ashford. Our appeal is not intended to stop housing development as such. It seeks a proportionate change to the most sensitive part of the layout, where the revised houses still adversely affect our established residence at No. 1 Ashford Oaks. [R1–R3, R12]

Priorities, in order

- Protect No. 1 Ashford Oaks: remove Units 47–51, remedy overlooking and retain effective boundary screening.
- Ensure the L1096 entrance and routes into Ashford are safe for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers.
- Assess nearby housing growth against realistic village-service capacity, and secure timely delivery of infrastructure.

If the Commission concludes that the essential layout changes cannot lawfully or satisfactorily be secured by amendment or conditions in this appeal, we request refusal of permission in its present form. [R3, R4]

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1 Why Units 47–51 should be omitted

A distinctive existing home has not been fully addressed

No. 1 Ashford Oaks is situated on an elevated, sloping site. Its bedrooms are at ground-floor level, but its kitchen, dining room, living room and permitted external balcony are at first-floor level. The location and height of rooms used during the day are therefore especially relevant to overlooking, perceived enclosure and privacy. Our original Council submission included photographic evidence of the outlook and the relationship to the former taller units. [R1]

We welcome the applicant's revision of Units 47–51 from three-storey G1/H forms to two-storey Types Q and R. However, reducing the height does not answer whether five dwellings should remain in this constrained edge-of-site position so close to established homes. The planning concern is not a claimed right to an unchanged distant view: it is the effect on habitable rooms, balcony use, private garden amenity and the overall quality of the layout. [R1–R3]

The Council's assessment does not settle our particular situation

In Further Information Item 12, the Council accepted the revised two-storey Units 50–51 and an approximate minimum 8 m setback in relation to Nos. 2 and 3 Grangelea. We acknowledge that assessment, but it does not provide a property-specific assessment of the first-floor living spaces at No. 1 Ashford Oaks. [R3, Item 12]

For No. 1 Ashford Oaks, the critical difference is that the principal daytime living rooms and balcony are elevated at first-floor level on a sloping site. The effect on privacy, outlook and enclosure must be considered from those spaces, rather than assumed acceptable by reference to the Grangelea boundary. Our concern is localised overdevelopment along a sensitive site edge, not an objection to the estate's overall density. [R1–R3]

A specific and constructive alternative

Our accompanying drawing, previously submitted to the Council, illustrates the omission of Units 47–51 and enlargement of the adjacent recreation area towards Unit 52. We ask the Commission to assess that outcome as a less intrusive edge transition that may also improve the usable public open space for the scheme. The image below illustrates only the affected part of the site; the full comparison is Appendix A. [R12]



Figure 1. Excerpts from the appellants' illustrative comparison: five dwellings at the sensitive perimeter (left) and the proposed enlarged recreational area (right). Not an engineered redesign.

2 Protection of neighbouring residential amenity

Privacy: the north-facing landing window at Q47

Our 31 August submission identified an apparent inconsistency in File 652: an obscure-glazing notation associated with Q48 does not appear to be repeated for the north-facing landing window at Q47. We request an explicit check of window orientation, sightlines, sill levels, glazing and opening arrangements. This is a subsidiary safeguard, not an adequate substitute for the preferred removal of Units 47–51. [R2, R10]

Condition 20 of the Council decision specifically addresses window changes at other identified units, but does not expressly resolve the Q47 query. If Q47 is retained contrary to our preferred outcome, we seek a definite, enforceable obscure-glazing and opening specification where technically appropriate. [R3–R4]

Retain continuous mature boundary screening

The established hedge at the end of our garden is important to privacy. The Tree Removals Plan identifies existing planting to be cut back, and the August Boundary Treatment Plan says to retain as much boundary hedgerow as possible and reinforce it with native planting as required. Neither phrase, by itself, ensures the height or density of an effective screen at occupation and thereafter. [R2, R9]

Condition 7 would place the planted verge adjoining Units 47–63 within individual residential plots, with maintenance the responsibility of separate owners or occupiers. That may lead to differing pruning and retention practices along what currently functions as one continuous screen. [R3–R4]

We request a precise retained-vegetation plan, including protected sections, minimum screening objective, restrictions on damaging root works, replacement and establishment specifications, and arrangements for inspection and long-term maintenance. Temporary screening should be considered where retained vegetation is unavoidably reduced. [R2, R9]

Make the new open space genuinely useful

The Council concluded that the scheme meets its numerical public-open-space provision. We do not dispute that calculation. Our proposal concerns the location and quality of that space: removing Units 47–51 offers an opportunity for a coherent planted transition and increased usable amenity adjoining Unit 52. The revised plan would need professional checks on surveillance, accessibility, drainage and landscape management. [R3, R12]

The Commission is asked to consider this revised design as a positive planning remedy for both future residents and existing neighbours, rather than only as a reduction in housing numbers.

