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# National Cycle Network Local Authority Funding Scheme 2012/13

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## PROPOSAL

Prepared for Monaghan County Council

April 2012

# Table of Contents

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Project Outline

Project Detail

Project Costs

Demand and Benefit Assessment

Route Integration, Management and Monitoring

Appendix One

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# Project Outline



## Section 1: Project Outline

The Monaghan cycle greenway proposal will connect Armagh and Monaghan Town through the enhancement of tourism potential within the area. Monaghan town and the surrounding area contain many amenities which will appeal to both tourist and local people alike. Monaghan Town has a low level of residents who currently avail of sustainable travel modes i.e. walking, cycling etc. The restoration of the existing Ulster Canal and towpath presents a positive opportunity to improve sustainable transport within the area which in turn promotes a healthier lifestyle for residents, a less trafficked town centre and an alternative activity/travel experience for tourists. The greenway presents improved linkage and ease of travel for residents, school children and tourists as well as boosting the local economy if promoted correctly.

The proposed greenway route will make use of the historical Ulster Canal route which currently flows through Armagh and Monaghan. The restoration of the canal will improve linkages between both towns as well as links to amenities and educational areas within the town itself. School children will be provided with a safe and direct link to the majority of schools within the area, especially those attending the VEC Education Campus (currently under construction) located on the N12. This direct link in turn will result in less traffic at peak times within Monaghan easing the pressure for residents.

The proposed greenway takes into consideration the National Cycling Network Strategy for Ireland and provides a designated rural signed cycle greenway providing especially for visitors and recreational cycling. The greenway route will begin at the new VEC education campus on the outskirts of Monaghan Town and follow the route of the currently disused Ulster Canal through the grounds of the local hospital and then continuing adjacent to the N54. This greenway can then link in further to the nearby town of Clones providing a complete throughway from the N12 Armagh Road to Clones.

The route choice has also taken into consideration the close proximity and tourist potential of Lough Erne and Lough Neagh. The provision of a cycle network which allows tourists to visit both areas of interest is a long term goal for the area. The greenway route also directly relates to the current Waterways Ireland project which involves the re-opening of the Ulster Canal to Clones.

Therefore the proposed greenway through Monaghan town not only provides solutions locally but also on a regional scale. The route makes maximum use of the current infrastructure within Monaghan causing minimal disruption to the town and residents.

Overall, the greenway promotes the following;

- Improvement in health and wellbeing with more active lifestyles;
- Maximising access to jobs education and services without increasing congestion;
- Making more attractive safer places and communities by ensuring improved access;
- Promotion of the tourist value of the town and the ease at which any attractions can be accessed.

Table 1 below outlines the project for the Monaghan Greenway

<b>Name and Address of Local Authority</b>	Monaghan County Council The Glen Monaghan Ireland
<b>Contact person/proposed project manager</b>	John McGrath – Senior Engineer Roads Carol Lambe – Community & Enterprise Section
<b>Telephone</b>	047 30597 047 73725
<b>e-mail</b>	<a href="mailto:jmcgrath@monaghancoco.ie">jmcgrath@monaghancoco.ie</a> <a href="mailto:clambe@monaghancoco.ie">clambe@monaghancoco.ie</a>
<b>Planned route start and end points (e.g. Newport to Mulranny).</b>	This application is Phase 1 of a two phase project. The entire route will run from Clones through Monaghan Town and onto Glaslough. Phase 1 will consist of that section of the route which passes through Monaghan Town along with a scoping study for the rest of the route. The Monaghan Greenway begins on the N12 Armagh Road at the VEC Education Campus and ends at the R189 maximising existing infrastructure and taking into consideration existing links and tourist attractions. The Greenway will promote sustainable travel through Monaghan Town (North East to South West).
<b>Proposed route distance (km)</b>	The entire route will be approx 30km in length. The Monaghan town section is approximately 4km in length and is mostly off road; however the route does join the carriageway at two points – N2/N12 Roundabout and Old Cross Square (Distance on road – 0.5km).
<b>Estimated total project delivery costs (€)</b>	It is estimated the total delivery cost of the project will be in the region of €460,000 for construction costs, and €150,000 for Environmental Impact Assessment and Scoping study for Phase II of the route. Total: €690,000
<b>Total grant funding being sought (€)</b>	€621, 000 **10% of total costs will be provided by Monaghan County Council in terms of resourcing management of the Greenway Delivery.
<b>Planned duration of project/works</b>	It is anticipated that this project will take 12 months to complete.
<b>Planned start date and completion date</b>	After being granted funding, the preliminary and detailed design phases will commence immediately. A projected start date therefore (design phase) of June 2012 is anticipated with construction beginning towards the end of 2012. The construction timeline is subject to the preparation of a detailed schedule of works but it would be hoped that the construction phase could be completed in nine months. The EIA and scoping reports will be completed during 2012. It can be expected to have the project delivered by August 2013.
<b>Brief outline of planned project</b>	In this, Phase I, we propose to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Carry out environmental impact assessment on the entire length of the proposed route (i.e. Clones to Glaslough). This is necessary as the Ulster Canal is a protected structure</li> <li>2. Carry out a scoping study to ascertain the condition of the route in detail and prepare detailed costings and drawings, so that an application for Phase II funding can be made to Round 2 of this Programme</li> <li>3. Construct the section of the route which runs through Monaghan town immediately. This will facilitate the development of Monaghan town as an Active Travel Town, as well as enable us to test our engineering assumptions and costing models before tackling the longer route.</li> </ol>

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# Project Detail



## Section 2: Project Detail

**Briefly outline how this route aligns with the corridors identified in the National Cycle Network scoping study, or links into or between the identified corridors.**

The proposed alignment of the NCN through County Monaghan corresponds directly with the route identified in the National Cycle Network Scoping Study (Shown in Figure 2.1 below). The proposed route runs through County Monaghan along the towpath of the Ulster Canal linking Monaghan town to Clones. The route forms part of a wider regional route connecting Dundalk to Sligo as illustrated below.

