

Kildare County Council

Naas Canal Quarter – post public consultation report

October 2024



Quality information

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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Background

The Naas Canal Quarter regeneration initiative aims to develop a masterplan framework to transform an under-used area in the heart of Naas into a vibrant local hub, attracting new economic and community activity to the area.

To gather feedback from the community in Naas and beyond, Kildare County Council commissioned AECOM to develop the Naas Canal Quarter Community and Stakeholder online survey which was launched at 09:00 on Friday 28th June 2024 and concluded at 17:00 on Friday 9th August 2024.

Gauging community priorities and insight into the opportunity at Naas Canal Quarter from those that live and work there, is critical to achieving successful and sustainable regeneration. The online survey broke the regeneration opportunity down into a series of accessible questions, each looking at a topic or theme and asking participants for their feedback.

The following document provides a summary of the responses to the Naas Canal Quarter public online survey.

1.2 Engagement objectives and approach

The online survey was developed to raise awareness of the proposals to regenerate Canal Quarter, to inform local people about Kildare County Council's aims and objectives and to consult with the goal of securing a diverse range of perspectives and insights from the wider community in Naas and in surrounding areas

1.3 Survey drafting and development

The survey, designed to be completed in approximately ten minutes, incorporated a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions, focused on gathering information about how people currently interact with the Canal Quarter space and their aspirations for its future.

Optional demographic questions were strategically included to understand the composition of respondents and their geographic connection to Naas. This was aimed at ensuring the feedback secured represented a wide spectrum of community voices, essential for an inclusive and representative masterplan.

The questionnaire explored various facets, such as visitation frequency to the Canal Quarter, preferred modes of transport and desired amenities that would enhance the area's appeal as a destination. It also sought input on temporary "meanwhile uses" that could activate the area before permanent redevelopment, to reflect community preferences for activities such as street food and retail markets, or cultural events.

Additionally, questions were posed to gauge preferences for physical improvements in the Canal Quarter, ranging from infrastructure enhancements to biodiversity initiatives. The survey concluded by inviting participants to share their aspirations and suggestions for the regeneration of the Naas Canal Quarter, capturing their hopes and concerns in a concise format.

This document contains a breakdown of the feedback received, looking at both quantitative and qualitative data to identify common themes and trends and identifying opportunities for the project team to undertake further work with local stakeholders and communities.

1.4 Online survey development and promotion

The Canal Quarter online survey was developed utilising Microsoft Forms and respondents were directed to the survey site via email and organic social media posts. A press release was also issued to the local media to raise the profile of the consultation. The press release and samples of the coverage and social media posts are included at appendix A and B.

Respondents were signposted to the online survey from the Kildare County Council project landing page here: [Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan: Have your say | Kildare County Council \(kildarecoco.ie\)](#). Additionally, the survey was issued to Kildare County Council's email data base of consultees.

2.0 Survey responses, analysis and key themes emerging

2.1 Feedback overview and analysis

The Naas Canal Quarter online survey received 901 responses in the six weeks of the consultation period, with the depth and detail of feedback received extensive. Most responses to open field, qualitative questions provide valuable and specific ideas about opportunities and constraints.

Following the close of the public survey, AECOM has worked with Kildare County Council to review and analyse all responses. Summaries and detailed breakdowns are included in the following chapters.

2.2 Feedback overview - key themes emerging

The feedback received from the Canal Quarter online survey shows the community want to see **new business and community spaces** at Canal Quarter to allow for new economic opportunities. **Hospitality** venues, including cafes and restaurants received **48% of first preferences** from respondents, with **46%** prioritising street food as a **meanwhile**, or temporary use.

Feedback also indicates the community wants to see regeneration delivered in a **sensitive** way, with 37% of respondents favouring and **prioritising regeneration of old buildings** at Canal Quarter. Regeneration that is sensitive to and even bolsters the natural and green surroundings of the Canal Quarter space is important - with **35%** of respondents choosing '**more trees and hedgerows**' as their top priority when asked about the environment.

The community want to **feel safe** in a regenerated Canal Quarter with the topic being the **second most regularly mentioned phrase in free text feedback** on physical changes which respondents would like to see.

Further high-level analysis is outlined in the points below with detailed, question by question, analysis following in the sections below:

- **Connectivity** and **easy access** to Canal Quarter from surrounding areas is important and feedback indicates that while the majority travel to Canal Quarter on foot, there are those who wish to access the space by car.
- Respondents see huge **potential in the waterway and harbour space** at Canal Quarter and have ideas as to how this space can best work for the community.
- Respondents want to see regeneration delivered in a **sensitive way** which celebrates Naas' history and heritage and overall the feedback indicates that local communities and stakeholders share Kildare County Council's view that the Canal Quarter is a 'hidden gem' which possesses huge potential.
- 47% of respondents live between 1-5km from the Canal Quarter with 45% passing through or visiting Canal Quarter on a weekly basis.
- **Most respondents** (60%) travel to Canal Quarter to undertake a **specific activity**, indicating that there is an existing cohort of users and patrons for potential new facilities and developments. The activities currently undertaken at Canal Quarter include visits to the library, visits to green, natural space, dog walking, exercise, community events and socialising.
- **67%** of respondents walk to Canal Quarter indicating a **focus on active travel** amongst existing visitors and users.
- When asked to prioritise the activities which encourage them to spend more time in Canal Quarter, **48%** of respondents **prioritised hospitality** infrastructure including cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating.
- When asked about temporary or **meanwhile** uses at Canal Quarter, **46%** of participants prioritised street **food**, with **23%** selecting '**community uses**' as their **second** priority.
- In relation to the types of infrastructure or physical improvements that would need to be made in the Canal Quarter to encourage people to visit the area more, **37%** of respondents prioritised **developing vacant sites** and buildings.

- When asked about the best ways to celebrate Naas' history and heritage, respondents prioritised **exhibitions** of significant archaeological artefacts from Naas and festivals and **cultural events**.
- In respect of environmental improvements and biodiversity net gain, **35%** of respondents prioritised more **trees and hedgerows** at Canal Quarter with **19%** prioritising more **public green space** as a second priority. Feedback shows a desire that the natural feel of the Canal Quarter should be maintained and improved through any regeneration project.

2.3 Demographics

Respondents had the opportunity to answer some non-mandatory questions on their demographics. This data is included below to give further context and insight.

Question 1

Respondents were given the option of answering a question on what age group they belong.

Figure 1 shows the age group breakdown of respondents to the consultation,

- 268 respondents to the question falling into the 35-44 age group
- 241 respondents falling into the 45-54 age group
- 166 respondents of the 55-64 age group
- 131 respondents aged 25-34
- 23 respondents aged 18-24.
- All other respondents selected the 'other' option or skipped the question.

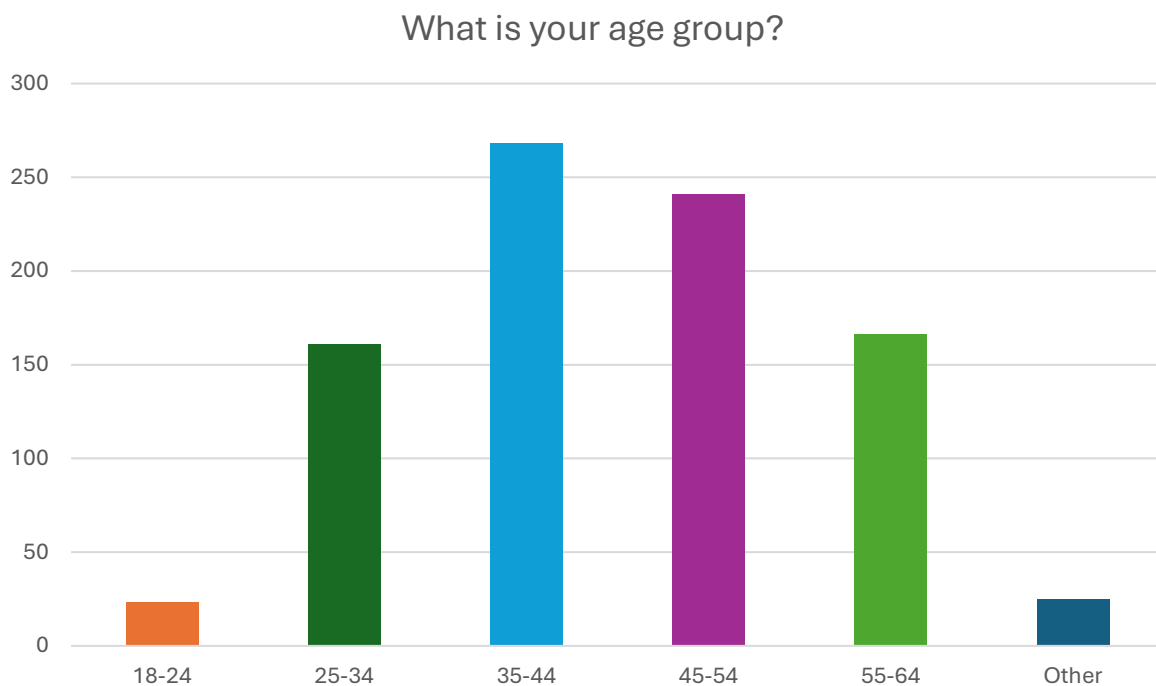


Figure 1- Age group of respondents

It is recommended that some specific outreach could be done with younger members of the community to secure engagement – such as through youth networks and educational facilities. It is also advised that greater granularity is given to younger and older cohorts to better reflect age group participation.

Question 2

Figure 2 shows the gender breakdown of respondents to the consultation:

- 482 respondents (54%) identified their gender as woman
- 381 respondents (43%) identified their gender as man
- 7 respondents (1%) identified their gender as non-binary
- The remaining 22 respondents (2%) selected the ‘prefer not to say’ option or ‘other’ option

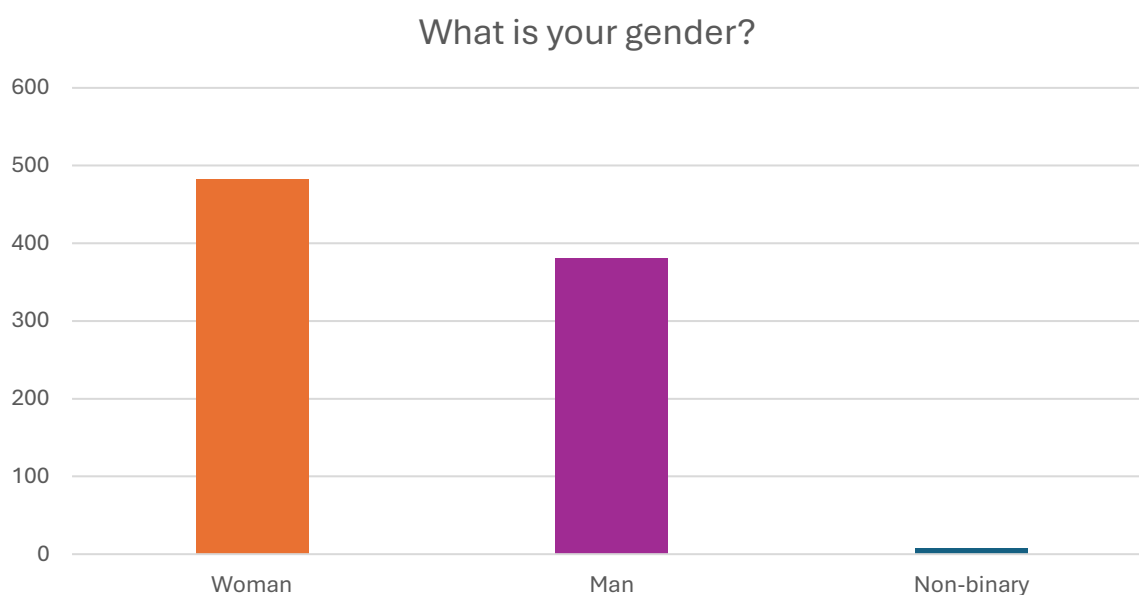


Figure 2 - Gender identity of respondents

Question 3

Respondents were given the option in a non-mandatory question of sharing their ethnic background in a free text answer.

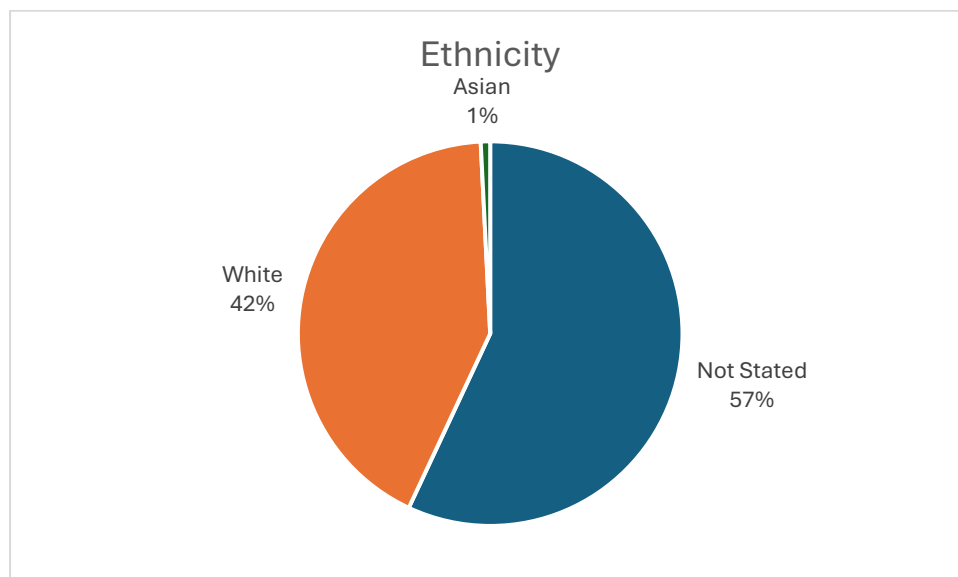
As respondents could enter any answer to this question, the answers provided could not always be directly coded to a quantifiable value. The 632 responses to this question have been analysed both on an “ethnicity” and “nationality” basis.

Future iterations of this question in any further surveys should align to CSO recommendations with regards to standardised responses to ethnicity questions. This will allow for better analysis of responses.

Ethnicity

Of the 632 respondents:

- 360 respondents (57%) did not state an ethnicity
- 267 respondents (42%) stated their ethnicity as ‘white’
- 5 respondents (1%) stated their ethnicity as ‘Asian’



Nationality

Of the 632 respondents:

- 518 respondents (82%) identified their nationality as Irish
- 87 respondents (14%) did not provide nationality information
- 13 respondents (2%) identified their nationality as European
- 7 respondents (1%) identified their nationality as British, Northern Irish, English, Scottish or Welsh
- 4 respondents (0.6%) identified their nationality as Asian
- The remaining 3 respondents (0.4%) identified their nationality as “American Irish”, “Latin American” or “White African”

3.0 Feedback on current and future uses

The following section of the report analyses several questions, which explored in greater detail the various additions and improvements that could be made to the Naas Canal Quarter. These questions assessed preferences on potential additions and improvements that could be made.

Data was also gathered on respondents' distance from the centre of Naas, and other aspects of their use of and access to the Canal Quarter, to contextualise their answers. Many questions allowed for respondents to provide free-text answers following ranked-preference questions.

Question 4

Respondents were asked about the distance they live from the centre of Naas to contextualise answers. All 901 respondents answered this question.

- 427 (47%) of respondents living approximately 1-5km from the centre of Naas
- 314 (35%) of respondents living approximately less than 1km from the centre of Naas
- 79 (9%) respondents living approximately 6-10km from the centre of Naas
- 44 (5%) respondents living approximately 11-20km from the centre of Naas

- 37 (4%) respondents living approximately 21km or more from the centre of Naas.

How far do you live from the centre of Naas, approximately?

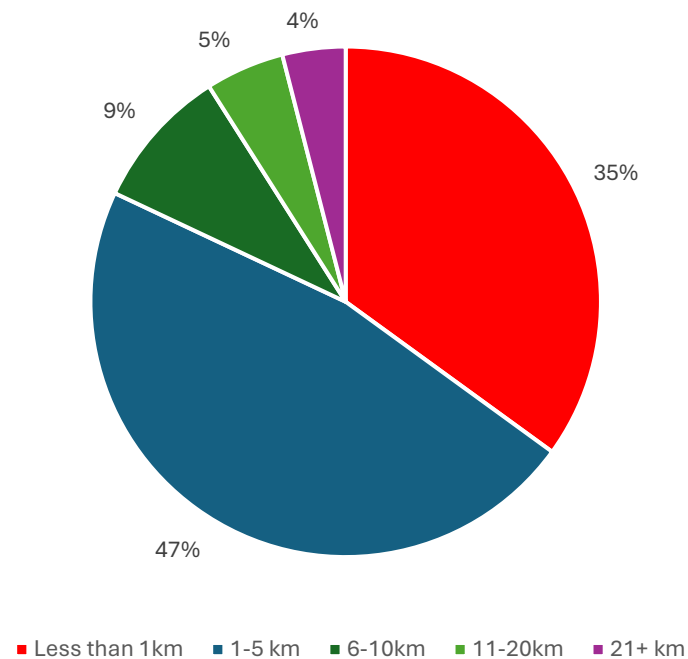


Figure 3 - Respondents' proximity to the centre of Naas

Question 5

Respondents were asked how often they visit or pass through the Naas Canal Quarter. All 901 respondents answered this question.

- 408 (45%) of respondents passing through or visiting weekly
- 263 (29%) of respondents doing this daily
- 129 (14%) monthly
- 94 (10%) rarely
- 7 (1%) never

How often do you pass visit or pass through the Naas Canal Quarter?

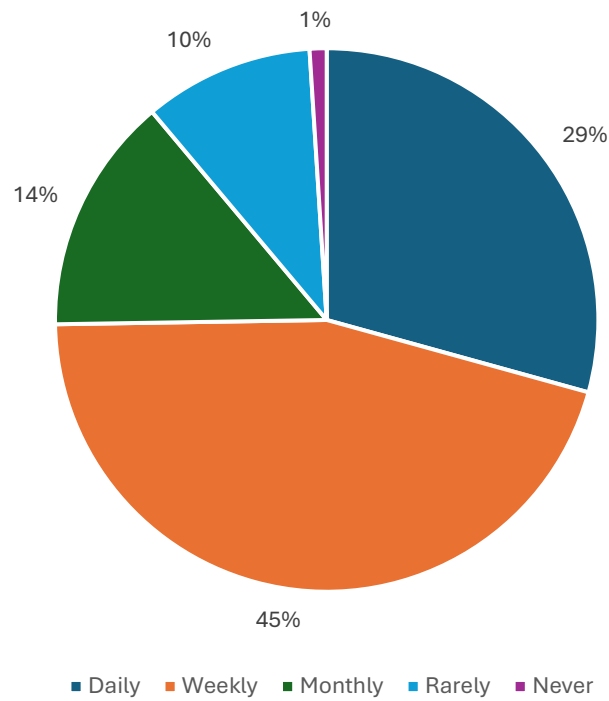


Figure 4 - Respondents' frequency of visiting or passing through Naas Canal Quarter

Question 6

Respondents were asked if they ever travel to the Naas Canal Quarter to undertake a specific activity. All 901 respondents answered this question.

- 538 (60%) travelling to undertake a specific activity
- 363 (40%) not doing so

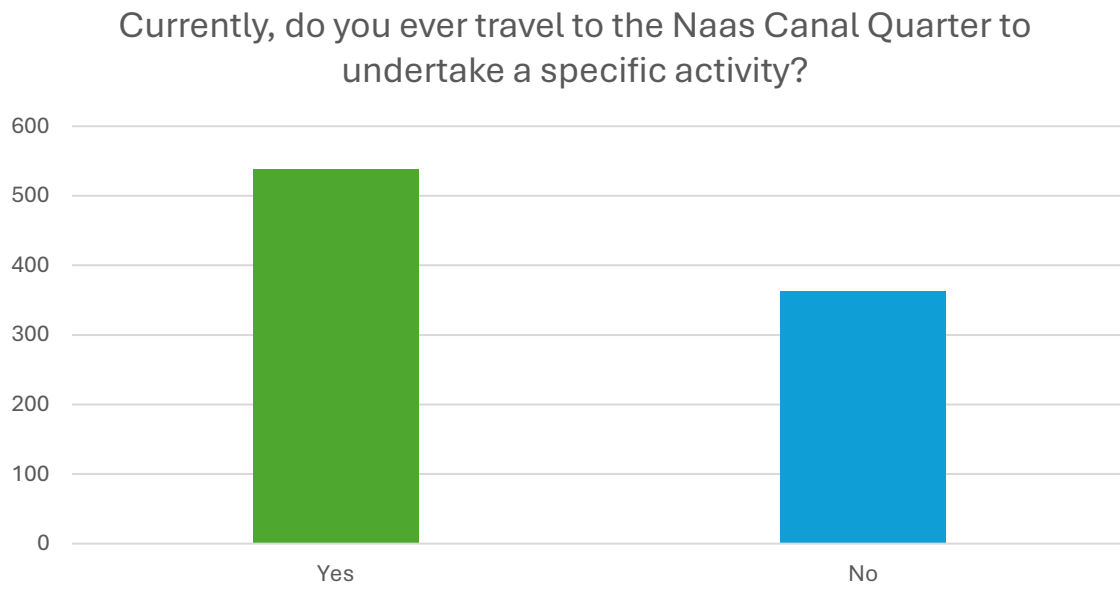


Figure 5 - Respondents' travel intentions to Naas Canal Quarter

Question 7

Following from question 6, respondents were asked to explain why they stop at or visit the Naas Canal Quarter and what activities they participate in if they answered "yes." A total of 576 respondents provided answers, and their responses have been summarised and categorised into themes in the table below.