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3 L1096 access and pedestrian safety

The proposed main estate entrance would connect to the L1096. The final Stage 1 Road Safety Audit identifies the falling gradient at that access as a potential cause of loss-of-traction or loss-of-control collisions and of difficulty for some mobility-impaired pedestrians (Problem 3.1). The auditors recommended a suitable approach gradient and dwell area. The feedback form records acceptance of that recommendation; actual satisfactory incorporation in the final approved design still needs to be demonstrated. [R5]

Residents Rolfe/Johnston and Sutton have submitted photographs and reported measurements along the route towards the village: a footway narrowing to approximately 450 mm at one location, another measuring approximately 720 mm including kerb, and a carriageway constriction of approximately 4.8 m. These are resident measurements rather than a certified highway survey, but they warrant direct inspection, particularly for children, older pedestrians, wheelchair users and pushchairs. [R6]

The applicant's Crèche Traffic Management Plan acknowledges that surrounding pedestrian provision is intermittent in places and that no dedicated cycle facility exists along the immediate site frontage. Ashford Town Plan Objective ASH9 seeks improved footpaths, cycleways and traffic calming. A mapped walking distance to the village does not, without more, demonstrate a safe continuous walking route. [R7–R8]

Avoid piecemeal assessment of additional traffic

Potential future use of the connection towards Ashford Rovers and adjoining SLO4 lands should be assessed through reasonable traffic scenarios; unpermitted future housing must not be counted as built or approved. The immediate request is to demonstrate safe access and manageable traffic for the current scheme and any realistically foreseeable connections, with infrastructure delivered when needed. [R5–R6]

A separately advertised detached house on approximately 0.85 acres in the centre of the development (but understood not to form part of Rycroft's current planning application) is reported as sale agreed; neither the purchaser nor any redevelopment proposal is verified. If development is subsequently proposed on that land, its access, traffic and service implications should be assessed in the wider context. No additional homes on this property are assumed in the present appeal. [R14]

4 Ashford's facilities and cumulative housing growth

The question is whether Ashford can accommodate housing growth collectively, rather than treating each application as though nearby permissions and proposals did not exist. The applicant's Social and Community Infrastructure Audit and School Demand Assessment provide an inventory and indicative estimates, but do not establish confirmed available places in each local school or actual spare capacity in community facilities. That is a request for better evidence, not an assertion that schools are already full. [R11]

Scheme	Homes	Status relevant to cumulative assessment
Rycroft, Ballinalea - 26/60290	87	The present Council decision under appeal
Inchanappa South - ABP-313953-22	98	Previously permitted scheme; delivery/occupancy requires checking
Orchid Homes, Ballinalea - 26/60258	16	Separate permission, reported final grant in August 2026

These three schemes alone account for 201 homes at different stages, not 201 additional occupied homes. Other local schemes exist, but are omitted from this short schedule where their status, phasing or relationship to existing permissions remains uncertain. The Commission should seek a proportionate cumulative assessment of traffic, walking routes, school demand and essential facilities, with delivery timing. [R11–R13]

Our October photographs show the dilapidated condition of Ashford Park, including its overgrown entrance, and the unfinished buildings at Mount Usher View, which residents report have remained incomplete for many years. A site notice photographed at the former Garda Station on 27 October 2026 describes a proposed community sports and recreation hub. This is a prospective facility, not one currently operating for residents. Ashford Studios is a privately operated film-production facility; no regular public recreation or visitor access is advertised, so it should not be counted as a public leisure amenity. [R15] We acknowledge Ashford's existing shops and food outlets, while asking that facilities be assessed by their actual availability and capacity. [Appendix B]

5 Timely delivery and enforceable safeguards

We acknowledge the Council's 29 conditions, including financial security (Condition 5), phasing of estate roads, landscaping, public open space and crèche (Condition 9), and open-space arrangements (Condition 26). These are useful safeguards. We ask that the necessary access improvements, planted screening and recreational space have measurable specifications, clear triggers before occupation and reliable long-term management. [R3–R4]