**Figure 2.1 NCN Dundalk to Sligo Corridor**

Source – National Cycle Network Scoping Study 2010

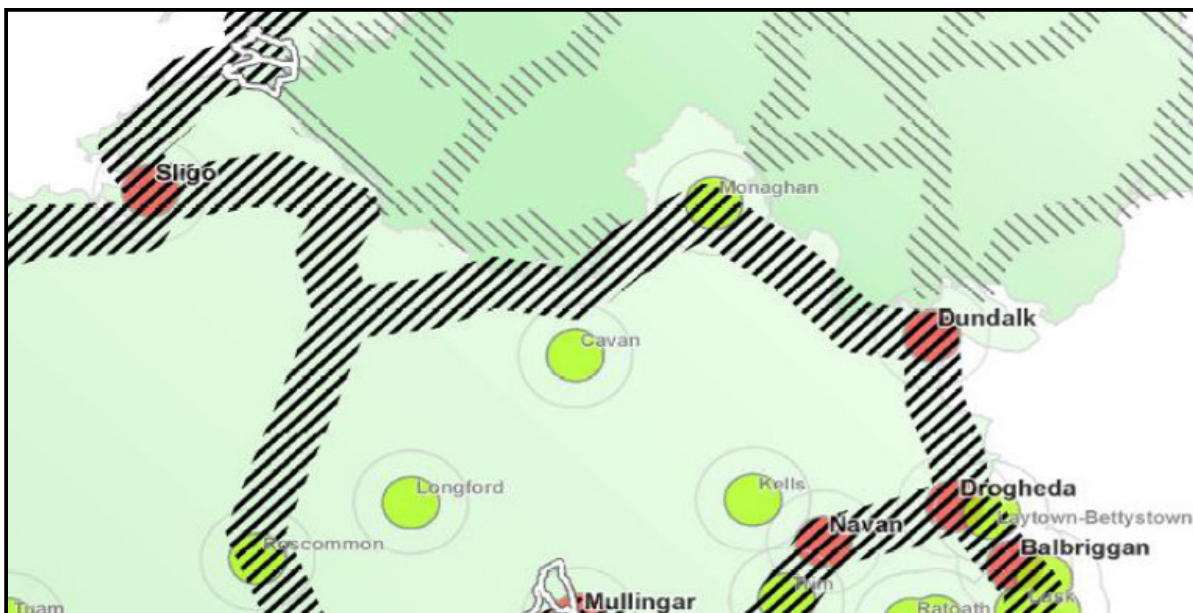


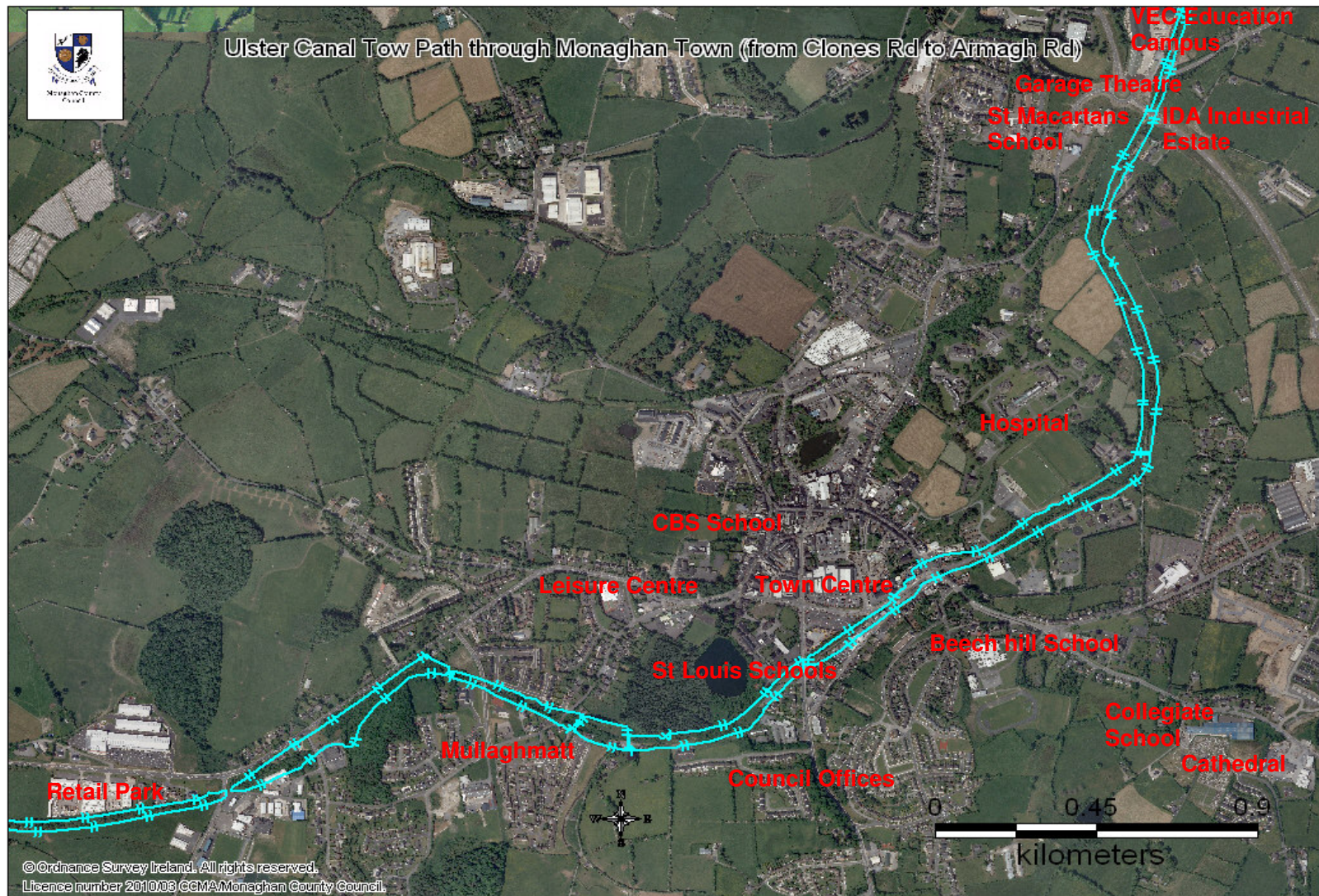
Figure 2.2 illustrates the focus of the current funding application. The route will follow the alignment of the original towpath of the Ulster Canal. The Ulster Canal was built in 1841 to link the Erne system and the Shannon with Lough Neagh, but its success was short-lived. It has 26 locks and about 70% of the original canal is still in place. The canal to Clones from Lough Erne is due to re-open in 2015. When full restoration of the Ulster Canal from Lough Erne to Lough Neagh is complete it would bring together a network of over 600 miles of navigable waterway linking Limerick, Waterford, Dublin, and Enniskillen to Monaghan and onto Coleraine.

The proposed immediate work through Monaghan town will also facilitate the town's development as an Active Travel Town. Figure 2.2 also illustrates the key developments within Monaghan Town in terms of schools, employment centres and leisure facilities which will impact on the number of people using the greenway once constructed. The highlighted developments are all within walking/cycling distance from the proposed greenway.