Insights

Qualitative feedback included 361 responses relating to walking, dog walking and Public Rights of Way (PRoW). Many comments highlighted daily walks along the canal as part of their routine. Several respondents noted the canal's scenic beauty as a reason for their walks, with some mentioning that they incorporate the area into their exercise routines or use it as a route to access the town.

135 responses related to sports and recreation. Respondents highlighted a wide range of sports and recreational activities they engage in around the area. Boating, including events like the Naas Canal Rally, was frequently mentioned, along with various water-based activities such as kayaking and stand-up paddleboarding. Running and jogging are popular activities, with many individuals partaking in these activities regularly along the canal.

Table 1 – Reasons respondents stop in Naas and activities they participate in

Theme	Number of responses making comments in this theme	Detail of comments
Walking / dog walking / Public Right of Way (PRoW)	361	Respondents frequently mentioned walking as a primary activity in the area. Many comments highlighted daily walks along the canal as part of their routine. Walking with dogs, taking leisurely strolls and walking with young children were common themes.
Sports and Recreation	135	As well as the canal based activities highlighted above, cycling also featured prominently, with people cycling for both commuting and leisure and some mentioning issues with narrow paths on Old Sallins Road. Fishing and relaxation were noted as well, alongside general mentions of walking for exercise or leisure.
Hospitality and dining	115	Respondents frequently cited food and drink as key reasons for visiting the area. Many comments highlighted dining at local restaurants, particularly Vie de Chateau (also known as VDC), for lunch or dinner. Coffee was another popular attraction, with several respondents mentioning daily visits to coffee spots like Bad Habits and Basin Street. Food trucks were also noted as a significant draw. Additionally, comments referred to enjoying meals on the benches along the canal or picking up a takeaway coffee to savour while walking.
Community & Socialising	81	Respondents frequently mentioned using the area for visiting the library, meeting friends, and engaging in social activities. Social activities include meeting for coffee, walking with friends, attending community events like the Naas Garden Club and boat rally, and participating in local clubs. Some respondents also highlighted their enjoyment of sitting on benches and using the area for personal errands.

Family	39	Comments frequently mention family-related activities as a primary reason for visiting the area. Many respondents refer to spending time with children, such as feeding ducks, family walks, attending children's events or bringing children to the library. Some also highlight visiting family members or transporting children to school. Additionally, references are made to visiting parents and participating in family gatherings
Culture	34	Respondents expressed a strong connection to cultural activities centred around the Moat Theatre. Many individuals attend various events at the Moat, including performances, classes, and festivals. There is enthusiasm for more cultural activities and upgrades at the theatre, with some suggesting the addition of a café and more art and cultural events. The theatre is a key venue for music, theatre, and community gatherings. Other locations including the graveyard and the Kildare Archive Centre were mentioned.
Nature/Ecology	34	Respondents highlight the area's appeal for nature and wildlife observation. Many respondents mentioned feeding ducks and swans with their children or simply enjoying the presence of various bird species. Comments suggest the canal area is valued for its opportunities to observe and engage with local wildlife, including swans and ducks. Comments also reflect an interest in seeing enhancements to natural amenities and biodiversity efforts, such as those by the Naas Biodiversity Group.
Shopping	33	Respondents frequently mentioned various shopping activities in the area, including visits to the country market, which is held every Friday. Shopping also includes stopping off during cycling trips or visiting shops while running errands. Additionally, there are mentions of shopping related to dining out and attending local events at places like the Moat Theatre.
Access	27	Respondents highlighted various reasons for needing access to the area, including accessing the main street, finding parking, and walking into town. Many mentioned using the area as a route to reach home, with one response noting the dangers of narrow paths on Old Sallins Road for smaller cyclists. Others mentioned taking a shortcut to the town centre from Newbridge Road or passing through to shop or dine in town. There were also comments about using the area to avoid traffic on Sallins Road, with parking needs mentioned for accessing restaurants and specific destinations like Vie de Château.
Economic	27	Respondents indicated that their interactions with the area are often work-related. Many pass through or visit the quarter as part of their daily commute to work, and some work directly within the area, including roles with local organisations like the Naas Youth Project. There is also mention of local businesses and markets being part of their routine. Several respondents noted their work with specific local enterprises, such as Anderson Jewellers and others referenced construction or business activities.
Waterways	22	Respondents highlighted various activities and interests related to the waterways. Many people participate in boating and fishing, with frequent mentions of the Naas Canal Festival and the Naas boat rally, which are described as key events that showcase and animate the waterway. There is a noted interest in water sports and fishing, with some respondents expressing a focus on the condition of the canal and its wildlife.
Traffic	17	Respondents frequently mention traffic-related concerns. Comments suggest that individuals often cycle or drive through the area to avoid traffic congestion, particularly on Old Sallins Road. Several comments indicate that parking in the area is used strategically to avoid busy town routes and to facilitate access to various amenities such as restaurants, the post office, and shops. Additionally, respondents note using the area as a connection point between Main Street and Sallins/Monread, and for school runs or medical appointments.

Education	9	Respondents noted several key uses related to children’s activities and school runs. Many mentioned using the area for dropping off and picking up children from schools, including Mercy Convent and St Mary’s, with some noting the frequency of these trips. The Moat Theatre was also highlighted as a destination for children’s classes and shows. Additionally, some respondents mentioned parking in the area to collect their children from school and driving their kids to various school-related activities.
Visual amenity	6	Respondents highlighted visiting the area for its scenic and tranquil qualities including enjoying the scenic beauty of the canal, whether as part of a peaceful walk or simply to take in the views.
Youth	4	Comments highlight youth-related activities in the area, with several respondents mentioning their involvement with the Naas Youth Project, either through work or participation. References are also made to children attending youth groups like InSync.
Health, Safety and Security	1	One respondent reported concerns about antisocial behaviour, specifically noting that jogging around the harbour is frequently disrupted by such behaviour.

Question 8

When looking at the mode of transport respondents use to most frequently to travel to, or through the Naas Canal Quarter, **Figure 6** below shows that:

- 604 (67%) walk to or through the area
- 64 (7%) cycle
- 217 (24%) travel by car
- 4 (0.5%) take the bus
- 12 (1%) travel by boat

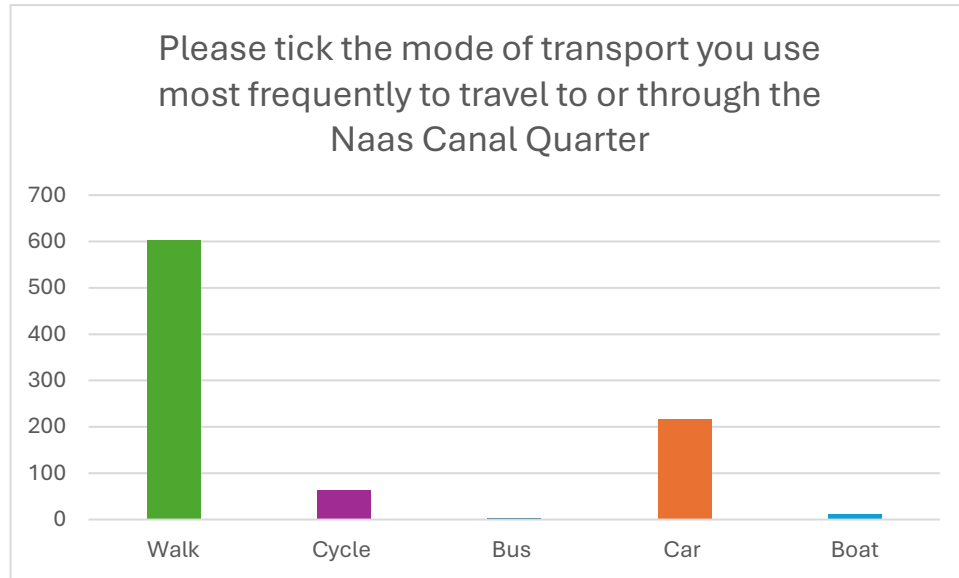


Figure 6 - Respondents' most common mode of transport to Naas Canal Quarter

Questions 9 &10

Respondents were asked to specify activities that would encourage them to spend more time in the Naas Canal Quarter. 159 respondents answered the question

“We would like to make the Naas Canal Quarter a destination for Naas. Please rank in order of preference the activities listed below which would encourage you to spend more time in the Canal Quarter?”

Insights

Almost half of respondents (428 or 48%) selected hospitality, including cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating as their first preference. More detail is available at Appendix D. Qualitative feedback included 32 responses relating to waterways. Respondents emphasised the importance of preserving the canal's natural beauty while promoting its use for peaceful walks, fishing, and nature appreciation.

Quantitative feedback

First preferences on what would encourage respondents to spend more time in the Canal Quarter



Qualitative feedback

- Waterways (32 responses)**
 Responses in this theme focused on enhancing the use of waterways in the Naas Canal Quarter. There were calls for increased water-based activities like canoeing, kayaking and boat trips, as well as creating a watersports centre.
- Nature/Ecology (29 responses)**
 In this theme, there was strong interest in preserving and enhancing nature and ecology within the Naas Canal Quarter. Comments emphasised the importance of nature walks, protecting existing green spaces, and avoiding the removal of trees.
- Community and Socialising (27 responses)**
 Many comments in this theme expressed a desire to enhance the Naas Canal Quarter as a vibrant community space. Some suggested adding picnic areas, seating, and spaces for gathering to encourage social interaction.

Questions 11 &12

Respondents were asked what temporary use can be made of the Naas Canal Quarter between now and the redevelopment of the area. 135 respondents answered question 12 and gave feedback, while 766 skipped this question and opted to only rank their preferences.

“Meanwhile uses: In the period between now and the redevelopment of sites in the Naas Canal Quarter there is an opportunity to provide temporary uses to help the area become a destination in people’s hearts and minds. Please place the following in order of the kinds of uses that you would like to see there”

Insights

Almost half (46%) of respondents highlighted ‘street food’ as the priority with 411 respondents choosing this as their top priority as a meanwhile use at Canal Quarter. 23% chose ‘Community uses’ as their top priority. Qualitative feedback included 32 responses relating to waterways, suggestions included developing facilities for boating activities, such as jetties, moorings, and services for touring and residential boats. More detail is available at Appendix E.

Quantitative feedback

First preferences on temporary uses of the Naas Canal Quarter



Qualitative feedback

- Sports and Recreation (31 responses)**
 Comments in this theme suggest a strong interest in enhancing sports and recreation opportunities, particularly those related to water activities like kayaking paddleboarding and canoeing.
- Waterways (29 responses)**
 In this theme, there was significant emphasis on enhancing the waterways for recreational and sporting activities.
- Culture and Heritage (28 responses)**
 Suggestions included displaying local artists' and school children's work, hosting family cultural events, and organising outdoor activities such as music and food festivals. Respondents emphasised the importance of celebrating local history, with ideas like a canal museum, heritage interpretation and events that highlight the town's historical significance.

Questions 13 & 14

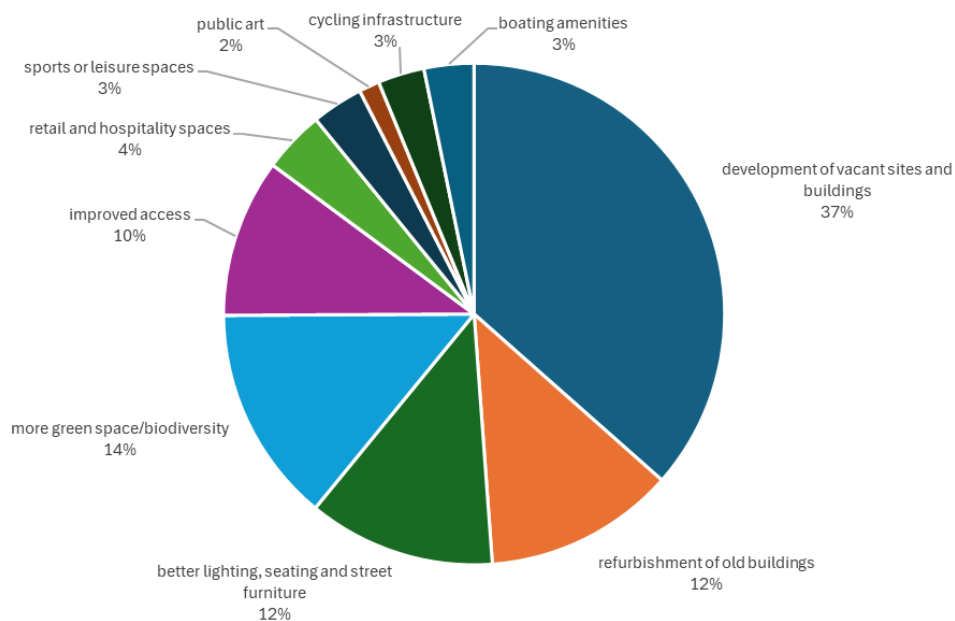
All respondents completed Q13 providing their preference on physical improvements, while 161 respondents completed Q14 providing additional information regarding their preferences

“Thinking about the current physical presentation of the area, how it looks, how it is linked to the rest of Naas and the current condition of public infrastructure, please rank the below options on types of infrastructure or physical improvements that would need to be made in the Canal Quarter to encourage you to visit the area more?”

Insights

Almost half (49%) of respondents highlighted development of vacant sites and refurbishment of old buildings as the most important physical improvements. Qualitative feedback included 32 responses relating to waterways, including development of boating facilities such as jetties and moorings, as well as provisioning for activities such as canoeing or kayaking. More detail is available at Appendix F. Additionally there is a clear desire for the Naas Canal Quarter to be developed into a vibrant community space, with some suggestions for adding picnic areas, seating and spaces to encourage social interaction

Quantitative feedback



Qualitative feedback

- Waterways (32 responses)**
 Suggestions included developing facilities for boating activities, such as jetties, moorings, and services for touring and residential boats. There were calls for increased water-based activities like canoeing, kayaking and boat trips, as well as creating a watersports centre.
- Nature/Ecology (29 responses)**
 Comments emphasised the importance of nature walks, protecting existing green spaces, and avoiding the removal of trees. Many respondents suggested rewilding the area, creating a nature reserve, and focusing on biodiversity through pollinator-friendly planting and native tree initiatives.
- Community and Socialising (27 responses)**
 Respondents emphasised the need for community services like childcare, local history museums, and exercise workshops, with ideas including a tea shop in the old library building or a floating café restaurant.

Questions 15 & 16

Respondents were asked how Naas Canal Quarter’s rich history and heritage can be celebrated and were given a series of choices including exhibitions of notable archaeological/cultural artefacts to rank in order of preference. Question 16 offered respondents a chance to comment on this, with 61 respondents opting to comment.

“History and Heritage: How can we celebrate the rich history and heritage of the Naas Canal Quarter? Please rank the options below in order of importance.”

Insights

25% of respondents chose ‘Festivals and other community events’ and this option gained the most first preferences and 24% chose ‘Exhibitions of notable local archaeological/cultural artefacts related to the area’ as their first preference. More detail is available at Appendix G.

Qualitative feedback included 33 responses relating to culture and heritage. Respondents suggested development should offer affordable community spaces. Ideas included a community garden growing herbs and food, and outdoor classrooms/spaces. The old library featured heavily in respondents’ feedback, with suggestions for it to be converted into a community space.

Quantitative feedback

First preferences on how we can celebrate the rich history and heritage of the Naas Canal Quarter



Qualitative feedback

- Culture and Heritage (33 responses)**
 The old library featured heavily in respondents’ feedback, with suggestions for it to be converted into a community space. Other ideas for its use include for a museum, a market, and a workshop space.
- Waterways (12 responses)**
 Feedback made note of the canal setting and infrastructure as a universal selling point of the area and proposed that this should be the focus of the proposals.
- Nature/Ecology/Environment (9 responses)**
 The establishment of facilities such as a public garden, nature centre, and biodiversity information centre were proposed to support nature and ecology in the area.

Questions 17 & 18

Respondents were asked how the environment and biodiversity at the Canal Quarter can be improved and were given choices including additional trees and hedgerows to rank in order of preference. Question 18 offered respondents the opportunity to comment on improvements to the environment and biodiversity, which 83 respondents gave their views on.

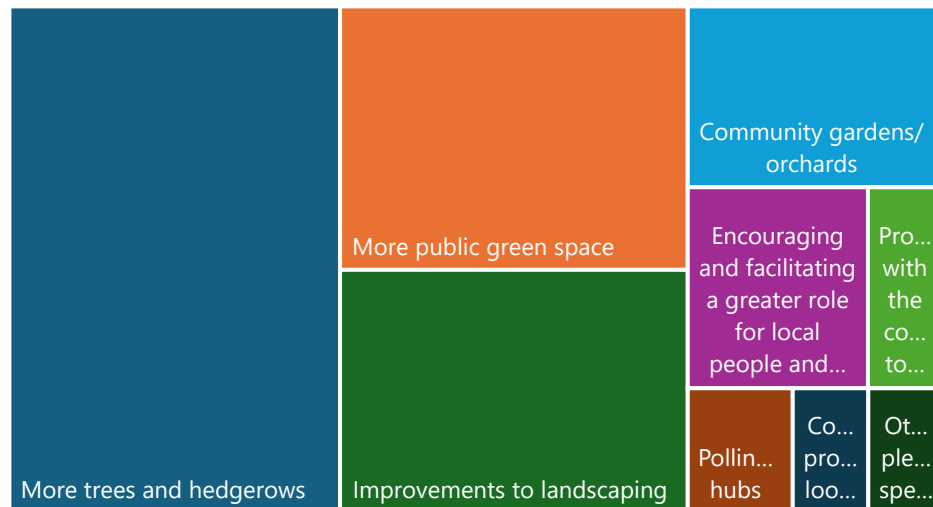
“Environment and Biodiversity: How can we improve the environment and biodiversity at the Naas Canal Quarter? Please rank the options below in order of importance”

Insights

319 (35%) of respondents chose ‘more trees and hedgerows’ as their first choice. 174 (19%) chose ‘More public green space’. Qualitative feedback included 38 responses relating to nature, ecology and environment. More detail is available at Appendix H. Comments in this theme focused on various aspects of nature, ecology, and the environment, reflecting the highest number of responses. Suggestions included creating allotments and community educational gardens, focusing on native trees and plants and ensuring planting efforts use local varieties.

Quantitative feedback

First preferences for how biodiversity at the Naas Canal Quarter can be improved



Qualitative feedback

- Nature, Ecology, Environment (38 responses)**
 Suggestions include leaving existing wild areas untouched and enhancing biodiversity with initiatives such as bird and bat walks. Other ideas include using renewable energy sources like wind and solar power and implementing practical measures such as installing Sea-bins to remove floating litter and dredging the canal to support aquatic life.
- Waterways (11 responses)**
 Emphasis was placed on retaining wild verges and encouraging biodiversity, both land-based and aquatic, by supporting native Irish wildflowers and local water-based flora and fauna.
- Health, Safety and Security (6 responses)**
 Improving the quality of the canal water to ensure it is safe for activities such as canoeing and kayaking is suggested alongside ideas such as implementing no smoking and no single-use plastics zoning.

Question 19

In this free text question, respondents were asked “Please let us know any other thoughts you have around aims and aspirations, or issues you feel the Council should consider, for the regeneration of the Naas Canal Quarter in the space below. (50 words). A total of 886 respondents provided answers, and their responses have been summarised and categorised into themes in the table below.

Insights

Qualitative feedback included 361 responses across four key themes: Health and Safety, Community and Socialising, Culture and Heritage, and Hospitality and Dining.

Health and Safety emerged as the top priority, with 175 responses emphasising the need for improved lighting and surveillance, particularly in areas like Sarto Park. The second most popular theme, Community and socialising garnered 113 responses, with respondents advocating for a vibrant social destination featuring outdoor seating, green spaces and recreational facilities, while preserving the canal’s natural beauty and ensuring good connectivity. The third most popular theme, Culture and Heritage, received 98 responses, highlighting the importance of integrating historical and cultural elements into development plans. Suggestions included creating a cultural gallery, public plaza, and community arts centre, along with vibrant public spaces and repurposing derelict sites for community events and festivals.