The crèche itself is a positive element, but its revised traffic plan assumes an indicative 60-child / 13-staff operation, with eleven staff parking spaces and two parent set-down bays; no operator had been appointed when that plan was prepared. The Council accepted the management response. We simply ask that safety and parent access be verified before opening, without relying on untested operational assumptions. [R7]

6 Relief requested from An Coimisiún Pleanála

We respectfully ask the Commission, in order of preference:

1. PRIMARY MODIFICATION: If legally and technically possible within this appeal, grant permission for an appropriately amended residential layout omitting Units 47–51, with the released land integrated into additional landscaped recreational open space extending towards Unit 52, substantially as the concept in Appendix A but subject to full professional redesign.
2. RESIDENTIAL AMENITY: Secure adequate separation, privacy and an enforceable boundary-screening scheme; if any dwelling in the affected area is retained, resolve the specific Q47 glazing concern and any demonstrable overlooking.
3. TRANSPORT SAFETY: Require a satisfactory and deliverable design for the L1096 entrance, and safe, continuous pedestrian connections towards Ashford village.
4. PHASING AND SERVICES: Require proportionate consideration of cumulative growth and clear, enforceable staging and maintenance of essential roads, open space, landscaping and community facilities.
5. FALLBACK: If the Commission considers that the essential changes cannot lawfully or satisfactorily be achieved in the present appeal, refuse the Council's grant as presently designed.

Closing submission

Our position is constructive and limited. We recognise the need for additional housing and the improvements the applicant has already made. The disputed five dwellings occupy a sensitive location at the edge of the estate; their omission would protect existing residential amenity while potentially improving the scheme's public open space. We ask the Commission to give that remedy priority, alongside proportionate road-safety and infrastructure safeguards.

Yours faithfully,

John Snelgrove _____ Date: 3/11/26

Eileen Snelgrove _____ Date: 3/11/26

Appendix A | Illustrative omission of Units 47–51

The following is the appellants' comparison already supplied with their 31 August 2026 Council submission. It is shown to identify the planning outcome sought, not to represent a survey-certified or fully engineered revised application. The Commission would need to determine the lawful means of considering any revised plans. [R12]



Site Plan File 3395



Lodged layout (top); proposed open-space alternative (bottom). Original drawing supplied by appellants. The five affected units are adjacent to the western side of Road 5; the lower image shows their omission.

Appendix B | Selected photographs of village facilities

Photographs supplied by the appellants and described as taken in October 2026. They show conditions visible when photographed. Statements about the duration of closures or incomplete development reflect residents' accounts, rather than dates established by the photographs alone. Full-size originals are available if requested.



B1 Ashford Park entrance

Entrance and substantial vegetation covering the entire space. Closed for several years.



B2 Mount Usher View

A deserted and derelict unfinished housing development since 2016



B3 Former Garda Station and proposed hub

Former Garda Station, empty for many years. Latest site notice photographed on 27th October 2026 proposes a sports and recreation hub



B4 Centra convenience store.

An operating village retail outlet; the Post Office is a small in-store counter, not a separate main street building as described by the developer.

The purpose of the appendix is not to challenge the existence of legitimate businesses; it is to show why lists of facilities should be checked for current public access and functioning capacity.

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Appendix C | Source documents and pinpoint references

Source material is on Wicklow County Council's 26/60290 planning file unless identified as appellant-generated. Existing material is listed for ease of reference and should not be duplicated unnecessarily with the appeal.