The current condition of the route through Monaghan Town varies, with some sections requiring a total upgrade, whereas other sections require just surface upgrades. On road sections of the route will need

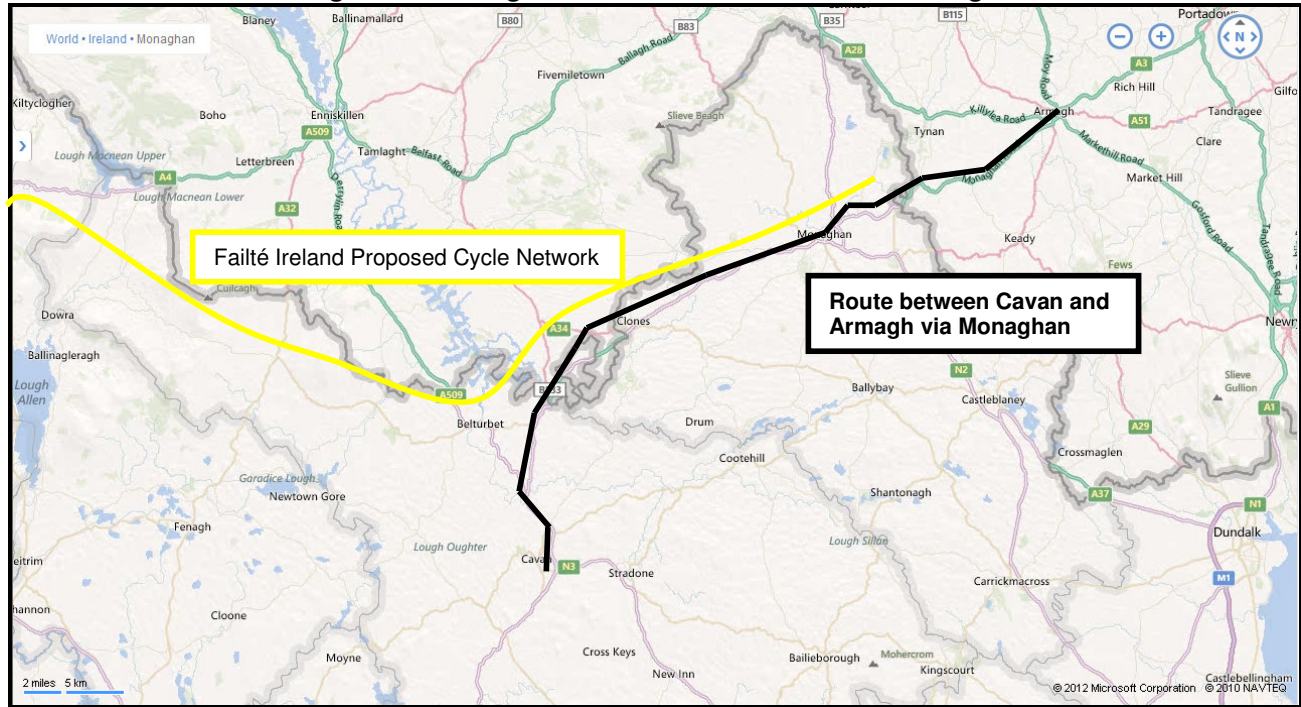
upgrading to standard including the N12/N2 roundabout and areas along the canal and including the canal will need excavated and resurfaced in order to reach an approved greenway standard.

Figure 2.2 –Monaghan Section of the NCN



Following engagement with Cavan County Council, it is proposed that the Monaghan section of the NCN will connect with the disused Great Northern Railway Corridor. The corridor will be upgraded to include a high quality greenway connecting to Cavan Town, Killeshandra and County Leitrim further west. This proposed alignment is also broadly reflective of the Failte Ireland Cycle Network which is outlined in Figure 2.3 below.

**Figure 2.3 Monaghan Town Links to Cavan and Armagh**



Source: Google Maps

Two specific aims identified in the NCN Scoping Study which are of particular significance to this application are as follows:

- The network should attract as many users as possible by linking in to the main urban centres and it should form the basis for linkages to both local rural cycle routes and urban networks. The network should align with tourism and economic development; and
- The length of the network that is off road or of greenway standard should be maximised with the aim of minimising the interaction with motorised vehicles. The network should use existing cycle routes if appropriate. Special attention should be given to the opportunities of using both the disused rail network and canal / river tow-path networks as cycling / walking routes

The proposed Monaghan cycle route achieves this standard in terms of maximising use of the existing Ulster Canal towpath as well as taking into consideration tourist attractions and points of interest. The route will also provide linkages to major education sites and workplaces within Monaghan therefore encouraging sustainable travel among residents.

**Is this project proposal for a standalone route, or is it a single phase of a longer proposed route (outline details).**

Phase I of the route, which is the basis of this application, will be a standalone route. Once Phase II is completed in its entirety from Clones to Glaslough, the stretch completed during Phase I will form the basis of a longer route. As a standalone route, the greenway will provide Monaghan Town with vital connections between schools/education campuses and residential areas as well as workplaces and tourist facilities. The greenway will provide a sustainable transport solution to the urban area of Monaghan Town without impacting on the town's current road infrastructure.

In terms of potential for a longer proposed route, the greenway could be extended as far as Clones making use of the existing Ulster Canal cycling trail (Route No.91) providing direct linkages to Clones as well as putting in place links which will become part of Corridor 1: Dundalk to Sligo on the National Cycle Network when developed. Therefore the currently proposed greenway in Monaghan Town should be considered as Phase 1 with an extension to Clones as Phase 2.

In relation to this greenway proposal and the extension to Clones town, Monaghan County Council consulted with key stakeholders including Waterways Ireland and the Cavan Monaghan LEADER Office. Waterways Ireland are currently developing the reopening of the Ulster Canal from Lough Erne to Clones and the Cavan Monaghan LEADER Office commissioned a feasibility study on the development of a Greenway along this section of the Ulster Canal previously. The letters of support are included with this application as Appendix 1.

**What type of route will be delivered (i.e. on road or off road, usage of existing infrastructure such as abandoned rail lines, canal tow paths, state lands etc.)**

The proposed Phase I Greenway will make exclusive use of the original Ulster Canal towpath covering an area from the N12 Armagh Road to R189 Monaghan-Newbliss Road with two small sections of on-road facilities which will make use of the existing infrastructure within Monaghan Town. The Ulster Canal towpath was chosen as the most appropriate and deliverable option for the Greenway as it is ready to be utilised with large sections currently in council ownership and the alignment of the canal connecting with an extensive network of residential areas, employment centres and amenities within Monaghan Town.