Additionally, it is worth noting the combined 129 responses related to Accessibility and Traffic roads and parking. While there is strong support for creating pedestrian-friendly spaces, there is also a clear call to balance this with maintaining some level of car access to ensure inclusivity and accessibility for all. Although there was general agreement on the need to improve pedestrian and cyclist access, opinions diverged on how to manage car access and parking effectively. Balancing these aspects remains a key challenge, with a focus on accommodating all users while enhancing the overall quality of public spaces.

Table 2 - Other thoughts around aims and aspirations, or issues for consideration

Theme	Number of responses making comments in this theme	Detail of comments
Health, safety and security	174	<p>Respondents suggested enhancing safety and reducing antisocial behaviour through increased security measures, such as improved lighting, surveillance, and strategies against loitering. Establishing car-free zones and safer vehicular routing to protect pedestrians was recommended.</p> <p>Ensuring that spaces are welcoming and safe for all ages, including children, the elderly, and families, was emphasised. It was suggested that all dogs should be kept on leads with fines implemented for dog fouling.</p> <p>Improving lighting in key areas, such as Sarto Park, and ensuring visibility for pedestrians at night were noted as priorities. Addressing vacant properties to prevent crime and avoiding design features that might shelter antisocial behaviour were also highlighted.</p> <p>Respondents called for increased Garda presence and patrols to tackle issues such as drinking, drug use, and antisocial behaviour. Adding safety rails along the canal and improving pedestrian visibility at road crossings were recommended.</p>
Community and socialising	113	<p>Respondents suggested repurposing the former Library building into a versatile community space. Proposals included transforming it into a centre for children, the elderly, and vulnerable groups, or converting it into a café or restaurant to serve diverse public needs. The need for a vibrant, multi-generational hub was emphasised, with recommendations for adding seating, picnic areas, playgrounds, allotments, and green spaces suitable for all ages.</p> <p>Comments also recommended utilising vacant buildings for community arts, education, and social projects. There was a focus on creating a safe, accessible, and inclusive environment for the elderly, families, and teenagers. Suggestions included developing the area as a social destination with outdoor seating, effective lighting, and recreational facilities, while preserving and enhancing the canal's natural beauty to promote biodiversity and tranquillity.</p> <p>Further input included linking the Canal Quarter with the De Burgh public park and opening Kildare CoCo gardens to the public. Ensuring ongoing maintenance, safety, and sustainability, and linking the area effectively with Main Street and future development lands, were also highlighted as important for creating a strong economic and community hub in Naas.</p>

<p>Culture and heritage</p> <p>98</p>	<p>Respondents stressed the need to reflect and celebrate Naas's heritage in development plans. Key suggestions included establishing a small cultural gallery and a permanent memorial to Celine Garvey. They proposed prioritizing the town's history and culture, with a model similar to Eyre Square in Galway, which functions as a versatile event space for festivals.</p> <p>The development should focus on integrating Naas Harbour and Canal as historical and recreational assets. Establishing a community arts centre and an adult arts education facility was recommended. Utilising surrounding derelict sites for free community events, craft displays, and cultural festivals was seen as beneficial for enriching the area.</p> <p>Creating a public plaza for events, markets, and performances with amenities such as bandstands, food trucks, and seating was suggested. The area should feature vibrant elements like colourful street art, public art, and historical information boards. An outdoor theatre or venue, as well as indoor spaces for markets and events, were also recommended.</p> <p>Respondents also suggested developing a tourist office hub and cultural centre in the old library building and focusing on the cultural, recreational, and retail elements from Jigginstown to Leinster Mills/Soldiers Island. They advocated for seasonal activities, local markets to support artists and small businesses, and avoiding an overemphasis on retail shops.</p> <p>Promoting local history, including notable figures and historical events, and ensuring the redevelopment of Market House were considered important. The inclusion of Irish and multilingual signage was recommended to celebrate both local heritage and new cultural influences.</p> <p>Finally, suggestions included avoiding the term "Naas Canal Quarter" due to its perceived pretentiousness, and instead focusing on reflecting the working-class history of the area. Ideas such as inviting celebrated artists, encouraging local food producers, and creating a complete outdoor area for culture and entertainment with features like a permanent stage and outdoor cinema were also proposed.</p>
<p>Hospitality and dining</p> <p>96</p>	<p>Respondents suggested repurposing the former library building for use as a café or restaurant. Enhancing the canal area with cafés, restaurants, and food trucks in the short term was recommended to make it a dining and socialising destination.</p> <p>Developing a vibrant street food scene with high-quality offerings, and avoiding chain establishments, was emphasised. Establishing hospitality venues like cafés, bars and possibly a hotel with outdoor seating was also proposed.</p> <p>Introducing picnic areas, bandstands, and outdoor dining spots was suggested to create a lively atmosphere. Maintaining a balance between development and preserving the area's natural beauty, and avoiding over-commercialisation, was advised.</p> <p>Promoting environmentally conscious eateries and maintaining green spaces for a relaxed, nature-focused environment were highlighted. Encouraging food markets with open seating to allow groups to enjoy diverse food options together was recommended.</p>

		<p>There was a suggestion to move the youth services building to facilitate a café or restaurant and to adopt holistic approaches combining biodiversity, sustainability, arts, culture, and safety.</p>
Nature/Ecology/Environment	91	<p>Respondents highlighted the need to prioritise nature and biodiversity, ensuring that development does not disrupt existing ecosystems. They stressed the importance of protecting and enhancing green spaces, maintaining existing trees, and integrating new planting.</p> <p>Regular cleanups of the canal, including the removal of trash, algae, and weeds, were recommended. Developing and supporting environmental education and activities, such as rain gardens and wildlife projects, was suggested, with the Naas Biodiversity Group’s rainwater planters at In Sync and the Harbour Hotel in 2023 seen as a positive step towards this goal.</p> <p>Engaging with local ecologists and experts to guide sustainable development and biodiversity efforts was advised. Promoting sustainability through recycling, composting, and reduced waste, including initiatives like reusable cup programs, was also recommended.</p> <p>Continuous, proactive management and maintenance were suggested to prevent negative impacts such as pollution and disturbance. It was noted that wetlands should be enhanced for climate resilience rather than developed. Making space for existing wildlife, such as nest sites for ducks and swans, and monitoring water quality in the canal to support fish were also mentioned.</p>
Waterways	87	<p>Respondents suggested developing the canal for a range of water sports and activities, including canoeing, kayaking, paddleboarding, and floating obstacle courses, as well as offering boat rentals. They recommended installing facilities for water sports, such as changing rooms and storage, and emphasised the importance of regular maintenance to address issues like trash, shopping carts, and algae.</p> <p>There were proposals to transform Naas Harbour into a vibrant destination with floating cafés and restaurants and to enhance it with boat-friendly infrastructure like freshwater taps, pump-out stations, and additional moorings. Such improvements were viewed as beneficial for attracting tourism and supporting liveaboard boats, potentially reducing antisocial behaviour through increased activity and security.</p> <p>Respondents also noted that the Naas Line of the canal is very short and includes five locks, which makes cruising difficult and limits visitor numbers. Raising the Newbridge Road Bridge to reopen the Corbally line was suggested to increase cruising potential. Additionally, a small number of well-serviced liveaboard berths outside the harbour would animate the waterway and contribute to a lively environment, noting the IWAI Executive can be contacted for further information on waterways.</p>
Sports and recreation	74	<p>Respondents suggested creating running paths in a park with measured distances for interval training. Developing a cycle path from Naas to Corbally Harbour was recommended to improve bicycle access.</p>

		<p>There was support for utilising the area as a sports hub to promote active lifestyles, including walking clubs and water sports. Specific proposals included introducing a floating water obstacle course for both kids and adults during summer and reviving or starting businesses similar to Naas Adventure Sports for activities such as canoeing and kayaking.</p> <p>Creating an outdoor calisthenics area, along with free basketball and tennis spaces was also recommended. Dredging the canal to support paddleboarding and enhancing water sports facilities with changing rooms and storage were suggested.</p>
Access	71	<p>Respondents express a diverse range of views regarding accessibility in the Naas Canal Quarter, reflecting both support for pedestrianisation and significant concerns about its impact.</p> <p>Many respondents advocate for prioritising pedestrian and cyclist access in the area. They suggest improvements such as dedicated cycle paths, pedestrian bridges, and car-free zones to create a safer and more inviting environment for walking and cycling. There is strong support for making the area accessible to all age groups, including the elderly and those with disabilities, by ensuring smooth, obstacle-free paths, well-lit spaces and secure environments. Proposals include making the main street less trafficked, improving access for people with disabilities and enhancing the visibility of local landmarks through better signage.</p> <p>However, several respondents raise concerns about fully pedestrianising the area. They argue that car access is essential, particularly for those who rely on vehicles for mobility, such as the elderly and those with disabilities. Some fear that removing cars could lead to increased traffic congestion in other parts of the town, particularly on nearby roads like Sallins Road. Others express concerns that full pedestrianisation could make the area less accessible for people visiting from outside Naas, especially those who need convenient parking options.</p> <p>Concerns were raised about the safety of new town cycle lanes, with recommendations to make them similar to the Blessington Road cycleway - colour-differentiated and without high kerbs. There was also a request to establish a safe cycle lane connecting Naas with Johnstown and Kill, as the existing pathways are considered unsafe and discontinuous, with acceptance for a breakthrough Johnstown’s main street.</p>
Visual Amenity	63	<p>Respondents emphasised the importance of maintaining the canal's natural beauty, which is seen as a unique selling point for Naas. They noted that the canal area currently appears run down and suggested that development should enhance existing natural amenities and preserve the character of beautiful buildings.</p> <p>To improve the area, respondents recommended creating landscaped settings with green spaces and incorporating local businesses. They also proposed developing spaces for relaxation and nature enjoyment, including areas for coffee and street performances. Enhancing public seating and adding colourful night lighting were also suggested to make the area more attractive.</p>

		<p>It was noted that new structures should complement the canal vista and not provide shelter for antisocial activities. Comments included refurbishing old facades, adding colour and preventing the construction of new housing or apartments that might obstruct views. Beautifying the area with flowers, clean buildings, and art sculptures was also suggested.</p> <p>Addressing derelict buildings, including the harbour hotel at the Newbridge Road entrance, and implementing a full-time caretaker for maintenance were highlighted as necessary steps.</p>
Family	59	<p>Respondents emphasised the need to maintain the area as a family-friendly space, with amenities catering to both children and adults. They highlighted the importance of preserving the area that provided a place for families to walk daily during COVID-19.</p> <p>Addressing antisocial behaviour to ensure a safe environment for families was noted as essential. Focus should be placed on community projects and creating safe spaces for families with young children.</p> <p>Recommendations included providing picnic tables, bins, and family-friendly amenities. Enhancing facilities for young children, such as restrooms, baby-changing areas, and sheltered play zones, was suggested.</p>
Traffic, roads and Parking	58	<p>The feedback on optimising public spaces in the area revealed a range of opinions. Some respondents strongly supported creating a car-free zone to enhance safety and the pedestrian experience, with particular emphasis on restricting car access on the street from the canal to the main street. However, there was concern that complete pedestrianisation might disrupt necessary car access so a balanced approach was preferred.</p> <p>On parking and traffic management, views were mixed. Several respondents suggested converting free parking spaces beside the old library to paid or staff parking as a solution to the existing parking problems. Conversely, others highlighted the need for more free parking and better management to cater to families with young children and people with limited mobility. There were calls for increased parking options and better traffic flow management to ensure accessibility for all.</p> <p>Traffic management proposals included introducing one-way systems on streets like the main street, the Moat and Abbey Street, drawing inspiration from European cities such as Memmingen. Continuing 'no car' Sundays and exploring part-time car-free zones were also supported to promote pedestrian use, although there were concerns about the impact of reduced car access on traffic congestion and local businesses.</p> <p>Suggestions to improve pedestrian safety included enhancing visibility at crossings and reducing traffic speeds, potentially lowering limits to 30 km/h with additional ramps if needed. Some advocated for better public transport options, like a tram line, to decrease reliance on cars and alleviate traffic issues.</p>
Shopping	54	<p>Respondents suggested developing a high-quality farmers market similar to London's Borough Market and creating a multi-use indoor space for various activities, including an indoor market.</p>

		<p>There was a recommendation to offer free or validated parking with purchases to attract more visitors. Focus was placed on niche cultural and high-end retail opportunities, especially during local events like racing festivals. A bustling outdoor hub to complement the new shopping centre was also proposed.</p> <p>Encouragement was given for family-owned businesses over chains, and increasing the number of local markets was suggested. Preserving McCormac's Field as a green and recreational space without retail or high-rise buildings was emphasised. Support for local crafts and pop-up shops, potentially combined with living spaces above, was noted.</p>
General positive	50	<p>There is strong enthusiasm for the proposed development of the Naas canal area, with many seeing it as a fantastic opportunity to revitalise a previously underused space. Respondents praised the potential to bring the community together and transform the canal into a vibrant destination. As one respondent noted, "It's such an underused gem in Naas and it's great to see it getting attention now!"</p> <p>The project is seen as a much-needed boost for Naas, offering a chance to breathe new life into the area and make it a focal point for both locals and visitors. Positive comments highlighted its potential to enhance Naas's appeal and set it apart, with one remarking, "This proposal could be a game changer for Naas."</p> <p>Respondents expressed excitement about the initiative and a strong desire for swift action. They emphasised the need to implement the plan efficiently, avoid overdevelopment, and maintain the canal's unique charm.</p>
Walking/dog walking/PrOW	46	<p>Respondents suggested optimising public spaces for pedestrians and cyclists while minimising car access. Developing a dog park where dogs can be off-lead was recommended, alongside preserving green spaces around Naas for families and nature enjoyment.</p> <p>Ensuring pedestrian access to shops and schools along the canal and developing running paths with measured intervals in the proposed park, were also proposed. Secure, well-lit pedestrian walkways were advised to enhance safety, particularly in the evenings.</p> <p>Implementing fines and community initiatives to prevent dog fouling, and establishing hydration stations for pedestrians and more bins for dog waste along the canal were suggested. Encouraging active travel through dedicated cycle lanes and pedestrian pathways was emphasised.</p>
Economic	26	<p>Feedback on the economic development of the Naas canal area highlighted several key points. Respondents expressed concern about the proliferation of apartment blocks and emphasised the need for careful investment to revitalise the area and boost footfall. There was a strong desire to transform the canal into a major tourist attraction, drawing inspiration from successful models in other locations.</p>

		<p>Support was voiced for creating a public plaza that includes elements such as biodiversity, a weekly market, tree shade, and historical notices. There were also calls to provide space for local businesses to trade and ensure ample public seating and playground facilities. One respondent suggested integrating live-work units to promote sustainable urban living.</p> <p>While there was enthusiasm for maintaining a commercial presence to support the area’s upkeep, others preferred keeping it free from new businesses, citing the nearby Main Street as sufficiently equipped. Proposals included repurposing unused buildings for food outlets to increase footfall and ensuring that any development links seamlessly with Main Street and future expansion areas to establish a central economic and community hub.</p> <p>Suggestions also included zoning Basin Street for commercial use rather than residential, and revitalising old buildings for new ventures, such as hotels or restaurants.</p>
Socioeconomic	25	<p>Respondents suggested focusing on free and low-cost activities to increase accessibility. They recommended considering the development of homes for the elderly and more affordable housing, ensuring a variety of solutions for different age groups.</p> <p>It was noted that the area should avoid becoming a late-night hotspot to prevent disturbances for elderly residents. The redevelopment plans should consider the impact on residents, particularly those moving into new housing near the old library.</p> <p>There was also a call for broader public involvement in the redevelopment process beyond just councillors.</p>
General amenities	25	<p>Respondents emphasised the need for general amenities to enhance the canal area. Suggestions included providing covered spaces for shade and shelter, increasing public seating and benches along the canal, and adding public restrooms with baby changing facilities. There was also a call for improved signage to better guide visitors to the canal area and addressing basic needs such as installing sufficient bins and a shelter for walkers.</p>
Survey and consultation	16	<p>Respondents provided mixed feedback on the survey and consultation process. Some found the questionnaire difficult to navigate on mobile phones, noting issues with scrolling and option selection not being optimised for mobile use. Suggestions were made to enhance public understanding by incorporating more engagement and imagery to better communicate the project's vision and goals.</p> <p>There were calls to involve professional designers in creating multiple redesign options for public spaces, with the public voting on their preferred choice. While some praised the initiative and found the survey helpful, others criticised the questionnaire's design, pointing out that the main challenge lies in integrating the canal experience into the town's fabric and avoiding imbalances that "Quarter" initiatives might introduce.</p>

<p>Education</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>Respondents highlighted the need for a community park near Jigginstown to address the lack of green space around nearby schools. They also suggested establishing a study hub for students and a centre for community arts and adult education to enhance cultural and educational opportunities.</p> <p>There were calls for a science or natural history centre to engage children with local nature. Accessible indoor and outdoor spaces for health, leisure, and community activities were recommended, alongside cooking demonstrations for all ages.</p> <p>Comments indicated a preference for focusing public funds on healthcare and education over tourism. Ensuring safe routes to school and improving public transportation options to reduce car traffic related to school drop-offs were also highlighted. Respondents encouraged local schools and communities to participate in art, wildlife preservation, and historical activities.</p>
<p>Youth</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>Respondents highlighted the need to address the lack of facilities for children aged 10-17 in Naas. Suggestions included repurposing the old library for youth services, such as a café/restaurant and a safe hangout space.</p> <p>Creating a welcoming environment for teenagers, including a supervised youth club and a music hub with recording facilities, was recommended. Reducing antisocial behaviour and ensuring a safer environment for teenagers were also emphasised.</p>
<p>General negative</p>	<p>7</p>	<p>Respondents expressed concerns about the project, with some advising against naming it a 'Quarter,' citing an overuse of such terms across the country. There were also criticisms about the potential misuse of public funds, particularly if the project turns out like DeBurgh Park or the greenway, which some feel do not effectively serve the community or attract tourists. Frustration was voiced over the perceived slow progress, with calls for more decisive action.</p> <p>Additionally, some respondents believe the area is already pleasant and worry about potential negative changes, expressing a lack of confidence in the council's ability to manage the project effectively.</p>
<p>Planning</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Respondents suggested considering unused gardens for Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) to enhance development opportunities.</p> <p>It was noted that the Naas Line of the canal is short and includes five locks, which limits visitor numbers. Raising the Newbridge Road Bridge could reopen the Corbally line and increase cruising potential, while a few well-serviced liveaboard berths outside the harbour could invigorate the waterway, nothing further information on waterways can be obtained from the IWAI Executive at canalsrep@iwai.ie.</p> <p>A clear timeframe and commitment for redeveloping the area promptly were highlighted as necessary. It was suggested to consult with ecologists, planning professionals and professional designers rather than only responding to vocal opinions.</p>
<p>Nightlife</p>	<p>4</p>	<p>Feedback on enhancing nightlife in the area highlighted three main points. Respondents were enthusiastic about developing a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly nightlife scene with bars, restaurants and potentially nightclubs. An example cited for</p>

		<p>inspiration was Carrer de Ramon Trías Fargas in Barcelona, where bars and restaurants transform into nightclubs, demonstrating a successful model that could be adapted for Naas.</p> <p>Additionally, there was a call to be considerate of local residents when organising events to ensure their needs and concerns are addressed.</p>
General neutral	4	<p>Feedback emphasised the need for proper supervision and careful planning. One respondent noted that public input can be narrow, especially on issues like car parking, highlighting the importance of clear communication of the project's goals. Another stressed that all options should be considered equally and cautioned against placing good ideas in the wrong context, which could hinder the project's success.</p>
N/A /no/not understandable	125	<p>Majority of comments included responses like "Na," "N/A," and "None," indicating no additional input. One participant mentioned, "None - the suggested items above capture any thoughts I would have on the topic overall."</p>

Standalone Feedback

During and after the survey period, several stakeholders; members of the public, councillors and organisations submitted their views on the proposal, both as emails to the council, and as long-form documents. These are included in the appendices; however, summaries are included below.

Respondent 1

Respondent 1 submitted a 12-page document outlining their proposals for the area, including maps and renders of the area. The full submission and illustrations are included in the appendix of this report. They gave their thoughts and views on how the Naas Harbour Precinct can be improved and welcomed any opportunity to realise this vision.

Their recommendations include:

- Expansion of the harbour to increase mooring capacity and support to enable recreational and tourism focussed activities, and the potential to install floating cafes and boat rental stations.
- Harbour activation via the development of active frontages with cafes, restaurants, shops and cultural spaces around the harbour, and the use of public spaces, outdoor seating, green landscape features and displays of public art to make the area more appealing.
- Active frontages to be created through public plazas and green spaces adjacent to the canal and harbour, and the hosting of regular events such as farmers' markets and cultural events.
- Improved mobility through the implementation of a network of streets with limited vehicular access, for deliveries and emergency vehicles, and the use of traffic-calming measures such as bollards.
- the enhancement of public transport links including shuttle buses, trams or water taxis to aid connectivity, alongside dedicated cycling lanes and pedestrian pathways with bike parking and rest areas.
- To the enhance community and cultural assets, they suggested the enhancement of the new Naas library, old Naas library building, Moat Theatre and health centre, with improved public spaces around them to foster community.