Ref.	Document	Main relevance
R1	John Snelgrove original submission, May 2026	First-floor living/balcony, original house types and sensitive interface.
R2	John Snelgrove follow-up, 31 Aug 2026	Two-storey revision, Q47 window, hedge, removal of 47–51.
R3	WCC Planner's Report 2 (26 pages)	FI Item 12; planning conditions and Council assessment.
R4	Notification of Decision to Grant, 8 Oct 2026	29 conditions, especially 5, 7, 9, 15–17, 20–22 and 26.
R5	Bruton Stage 1 Road Safety Audit, Rev. 1, 7 Aug 2026	Problem 3.1: L1096 access gradient and feedback form.
R6	Rolfe/Johnston and Sutton Council submissions, 2026	L1096 footpaths and entrance, measured widths, photos, future traffic.
R7	Pinnacle Crèche Traffic Management Plan V2, 7 Aug 2026	Sections 4.4 and 5.4: operating assumptions, parking, walking.
R8	Ashford Town Plan 2022–2028	Sections 2.5, 2.7; Objective ASH9.
R9	Tree Removals Plan File 1205; Boundary Treatment Plan 03_BT	Proposed pruning, replacement planting and boundary retention.
R10	Revised house type elevations, File 652	Q47/Q48 obscure-glazing notation and window relationship.
R11	Applicant's SIA and School Demand Assessment, April 2026	Village facilities, school-place projections and cumulative needs.
R12	Appellants' "Adjusted Site Plan showing additional ROS"	Illustrative omission of Units 47–51 and improved open space.
R13	Other Ashford planning files, e.g. 21/1407, 26/60258	Context for cumulative housing permissions and proposals; statuses are distinguished in section 4.
R14	Clarke Auctioneers Ballinalea property advertisement; appellants' photograph, October 2026	Approximately 0.85-acre residential property reported sale agreed; purchaser and redevelopment intentions unverified.
R15	Ashford Studios Ireland Ltd, official Facilities page, accessed 31 Oct 2026 (ashfordstudios.com/facilities)	Private film stages/support spaces; no regular public visitor or leisure programme advertised.

Council acknowledgements: Copies of Wicklow County Council acknowledgements dated 6 May 2026 and 31 August 2026 are attached to the filing pack.

Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council

Pleanáil, Forbairt Eacnamaíochta agus Tuaithe
Planning, Economic, and Rural Development

Áras An Chontae / County Buildings Cill Mhantáin / Wicklow
Guthán / Tel: (0404) 20148
Faics / Fax: (0404) 69462
Rphost / Email: plandev@wicklowcoco.ie
Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

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06/05/2026

John & Eileen Snelgrove
1 Ashford Oaks
Ballinalea
Ashford
A67 YP02

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT of RECEIPT of SUBMISSION or OBSERVATION on a PLANNING APPLICATION

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KEEP THIS DOCUMENT SAFELY. YOU WILL BE REQUIRED TO PRODUCE THIS ACKNOWLEDGEMENT TO AN COIMSIÚN PLEANÁLA IF YOU WISH TO APPEAL THE DECISION OF THE PLANNING AUTHORITY. IT IS THE ONLY FORM OF EVIDENCE THAT WILL BE ACCEPTED BY AN COIMSIÚN PLEANÁLA THAT A SUBMISSION OR OBSERVATION HAS BEEN MADE TO THE PLANNING AUTHORITY ON THE PLANNING APPLICATION.

PLANNING AUTHORITY NAME Wicklow County Council

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE No.2660290

A submission/observation in writing, has been received from
John & Eileen Snelgrove on 05/05/2026 in relation to the above planning application.

The appropriate fee of €20 has been paid. ***(Fee not applicable to prescribed bodies)***

The submission/ observation is in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) and will be taken into account by the planning authority in its determination of the planning application.

pp Aoife Kinsella
SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
PLANNING, ECONOMIC & RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Planning Authority Stamp

Date 06/05/2026

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
06 MAY 2026
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Comhairle Contae Chill Mhantáin
Wicklow County Council
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Planning, Economic, and Rural Development

Mhantáin / Wicklow
Guthán / Tel: (0404) 20148
Faics / Fax: (0404) 69462
Rphost / Email: plandev@wicklowcoco.ie
Suíomh / Website: www.wicklow.ie

31/08/2026

John & Eileen Snelgrove
1 Ashford Oaks
Ballinalea
Ashford
Co. Wicklow

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PLANNING AUTHORITY NAME Wicklow County Council

PLANNING APPLICATION REFERENCE No.2660290

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John & Eileen Snelgrove on 31/08/2026 in relation to the above planning application.

The appropriate fee of €0 has been paid. ***(Fee not applicable to prescribed bodies)***

The submission/ observation is in accordance with the appropriate provisions of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001(as amended) and will be taken into account by the planning authority in its determination of the planning application.

WICKLOW COUNTY COUNCIL
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PLANNING DEPT.

pp Kate

SENIOR EXECUTIVE OFFICER
PLANNING, ECONOMIC & RURAL DEVELOPMENT.

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