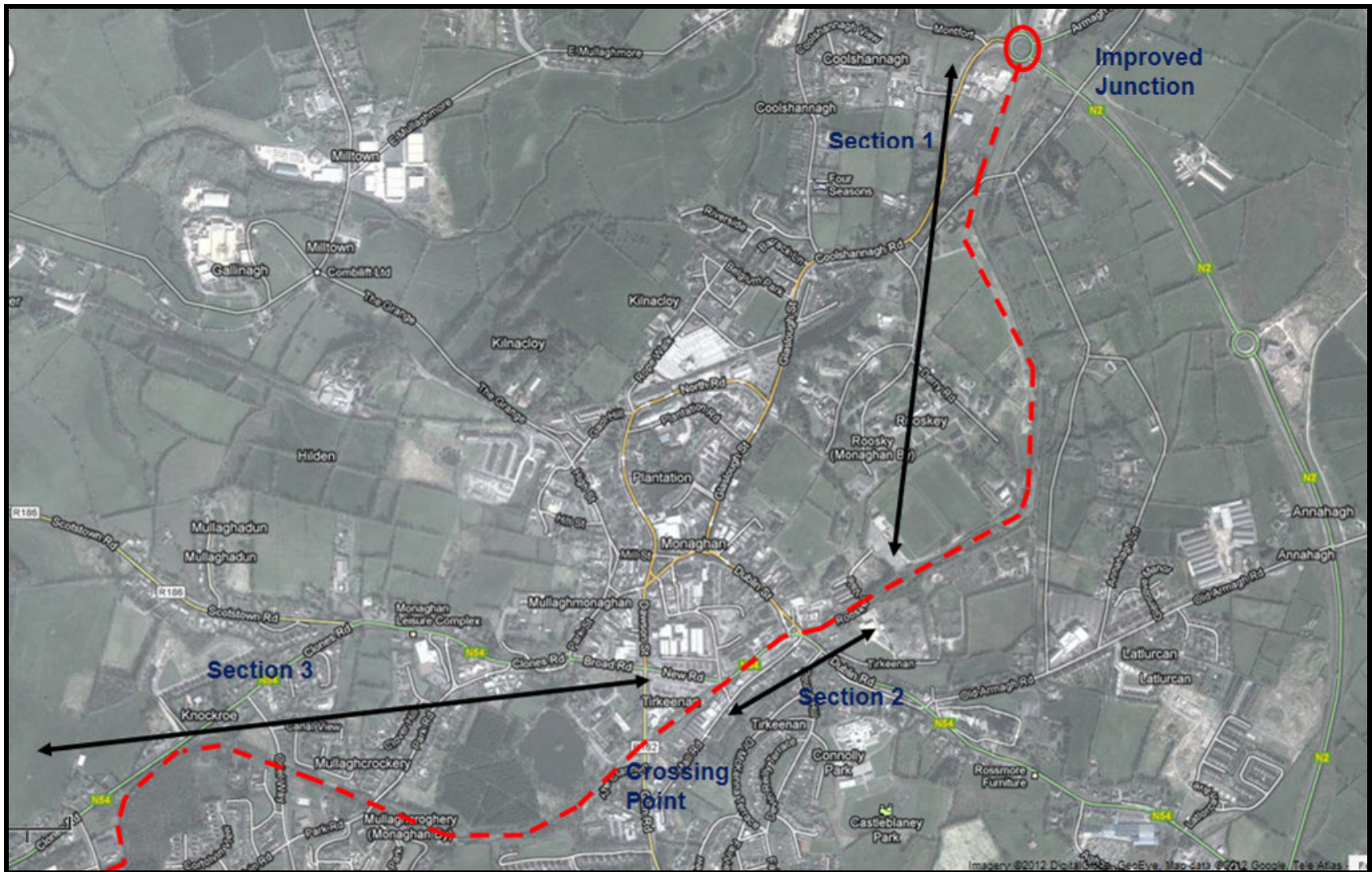
Phase II of the Greenway will follow the Ulster Canal from Clones to Monaghan town, and will use the disused railway line from Monaghan to Glaslough and then onward to Armagh. Information on the condition of these sections is not up to date, and therefore construction works are excluded from this application. Instead, we are applying for funding to carry out scoping survey and environmental impact assessment, so as to be ready to make an informed submission to Round 2 of the National Cycle Network Fund.

For the purposes of design and analysis, Phase I's proposed route has been divided up into three sections by the type of infrastructure being proposed; these are identified below in the indicative map.

- **Section 1** - Greenway along existing Ulster Canal Alignment;
- **Section 2** - On road cycling facilities at Old Cross Square; and
- **Section 3** - Cootehill Road to connection with R189 to Rossmore Forest Park.

The photographs above are photos taken on site in April 2012 and show the level of site clearance that would be needed to upgrade the disused canal area to greenway standard.







**Proposed Infrastructural Provision:** Greenway to be established along disused Ulster Canal.

**Section 1 - Route Length: 1.8km**


Section 1 of the route linking the N12 Armagh Road with the on-road section of the proposed route at Old Cross Square will utilise one of the longest sections of the disused Ulster Canal towpath.

This route will be upgraded to cater for cyclists and walkers and will be officially designated as a greenway which will run from the outskirts of Monaghan Town on the N12 to Armagh adjacent to the new VEC education campus and connect with the proposed route through the town to Monaghan/Newbliss Road R189. This will provide both cyclists and walkers with a tranquil route on which to avoid the heavily trafficked N54.



Section 1 of the route will provide linkages to the VEC education campus which is currently in construction and the adjacent IDA industrial estate as well as the garage theatre and nearby hotels. The greenway will run through the grounds of St Davnet's hospital, which houses a number of HSE services including a Primary Care Unit. It will also pass the offices of Monaghan town's largest employer, Monaghan County Council, thereby providing sustainable transport options to staff.

It is proposed to construct a cycle way which is suitable for use by two cyclists abreast. It will be approx 3.5m in width, and will be finished with a surface dressing. Geo textile fabric may be required in constructing or reinstating paths as generally poor ground conditions are found adjacent to canals. Access points to the path may be infrequent and the construction thickness of the path may need to be increased to allow use by construction plant traffic.