At the back of the Canal Quarter, they proposed the construction of a car park on the Millenium Park side of the canal, to the aim of serving visitors while avoiding disruption to the pedestrian experience, which along with other measures such as car sharing schemes and rental cars, would contribute to a transport hub initiative detailed in the appendices. Their suggestions can be read in greater detail at Appendix I.

Respondent 2 - Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI)

IWAI submitted an 18 page report of suggestions in response to the consultation, which supported the initiative with a number of prescriptions for the betterment of Naas and its tourism potential,

Central to their proposals is the reinstatement of access to the Corbally Branch of the canal, and the construction of a new bridge to replace the obstructing culvert on Newbridge Road, to be built prior to the development of housing nearby which could dissuade its construction. This is to the aim of increasing tourism to the area to support the council's aim to increase harbour boat traffic, outlined in its Local Area Plan.

Other recommendations include:

- A service block, water taps, pump-out and jetties along the green bank opposite the harbour buildings, to facilitate liveaboard boating in the area and sports and recreational usage of the area.
- Dry dock facilities on the Grand Canal.
- Elevation of the Green and Silver Route to national planning status level to flourish, and to aid its development as a tourist route.
- Consideration of routes at the national level.

IWAI's submission can be read in greater detail at Appendix J.

Respondent 3

Respondent 3 (member of the public) submitted a word document and map outlining his view and suggestions for the scheme. His proposals centred around the development of an off-road facility for everyone, the canal to be an inclusive tourist destination, and an extension of the Grand Greenway for all age. They suggested that with the development of multi-level housing in the area over the past two decades, there is need for open spaces perhaps equivalent to the linear open spaces that can be found along the Liffey in Kildare and Dublin, John suggested that essential open space can be provided in the triangular link between Abbey Bridge, with a walk and open space up to Pollpuck Bridge.

They also highlighted:

- Land enclosed by the triangle is one of the lowest areas of Naas, and this renders the land poorly suited for construction, which coupled with springs in the canal, makes the area best for the cultivation of willows and 'hydro vacuum' plants.
- A walkway along the bank without tarmac could enable families to walk safely.
- A fenced area for dog walking.
- A bridge for Newbridge Road for walking and to facilitate tourism.
- The shed built for canoeists to be reopened to enable this usage on the canal.
- The submission can be read in full at Appendix K with personal details redacted.

Respondent 4 - Cllr. Bill Clear

In addition to his response to the form, Cllr. Bill Clear emailed to advocate for a crossing across Newbridge Road to pass straight across the road, and for the relocation of the pedestrian crossing at the hotel to there to allow people to cross directly and link up to Rathasker Road and up to Kilcullen Road to schools.

Respondent 5 - Cllr. Seamus Moore

Cllr Seamus Moore submitted a document outlining a number of suggestions primarily pertaining to heritage assets and the harbour area. His suggestions included:

- The Market House to be the defining building of the Canal Harbour Quarter in any future development proposals, and for it to be protected, preserved and developed alongside existing canal-related structures to reflect the 18th and 19th century.
- For the old library to be considered as a social centre facility for the local area population and for the retirement centre at a future date.
- An enhanced set back area with tall buildings to give the area an enclosed compaction to a site that lends itself to period retention and a protection against the very cold, wind-driven environment in winter.
- The retention of the Basin Street houses with a modern town house development to the rear of each house, as they are period based and formed the new traffic route to The Harbour from the Town Centre.
- For the area to serve as a water sports hub, facilitated by a bridge-lifting mechanism at the Jigginstown blocked section of the 8.5km of Corbally Canal.
- The reopening of the Corbally Canal to a free boat passage between both harbours, which would lend itself to the creation of boat slip ways.
- The possible creation of a Naas-Newbridge and Kilcullen inland water feature for water sports, biodiversity walks and other activities.
- For the local authority to pursue the ownership status of two houses on the south side of Sarto Road which would aid the creation of a bridge facility for public transport.
- Redesign of the Abbey Street Corridor.
- Compulsory acquisition and renovation of the house atop Moat Hill.
- Cllr Moore's full submission is available at Appendix L.

Respondent 6

Respondent 6 (member of the public) emailed in several suggestions for the project, including:

- Cleaning benches and footpaths, and more landscaping/greenery in the area.
- For the harbour's role as a pedestrian transit route to be taken advantage of.
- 'Play on the way' initiatives to welcome children.

- Urban agriculture in the green field space beside Sarto/Abbey bridge.
- More benches along the length of the canal.
- Improved harbour safety at night
- For the old library to be opened for booking as a space for community events/exhibitions.
- Full submission, with personal details redacted is available at Appendix M.

4.0 Conclusions

Based on the feedback received and the levels of engagement, we can conclude early proposals to improve and regenerate the Canal Quarter have received a high level of support and generated meaningful input across stakeholder and community audiences. The findings of this report will be incorporated into discussions at forthcoming visioning and synthesis stakeholder workshops, which form a key aspect of the masterplanning process.

Learnings to take forward to further engagement include surveys that allow greater granularity to segmenting of younger and older cohort, to better reflect age group participation. It is recommended that some specific outreach could be done with younger members of the community to secure engagement – such as through youth networks and educational facilities. It is also advised

Insights secured as part of the consultation, indicates the public see the potential in the Canal Quarter to create a local destination, close to the town centre, where new business and economic activity can flourish. The feedback highlights ways in which the natural environment and access can be improved, and where new uses can be trialled over shorter periods, to coalesce in a place where people will enjoy spending time.

It is clear from feedback received there are ideas and issues which would benefit further collaboration and dialogue. For example the balance to be struck between active travel access and vehicular access/parking, as well as the balance between development and the maintenance of the natural feel of the Canal Quarter. Safety, connectivity and sensitivity to local history and heritage, as well as preservation of the unique local context, are areas which will benefit from further exploration as the masterplanning process continues to evolve.

Appendix A - Press Release

Press Release

Ideas being sought for Naas Canal Quarter regeneration

- **Public survey launched to shape the future of Naas Canal Quarter as a destination for locals and visitors**
- **Ambitious project aims to create an attractive new town centre destination at Naas Canal Quarter, enhancing public spaces and preserving local heritage**

28th June 2024: Kildare County Council is excited to announce the launch of a public survey as part of its ambitious Naas Canal Quarter regeneration initiative. This masterplanning project aims to transform an under-used area in the heart of Naas into a vibrant local hub, attracting new economic and community activity to the area.

The Naas Canal Quarter is set in a key location close to the centre of Naas, situated west of Main Street, east of Sarto Park, north of Newbridge Road, and south of Abbey Road and Bridge.

Sonya Kavanagh, Chief Executive, Kildare County Council, said: *“We are committed to making the Naas Canal Quarter a thriving and vibrant hub that reflects the needs and aspirations of our community. This survey is a crucial step in ensuring that everyone's voice is heard in shaping the future of this exciting project.”*

“Collaboration is a key element of this project, and Kildare County Council is eager to gather insights from residents, workers, and visitors to Naas. To ensure a broad range of voices are heard, we are launching an online survey and we want you to take part and help us shape the future of Naas Canal Quarter.”

Through this initiative, Kildare County Council plans to:

- Develop under-utilised sites and buildings
- Revitalise public spaces
- Improve pedestrian and cycling paths
- Create engaging new spaces

Supported by the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage's Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, the scheme aims to attract new businesses, provide diverse recreational opportunities, spark investment, and celebrate the area's rich historical background.

By developing under-utilised sites and buildings, revitalising public spaces, improving pedestrian and cycling paths Kildare County Council hopes to attract investment and commercial activity while preserving and celebrating the area's heritage. Sensitive restoration of historic buildings and assets will ensure the past is honoured as a prosperous future is paved.

Key components of the project include the integration and enhancement of existing community and cultural assets such as the new Naas Library, the old Naas library building, the Moat Theatre and the health centre. These efforts aim to reinforce the existing social and cultural fabric of the area.

The public is invited to complete this questionnaire to share your insights and help shape the future of the Naas Canal Quarter. The survey will close **at 5pm on Friday, 9th August 2024.**

Click the link to take part and have your say: <https://forms.office.com/r/k90tA4HvMX>

For more information, please contact forwardplanning@kildarecoco.ie

-ENDS-

Note to Editors:

For media inquiries and additional information, please contact:


Kildare County Council

Press Office

press@kildarecoco.ie

Appendix B - Promotional post from Kildare County Council on 'X'

← Post


 **Kildare County Council** @KildareCoCo [Follow](#) ...

📢 Don't miss your chance to have your say!

Kildare County Council wants to revitalise Naas Canal Quarter to create a vibrant hub & destination for Naas residents & visitors.

Complete our survey & have your say by 5pm on Friday, August 9th, 2024!

[➡ rb.gy/v8etjh](https://rb.gy/v8etjh)



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Appendix C - Questionnaire



Comhairle Contae Chill Dara
Kildare County Council

Naas Canal Quarter Community and Stakeholder Questionnaire

The below survey will take around ten minutes to complete. Please note, the first three questions are optional and do not have to be completed.

Your data will be processed in line with the Data Protection Acts 1988 to 2018. The information will only be used to inform the development of the Canal Quarter masterplan and for no other purposes. The Council's full privacy statement is available at

www.kildarecoco.ie/YourCouncil/GovernanceandCompliance/PrivacyStatement/

* Required

1. What is your age group? (optional)

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

Other

2. What is your gender? (optional)

- Woman
- Man
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say
- Other

3. To help us understand the data we receive from this survey, please tell us your ethnic group below: (optional)



4. How far do you live from the centre of Naas, approximately? *

- Less than 1 km
- 1-5 km
- 6-10 km
- 11-20km
- 21+ km

5. How often do you pass visit or pass through the Naas Canal Quarter? * Daily

Weekly

Monthly

Rarely

Never

6. Currently, do you ever travel to the Naas Canal Quarter to undertake a specific activity? *

Yes

No

7. If yes, please tell us why you stop at/visit the Naas Canal Quarter and what activity you are taking part in? (max 10 words)

8. Please tick the mode of transport you use most frequently to travel to or through the Naas Canal Quarter *

Walk

Cycle

Bus

Car

Boat

9. We would like to make the Naas Canal Quarter a destination for Naas. Please rank in order of preference the activities listed below which would encourage you to spend more time in the Canal Quarter? *

More shops and/or retail on offer

Hospitality venues, including cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating

Night-time economy opportunities

Arts, culture and creativity spaces and events

Sports and recreation activities

Children's play facilities

Heritage interpretation or activities

Other, please specify in the question below.

10. If you selected 'Other', please specify. (max 10 words)

11. Meanwhile uses: In the period between now and the redevelopment of sites in the Naas Canal Quarter there is an opportunity to provide temporary uses to help the area become a destination in people's hearts and minds. Please place the following in order of the kinds of uses that you would like to see there: *

Street food

Retail or market uses

Community uses

Cultural uses

12. If you selected 'Other', please specify. (max 10 words)

13. Thinking about the current physical presentation of the area, how it looks, how it is linked to the rest of Naas and the current condition of public infrastructure, please rank the below options on types of infrastructure or physical improvements that would need to be made in the Canal Quarter to encourage you to visit the area more? *

Development of vacant sites and buildings

Refurbishment of old building facades and structures

Spaces for retail and hospitality

Improved access, including improved streets, footpaths and public spaces

More green space/ enhanced biodiversity, including more street trees and landscaping

Better lighting, seating and street furniture, including public toilets

Spaces for sports or leisure

Public art

Improved cycling infrastructure, i.e.. cycling stands

14. If you have another suggestion for Q13, please state here.
(max 10 words)

15. How can we celebrate the rich history and heritage of the Naas Canal Quarter? Please rank the options below in order of importance. *

Exhibitions of notable local archaeological/cultural artefacts related to the area

Public art to showcase local history and culture

Creating community-led projects to collect knowledge and stories from local people, available to access online in a citizens' archive.

Events and gatherings focused on traditional music and dance

Events focused on local, traditional crafts

Festivals and other community events

Events focused on culinary traditions

Exhibitions to celebrate the architecture of Naas

Local information/interpretation boards

Other, please specify in the question below.

16. If you selected 'Other', please specify. (max 10 words)

17. How can we improve the environment and biodiversity at the Naas Canal Quarter? Please rank the options below in order of importance. *

More trees and hedgerows

More public green space

Improvements to landscaping

Encouraging and facilitating a greater role for local people and organisations in maintaining outdoor spaces

Community gardens/orchards

Community projects looking at sustainability, for example sustainable urban drainage (SUDs)

Projects with the community to build now wildlife infrastructure, for example bug hotels/ bird and bat boxes

Pollinator hubs

18. If you selected 'Other', please specify. (max 10 words)

19. Please let us know any other thoughts you have around aims and aspirations, or issues you feel the Council should consider, for the regeneration of the Naas Canal Quarter in the space below. (50 word limit) *

This content is neither created nor endorsed by Microsoft. The data you submit will be sent to the form owner.

Appendix D – Questions 9 and 10 detailed feedback

Respondents were to rank several ideas to help make the Canal Quarter a destination for Naas, including hospitality venues and arts spaces. 159 respondents answered question 10 and gave feedback, while 742 skipped.

The activity that would encourage the highest number of respondents to spend more time in the canal quarter was

- 428 respondents (48%) selected hospitality, including cafes and restaurants with outdoor seating as their first preference.
- 144 (16%) of respondents selected arts, culture and creativity spaces and events as their first preference
- 103 (11%) selected sports and recreation activities as their first preference
- 74 (8%) chose children’s play facilities
- 60 (7%) chose more shops and/or retail on offer as their first preference
- 20 (2%) chose night-time economy opportunities as their first preference
- 35 (4%) chose other and opted to specify their first preference in the free text below for question 10.

For question 10, respondents were asked to specify other activities that would encourage them to spend more time in the Naas Canal Quarter. 159 respondents answered the question and their responses have been summarised in the table below.

Table 3 - Activities that would encourage respondents to spend more time in the Naas Canal Quarter

Theme	Number of responses making comments on this	Detail of comments
Waterways	32	<p>Responses in this theme focused on enhancing the use of waterways in the Naas Canal Quarter. Suggestions included developing facilities for boating activities, such as jetties, moorings, and services for touring and residential boats. There were calls for increased water-based activities like canoeing, kayaking and boat trips, as well as creating a watersports centre.</p> <p>Respondents emphasised the importance of preserving the canal's natural beauty while promoting its use for peaceful walks, fishing, and nature appreciation.</p>

<p>Nature/Ecology</p> <p>29</p>	<p>In this theme, there was strong interest in preserving and enhancing nature and ecology within the Naas Canal Quarter.</p> <p>Comments emphasised the importance of nature walks, protecting existing green spaces, and avoiding the removal of trees. Many respondents suggested rewilding the area, creating a nature reserve, and focusing on biodiversity through pollinator-friendly planting and native tree initiatives.</p> <p>There were calls to protect local wildlife, including swans, ducks, and bats, and to establish wildlife safe zones and sanctuaries. Suggestions included a public garden, nature centre, and biodiversity information centre, with activities centred around environmental education and sustainability.</p>
<p>Community and Socialising</p> <p>27</p>	<p>Many comments in this theme expressed a desire to enhance the Naas Canal Quarter as a vibrant community space.</p> <p>Some suggested adding picnic areas, seating, and spaces for gathering to encourage social interaction. Others emphasised the need for community services like childcare, local history museums, and exercise workshops, with ideas including a tea shop in the old library building or a floating café restaurant.</p> <p>There were also calls for recreational and environmental features, such as a town park in West Naas, community gardens, and residential options to make the area more functional and inviting.</p>
<p>Sports and Recreation</p> <p>25</p>	<p>Respondents in this theme suggested establishing a bike rental hub and offering a range of boating-related activities such as barge trips, canoeing, kayaking, and paddle boarding. There were calls for green spaces for picnics, and facilities for water sports including jetties, moorings and boat refurbishment.</p> <p>Comments also highlighted the need for outdoor gym facilities, a watersports centre and houseboat moorings. Ideas included creating a recreational area by removing the Canal Masters house, and developing water-based activities like small electric boats, duck races, and fun activities for all ages.</p> <p>Additionally, there was support for continuous walking and cycling routes, and proposals for amenities like crazy golf or a kids' splash pad. Overall, respondents favoured transforming the canal into a lively, multifunctional space for sports, leisure, and recreation.</p>
<p>Culture and heritage</p> <p>19</p>	<p>Respondents noted several key uses related to cultural and heritage activities.</p> <p>Suggestions included creating open areas for festivals and events such as summer festivals, St Patrick's Day celebrations, and multicultural food and music festivals. There were calls for a multi-use amphitheatre for live music, movies, and theatre, as well as a sculpture park and street entertainment.</p> <p>Respondents also emphasised the need for an adult arts education centre offering ceramics, stained glass, and woodwork and suggested establishing a local history museum or heritage centre in the old library building. Ideas included a floating café restaurant or a Citizen's Information Centre as alternatives.</p> <p>Overall, there was strong support for vibrant cultural events and activities, with an emphasis on engaging local history and providing spaces for community gatherings and entertainment.</p>
<p>Access</p> <p>18</p>	<p>Ensuring overall accessibility for all users is a key concern among respondents. Comments indicate support for infrastructure projects like the new Sallins Greenway and the future Corbally Canal link, with several respondents advocating for continuous, uninterrupted walking and cycling routes. Suggestions also include adding more benches and water stations, making the area more elderly-friendly, and improving bicycle access to the town centre.</p>
<p>Hospitality and dining</p> <p>13</p>	<p>Suggestions in this theme include establishing a feature café or gourmet food trucks, with ideas for a zero-waste café and various other cafés and restaurants. Respondents highlighted the importance of having picnic spaces</p>

		<p>with seating and waterside dining options.</p> <p>There were calls for a live music and busking vibe with cafés offering open seating and free water stations to accommodate all visitors. Additional ideas included a café with outdoor seating, a floating café restaurant and water-based dining activities on a barge.</p> <p>A local history museum with a tea shop in the old library building was also proposed, alongside facilities like a children's play area with nearby coffee and beverage options for parents.</p>
Shopping	12	<p>Suggestions included creating a vibrant vendor market hub, similar to the Timeout Market in Lisbon and incorporating more 'alive' shops with niche businesses rather than finance, betting or office spaces. There were calls for a market area with fresh fish and seating spaces, as well as a weekly flea market on Sundays.</p> <p>While some mentioned existing shopping centres nearby, others expressed interest in avoiding traditional retail and focusing on unique market experiences.</p>
Walking/dog walking/Public Right of Way (PRoW)	10	<p>Suggestions in this theme included creating nature walks, wildlife park walks, and dog-friendly areas such as parks for large dogs. Respondents also emphasised the importance of continuous, uninterrupted walking and cycling routes that connect various parts of the area.</p> <p>Additionally, there was interest in providing spaces for leisure walks, ensuring safety and tranquillity for those walking through the Quarter.</p>
Family	10	<p>In this theme, there was interest in creating spaces that cater to children and families, with an emphasis on balance and safety.</p> <p>Comments included suggestions for areas where families can enjoy a simple life away from commercial activities, as well as providing community childcare. Some respondents praised initiatives like Naas Adventure and suggested adding a kids' splash pad, inspired by places like the Magic Garden at Hampton Court.</p> <p>There were mixed opinions on play areas - some respondents supported the idea of play areas with nearby facilities for parents, while others expressed concerns about such spaces encouraging undesirable behaviour at night.</p>
Economic	10	<p>Comments suggest several key uses related to economic development in the Naas Canal Quarter.</p> <p>Suggestions included creating a space for families to enjoy a peaceful environment away from commercial activities, and developing the day and night economy with bars, cafés, and restaurants. There were calls for a well-organised town market area and a focus on 'alive' shops with niche businesses rather than finance, betting, or office spaces.</p> <p>Respondents also highlighted the need for residential and hotel developments to bring life to the area and emphasised the potential for boosting tourism to benefit local businesses. Additionally, there was support for a well-resourced tourist information centre. However, some respondents cautioned that economic development should not compromise the area's tranquillity.</p>
Health, Safety and Security	10	<p>In this theme, comments centred around health, safety, and security concerns.</p> <p>Suggestions included installing CCTV for enhanced safety and increasing footfall to deter negative behaviour in the area. There were calls to remove parking to create a larger, safer pedestrian and cycling space and to avoid alcohol and smoking to prevent anti-social behaviour.</p> <p>Respondents emphasised the need for improved safety, especially for women walking alone, and suggested appropriate lighting and security measures to prevent vandalism. There was also a desire for a safe space for</p>

		teens to spend time, while some expressed concerns that children's play areas might encourage undesirable behaviour among teenagers at night.
Socioeconomic	6	Comments in this theme included calls for affordable housing, LGBTQ+ spaces and suitable housing for an older population developed by the local authority.
Education	5	Respondents noted several key uses related to educational and learning opportunities. Suggestions included establishing a study hub for students and remote workers and creating an adult arts education centre offering ceramics, stained glass, and woodwork. There were also calls for integrating nature reserve ecosystem education and inviting angling clubs to teach children about fishing. Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for expanding colleges and schools to provide additional services with canal access.
Youth	5	In this theme, there was a focus on creating spaces and activities specifically for youth. Comments highlighted the need for dedicated areas for kids and teens, including activities like trampolines, swings, zip lines, and a ball wall for sports such as tennis, football, and camogie. There was also a suggestion to repurpose the old library building into a youth club, providing a safe and engaging space for teenagers. Additionally, respondents expressed a desire for more activities and places that cater specifically to the interests and needs of teenagers in the area.
Traffic	5	Comments in this theme focused on traffic and parking considerations. Suggestions included improving parking facilities and increasing the number of parking spaces. There was a proposal to close the road to cars during a weekly market on Sundays, while some respondents expressed a desire for the roads to remain open to cars on weekdays, highlighting the route's importance for daily use.
General Amenities	4	General amenity suggestions included adding more seating and places for people to relax, cleaning up the area and potentially removing some parking spaces to make room for additional benches. There was also a recommendation to include public toilets as a useful addition, along with a mention of amenities like Fachinnos.
Visual amenity	3	Comments in this theme expressed a strong desire to preserve the natural beauty of the canal. Suggestions included maintaining the canal's natural landscape, increasing green spaces where the sky is visible, and creating peaceful areas for sitting and relaxing while enjoying the heritage and views.
Nightlife	1	Comments on nightlife in the Naas Canal Quarter were limited, with only one respondent who specifically expressed opposition to nightclubs.
General – positive	1	In this theme, one comment expressed overall positivity, noting simply that "All of these sound good."
General - negative	1	In this theme, one comment expressed a general negative sentiment, stating, "Think you need to leave well enough alone; you shouldn't have moved the library."

Appendix E – Questions 11 and 12 detailed feedback

Respondents were asked what temporary use can be made of the Naas Canal Quarter between now and the redevelopment of the area. 135 respondents answered question 12 and gave feedback, while 766 skipped this question and opted to only rank their preferences.

When looking at what temporary uses would help the area become a destination in respondents’ hearts and minds,

- 411 (46%) of respondents selected ‘Street Food’ as their first preference
- 206 (23%) selected ‘Community Uses’ as their first preference
- 119 (13%) selected ‘Retail or Market uses’ as their first choice
- 115 (13%) selected ‘Cultural uses’ as their first choice
- 50 (6%) chose ‘Other’ and specified their first preference in the free text for question 11.

Table 4 - Other temporary use suggestions

Theme	Number of responses making comments on this	Detail of comments
Sports and Recreation	31	<p>Comments in this theme suggest a strong interest in enhancing sports and recreation opportunities, particularly those related to water activities like kayaking paddleboarding and canoeing. There is also a desire for cycling infrastructure including safe bike racks and a cycle hub with rental and repair services. The idea of creating a greenway hub and promoting outdoor recreation such as water sports and leisure activities is also supported.</p> <p>Additionally, some envision occasional events or festivals centred around the canal to further promote these recreational uses.</p>
Waterways	29	<p>In this theme, there was significant emphasis on enhancing the waterways for recreational and sporting activities.</p> <p>Comments highlighted the need for a variety of water-based activities, such as kayaking, paddleboarding, and boating. Suggestions included creating more moorings and facilities for houseboats and barges, serviced berths for liveaboard boats and safe mooring spaces to attract boaters to the area.</p>

		<p>Respondents also suggested reintroducing kayaking rentals, tours, and lessons, and using the canal for events like floating parades or displaying outdoor art. There was a strong desire to animate and enliven the waterways, making them a central part of the community's recreational and cultural life.</p>
Culture and heritage	28	<p>Comments in this theme focused on enriching the area's cultural and heritage offerings through a variety of creative and community-focused initiatives.</p> <p>Suggestions included displaying local artists' and school children's work, hosting family cultural events, and organising outdoor activities such as music and food festivals. Respondents emphasised the importance of celebrating local history, with ideas like a canal museum, heritage interpretation and events that highlight the town's historical significance.</p> <p>Other proposals included hosting street food markets, live music and art displays, as well as creating spaces for arts, crafts, and multilingual cultural engagement, aiming to make the area a vibrant cultural hub.</p>
Nature/Ecology	21	<p>Feedback in this theme focused on enhancing and preserving natural and ecological features. Comments suggested establishing nature trails and walks to foster environmental immersion. There was a strong emphasis on protecting wildlife and increasing biodiversity through nature education for schools and local groups.</p> <p>Additional comments stressed avoiding chemical use for area management, promoting sustainable practices and improving public green spaces with trees and biodiversity information centres.</p> <p>Other ideas included creating wildlife areas and providing educational opportunities centred on climate action and biodiversity.</p>
Hospitality and dining	19	<p>Comments in this theme focused on enhancing hospitality and dining options. Suggestions included establishing picnic areas, coffee docks with outdoor seating and a pub or restaurant with views of the canal. Ideas for outdoor events, street food, and temporary pop-up shops and markets were also mentioned.</p> <p>There was interest in creating a cultural quarter with options like a local history museum and a floating café restaurant. Additionally, there was a comment recommending the removal of walls in the basin and harbour area to facilitate a plaza-style development.</p> <p>However, there was a contradictory suggestion to preserve the quiet area by avoiding retail and food stalls, which contrasts with the call for increased food and dining options.</p>
Access	15	<p>Comments in this theme centred on improving accessibility. Suggestions included ensuring a well-planned movement sequence through the area. There were concerns about the Dunnes entrance/exit, described as a disaster and dangerous, highlighting the need for improvements.</p>

<p>Community and Socialising</p>	<p>14</p>	<p>This theme focused on enhancing community and socialising opportunities.</p> <p>Comments included suggestions for picnics, open-air cinema and local events to foster community engagement. There were calls for regenerating the old library and vacant buildings nearby to create a community hub. Respondents expressed a desire for spaces where people can sit and relax, such as community gardens and allotments.</p> <p>Additional ideas included creating peaceful areas for sitting and enjoying the space and establishing a meeting place for local walks. There was also a preference for community spaces rather than developer-led commercial opportunities.</p>
<p>Walking/dog walking/PrOW</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>Respondents in this theme emphasised enhancing walking and dog walking facilities. Suggestions included developing nature walks, creating off-lead areas for large dogs and improving safety for walkers. There was a call to prioritise walkers and cyclists in the area, avoiding major roads and vehicular bridges that could disrupt the canal.</p> <p>Ideas also included establishing dog parks, green spaces for walking, cycling and wildlife observation and leisure gardens with play areas. There were also suggestions for enclosed areas for kids and dogs and improving the overall meeting place for walks within the town.</p>
<p>Shopping</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Comments in this theme focused on enhancing the shopping experience with various market-based ideas. Suggestions included creating an open-air market with a European outdoor feel, establishing an organic food co-op, and setting up markets for local crafts and food. There were also ideas for markets and street food with a covered area, and a spring market featuring face painting, balloons, and crafts. However, concerns were raised about the existing struggles of the Naas market, which might impact the effectiveness of new market ventures.</p>
<p>Family</p>	<p>6</p>	<p>Comments in this theme focused on creating spaces for family activities and children's recreation. Suggestions included hosting family cultural events and providing fenced play areas. Some expressed the need for playgrounds, noting they would attract significant footfall, while others preferred to avoid playgrounds and similar facilities. There was also mention of enclosed areas for both kids and dogs.</p>
<p>Health, safety and security</p>	<p>5</p>	<p>Comments in this theme focused on enhancing safety and security. Suggestions included improving street lighting and increasing Garda patrols.</p> <p>One comment highlighted the need to address safety issues at the Dunnes entrance/exit and another stressed the importance of policing the area consistently. Additionally, improving safety for walkers and ensuring better management of the cycling routes were mentioned.</p>

Traffic	5	Comments on traffic showed varied opinions. One suggested adding buses to and from Sallins. Others recommended increasing parking facilities, while some suggested removing certain parking spaces to enhance safety. There was also a call for prioritising walkers and cyclists and avoiding major roads crossing the canal e.g. the proposed vehicular bridge.
Visual Amenity	4	In this theme, comments focused on enhancing the visual appeal of the area while preserving its natural beauty. Suggestions included the creation of green spaces, potentially linked to local schools and establishing a pub or restaurant with views of the canal. There was a strong emphasis on protecting the area's nature and wildlife, with calls for conservation efforts to be prioritised. Additionally, respondents proposed adding flower displays or sculptures to create visually attractive landmarks that would draw visitors and provide picturesque spots for photography.
Education	4	Respondents suggested providing green spaces for schools, offering nature education for both schools and local community groups and creating opportunities for students to engage with water activities such as linking schools to DeBurgh Gardens. There was also a suggestion to display artwork from local artists and school children.
Economic	4	In this theme, comments addressed potential economic initiatives that could benefit the community. Ideas included introducing a bag drop service similar to those in other greenways in Europe, allowing shoppers to collect purchases later or have them delivered to their homes or hotels. An open town market was suggested, although concerns were raised about the existing struggles of the Naas market. There was also caution about the impact of permanent private businesses being established before the implementation of any new plans, as this could limit the scope and ambition for future developments in the area.
General amenities	3	Respondents highlighted a need for more seating with tables and covered entertainment areas. There was also a request for peaceful spots where people can sit and enjoy the space.
Youth	2	Comments in this theme highlighted the need for youth-focused facilities. One suggestion was for a dedicated youth club. Another comment emphasised the importance of providing space specifically for teenagers.
Planning	2	One comment highlighted the importance of testing various options while maintaining adaptability, suggesting that experienced professionals should lead the regeneration efforts rather than relying solely on local politicians.
General – negative	2	There were two comments in this theme, with one suggesting that the area is perfect as it is and another advocating for no changes.

Socioeconomic	1	In this theme, one comment highlighted a concern about the lack of affordable community spaces for local groups.
General - positive	1	There was only one comment in this theme, which expressed that all the suggested ideas sounded good.

Appendix F – Questions 13 and 14 detailed feedback

Respondents were asked what infrastructural or physical improvements could be made in the Canal Quarter to encourage more frequent visiting, while question 14 offered them the opportunity to comment on these improvements. All respondents ranked their preferences, while 161 answered question 14, the remainder skipped this question and only ranked their preferences.

When looking at what types of infrastructure or physical improvements would need to be made in the Canal Quarter to encourage respondents to visit the area more.

329 (37%) of respondents selected ‘development of vacant sites and buildings’ as their first preference

111 (12%) selected ‘refurbishment of old building facades and structures’ as their first preference

109 (12%) selected ‘better lighting, seating and street furniture, including public toilets’ as their first preference

126 (14%) selected ‘more green space/ enhanced biodiversity, including more street trees and landscaping’ as their first preference

92 (14%) selected ‘improved access, including improved streets, footpaths and public spaces’ as their first preference

36 (4%) selected ‘spaces for retail and hospitality’ as their first preference

30 (3%) selected ‘spaces for sports or leisure’ as their first preference

12 (1%) selected ‘public art’

27(3%) selected ‘improved cycling infrastructure, i.e. cycling stands’

29(3%) selected ‘amenities for boats’.

Table 5 - Other infrastructural or physical improvements

Theme	Number of responses making comments on this	Detail of comments
Visual Amenity	31	Maintaining the visual and aesthetic appeal of the Canal Quarter space is clearly a priority from the feedback received. Suggestions include refurbishment of the Customs House façade and garden and upgrades to open up the route to Abbey St from Main St at the side of the library to encourage more foot traffic. Lighting, seating, street furniture and street art also come through in feedback.

Access	31	<p>Feedback focuses on ease of access to Canal Quarter with physical improvements in mind and centres on ideas around encouraging active and sustainable travel.</p> <p>Feedback raises ideas including bicycle hire schemes and cycle lanes linking to Main Street.</p> <p>Other ideas for physical improvements included public toilets, seating and a footbridge crossing the canal</p>
Health, Safety and Security	22	<p>This is clearly a priority area in the feedback received. Suggestions on physical improvements around safety and security include improving existing approach routes which are narrow, for example Basin St to Main St. Improved parking provision, CCTV and engagement with the Garda to tackle antisocial behaviour are also sited as priorities.</p>
Nature/Ecology/Environment	21	<p>With the environment, ecology and biodiversity in mind, feedback highlights a number of physical improvements required. These include a green kitchen space, native planting, bait boxes and sensitive down-lighting which does not disturb bats and other night time pollinators. Respondents highlight the importance of rubbish bins throughout the space alongside tree planting and walkways with natural coverage to give shelter.</p>
Waterways	20	<p>Utilising the waterway for community access is a key physical change which came through the feedback received. Suggestions include facilities for water sports such canoeing and kayaking and swimming in the harbour. Other suggestions suggest boat tours, recreational moorings for boats and provision for electric boats.</p> <p>Feedback shows that participants are keen avoid any detrimental effects on the environment at Canal Quarter, seeing this as one of the area’s unique strengths and attractors.</p>
Sports and Recreation	18	<p>With physical improvements in mind, respondents suggest bicycle hire infrastructure, water sports provision, storage facilities for local clubs and provision for watersports.</p> <p>Cycle paths, infrastructure to allow for events around boats and administrative spaces to allow for sports activities are also sited.</p> <p>Wayfinding and maps are also mentioned as infrastructure which would form a valuable addition to a regenerated space.</p>
Culture and Heritage	17	<p>Feedback suggests art gallery spaces, outdoor cinemas and spaces for arts and culture. Spaces for local artists and arts projects with local schools also come through from responses received.</p> <p>Pop up spaces and shops and spaces for music and entertainment are also suggested.</p>
Traffic, Roads	14	<p>Physical improvements with traffic and roads in mind include, better parking facilities with security provision and accessible and disabled parking provision. Other suggestions include integrated cycle lanes, design interventions to limit car access to the Canal Quarter and the promotion of ‘car free days’.</p>
Community and Socialising	10	<p>Feedback indicates that participants see Canal Quarter as a space for community gatherings such as festivals with vacant and un-used buildings converted into flexible spaces for community use. Other ideas included picnic spaces and seating to allow for relaxation and wellbeing.</p>

Walking/dog walking/PRoW	10	Provision for dog walking comes through in feedback, including a circuit walk and an ‘off-lead’ park space. A footbridge over the canal and interactive trails, potentially tied in with the ‘leave no trace’ litter picking incentive initiative are suggested as ways to encourage walking and sustainable travel.
General amenities	9	With amenities in mind, feedback highlighted a number of amenities which should form a part of a regenerated space. These include improved lighting, meditation pods, seating, rubbish bins, public toilets and other street furniture.
Hospitality and dining	8	Ideas include Picnic facilities and potential infrastructure for a Canal Boat café. Respondents also suggest covered outdoor eating spaces and infrastructure for street food vendors.
Education	7	Feedback shows desire that local schools should have access to a regenerated space at Canal Quarter and that the space plays a role in educating and inspiring. Canal Quarter is also seen a conduit to encouraging more sustainable travel to school.
Family	7	Physical improvements geared towards families include a drop in space for children and teens, spaces for parent and baby classes in addition to other facilities such as picnic benches and play spaces for young people. Alongside this, respondents highlight a need for adequate parking for families.
Youth	6	Suggested physical improvements aimed at young people include drop in spaces for young people with a focus on music and arts. Security provision is highlighted to tackle antisocial behaviour and provision for street art is also cited a beneficial physical improvement.
Socioeconomic	5	Suggestions focus on the provision of affordable housing as a means to create a sustainable new space at Canal Quarter.
Economic	4	Feedback shows a desire to see more economic activity at Canal Quarter. Ideas around physical improvements include a space for an outdoor market space for local produce. Other ideas focus on funding to support local businesses to deliver renovations and refurbishments to improve the aesthetic of Canal Quarter and the surrounding area.
Shopping	4	Physical improvements which would encourage retail activity at Canal Quarter include spaces for markets. This could include weather-proof spaces which can host a variety of types of events and economic activities. Respondents also mention financial incentives to encourage traders to a regenerated space.
Planning	1	With planning mind, feedback requested that improvements and planned and delivered in a cohesive manner.

Appendix G – Questions 15 and 16 detailed feedback

Respondents were asked how Naas Canal Quarter’s rich history and heritage can be celebrated and were given a series of choices including exhibitions of notable archaeological/cultural artefacts to rank in order of preference. Question 16 offered respondents a chance to comment on this, with 61 respondents opting to comment.

When looking at how respondents believe the rich history and heritage of Naas Canal Quarter can be celebrated, **Figure 7** feedback shows the following in terms of priorities:

219 (24%) respondents chose ‘Exhibitions of notable local archaeological/cultural artefacts related to the area’ as their first preference.

223 (25%) respondents chose ‘Festivals and other community events’ gained the most first preferences; this was overall ranked lower due to a greater number of lower preferences.

122 (14%) respondents chose ‘Public art to showcase local history and culture’ as their first preference

109 (12%) selected ‘Events and gatherings focussed on traditional music and dance’ as their first preference

95 (11%) selected ‘Creating community-led projects to collect knowledge and stories from local people available to access online in a citizens’ archive’

32 (4%) selected ‘Events focused on local, traditional crafts’

26 (3%) selected ‘Events focused on culinary traditions’

11(1%) selected ‘Exhibitions to celebrate the architecture of Naas’

47 (5%) selected ‘Local information/interpretation boards’

17 (2%) selected ‘Other’ as their first preference.

Table 6 - Suggestions on how Naas Canal Quarter’s rich history and heritage can be celebrated

Theme	Number of responses making comments on this	Detail of comments
Culture and Heritage	33	Respondents suggested that development should offer affordable community spaces. Ideas included a green kitchen with outdoor classrooms/spaces. The old library featured heavily in respondents’ feedback, with suggestions for it to be converted into a community space. Other ideas for its use include for a museum, a market, and a workshop space.

Waterways	12	<p>Feedback made note of the canal setting and infrastructure as a universal selling point of the area and proposed that this should be the focus of the proposals. Mention was made of the role the canals played in immigration into Naas, and that its location should be used to celebrate this history, and the wider history of the canal and connectivity of Naas to the wider area.</p> <p>Boating and related activities, events and facilities were also emphasised, with appetite for a canal boat festival. Respondents also advocated for an end to the pollution of the canal so that it can be used for watersports.</p> <p>Respondents also suggested that life-size sculptures depicting residents going about their lives in the past Canal Quarter as can be found in other historical areas.</p>
Nature/Ecology/Environment	9	The establishment of facilities such as a public garden, nature centre, and biodiversity information centre were proposed to support nature and ecology in the area.
Sports and Recreation	3	Respondents were keen on the usage of the waterways for boating and related activities and events, and facilities to accommodate them. There was appetite for the celebration of local sports clubs, to involve the clubs themselves. Respondents emphasised the need for pollution of the canal to end, to allow for watersports usage.
Shopping	3	Market usage was suggested for the old library, alongside appetite for “Real” Organic Farm Product Shops. One respondent objected to the area being converted into retail space.
Youth	3	Respondents emphasised safety and called for the area to offer a space for teenagers to meet and pursue creative or expressive outlets such as art, music and food, rather than drinking. One respondent advocated for a youth consultation on the development of the space.
Community and Socialising	3	<p>Respondents suggested that development should offer affordable community spaces. Ideas for this usage included a green kitchen with outdoor classrooms and spaces.</p> <p>Renovation of the old library featured heavily in respondents’ feedback, particularly for it to be converted into a community space with a museum and market.</p>
Access	2	Respondents emphasised the that efforts to celebrate the history and culture of the area should be inclusive and accessible of the whole community, and not neglect the elderly. Respondents want these efforts to be accessible to all.
Visual Amenity	2	<p>Feedback made note of the canal setting and infrastructure as a universal selling point of the area.</p> <p>Respondents also suggested that life-size sculptures depicting residents going about their lives in the past Canal Quarter as can be found in other historical areas.</p>
Walking/dog walking/PrOW	2	Walking history tours were suggested, along with a dog park.
Family	2	<p>Suggestions for families included more affordable spaces for family usage.</p> <p>Picnic benches. enclosed green spaces and play areas away from bodies of water or roads offer opportunities for family use and children’s play.</p>
Health, Safety and Security	2	<p>The use of the space as an area for teenagers to pursue outlets was suggested, to divert them away from drinking.</p> <p>The need for the area to be made safer and more desirable was also made clear.</p>
Education	2	Ideas for this usage included a green kitchen with outdoor classrooms and spaces.
Economic	2	Respondents suggested economic development could be facilitated through start-ups, and a traditional open market for local produce.

Socioeconomic	2	Respondents stressed the need for the whole community to be included, noting a tendency to forget the elderly. There was desire to see the representation of the Irish language in the proposals.
General amenities	2	Other suggestions included a roofed area and info boards to help keep the area quiet.
Hospitality and dining	1	One respondent suggested usage of the area for a wild food festival.
Forms/consultation	1	An additional youth consultation on the development of the space was proposed.
General - positive	1	A general support for all the suggested uses was indicated.