	<p><b>Proposed Infrastructural Provision:</b> On road section of the route – cycle lane provision</p>
	<p><b>Section 2 - Route Length:</b> 0.5km</p>
	<p>Section 2 of the route begins where the proposed Section 1 greenway intersects with the N54 at Old Cross Square. At this point the towpath has been developed over and no longer exists. As an alternative, the NCN will run on-road for a distance of 0.5km on the existing N54. The on road cycle lane, which can be facilitated on road (currently 3m in width), will reconnect with the towpath at Cootehill Road (R162). Comprehensive signage will be provided to ensure a high level of connectivity between the two route sections. Section 2 of the route will service Monaghan Town centre, leisure centre, council offices and 4 nearby schools.</p>

	<p><b>Proposed Infrastructural Provision:</b> Greenway to be established along disused Ulster Canal.</p>
	<p><b>Section 3 - Route Length:</b> 1.8km</p>
	<p>Section 3 is one of the longest sections on the route and runs adjacent to the N54 Clones Road. Upon reaching the R189, the greenway will divert south to connect with Rossmore Forest Park.</p> <p>Section 3 of the route commences at Cootehill Road which currently has a section of the Greenway upgraded to standard shown in adjacent photo and follows the alignment of the Ulster Canal through Mullaghmat Estate (the county's largest local authority housing estate) to connect to the R189.</p> <p>The route will utilise sections of the disused Ulster Canal towpath which will be upgraded to cater for cyclists and walkers and will be officially designated as a greenway. The route will connect with the R189 and onto</p>



**Rossmore Forest Park.**

Section 3 of the proposed greenway will provide linkages to both Mullaghmat housing estate and Killyconnigan/Clones Road Housing and out of town retail park.

Surfaces will be as in Section 1

**Is the land necessary to develop the proposed route currently in public ownership? Are there any land ownership issues along any section of the proposed route, and if yes how is it planned to address them?**

**Figure 2.4 – Ulster Canal – Clones Road**



Yes. Monaghan County Council acquired the majority of the Ulster Canal under the Derelict Sites Act in the 1970's. However, some small sections remain in public ownership or have claims registered. The Council will negotiate permissive access agreements to the canal where applicable and therefore no money granted as part of this funding application will be used toward land acquisition.

Waterways Ireland has written a letter of support in relation to this scheme shown in Appendix 1.

**Are there any other outstanding issues which could impact on deliverability of the proposed route (e.g. statutory requirements)?**

The Ulster Canal is a protected structure. Therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is required to ascertain whether the impact on the canal would be beneficial or detrimental to the structure or any existing habitats. However it should be noted that re-opening the currently disused Ulster Canal will reinstate the original intended use for the area in terms of a towpath and a functioning canal thus providing an alternative form of transport for users. We have included the cost of commissioning the EIA in this application.

**What is the proposed width of the route? (Metres)**

The greenway will be designed to accommodate 2 cyclists abreast and will therefore be approximately 3.5 metres in width.

At the two points along the proposed route where the greenway becomes on-road for a short distance i.e. Old Cross Square and R162 Glen Road/Cootehill Road; cyclist provision will have to be considered. Old Cross Square will incorporate a cycling lane for a short distance to accommodate greenway users. The current width of the road at Old Cross Square is approx 3m and the existing carriageway will have to accommodate a 1.5m cycle lane. Whereas Cootehill Road will be a crossing point for users and no on road cycle lane is necessary.

**What is the proposed surfacing type for the route?**

The surfacing standard along the route will vary by section. We intend to provide surface dressing to sections 1 and 3. Section 2, which includes existing roads at Old Cross Square and Cootehill Road, will be demarked by red-anti skid to help delineate the segregated cyclist's provision from the main road carriageway.

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# Project Costs



## Section 3: Project Costs

Phase I – Monaghan Town plus scoping & EIA of Phase II

The proposed cycle and walking greenway in Monaghan is approximately 4km in length and for the purpose of this application for funding is being quantified as a standalone route with the potential to extend as part of the National Cycle Network.

A detailed breakdown of costs is shown in the table below outlining the individual elements infrastructure and facilities of the greenway.

Table 1 – Cost Estimate for Proposed Cycle Network

<b>Key costs/works (e.g. land purchasing, clearance works, compacting and placing of surface material, bridges, crossing barriers, fencing)</b>	<b>Estimated cost (€)</b>
Site Clearance	€3,000
Safety Barriers and Guardrails & boundary fencing	€217,500
Drainage and Service Ducts	€48,750
Earthworks	€8,483
Pavements	€102,528
Kerbs, Footways and Paved Areas	€36,900
Traffic Signs	€28,200
Boundaries	€0
Landscaping	€0
Road Lighting incl Electrical Work	€27,800
Traffic Signals / Controlled Pedestrian Crossings	€0
Traffic Management	€473,161
<b>Total Construction Costs</b>	<b>€70,950</b>
<b>Additional Costs</b>	<b>€3,000</b>
<b>Environmental Impact Assessment &amp; Scoping study</b>	<b>150,000</b>
<b>Total Cost Estimate</b>	<b>€690,000</b>

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# Demand and Benefit Assessment

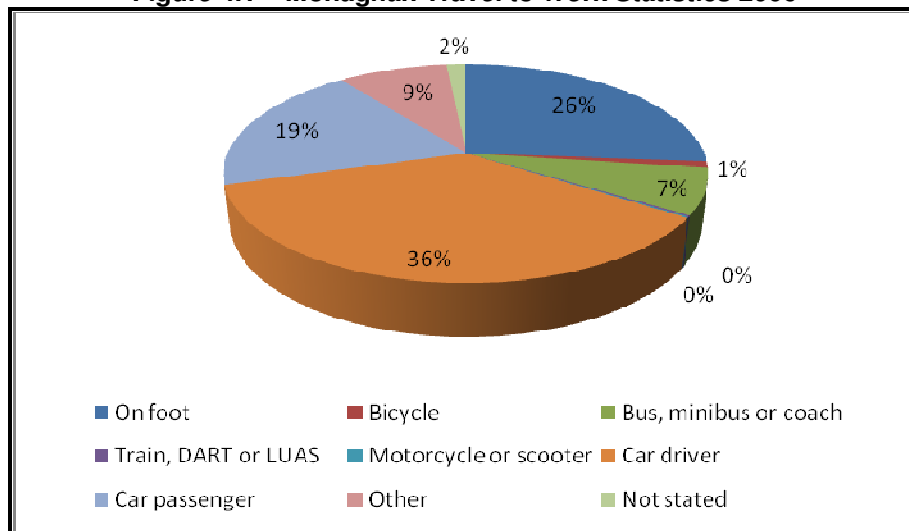


## Section 4: Demand and Benefit Assessment

**Provide an evidence based assessment of potential demand in terms of local users and potential visitor and tourist user numbers. Assessment should include evidence based estimate of annual user number, and impacts on local economy, including in terms of job creation.**

As stated previously within this application the proposed cycle greenway in Monaghan will attract both commuter cyclists and leisure cyclists. Currently the modal share within Monaghan Town for cycling is extremely low. Figures taken from the Central Statistics Office which represent either work or school trips show that only 1% of commuters in Monaghan cycle to their destination. Because the proposed towpath will provide a high quality and segregated route option for cyclists across Monaghan Town – connecting residential area to schools and workplaces – it is anticipated that the proposed infrastructure could have a very favourable impact on travel patterns and a positive impact on modal shift within the town. We would anticipate that the route will result in at least a 50% increase in commuter cycling trips in the town.