Appendix H – Questions 17 and 18 detailed feedback

Respondents were asked how the environment and biodiversity at the Canal Quarter can be improved and were given choices including additional trees and hedgerows to rank in order of preference. Question 18 offered respondents the opportunity to comment on improvements to the environment and biodiversity, which 83 respondents gave their views on.

When looking at how the environment and biodiversity at the Canal Quarter can be improved, **Figure 8** below shows respondents' priorities were:

- 319(35%) of respondents chose 'more trees and hedgerows' selecting it as their first choice.
- 174 (19%) chose 'More public green space'
- 161 (18%) chose 'Improvements to landscaping'
- 88(10%) chose 'Community gardens/orchards'
- 69(8%) chose 'Encouraging and facilitating a greater role for local people and organisations in maintaining outdoor spaces'
- 29(3%) chose 'Projects with the community to build new wildlife infrastructure.'
- 18 (2%) chose 'Community projects looking at sustainability.'
- 25(3%) chose 'Pollinator hubs'
- 18(2%) selected 'Other' as their first choice.

Table 7 - Other ways the environment and biodiversity at the Canal Quarter can be improved

Theme	Number of responses making comments in this theme	Detail of comments
Nature/Ecology/Environment	38	Comments in this theme focused on various aspects of nature, ecology, and the environment, reflecting the highest number of responses. Suggestions included creating allotments and community educational gardens, focusing on native trees and plants and ensuring planting efforts use local varieties. There were calls for leaving existing wild areas untouched and enhancing biodiversity with initiatives such as bird and bat walks.

		<p>Recommendations also included using renewable energy sources like wind and solar power and implementing practical measures such as installing Sea-bins to remove floating litter and dredging the canal to support aquatic life.</p> <p>The importance of expert opinions on biodiversity and the inclusion of public education on wildlife were highlighted. Additionally, there were recommendations for creating nature reserves, reducing lighting to minimise disturbance and protecting existing green spaces and wildfowl.</p>
Waterways	11	<p>Comments in this theme addressed the management and enhancement of waterways. Suggestions included dredging the canal and harbour to improve navigation and water quality, installing features like a Sea-bin to remove floating litter, and creating a boardwalk similar to Portobello. Emphasis was placed on retaining wild verges and encouraging biodiversity, both land-based and aquatic, by supporting native Irish wildflowers and local water-based flora and fauna. Comments noted the importance of improving canal water quality and enhancing its use for outdoor activities like canoeing and kayaking.</p>
Health, Safety and Security	6	<p>Concerns were raised about improving the quality of the canal water to ensure it is safe for activities such as canoeing and kayaking. There were also calls for implementing no smoking and no single-use plastics zoning.</p> <p>Enhancing security and illuminating the area to prevent antisocial behaviour and drug dealing were also highlighted. Additionally, there was a recommendation to ban pesticide use across all areas and to increase footfall to maintain safety, especially following the library's closure.</p>
Planning	6	<p>Responses in this theme focused on the management and maintenance of the area. One suggestion was for KCC to maintain operational control to ensure effective oversight. Another comment expressed concerns about relying too heavily on volunteers, noting that Naas Tidy Towns does significant work but that a more sustainable solution is needed.</p>
Access	5	<p>Comments on access highlighted the need for improvements to ensure easy navigation and enjoyment of the space. Suggestions included providing more accessible seating, particularly for the elderly, and maintaining green areas to prevent overgrowth that impedes movement. Ensuring the canal is navigable through dredging and tidying the towpath was also recommended.</p>

Community and Socialising	5	Comments in this theme focused on creating and enhancing spaces for community and socialising. Suggestions included establishing subsidised intergenerational spaces for adults and developing allotments and community educational gardens. Ensuring that spaces have enough footfall to maintain safety, especially after the library's closure, and providing green spaces for public use were also noted.
Education	5	Comments in this theme focused on enhancing educational opportunities. Suggestions included creating outdoor classrooms and community educational gardens. There was also interest in educating the public about wildlife, such as advising against feeding ducks bread. Additionally, comments proposed involving local schools in designing, decorating, and maintaining public spaces and participating in local maintenance efforts similar to "Tidy Towns."
Walking/dog walking/PrOW	5	Comments in this theme highlighted the need for raised awareness of biodiversity through initiatives like bird and bat walks. There were also suggestions for creating dog parks and providing more accessible seating, particularly in areas popular with elderly residents. Additionally, there were calls for enclosed dog walks and cross-country walking routes, such as the triangle opposite the harbour.
Sports and Recreation	4	The comments in this theme included the need for a sports or game centre and more parks and areas for exercise. There was also a call for increased bicycle parking and improving the water quality in the canal to support outdoor activities like canoeing and kayaking.
General - positive	3	Comments in this theme expressed general approval of the suggestions provided. One comment indicated a lack of familiarity with the details but expressed a positive outlook on all the ideas. Another simply endorsed all the suggestions, while a third reaffirmed support for the proposals mentioned in the previous question.
Visual Amenity	3	Comments in this theme focused on improving visual amenities. Suggestions included installing LED lighting to illuminate trees and buildings and maintaining cleanliness and tidiness to prevent overgrown weeds. There was a call for beautiful displays of flowers and a flower competition to enhance visual appeal while balancing wildlife conservation. Landscaping was also highlighted as a key aspect for creating an attractive environment.
N/A (not understandable)	3	The comments in this theme included mentions of not selecting "other," unclear responses, and references to previous comments not visible here. For example, a comment about zero

		bins relates to earlier discussions on signage if bins are removed. Some responses suggested placing amenities in residential areas rather than central ones, and entries like "7 8 4 1 2 3" and "N/A" were noted.
Traffic, Roads	3	Comments in this theme addressed different traffic and road issues. Suggestions included making the main street one-way to improve traffic flow, avoiding large bridges, and including the canal bank to DeBurgh/Tandys in the development area.
Culture and Heritage	2	There were two comments in this theme. One reflected a desire for a public theatre with a south-facing orientation and support for cultural history. The other called for developing spaces that promote cultural engagement and preserve historical heritage.
General amenities	2	Comments in this theme highlighted the need for improved waste management. One suggestion was to install solar litter and recycling bins that are bird and animal proof. Another comment emphasised the importance of providing clear signage to encourage people to take their litter home.
Economic	1	There was one comment in this theme suggesting that funds should be used to lower Local Property Tax (LPT) and support living costs, healthcare, and education, rather than focusing on economic development.
Socioeconomic	1	The comment in this theme suggested focusing on amenities for older individuals.
General - negative	1	The comment in this theme criticised the question as inappropriate given the constraints of the available space.
Forms/consultation	1	The comment in this theme indicated uncertainty about ranking the suggestions due to a lack of detailed knowledge but expressed a positive view overall.

Appendix I – Respondent 1

Submission to Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan

Introduction

We commend Kildare County Council's Naas Canal Quarter regeneration initiative. This ambitious project aims to transform an under-used area in the heart of Naas into a vibrant hub for both locals and visitors. We appreciate the collaborative approach of seeking input from those who live, work, or visit Naas, and we are excited to contribute our ideas.

We view Naas as having two highly strategic, under-used assets that can serve as cornerstones for the town's unparalleled future development.

These are:

1. The Naas Harbour Precinct and its waterways access, and
2. The close proximity of Naas to the Rail Network which allows for the full integration of an environmentally friendly public transport system for Naas and its environs.

Naas Harbour Precinct - Initial Thoughts

Naas Town Centre

The main street of Naas is reasonably intact physically and is beginning to show signs of revitalisation after a period of economic decline due to 'out of town' shopping. On either side of Main Street there exists extensive tracts of underused urban land, where a cohesive street character is absent and where there is little sense of the civic realm that one would expect in a county town. The Naas LAP 2021 - 2027 has identified these large sites as critical regeneration areas necessary to underpin the consolidation of Naas town centre. Implementing these major regeneration areas remains a core challenge for KCC and the Naas LAP.

The Basin St/Abbey St Challenge

The harbour area and Abbey St. to the north of Main St. constitutes a central component of the Naas town centre regeneration challenge. The canal and harbour is a major amenity and potential centre of gravity, yet despite being within 100 metres of Main St., remains detached and invisible. Basin St., which currently connects Main St. to the harbour features a string of semi-vacant and poorly maintained buildings. Abbey St., parallel to Main St., and a short block to the north, is shapeless as a street, is given over to carparking, and has an anarchic mix of warehousing, service uses, and some established office/retail. The large semi-vacant sites to the rear of Naas Court House and to the south of Basin St. can also be seen as an extension of Abbey St. and constitute a major potential for regeneration. Any ambition to bring the harbour area into play must also tackle the embedded problems in the Basin St./Abbey St. area.

Naas Harbour Context

Naas harbour is an amazing physically intact legacy of industrial archaeology (NIAH Reg. No. 11814004). The Naas spur of the Grand Canal to Sallins is very well maintained, has beautiful stretches of mature landscaping and is highly valued by Naas people for both recreation and passive amenity. The harbour at Naas is also

enriched and made more complex by the presence of the Corbally spur. The great expanse of the lands as identified in the northwest quadrant come to a nub in a relatively tight footprint defined by the harbour, the Naas Canal Spur and the Corbally Spur. This area, currently green field and inaccessible, is critical to the strategic regeneration of the harbour area, and to the overall trajectory of Naas.

Shaping a Mind-set

While thinking about the potential of the harbour area, two key considerations need prioritisation. (i) The harbour area must be seen as a viable extension of Naas town centre, and (ii) the urban legibility and thrust of the northwest quadrant must successfully penetrate and interconnect in civic and urban design terms into the nub formed by the two canal spurs.

Reflecting on Desirable Qualities

It might be useful to begin with a reflection on the qualities that one might experience in the Naas Canal Quarter in the future. Firstly, one can anticipate an environment shaped and enriched by water. Secondly, celebrating the act of threshold and interconnection through an appropriate bridge design. Thirdly, creating a new public realm of high civic quality in the nub formed by the two canals. Fourthly, creating a mixed-use quarter in this area, incorporating both residential, commercial, and cultural uses. One could envisage a number of attractive restaurants/cafes with outdoor terraces exploiting a waterside environment. How can we shape an approach to placemaking that captures these qualities?

Critical Importance of Urban Design

A strategic approach to urban design and a commitment to generating quality in architecture is key. One of the dangers is the failure to contain space successfully. Great urban spaces are defined by the buildings which contain them, which have to incorporate the right proportions. Buildings here, need to be brought forward to frame both water and hard landscaping as public spaces.

An Inner Realm and an Outer Realm

A possible approach could explore two strategic scales. A higher scale environment of built fabric set back somewhat to the north from the nub, and a lower scale built fabric comprising waterside pavilion style buildings existing within the nub. These pavilion style structures might be woven into a network of new ponds/watercourses heavily threaded through with biodiversity. While this might seem exotic, it could strike a resonance with the hydrological gardens in the de Burgh estate (a short distance away) which will form a major part of Naas's attraction and identity in the future. The de Burgh gardens were made possible by the Naas spur of the Grand Canal over 200 years ago, and by a creative engineering vision and prowess.

Drawing on a Wider Design Resource

How do we achieve this type of vision and shape the design process? First, the vision needs articulation, and secondly a strong brief must be drawn up to prompt and steer the design process. This is such a challenging and critically important project, that KCC need to draw on a wide public imagination. Seeking ideas input from the public is a good starting point. However serious consideration should be given to an architectural / master planning competition. In France, relatively minor projects pursue this route and benefit from the creative imagination of several architectural

firms working to a well-shaped brief. The harbour project in Naas merits this type of design support. Potential design teams would need to include architectural, urban design, landscaping and hydrological/engineering capacities.

Prior to outlining our proposals and suggestions any further, we would like to highlight a few case studies of successful canal regeneration projects.

Examples of successful regeneration:

Stratford-upon-Avon, United Kingdom: Stratford-upon-Avon has focused on enhancing its canal and riverfront areas to boost tourism.



Key Features:

- **Canal Basin:** The Bancroft Basin has been rejuvenated to include mooring for narrowboats, enhancing the area's charm.
- **Tourist Activities:** Boat tours, rowing boats, and a floating café.
- **Public Spaces:** Improved pedestrian pathways, seating areas, and landscaping.
- **Cultural Integration:** Close proximity to the Royal Shakespeare Theatre and other historic sites.

Giethoorn, Netherlands: Giethoorn is a village with a network of canals that attract tourists worldwide.



Key Features:

- **Boat Tours:** Extensive options for boat rentals and guided tours.
- **Footbridges:** Charming bridges over the canals adding to the picturesque landscape.
- **Tourist Amenities:** Numerous cafes, restaurants, and shops catering to tourists.
- **Accommodation:** Development of unique lodging options like canal-side cottages.

Skipton, United Kingdom: Skipton has focused on enhancing its canal as a central tourist attraction in North Yorkshire.



Key Features:

- Skipton Canal Basin: Renovated to serve as a picturesque spot for visitors.
- Canal Cruises: Regular boat trips and dinner cruises.
- Public Events: Hosts canal festivals and events that attract tourists.
- Walking Paths: Improved towpaths for leisurely walks along the canal.

Suggestions for Naas Canal Quarter

Our submission aims to create an active, vibrant destination that integrates seamlessly with the surrounding urban fabric, prioritising pedestrians and cyclists, and ensuring excellent public transport permeability by transforming the Naas Canal Quarter into a dynamic and accessible area for all.

a) Harbour Repurposing and Expansion

Harbour Expansion:

- **Current Potential:** The existing harbour is a focal point with untapped potential.
- **Proposals:**
 - Expand the harbour basin to increase mooring capacity and support more active recreational and tourism-focus activities.
 - Potential to install floating cafes, boat rental stations, and other recreational amenities to attract visitors.

Harbour Activation:

- **Rationale:** To create a bustling, attractive area, at walking distance from Naas town centre
- **Proposals:**
 - Develop active frontages with cafes, restaurants, shops, and cultural spaces around the harbour.
 - Incorporate public spaces, outdoor seating, green landscape features, and public art to enhance the area's appeal.

b) Creation of Active Frontages

Canal-Side Development:

- **Rationale:** To create a lively atmosphere that encourages more footfall.
- **Proposals:**

- Develop mixed-use buildings with retail, dining, and entertainment on the ground floor and residential or office spaces above around the canal basin.
- Provide pedestrian-friendly promenades with benches, greenery, and lighting.
- Activate the surrounding lanes with urban acupuncture initiatives.

Public Spaces and Amenities:

- **Rationale:** Public spaces are essential for community engagement, public participation and social inclusion.
- **Proposals:**
 - Design public plazas and green spaces adjacent to the canal and harbour.
 - Host regular events such as farmers' markets, cultural festivals, and outdoor performances in those new spaces.

c) Improved Mobility with a Network of Streets with Limited Vehicular Access

Street Network Design:

- **Rationale:** Limiting vehicular access enhances safety and enjoyment for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Proposals:**
 - Design a network of narrow, pedestrian-focused streets with restricted vehicular access for deliveries and emergency vehicles only.
 - Implement traffic-calming measures like bollards, raised crosswalks, and signage to enforce low-speed zones.

Public Transport and Active Mobility:

- **Rationale:** Prioritising public transport and active mobility ensures efficient, sustainable movement.
- **Proposals:**
 - Enhance public transport links, including shuttle buses, trams, or water taxis, to improve connectivity.
 - Create dedicated cycling lanes and pedestrian pathways, with ample bike parking and rest areas.

Strategic Car Park Placement (Back of Canal Quarter):

- o **Rationale:** To support accessibility while preserving the pedestrian environment.
- o **Proposals:**
 - Construct a car park on the Millennium Park side of the canal, strategically located to serve visitors without disrupting the pedestrian experience. While this location is not within the Naas Canal Quarter, we feel it is essential to incorporate an initiative that will remove cars from the town while allowing visitors easy access to the Canal Quarter and town centre through public transport, cycling or walking.
 - Incorporate eco-friendly design features like green roofs, solar panels, and EV charging stations.
 - Allow for car sharing schemes & daily rental cars.
 - Integrate public transport interchange facilities which will facilitate the Canal Quarter, adjacent to the car park. We feel that the Naas Canal Quarter Master Plan should recognise also the potential a transport hub initiative, which is developed later in this submission.

d) Preserving and Celebrating Heritage

Sensitive Restoration:

- o **Rationale:** To honour the rich historical background while paving the way for future prosperity.
- o **Proposals:**
 - Restore historic buildings and assets with sensitivity, ensuring they remain integral to the area's character.
 - Integrate modern amenities while preserving the historical essence.

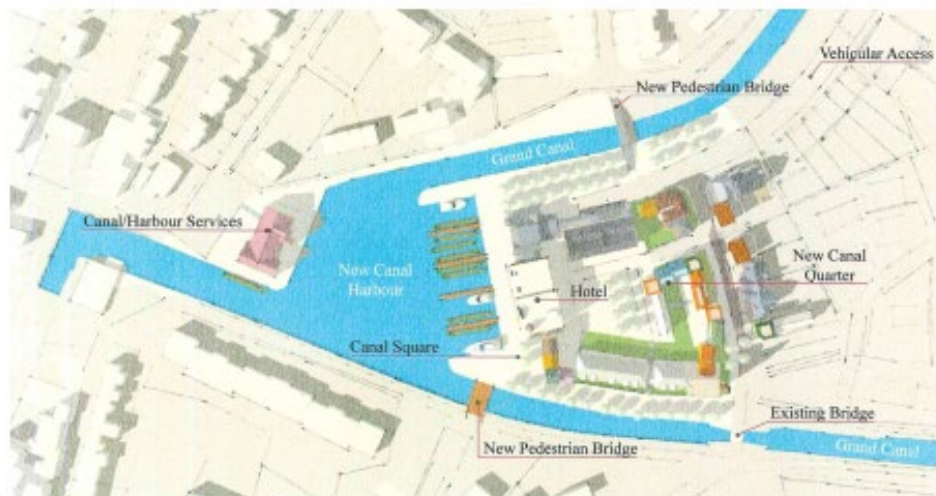
Enhancing Community and Cultural Assets:

- o **Rationale:** To reinforce the existing social and cultural fabric.
- o **Proposals:**
 - Enhance existing community and cultural assets, such as the new Naas library, old Naas library building, Moat Theatre, and health centre.
 - Improve public spaces around these assets to foster community interaction and cultural activities.

An Indicative Draft Masterplan

This section includes a draft masterplan, a strategic blueprint designed to align with the overarching objectives outlined in the preceding sections. The indicative masterplan serves as a comprehensive guide, detailing the envisioned development and key elements that could help illustrate the proposals for Naas Canal Quarter outlined above. It encapsulates the ambition and direction of the proposal, ensuring that every facet of the plan is coherent with the established goals and aspirations.

This submission outlines our key ideas and suggestions for transforming the Naas Canal Quarter into a dynamic and accessible area for all.



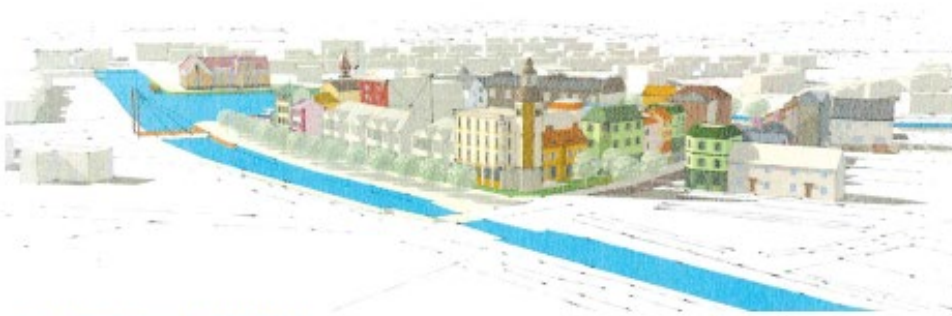
Naas Harbour Proposal - Plan View



Naas Harbour Proposal - South-East View



Naas Harbour Proposal - South View



Naas Harbour proposal - North-east View



Naas harbour Proposal - South-West View

Integrated Transport Mobility Hub Initiative

Our proposal is for the development of a state-of-the-art transport hub designed to meet the growing demand for sustainable and efficient transportation, adjacent to junction 9a on the M7 motorway and in close proximity to the existing Naas/Sallins railway station and the proposed new extended rail station. The hub will integrate electric vehicle (EV) charging points, an intercity bus interchange, park and ride facilities and a local shuttle bus service to provide access to the Naas Canal Quarter and on to the town centre and the railway station. It would be prudent for the Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan to be cognisant of this initiative now so that plans for access to and from the Harbour Precinct and the town centre can be incorporated into a fully thought out Masterplan.

This multi-functional facility aims to reduce carbon emissions, improve connectivity, and enhance the convenience of travellers. Such a hub has the ability to play a strategic environmental role in terms of regional transport infrastructure, while also serving the growing urban areas of Naas and Sallins.

By locating on the north side of the motorway, the proposed transport hub avoids the need to utilise valuable development land within the northwest quadrant of Naas, while also being located close to the strategic rail infrastructure. Properly linking the town centre with the greater Naas area and a high-capacity rail line – such as through a guided bus system - would create a well designed sustainable town with an integrated public transport system.

To substantiate the proposed transport hub initiative, a comprehensive economic appraisal of its impact on both Naas town centre and specifically the Naas Harbour Precinct is essential. Additionally, a detailed report on the integration and connectivity of the transport hub with Naas town centre will be necessary to justify the project's viability. These assessments will ensure that the project not only contributes positively to the economic development of Naas town centre and the Naas Harbour Precinct but also facilitates seamless and efficient integration with the existing urban infrastructure.

It is imperative that the proposed transport initiative is complemented by a well designed strategic cycling and walking network. While we acknowledge some great advances are being rolled out at present, this will require a major step-up on the very poor and fragmented cycling infrastructure currently in existence.

The proposed transport hub would be a cornerstone of sustainable urban development, addressing the transportation needs of the future while reducing environmental impact. By integrating modern infrastructure with advanced technology, this hub would serve as a vital link between several cities and local communities, fostering economic growth and improving quality of life.



In Conclusion

Our vision aligns seamlessly with the objectives of the Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan. By repurposing and expanding the harbour, creating active frontages, strategically placing a car park and transport hub, designing a pedestrian-friendly street network, and preserving the area's rich heritage, we believe we can transform the Naas Canal Quarter into a thriving, accessible, and sustainable urban space. This regeneration project has the potential to become a landmark destination for both locals and visitors, fostering economic growth, community engagement, cultural activity and a major tourist attraction for Naas Town.

The revitalised harbour will serve as a dynamic core, attracting a diverse range of recreational and commercial activities. The creation of active frontages will enhance the vibrancy of the area, encouraging social interaction and supporting local businesses. Strategically placing a car park on the Millennium Park side will balance accessibility and pedestrian enjoyment, ensuring a seamless experience for all visitors. Our pedestrian-friendly street network will prioritise safety and connectivity, promoting a healthier, more active lifestyle.

To further strengthen the Naas Harbour Precinct, the reopening of the 8 km uninterrupted stretch of the Grand Canal from Naas Harbour to Corbally Harbour has immense prospects from a major tourism focus for Naas and its environs also.

Although the transport hub north of the M7 detailed in this submission has little or no direct impact on the primary focus requested, it is crucial to recognise the importance of providing an adequate public transport corridor through this strategic project. The sole purpose of this consideration is to establish an environmentally friendly public transport system to serve the future needs of the Naas town centre, the greater Naas area, and most importantly, The Naas Harbour Precinct.

In conclusion, we feel that this comprehensive approach addresses the multifaceted goals of the Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan. We look forward to further discussions and collaboration to bring this transformative vision to life.



8th August 2024

Appendix J – Respondent 2, Inland Waterways Association



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Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan
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7th August 2024

Below please find the IWAI's submission regarding the proposed Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan. The IWAI supports Kildare Council's vision for the Canal Quarter, with the addition of some observations which we believe will ensure a more successful delivery of this plan for the betterment of the town and it's long-term tourism potential.

1. Setting the Scene

To quote the Naas Local Area Plan 2021-2027 *"The canal area of Naas is a hidden gem or a potential jewel in the crown for a regenerated town centre for Naas."*

"The Harbour provides a unique sense of place, with the peaceful and tranquil ambience. It provides a green lung connecting the town to the countryside. The area is rich in heritage and there is an opportunity for the Canal Quarter to make its archaeological, historical and industrial heritage a key centre of focus, and in the process become one of the most visually attractive and legible districts within the town."

All of this is true, Naas has so much potential, the plan presents a wonderful image of a vibrant, active, living canal section and harbour. Unfortunately, it fails to recognise the linchpin which will secure the delivery of this vision, which was highlighted in IWAI's original submission, the reinstatement of access to the Corbally Branch of the Canal.

The Plan, (page 150) recognises the value of the busy boating community in Sallins and again rightly points out that Naas has none. The Naas Branch of the Grand Canal, though beautiful and full of potential, is barely two miles in length and has a series of five locks (not 6) in close succession. Unassisted it can take 15-25 mins to transit just one lock, so a set of five locks along with the short cruises between them, amounts to between 1.5-3 hrs to complete the journey up to the harbour from Soldiers Island where the branch begins. The destination needs to be worthwhile to attract boat traffic. However, the journey is still too short for many boats to be attracted onto the branch.

The Plan continues on (page 150) to describe how the Newbridge Road (R445) runs across the canal at Jigginstown, and so obstructs access to another four miles of excellent canal cruising onward to the gorgeous Corbally harbour. We must remember that it was Kildare Co Co who culverted the canal thereby closing the Corbally Branch. We would strongly urge the Council's design team to consider the inclusion of a new bridge to replace the obstructing culvert on the aptly named Newbridge Road. **The time to build a new bridge is definitely upon us, before the surrounding lands become built upon** and the presence of adjacent housing makes for a deterrent, should the proximity of buildings encroach on the bridge location.

Vision

Or the lack of it, has been responsible for some terrible decisions and plans to rid us of valuable inland waterways in the past. The Circular Line of the Grand Canal would now be a road if IWA had not lobbied and fought for it's protection. Similarly, the Dublin section of the Royal Canal prior to restoration was being hungrily viewed as a site to fill in and replace with another road. Where would the now coveted Greenways be if these sections of canal had been allowed to disappear back then. The culverting of the Newbridge Road (R445) was, at the time of it's doing, the cheapest and simplest solution to an obstruction to road development. Thankfully there is hope, the council recognises the huge aesthetic and health value of extending Greenways and plans to develop the path onward from Naas to Corbally Harbour. Being able to walk alongside these waterways with ease does not just have to be a nod to our heritage and industrial past, to do only that would be to snub the living heritage that awaits the arrival of a bridge and the inevitable barges which will float under it. We must remember that the canal branch is still there, the Council need only provide a bridge, Waterways Ireland (WI) would then be responsible for dredging and reopening the canal. WI have already dredged Corbally Harbour and removed the silt mound from the harbour. It should also be noted that reopening the branch will greatly improve water supply from Corbally to the Naas Harbour and Branch. The Corbally Branch is very heavily silted, further prolonged silting drastically increases the possibility of flooding. The feeder is well supplied and very strong, the water has to go somewhere and the 'line of least resistance' will take it elsewhere from a silted and blocked canal. There is so much to be gained by installing a bridge and building firm foundations for increased tourism to the area, this further supports the Council's aim to increase boat traffic to the Harbour.



Corbally Canal beyond the (R445) culvert. A densely blocked, silted and almost dead waterway. Weed volumes hold water back, starving supply to the Naas Line. The Greenway here, though a pleasant tranquil walk, will look down upon this decaying monument to poor decision making in Kildare.

2. Introduction & IWAI History

The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) was established in 1954. It has 24 branches across the 32 counties of Ireland and has 2000 members. It represents a wide range of members interests regarding inland waterways use and activities, community interests, navigation issues, tourism development, protection of heritage, all in relation to the socio and economic benefits of the waterways. Our members come from all walks of life and many are not boat owners.

IWAI has a long history of working with statutory agencies, funding groups, and community interests with regards to promoting access to the waterways. In recent years this has taken the form of working with Waterways Ireland – the navigation authority and Government Departments in relation to legislative reform regarding byelaws on boating use on the Canals and Barrow sections of the waterways. We also undertake large infrastructural refurbishment projects, such as the regeneration of the Boyne Canal in Co. Meath. IWAI also supports Special Interest Groups (SIGS) such as the CSIG which has undertaken a digital national mapping and charting project of the Shannon, Erne, Royal Canal, Grand Canal and Barrow Navigations. In late 2018, as a response to the severe difficulties encountered by boating users of the Grand Canal and Royal Canal, which collectively along with a

partial route on the River Shannon form the **Green and Silver Route**, a special interest Nav-Watch¹ Group was established within the Canal branches of IWAI. The purpose of this group is to constructively contribute to the knowledge base regarding access to waterways, their navigational maintenance, development and use from a boating perspective. Sharing this information with the relevant agencies for better and more focussed maintenance of these navigations.

3. Developing a Successful Canal Quarter in Naas Harbour



The annual IWAI Naas Rally attracts many boats by providing a unique experience. Developing a destination is about providing facilities, experiences and unique cruising opportunities.

A vibrant and successful canal quarter requires the firm foundation of a canal system fit for purpose. The development of a canal quarter should also be an opportunity to future proof this canal line, which is two hundred and thirty+ years old, well into the future.

The draft plan makes the point that the Naas Line of the Grand Canal has five locks but the Corbally Line has none. It then fails to develop the possibilities here. It mentions Corbally only in terms of a Greenway and does not fully consider the reopening of the canal. It mentions that Sallins has a vibrant barging community while Naas Harbour is generally empty of boats. There are a variety of reasons for this which need to be addressed for the project to be successful:

- The Naas Line is short and requires passage through five locks to reach it

¹ Nav-Watch – comprising expert members of Canals & Barrow branches of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland from the Royal Canal, Kildare, Dublin, North Barrow, Barrow, Offaly, and Shannon Harbour IWAI areas.

- Water taps for boats are needed in the harbour
- A pump-out for emptying the waste tanks of barges is required
- The back of the harbour is heavily silted and requires dredging
- The silt trap, which is a walled area adjoining the garden of the bungalow at the back of the harbour needs to be dredged, restored and maintained to keep the harbour from silting in the future.
- A service Block within in the harbour area is essential in providing services to visiting boats and any residents of liveaboard barges proposed for the entrance to the Corbally Branch. A service block will also serve all waterways activities and essentially, will also serve the growing traffic along the Greenway. There are currently no services for Greenway users, which is a severe design oversight.
- Jetties along the green bank opposite the harbour buildings would provide quiet and tranquil moorings for visiting boats. The proposed pedestrian bridge would give them easy access to the town side of the harbour.
- The pedestrian bridge should adhere to the minimum height requirements for canal bridges. It is an opportunity to design something which pays homage to the heritage of the canal.

The proposed pedestrian bridge across the harbour is illustrated in the Draft plan as a low-level construction. It is essential that this bridge conforms to bridge heights on the canal network, critical to this is the air draft beneath the bridge which must be adequate to allow barges to pass beneath. This oversight was made in the construction of a pedestrian bridge in Tullamore town which has lower than average air-draft and creates an unnecessary pinch point on the Grand Canal which prevents some vessels from exploring the canal further.

The suggestion of moorings for liveaboard barges just outside the harbour, round the bend on the Corbally Branch, is an exciting proposition. However, for this to be successful, adequate services would have to be installed to serve these liveaboards with water, power, a pump-out and a floating jetty. The barge liveaboard lifestyle is currently booming and there is enormous demand for berths and appropriate services for these people. Liveaboard communities have much to offer, they add hugely to the atmosphere along the canal and are a great draw to local tourism. There would also need to be a sufficiently wide section on the canal for these barges to turn. Currently, these vessels would have to travel to the culverted bridge at Jigginstown where there is a sufficiently wide section to turn.

4. Sports & Recreational Facilities

Better facilities such as a toilet/service block lend themselves to the development of canal tourism. Boat Rentals, Bike Rentals, Kayak and Paddleboard Hire are all more likely and possible when there are supporting facilities to lean on. **The enormous success of the Greenways has emphasized the need for**

public toilet facilities along those Greenways. These facilities are maintained by waterways Ireland and are accessed free by way of a smart card. They are generally well maintained and are unlocked in daylight hours. Access to showers or other facilities are by smart card which protects facilities against vandalism.



Life has been brought to the Greenways, bringing life to the waterway completes the picture and enhances the experience for all users.

5. Liveaboard Boat Communities

For a variety of reasons, many people are choosing to make their home on a barge, a lifestyle more aligned with the rhythm of nature, anywhere they can in Dublin and it's surrounding counties.

With only twenty official liveaboard berths in Dublin's Grand Canal Dock demand has exploded and to-date both Waterways Ireland and Councils have been slow to respond to the increased interest in this seemingly idyllic and low stress way of life. We estimate in the region of 1000 liveaboards in various pockets throughout the country, the main concentration being in Dublin City and Kildare. **Planning sensitively for these growing communities is long overdue.** A vast number of people have applied to Waterways Ireland for a liveaboard berth and have created a long waiting list. Many others have simply bought a barge and had it craned into the canal, moved to a desired location where they have begun their liveaboard lifestyle.

Poor conditions

An ancient system is currently straining under the pressure, minimal services cannot cope with the new level of demand. New byelaws are pending which will give Waterways Ireland the power to deal better with the growth and introduce revised charges which will aid the delivery of better services for those liveaboards. At the same time there is much that DCC & KCC can do to improve the situation.

Currently boats are congregating in groups on both the Royal and Grand on a 200+ year old beautiful heritage canal system which still operates, but has little in the way of essential services. There is generally no drinking water available, very limited sewage pump-out facilities (one in GCD, one in Lowtown and one in Sallins), there is little lighting, few jetties and crucially almost no electricity. Blanchardstown Harbour at Lock 12 on the Royal is an example of all of these issues, barges crammed into a wonderful cut-stone, heritage harbour but with no facilities. The harbour is congested, uncontrolled and visiting boats have nowhere to moor for short term visits. Hazelhatch has a large liveaboard population surviving with almost no facilities or services.

While most barge owners are proud to be off the grid, using solar panels, large batteries and LEDs to generate power for their homes and offices, it only takes one vessel to continually pump its toilet directly into the canal to pollute the whole area. Dublin and Kildare urgently need fully serviced liveaboard berths where people can live safely and securely in this fast expanding vibrant communities.

6. Naas Harbour – Expand Facilities



Naas Harbour, alive and full of boats.

Infrastructure

The development of liveaboard facilities in this location would preserve and enhance the existing structure of the harbour in a sensitive marrying of old with new. The inclusion of jetties or quayside moorings on the edge of the harbour would be required, equipped with bollards supplying barges with power and water, a broadband link would be essential also. The berths would be sensitively lit with lights atop the service bollards. A pumpout station at a dedicated berth would allow boats to move there temporarily as required to empty their holding tanks. Holding tanks are fitted to barges to store all sewage/black water. **A handful of berths could be reserved for short stay visitors such as hire boats or travelling boaters coming from the Shannon, Grand Canal Main Line or Barrow.** This would help encourage and develop much needed tourist links between the Shannon, Dublin and the South East.



Low-carbon Community

By their nature, boating communities are low-carbon communities. Shore power is not always available. When disconnected from any communal electricity grid, each boat is responsible for its own electricity and heat generation. Boats commonly use off-grid electricity production methods such as solar panels and wind turbines to meet the electricity needs of the boatowner. Every electrical appliance is carefully chosen in order to reduce the electrical demand. Most boats run on a 12 volt system similar to that used in cars.

Every decision to switch on an application is a calculated decision for the boatowner, based on an assessment on whether there has been enough electrical power generated that day and whether the use of electricity is necessary. In comparison with conventional housing, there is a much greater awareness of energy usage and no demand on the electricity grid. With recent advances in the efficiency solar panels, there is a growing number of liveaboards boaters who are completely off grid with their electricity usage.

Alongside this, the lifestyle of a liveaboard boater is in general very eco-friendly. There is less often household waste generated due to space restrictions. Water usage is kept to a minimum as the size of

the water tank limits daily usage. This focus on renewable energy, low waste and water conservation results in a very low carbon lifestyle.

Rent

These serviced berths would generate some small income for WI, which would in turn be reinvested in facilities along the canals. Rates for liveaboards in Waterways Ireland's berths are restricted by limits imposed within the 1980's byelaws, these are currently being revised. The original permits were specifically intended for cruising boats and did not cater for the demands placed upon the system by liveaboard communities.

7. Year Round Boat Tourism Potential

Since the downturn in 2008 a cash strapped Waterways Ireland has focused it's attention on areas where funding was available, i.e. the development of Greenways. These have been very well received by the general public. Now, there is considerable scope to develop boat tourism on both Canals culminating with a boat tourism hub in the city centre linking the canals.

Boat tourism on the Shannon is basically restricted to a 6-7 month season, April to September-October. The canals offer the opportunity for year round boat tourism, cruising the canals is possible all year round (the winter months are termed Maintenance Season when works can result in localised closures, but generally the canals are open). Our warmer climate in recent years makes winter cruising on the canals all the more viable. The days are gone when the canal could be expected to freeze over for a period each winter. The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland's Nav-Watch group have recently surveyed the canals and documented areas where dredging or maintenance needs are greater (see/download Nav-Watch Report 2020: www.iwai.ie/nav-watch/surveyreport). It is hoped that this focus on critical maintenance will improve the navigation and leave it better able to cope with a variety of vessels travelling between Dublin and the Shannon.

Potential and Opportunity

There is a real opportunity to create something truly special here. As the number of liveaboard boats and barges grows ever larger, the demand for facilities to service and repair these vessels grows too. Dublin has long closed access to the valuable Graving Docks site at Grand Canal Docks. With liveaboard communities growing around Kildare there is a need for more servicing facilities. There is no dry dock in Monasterevin but the inclusion of one would add enormously to the attractiveness of Monasterevin as a canals town. Alternatively or complementing that, a service yard adjacent to the canal, where boats can be craned out to be worked on would be a huge advantage. There is a need for a

maintenance hub on the Grand Canal, where boats can be lifted or dry docked, welded, painted and refitted. All of these industries could operate from one location, providing valuable employment opportunities for the town. Currently, boats needing a dry dock have to travel from Dublin to Athy or from Dublin to Shannon Harbour. A dedicated facility with the complete range of skills does not exist, yet.



We take our canals very much for granted, they are just there, people are very surprised and always attracted and intrigued when they see a boat or barge pass by. The built heritage of these tremendous assets is largely overlooked. **Much of this 200 year old system still functions well today, it is working living history.** The longest hand-made structure in this country is the 146km length of the Royal Canal, yet few people are aware of this. We find original bridges, locks and some buildings are added to each counties' List of Protected Structures. Yet none have taken the obvious step and listed the structure of the canal cut which is arguably the greater achievement of our early 19th century canal builders.

Neglect

Looking at other capital cities around Europe we can see how much tourism has developed around their canals and waterway facilities. Water draws people to it, boats moving on that water have an even greater draw. **Everywhere in Europe that there are canals traversing a city there are thriving communities and vibrant tourism attractions built upon the back of that draw to water... except in Dublin where it has been neglected.**

Future-proofing the canals network

To fail to plan for the future life of the canals is to begin the process of decline and ultimately closure. IWAI's Nav-Watch was established to document problems and focus essential maintenance on critical issues by bringing them to the attention of WI. It is also a means to lobby Government for increased funding to allow WI to reinstate necessary programmes of maintenance and bring the state of the navigation back to where it should be, reversing the state of gradual neglect which had set in during years of budgetary reduction. Specific project funding and pressure from councils will help to drive this appreciation and development of our heritage waterways network.

Services and planning

As mentioned earlier in our submission, barges need services. As one answer to our lack of housing stock this growing community is struggling without services and safe places to berth their homes. One of the more essential services is the availability of a dry dock in the city. Dry docks in the Dublin region on both canals have long since been demolished or filled in. There remains still the two Graving Docks in Grand Canal Dock, Although these heritage structures are currently closed and are being kept out of use. They are not defunct and are still viable. Currently if you have a barge in Dublin and discover a leak or require maintenance to the hull your only options are:

- a. If it is urgent, hire a crane at great expense and lift it out. But that's difficult in the confines of a congested city, cranes block roads, and where do you lift it out to?
- b. The second option is you take a journey of several days to Athy Dry Dock; the other end of the Grand Canal to Shannon Harbour in Banagher; or to Mullingar on the Royal, where there are functioning dry docks.

These facilities were originally built at regular intervals on the canals, the builders understood their essential nature.

In short, dry docks in Dublin and Kildare have never been more important or essential. As we sit on the cusp of an explosion in vessel numbers on the canal's waterways. While the future of the Graving Docks site is unclear, it is important to note the existence of a dry dock in Sallins. This dry dock is currently filled in but could easily be excavated and returned to service. It is this essential restoration of a heritage structure which will help copper-fasten plans for Naas Harbour and indeed the surrounding canal infrastructure and communities.



A barge in dry dock (Shannon Harbour). Essential facilities for all canal based vessels.

8. The Importance of Through Traffic

By through traffic we mean the ability for boats to easily travel through one canal, out onto the Liffey and onward into the other canal, in either direction.