**Figure 4.1 – Monaghan Travel to Work Statistics 2006**



### **Commuter Cyclists – Education**

The proposed cycle greenway following the path of the Ulster Canal within Monaghan will provide connectivity to the following nine schools/education providers which are currently within Monaghan and the surrounding area. These schools will continue to operate in conjunction with the new VEC education campus (further detail on the following page):

- St Louis Girls Primary and Secondary School;
- CBS Boys Primary School;
- Beechhill Secondary School;
- Collegiate Secondary School;
- Model Primary School;
- St Macartans Boys Secondary School; and
- Monaghan Education Centre.

The introduction of the greenway would encourage those travelling to school to cycle instead of walking or being a car passenger. Parents would be encouraged to promote the use of the greenway to their children by the safety benefits the greenway presents as an off road alternative route.

The major trip generator for Monaghan town in terms of potential cycle activity; will be the VEC education campus which is currently in construction on the N12 Armagh Road. The campus is the first of its kind (pilot scheme) to be constructed and it pulls various levels of education together in one area in order to share resources and minimise impact on the area.

County Monaghan VEC to manage and oversee the procurement, planning and building of a multi-user Education Campus on the site of the former Military Barracks site in Monaghan. This campus will provide education at primary, post-primary and further education levels. Co. Monaghan VEC is the first education authority to get sanction from the Department of Education and Skills to manage this project on a “devolved pilot basis”.

The campus will comprise:

- A 16 classroom all Irish Primary School for Gaelscoil Ultain
- A 400 pupil all Irish Post Primary School for Colaiste Oiriall
- An Institute of Further Education that will replace the existing PLC College catering for 700 students
- A Theatre, which will be the only dedicated theatre space in the town
- Sports Hall – to be shared by all education users on the campus

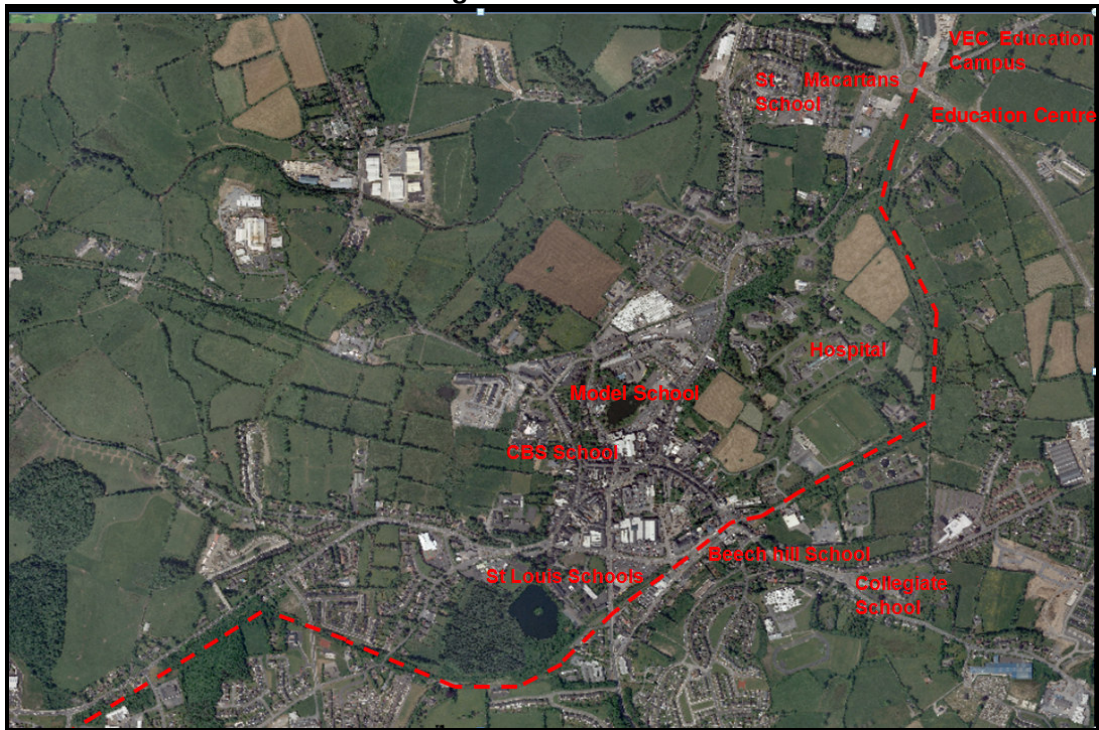
It is Co. Monaghan VEC's plan that this multi-user education campus will be ready for occupation in September 2012. The provision of three educational facilities on a 20 acre campus is in line with the Government view that shared campuses are the preferred model for future development of educational infrastructure in areas of demographic growth.

Development of a Greenway cycle/ walking route along the Ulster Canal would provide safe routes to school for well over 1,000 pupils each day in Monaghan town, and would also go some way to alleviating the significant congestion problem at school times in the town.

Monaghan Town is in the process of devising a Cycling Strategy, which will focus on providing Safe Routes to School. The provision of cycle paths in some areas of the town centre will prove a challenge, as many of the streets are too narrow to carry the additional width required. Traversing the town as it does; the canal tow path provides a safe off-road route to school for over 1,000 children every day.

The provision of a cycle network within Monaghan in order to connect the new VEC Education Campus to the town and surrounding area is an important priority to Monaghan County Council in terms of enhancing safety and promoting sustainable travel within the area. The availability of this alternative to the private motor car will greatly decrease the amount of vehicular traffic in the town at school time, and will encourage more schools to participate in the Green Flag transport module. At present, no Monaghan town school has achieved their fourth Green Flag (i.e. the transport module).

**Figure 4.2 - Location of School within Monaghan Town**



Monaghan town is serviced by four primary schools and five secondary schools. The new Education Campus site is located on the Armagh road, just outside Monaghan town. The Ulster Canal flows around the back of the site, and connects it to the town centre at Old Cross Square, which is beside Beech Hill College, the 600-pupil Secondary School run by the VEC in the town. The 400-student Collegiate secondary school is a further 400m out past Beech Hill, along the N2, which is wide enough to provide a cycle path to connect the school to the canal route. Also along the Canal are St Louis girls' Secondary and Primary schools, linked across the road to the CBS boys' primary school, while St Macartans College is just 100m beyond the Canal on the Education Campus side of town.

#### **Commuter Cyclists – Employment Centres and Housing**

Within Monaghan Town the following key employment centres will be served directly by the cycle greenway route;

- Retail Park and Century Homes;
- Town Retail Centre;
- Hospital and Primary Car Unit and Services;
- Council Offices; and
- IDA Industrial Estate.

These employment provider areas encompass approximately 1350 jobs within the area. The proposed Ulster Canal greenway is located adjacent to the majority of the employment hubs within the town and surrounding area. A growth centre for the future will be the IDA industrial estate, which has capacity for additional units. As the canal cuts through the town centre, the regeneration of the tow path will do much to encourage its use by retail workers in the town centre, thus freeing up car parking spaces in the town centre. It will also help to link the outlying Clones Road businesses with the town centre. Over 1350 people work in Monaghan town, many of these journeys could be facilitated by the canal tow path

Along the proposed greenway route, 1400 homes are located in numerous housing developments. One of particular significance is Mullaghmat which is the county's largest local authority housing estate (250homes). The Ulster Canal flows alongside this estate therefore providing potential for proposed towpath to encourage modal shift within the area. As the housing estate is one of low income and car ownership, cycling may prove a popular mode for residents for short trips into the town or for recreational purpose with families.

Beechgrove and the Pound Hill (300 homes collectively) are two areas which the demographics suggest have a low car ownership profile. Therefore a dedicated cycle and walking greenway within the town will provide facilities for recreation for families as well as an alternative to private car trips which residents here may not be financially able to avail of currently. The Latlorcan housing development (300homes) can be connected to the canal via a lane which runs from the cathedral down to join the bank at Rooskey, therefore providing direct access via the hospital grounds for residents.

### **Leisure and Tourism – Cycling Potential**

The development of a cycle route from Clones to Monaghan appears in Failte Ireland's national cycleway strategy, and is strategic in providing linkages into Northern Ireland at both ends (Fermanagh at Clones, and Armagh and Tyrone from the Monaghan/ Glaslough end)

The canal tow path provides town centre access to users via a segregated greenway, thus providing a greatly enhancing the visitor experience within the town. The main leisure amenities of the town are all accessible via the tow path. These include:

- Monaghan Leisure Centre;
- Garage Theatre;
- Cathedral;
- Rossmore Forest Park;
- Golf Course.

At the other end of town, the Coillte-owned Rossmore Forest Park begins at the edge of Mullaghmat where the proposed greenway route terminates. The park is already well developed for amenity use, including cycling and walking trails. The Park also connects into the existing Ulster Canal cycling trail (Route No. 91) which has been considered in determining the route for the greenway. The greenway will tie into this cycle route after crossing Cootehill Road.

The town swimming pool and leisure complex are also located at the edge of Mullaghmat estate on Clones Road and will be accessible from the cycle greenway.

The town's two largest hotels, the Four Seasons and the Hillgrove (both 4\*) are located close to the canal. A lane links the Hillgrove to the tow path at Rooskey, while the Four Seasons is just across the road from the canal.

Waterways Ireland is currently in the final stages of receiving planning permission to re-open the Ulster Canal from Belturbet to Clones. They expect to break sod in 2013, with a completion date of 2015. Once the visitor navigates the Canal to Clones, the existence of a Greenway which enables them to continue their journey along the canal will be of considerable appeal. It will be possible for the visitor to extend their stay in the region by several days, thus greatly increasing the potential benefits to the local economy.

Having a mechanism whereby users of the newly opened canal can continue their journey further into the county will bring the expected benefits of the canal's reopening to a much larger region.

The Blackwater Regional Partnership (a partnership between Armagh, Dungannon and Monaghan councils) commissioned a socio-economic study on the impact of re-opening the Ulster Canal in 2006. The study, carried out by Price Waterhouse Coopers, estimated the benefits of re-opening the canal to be:

- Expenditure by visitors as a result of a fully restored Ulster Canal has been estimated at between £2.6million and £3.2million per annum;
- After including multiplier effects this rises to between £3.1million and £4million per annum;
- The creation of at least 12 indicative development sites along the Canal corridor with a total area of 23.3 hectares;
- Increased demand for accommodation and hospitality, ancillary businesses and new housing provision;
- This increased economic activity could give rise to an additional 300-400 jobs in the area;
- This increased economic activity in the Canal corridor area is estimated to create between £5 million and £10 million per annum of additional value added in the local economy;
- Jobs created in the construction of the canal are estimated to amount to around 300 jobs per annum or in total 2300-2600 person years of employment; and
- Additional receipts to the public exchequer, in relation to income tax from additional employment, VAT payments on goods and service and increased rates revenues for local Councils.

Therefore in summary, the restoration of the Ulster Canal and proposed greenway benefits Monaghan community both socially and economically. Better linkages will be provided to different areas within the town including schools and places of employment. Tourism revenue within the area will also benefit from the improved linkages.



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# Route Integration, Management and Monitoring

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## Section 5: Route Integration, Management and Monitoring

**Outline (i) alignment with other transport, tourism and sport programmes/locations (e.g. other infrastructure, green schools, work place travel plans, tourism visitor centres etc.) (ii) Route management and promotion plans and (iii) planned route user monitoring**

(i) The current Monaghan County Council Development Plan consists of a written statement of policies and objectives specific to Monaghan and the surrounding area. It details how:-

- local amenities will be developed;
- services for the community (e.g. childcare facilities) will be facilitated;
- land is to be used for amenity, civic, community, housing, business, industry and other uses; and
- Proper planning and sustainable development of the area will be delivered.

In terms of the potential of cycling and tourism within the area, Monaghan County Council has outlined the following policies;

- TOU 12 – Investigate the potential of and opportunities for the funding of walking and cycling trails in the county and for the development of linkages between existing trails such as the Kingfisher Trails and other in adjoining counties including cross border partnership;
- CW 1 – Safe and convenient cycle access;
- CW 2 – Safe and convenient and secure cycle parking; and
- CW 3 – Safe and convenient pedestrian and cycle links to existing or programmed networks (including existing applications) where they adjoin the development site.

The greenway has the potential to join into the existing Kingfisher Trail (Route 91) on the R189 en route to Rossmore Park therefore taking into consideration TOU 12 outlined in the Councils Development Plan. The greenway also satisfies the remaining policies outlined by the development plan in terms of linkages, safety and convenience.

Monaghan County Council are promoting alternatives to the private car and encouraging a more sustainable means of travel. One step in this process is to improve the provision, safety, convenience and general environment for cycling and walking by ensuring the needs of cyclists and pedestrians are fully taken into account in the development process.

Waterways Ireland is advancing with the preparations to re-open the stretch of the Ulster Canal from Belturbet to Clones town. They are currently awaiting planning permission, and hope to break ground in 2013, with a completion date of late 2015. Phase II of our project will tie up with this stretch of the canal.

In preparation for the improvements to the canal at Clones, Monaghan County Council, in partnership with Fermanagh District Council has availed of INTERREG IV funding. This funding was acquired to construct a marina in Clones, and to open up the back-lands through the town. A project officer has been in place since 2011 to assist local businesses to gear up to take advantage of the new opportunities the canal will bring to the town.

The feasibility of re-opening the Ulster Canal is currently under consideration. The Canal which linked Lough Erne to Lough Neagh was opened in 1841, and is 58 miles long. If re-opened the Canal could bring significant economic, environmental and social benefits to County Monaghan particularly to the towns and villages of Clones, Smithborough and Monaghan itself.

The Ulster Canal Socio-Economic Study 2006 identifies the potential for various Canal side developments including those associated with walking, cycling, angling and improving access from the Canal to existing visitor attractions. Monaghan Tourism through Monaghan County Enterprise Board, Monaghan County Development Board and Monaghan County Council will play a central role in the development of the proposed Masterplan, which aims to identify and present all the corridor development opportunities and proposals associated with the Ulster Canal restoration, including private sector development opportunities.

Whilst it is hoped that eventually it will be possible to navigate the canal the whole way to Lough Neagh, for the foreseeable future the journey will stop at Clones. Once one reaches Clones by boat, the visitor experience will no doubt be greatly enhanced should it be possible to continue to journey along the canal by bike or foot. The economic benefits of reopening the canal to Clones will also be felt by the communities between Clones and Monaghan, and by Monaghan town. A road-based cycle trail links Monaghan town to Glaslough village, some 6 miles further on. Glaslough is home to Castle Leslie and is one of the biggest tourism destinations in the north east region. Monaghan County Council intends to explore the feasibility of using the old GNR rail line from Monaghan through Glaslough and on to Armagh as a natural extension of the Greenway. This will be included in Phase II, as much work around ownership of the former track remains to be done before we would be in a position to proceed with a project.

(ii) A management committee will be appointed to the route which will incorporate members of Monaghan County Council as well as local residents and stakeholders who will look after the day to day running of the route and identify and address any potential issues which arise. It is proposed a comprehensive signage strategy is employed so motorists will be made acutely aware that the route of the presence of cyclists where the greenway intersects with the road network.

(iii) The route will be monitored via the installation of permanent bicycle counters along the route which will monitor activity and provide valuable feedback as to the number of users on the route. The cost of these counters has been included in the preliminary cost estimates for the route.

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# Appendix One





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Monaghan Co Council  
The Glen  
Monaghan  
Co Monaghan

27<sup>th</sup> April 2012

To whom it may concern

**Re: Monaghan County Councils Proposal to Develop an Off Road Greenway along the Towpath of the Ulster Canal from Clones to Monaghan**

I would advise that Waterways Ireland supports this project and believes that this proposal would complement its ongoing project to reopen the Ulster Canal from Upper Lough Erne to Clones which also includes a public towpath.

Yours Sincerely

K.N.Russell

Director of Technical Services  
Waterways Ireland

Breifne Comhtháite Teo., agus Forbairt Chomhtháite Mhuineacháin Teo., ag obair le céile ar son forbairt tuaithe  
Breffni Integrated Ltd., and Monaghan Integrated Development Ltd., working together for rural development

Oifig Forbairt Tuaithe  
Coláiste Talmhaíochta  
Baile Átha hÉis  
Co. An Chabháin, Éire

25<sup>th</sup> April 2012

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To whom it may concern;

Cavan Monaghan LEADER delivers the Rural Development Programme 2007 – 2013 in Co. Monaghan and Co. Cavan. One of our core objectives is to develop rural tourism within the two counties.

To this end, in 2001 we commissioned Frank Benson & Partners consultants to conduct a feasibility study on the development of a Greenway along a series of old transport routes, including railway lines and the Ulster Canal tow path from Clones to Monaghan town. We received funding support from the Heritage Council to commission the report. The report was favourable towards the development of this Greenway, and we are delighted to see that Monaghan County Council is now acting on its recommendations.

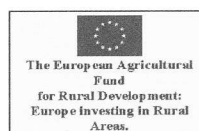
We are certain that the development of the tow path for recreational use will have a significant impact on tourism in not just Monaghan, but across north Cavan, and we look forward to hearing more about this project progress.

Please contact the undersigned directly should you require any additional information.

Yours sincerely,



John Toland  
Development Officer



Comhshaol, Pobal agus Rialtas Áitiúil  
Environment, Community and Local Government



Breifne Comhtháite Teo. 6A Pairc Ghnó Chorr Lorgan, Corr Lorgan, Bóthar Bhéal Átha na nEach, An Chabháin, Co. An Chabháin. Breffni Integrated Ltd, 6A Corlurgan Business Park, Corlurgan, Ballinagh Road, Cavan, Co. Cavan. Cuideachta faoi theorainn ráthálachta, cláraithe i mBaile Átha Cliath. A company limited by guarantee, regd in Dublin. Uimhir/Number 462591.  
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Forbairt Chomhtháite Mhuineacháin Teo, Bothar Mhuineacháin, Baile na Lorgan, Co. Muineacháin. Monaghan Integrated Development Ltd., Monaghan Road, Castleblayney Co. Monaghan. Cuideachta faoi theorainn ráthálachta, cláraithe i mBaile Átha Cliath. A company limited by guarantee, regd in Dublin. Uimhir/Number 463952. S/D: A.King, P.Grimes, G.Carville, S.Conlon, S.Coyle, M.Lennon, S.Kelly, A.McCabe, L.Sharkey, M.O'Brien, A.Malone, S.Roche, J.McEntegart, P.Kavanagh, M.Mullen, D.Durcan, B.McKenna, D.Murphy, M.Marron, R.Connolly, A.Forde & M.Sherry.