The potential here for developing a thriving boat tourism business through Dublin, Kildare and the Midlands is as great as it is in any other European capital with a canal network. We have a canals network which is still operational in its original state, nothing has been automated, simplified, or plasticized. One has to travel to other countries to gain a true understanding of the value of this living history heritage. There are only a couple of barge hire companies operating on the canals and Barrow Line at present. Poor maintenance of the navigation hampers their clients and businesses struggle accordingly. There is great demand for these hire services and tourists who do come will frequently take a boat for a week, spending heavily on food and drink in the towns they pass through. The Nav-Watch group through their Report 2020 are lobbying government for an increased maintenance budget for Waterways Ireland so they may better maintain the canals navigation in the future. (see Nav-Watch Report 2020: <https://branch.iwai.ie/nav-watch/surveyreport/>)

The Spectacular *Green & Silver* Route

The 'Green and Silver' route is based on the route taken on a documented triangular journey undertaken by L.T.C. Rolt in 1946. His subsequent publication of 'The Green & Silver' book in 1949, is now its 7th edition and as a boating 'classic' has become a bible for canals navigation enthusiasts in Ireland and many visitors from overseas. Rolt was one of the founders of the Inland Waterways Association (UK) in 1946.

This Green & Silver waterways route between Dublin and the midlands², which is of huge potential for economic benefit and social activity for the regions it passes through. It comprises a waterways triangular route of the Royal Canal, a section of the River Shannon, Grand Canal and into Dublin (crossing the Liffey to get back to the Royal to complete the journey). This navigation route is of international significance, ignored by our tourism organisations, it is **the only circular boating route in Ireland and needs to be elevated to national planning status level to flourish**. This route runs right through Westmeath and the beautiful harbour in Mullingar, a significant stop-off point on the Royal Canal leg of the journey. This is a **spectacularly beautiful route and a bucket-list goal for many boaters. It's potential for development as a tourist route has yet to be realized**. To-date it has been the goal of the private boat tourist to complete this special route but the potential for commercial boat rental tourism remains untapped.



² Green & Silver Route - Dublin, Royal Canal, River Shannon, Grand Canal triangular navigation route.

Green & Silver route – the Royal Canal, The Grand Canal (crossing the Liffey in Dublin) and the Mid Shannon region. As yet this is an unexplored route for major heritage value/boating tourism.



Green and Silver book cover – comprised of the Royal Canal, the Grand Canal and the mid-Shannon. The route is approx. 320 km and can be completed in 10-12 days of continuous travel by boat, however it is preferable to take as long as you can.

Boaters who currently do this route in Ireland can register to take part in the Green & Silver logbook challenge, by which they get various passport style stamps on an old fashioned log book format; a certificate; and a polished metal plaque to mark their achievement. The Dublin branch of the IWA have been the main drivers behind the promotion of this route and administer the registration, log book and plaque allocations. However it is also the users of the Green & Silver route who have contributed to it becoming known in the boating community over the last decade (only possible since the reopening of the Royal Canal) and it is an excellent example of 'ground up' grassroots user based perspective being able to contribute to regional development, once the relevant support and resources to push it on further are considered and applied. It is 70 years since the publication of the original book so it is timely that in 2024 it gains more exposure.



The Green & Silver route runs through nine of the twelve local authority areas – from Dublin City Council out the Royal Canal through Fingal, Meath, Kildare, Westmeath and Longford to the River Shannon (with access from the Shannon to the Camlin River – a particularly tranquil and secret spot on the overall navigation), back in the Grand Canal through Offaly, Kildare and South Dublin, with a spur line off in into Laois to access the River Barrow system. This route has the potential to be a major international level boating destination servicing both the city and the wider region and should be viewed as a collective resource with regard to its navigable future.

The canals network in Ireland is some 200 years old, and still functioning in much the same way as it is in the early 1800's. Manually operated lock are still operated the same way, the canal banks ensure the immediate natural environment is available and local history and heritage is on its doorstep in the many towns and villages through which the Green & Silver route passes. We are very good at presenting our nation's history through documentaries, drama, theatre and so on, but there is nothing that can evoke the actual real experience of canal boating except to undertake it. We constantly hear said by German and British tourists on our waterways *"You have the best waterways in Europe, why don't you use them more!"* In the case of the canals, this could not be more true. We have failed to invest in their tourist potential so far.

The Green & Silver route runs through large and small towns such as Longford, Mullingar, Enfield, Kilcock, Leixlip, Maynooth, Naas, Edenderry, Tullamore and Athlone. These can offer local boating route points e.g. weekend hire boats, to use the local areas of the Green & Silver from those locations. Small businesses in this area are starting up and indeed somewhat established - notably Royal Canal Boat Trips operating trips between Clonsilla and Kilcock on the Royal Canal (ref

<https://royalcanalgreenway.ie/listing/royal-canal-boat-trips/>); on the Grand Canal bargetrip.ie based in Sallins and more recently boattrips.ie on the Barrow adding to the long established Barrowline cruisers in Vicarstown. Also, as mentioned earlier, there are several hire companies on the Shannon that would be willing to send their tourist hire boaters into the midlands if they could be confident of access and reliability of use.

9. Expansion of the Record of Protected Structures

While the bridges, locks and some buildings associated with the canals are 'Listed' on the Record of Protected Structures in the counties through which the canal passes, the NIAH (National Inventory of Architectural Heritage) through their www.buildingsofireland.ie website fails to list the original 200 year old structure of the canals as 'Listed' structures. Built in the days before mechanization, our canals were built entirely by hand. **They are, collectively or individually, the largest man-made structures on our island and should be recognised as such with 'Listed' status for the entire structure as a whole** (Bridges, Locks, the Navigation, Banks, Bed and Cut). They are national routes, too often compromised by infringement through poor planning at county level. They need to be considered at a national level to insure their working future. They were built to operate commercially, with trading boats that hauled goods to and from Dublin, Limerick and Carrick, most notably Guinness. Many of these boats are still around today, lovingly re-purposed by their owners as residential or recreation barges. It is important to re-evaluate that importance at County level. Although they are over two hundred years old and considered affectionately in terms of heritage, it must be recognised that these structures have a unique place within our national heritage and should be promoted and explored more as offering a **Living History** experience. Though 200 years old, they still function and can be used in the same way that several generations of boatmen have experienced.

Awarding 'Listed' status to selective elements of the Royal, Grand and Barrow Navigations seems somewhat pointless, these items are interesting and individually contribute to our national heritage. But as parts of the whole, the entire canal, they come into their own and fully display their importance and function as essential parts of the canal's heritage. The greater part of the Royal Canal, its channel or 'cut' remains unlisted by some councils though it is a massive handbuilt construction which is often elevated far above the surrounding landscape which required the labour of thousands of Navvies each moving thousands of barrows of clay and soil. They form our largest national hand built structures. The Royal now also comprises the National Famine Way, a pilgrimage route which commemorates the suffering of famine victims being transported to Dublin docks and onward to North America.

10. Conclusion

Naas Harbour and its environs has the potential to offer a range of wonderful experiences to canal users and tourists, be they travelling by boat or along the Greenways and Blueways. The addition of vital facilities for visiting boats, liveaboards and all users of the Harbour must be considered as essential for the Naas Harbour LAP to be successful. However, the success or failure of this plan to return the harbour to a vibrant energetic destination will depend on whether the council has the vision to expand on the potential of the Naas Branch by building a bridge to recreate access further to the Corbally Branch where its harbour could become another destination experience in Kildare's tourism portfolio.

The canals network represent the living history of our industrial development. There are opportunities here to copper-fasten their future as 'working' and 'living' structures which can be reimagined in a modern and useful way. Demand is pushing for supply and communities need essential services and amenities. Allowing liveaboard life to grow on our canals assures their future but will also become the driving attraction in a tourism sector which we have only sampled so far on the canals.

The IWAI will be available to offer experience or guidance on any area of canal development, we warmly welcome opportunities to ensure the future of these heritage navigations and their infrastructure.

Appendix K – Respondent 3

Naas Canal Quarter Masterplan Submission



In recent years, with the emphasis on health, safety and outdoor recreation, there has been considerable interest expressed in creating an off-road facility for everyone. This canal can be a tourist destination for locals and visitors, an extension of the Grand Greenway for all ages and abilities, (including athletes in the water and on the land) A place for younger and older adults to enjoy kayaking, a destination for barges and boats, and for those with an interest in our industrial and natural heritage.

Construction in the last 20 years, have reduced spaces for the public. We now have in Naas a number of multi-level housing, reaching upwards with negligible open space around them. Those people need open spaces perhaps the equivalent to the linear open spaces that can be found along the Liffey in Kildare and Dublin.

This dense housing can be found in a number of areas. Examples being: Off the Newbridge Road between it and the Kilcullen road. What was a quite route out, has is planning application for 4 level housing on the Tipper road opposite the Racecourse entrance. (and ex IDA site) Along the Sallins roads we seem to have lost the Major De Burge's intention to give us the his, octagonal lake and

garden in exchange for rezoning. This will be multilevel flats and more as indicated by the signs on the walls.

There are a decreasing number of open spaces where people can wander without having to have caution regards noise and traffic.

Thankfully in past strategic plans, there was an intention to have clear space between the canal and housing. This needs to be maintained in one part of this strategic plan. I suggest this occurs in the triangular link between Abbey Bridge and with a walk and open space up to Pollpuck bridge

The triangle has its point reaching up to the harbor. The point, pointing directing people to the center of the town and an all its assets

36 years ago I remember a councilor who lived in the house at the harbor showing me a plan that showed a plan for a semicircular foot bridge over the canal just down from harbor, that allowed people to go into the triangle where the teenagers (I was a teenager then) could play pitch an putt. (as you may know that land was passed over to the council so that the owner could build the homes that are called "The harbour" on the KCC picture)

My belief is that, these days that space even more important to become be recreation facility places for families and those who are interested to alternatives to football and GAA games.

The new and old cultures arriving into Naas and Kildare might appreciate that space. That space also a start point for going up to the town to shop, up along Basin street a place to have a lunch or find out more about Kildare in the Library Cultural center in the old Town Hall. The history of Naas can be discovered in the ex Library.

Going up to the bus stop outside to post office, one will have, a start point for traveling on further around Kildare. Local Link travel is a brilliant way to explore Kildare, without a car.

In reviewing the geography of that triangle it would appear that the land enclosed by the triangle is one of the lowest places in Naas. (90m above sea level, top of basin street 99m)¹ Therefore, all the water going the lowest level flow down through there. Further on there now is Housing being constructed at 88m. Not a good land to build upon if water is traveling to it. That triangle my not only be a park and play area but a sponge up the water by trees and plants.

Walking inside the triangle you can see there is a stream that needs to be protected and its flow maintained.

Swimming in the canal when I was in my teens. I could feel 3 places where the water went cold between the Harbour and Abbey bridge. I was told there were springs are coming in under the canal. We need a place for the water to go. That would indicate this triangle could be a good place to grow willows and other "hydro vacuum" plants (just look at the willow growth near the bicycle shop.

¹ <https://en-ie.topographic-map.com/>

Indeed that was originally where the Naas Sewage farm was before Naas grew in size. Water flowing to the lowest level

Might be a place to hire a bike (there is a good bicycle shop below Murtaghs corner). The Triangle will be an environment resource not just for people but plants, insects birds and the bats (bats are under protection laws and the harbour and its insects are appreciated by the bats. Indeed, during the annual environmental week activated by the council, I could take my children along that pathway from the harbour, to see and listen to the bats and and was shown where the European shrews were) I was then able, think, to recognise one between the dip and the recourse hay field

A walkway along the bank on that side with no tarmac on it, could allow families can walk safely and train.

If we leave the grass in that bank. It would allow for people to enjoy cross country running the athletic club that was in Naas had that in the past above the lakes of Lakelands. These were lost to a carpark Tarmac and fences. It would be way to practise for hiking, savouring a quite space . A lot of tourists might like that place to allow to go one to go further up to the leisure centre have a swim or go further. Rise up with a connection off the canal banks to Polopook Bridge and onwards drop down on the pathway to old bridge. Cross over the Newbridge road and walk on to the Corbally harbor

Corbally Harbor is a place I reviewed previously that would be a nice place to paddle to in your canoe or cycle to from the start point of the harbor the apex of that triangle

Walking along there is where you can clear your head and listen to soft words of your children or gentle conversations, No concrete, no tarmac on it. Open spaces and a place to grow plants that will provide O2 for your brain.

I know this is not in the KCC's request but I am thinking of top level plan for the future and not to be lost in future plans please to not allow that area to be rezoned. Please, please keep that walkway safe from destruction and damage by constructors.

The focus point of the harbor is also the beginning of a canal walkway, one direction extends towards Salins and from Sallins to Dublin. How well is that protected and told to the tourist promoters? (ensuring that it is, will bring more tourists into Naas)

In the opposite direction it extends to a harbor many miles to the source spring.

Please keep connections to allow people to get all the way into Naas. Cycle or walk safely that way on a Sunday morning or during the week to School or work in Millenium Park

Dog walkers

We have more and more dogs in Naas people want to have a place to walk their dog.

² On of those plants could be OAK trees could be transplanted to that current line of old age trees (some fading). They would such up some of the excess moisture.

(These are growing in the Site opposite the racecourse entrance. The old IDA metal works factory There are well over 30 small oak trees and others. Councillor Anne Breen will be able to show you where I am speaking about.

The park in Monread is very crowded with many dog walkers. People try to find alternatives, I have seen that a the place behind Kingsfurze where people can go to walk their dog. That has now hasnow been rezoned for housing. So we need an alternative place where they can walk their dogs. Again the triangle. Yes there is planned to be on in the Parkway near Johnstown. That means though people has to drive there. I cant drive, many other cant afford a car and teenagers I see cant walk safely out there. Some dogs bark at the people coming towards them and they get frightened. So I reckon and area there could be a place where it is fenced in and people can allow their dog to ramble around and owners can chat.

When the break in that place are finished. They can walk up town, go for a coffee, a bit of shopping and look at the windows and decide to buy something in the window. Go to the bank or go to the big shopping centre behind Bank of Ireland. Without driving their cars or park there. Rather that without going ground the town and looking for car park spaces. Perhaps closer to the new housing area yet to be build close to Polpuck Bridge

Do you understand what I'm trying to do? Trying to make sure that people can walk. I keep themselves healthy. And have a chance with their families. Find small shops. I keep the centre of Naas alive. People can meet. Along the way, paths that the Council is already installed. Get on the bus. To go to silence. I'll come back from there to shop in Naas. Buses to Dublin. A local link goes to other towns and homes around Kildare. They could do that without having a car. In the original Perhaps.

That walkway I'm writing about travels up towards the Newbridge Rd., a bridge over that, if we cannot now, in the future put a pedestrian bridge over that walkway. That the way up to the Carnal harbour. So we could have people who will be running around, we could have them cycling, who could have them strolling. Around various places in Naas. And Kildare. So we then have a very good tourist attraction. To Naas, the towns. the country places further up. Just starting at one bit at a time from the area around the harbour.

Canoe Club

Around the side of the harbour there was a canoe club. That was a place where people started canoeing, some even went into Irish teams.

It was a place where people could have a place a rest, get health, make friends and try a sport. Canoe racing, canoe polo and Canoe Slalom was played there. I would recommend that to commence its reopening we need a place where a canoe club could have the assets it requires.

That place would need A place to enter easily the canal. (including not only for them and perhaps and place can enter when a tourist can enter if they're want to start canoeing).

There was a place there at the harbour when the original harbour was rebuilt, there was a canoe club. It was specifically built where the canoes could be stored. if you look there you can see a the

pathway where of the concrete matches the level of the water. That allowed the canoes to be able to get in and the canoeists young and old to easily get in and out. (other part of the side are high and the sloping side under the water made it harder to get out)

That shed which was built specifically for the canoeists. The shelves were solid metal, specifically welded together hold the weight of the plastic canoes, the length of Sea canoes, K1 and T2's. The people using it were accessing it through a gate specifically allow them to access it.

The shed is no longer available. We should allow access to there again and allow people to use it to enter the canal safely and store gear.

It allowed the mixing of older people and teenagers, each paddled, worked together and learned from each other. A place available for different ages. We learned from each other the history of Naas and think about the future. Some people even met their future partners, wives and husbands paddling on the canal paddling their canoe.

Some learned about the environment and where to shop and that was the start of the pathway to the future of their lives.

We need to put that in place and reopen that asset.

I would not have met my wife if I was not canoeing there. I am not the only couples that met the person they love in water or walking by the canal.



Perhaps a direction sign from there. Pointing up today where they could find coffee, food, quiet drink some of the music in Naas and of course the potato place. Show the timetable for various events. A recent and past places from map from that base base. Things that are in Naas, will be illustrated.

I hope in all the above you can assist the KCC experts in thinking in your planning. Hopefully can assist those who receive this to plan for the future and to continue that area. Excellent connections to the rest of Naas, the rest of Kildare and Ireland, for people and businesses.

³ Cleaners and maintenance people can seek an alternative, with perhaps the KCC's assistance.

⁴ You can see the crane hanging off that point. One person listening and learning from the older person remembered when he was canoeing, where he has seen the parts of that crane. Ask yourself would it be hanging there if he didn't know where he saw it and who to say it to?

Appendix L – Respondent 5, Cllr. Seamus Moore

Submission on the Naas Canal Harbour Quadrant

The request for proposals for the Regeneration of the Naas Canal Quarter comes at an appropriate time in 2024, in that other reviews include planning benefits to the same area i.e.

- 1) Master Plan for the North West Quadrant
- 2) Feasibility Study of the Naas-Corbally Canal Greenway
- 3) Approval of State Funding for the Naas-Sallins Canal Greenway
- 4) Approval of State Funding for the Regeneration of the Naas Canal Quarter
- 5) The CPO of the majority of housing accommodations in Basin Street.

Aside from the possible planning benefits there are also local pressures that are pertinent to the area.

- a) Housing/Residential Needs
- b) Dereliction/Vacant Sites/Under-utilisation/Amenity Needs
- c) Historic & Heritage Neglect
- d) Transportation Hub including a possible Link Bridge to the North West Quadrant
- d) A South end of Naas Town Centre Parking facility.

Canal Harbour Site

1. The Market House should be the defining building of the Canal Harbour Quarter in any future development proposals for the overall site. Like the open market area in the town centre or the railway station on the north side of the town, the Canal Quarter had a glorious 18th to 20th century period when it was the commercial heartbeat of the town and a regional status as a commercial entity.

The Naas Canal Harbour, fails to project its past success by the existence of surrounding, lavishly built, Merchant's Houses, as in other countries.

This was because the local Landlord, Lord Mayo, or Lord Naas, controlled the commercial activities of the Canal Harbour without any opposition. He lived at Palmerstown House near Johnstown. Apart from the Market (Trading) House, the area was marked more by depots and storage areas for coal, turf, grain, cut stone, timber, a quayside for Passenger Boats, the Harbour Masters House (still in situ) and the Canal Stores, a general goods depot, still in use as a

Youth Centre, where goods like beer, whiskey, glass and hardware items were unloaded from the boats and delivered by horse and cart to the shops and pubs of the town and to customers from outside the town.

Recommendation; Two forms of consideration.

a) The protection, preservation and development of the site and the enhanced development of existing canal-related structures, to reflect the 18th and 19th century.

b) The enhanced development of the Market House should consider its incorporation into an accommodation centre for retired people similar to the Naas AHB McAuley Place project. The acquisition and linkage of another nearby and vacant site to allow the project to be sustainable venture in size might be necessary. The full site development as a multi-story accommodation centre, not requiring car-parking spaces and using the Market House, a vaulted building, as a reception and administration frontage building would be well-received. The nearby old library, still in mint condition and with indoor access facilities, could be considered as a social centre facility for both the local area population and for the retirement centre at a future date.

Other building proposals for the quarter should be required to develop 18th & 19th century designed buildings to multi-storey levels, in line with that of the anchor site of the new Market House usage. Existing set-back lines from the canal quayside are good but could be improved to give a more enhanced public realm within the Harbour Quarter and perhaps lend itself to assemblies around water sport events or boating celebrations.

The area, defined as a Canal Harbour Quarter should include public art pieces and lighting features that reflect Neoclassical Architecture of the Victorian/Georgian period.

An enhanced set back area with tall buildings would give an enclosed compaction to a site that lends itself to period retention and a protection against the very cold, wind-driven environment, of winter time beside the harbour waters.

Basin Street Houses.

In my opinion the whole Canal Harbour should include the retention of the Basin Street houses, albeit with a modern town house development to the rear of each house. as they are period based and they formed the new traffic route to The Harbour from the Town Centre.

Water Sports Hub.

The inclusion of a Water Sports Hub as an essential amenity item for the Canal Quarter should be more broadly viewed to identify the inclusion of multi-water sports, in conjunction with the re-opening of the Corbally Harbour and the necessary creation of a water route, around, above, beneath or in conjunction with a bridge-lifting mechanism at the Jigginstown blocked section of the 8.5km of Corbally Canal. The re-opening of the Corbally Canal to a free boat passage between both harbours, would lend itself to the creation of boat slipways at various points to suit other boat dimensions and groups. The wider the range of boating interests around Naas Harbour the better will be the return on future investments. No single boating activity should anchor the proposals for financial support to develop this Canal Harbour Quarter. This canal opening proposal should also be referred to the Consultants doing a feasibility study on the Corbally Canal, in a joint effort to obtain the best possible forward plan for the next thirty or more years. The possible creation of a Naas-Newbridge & Kilcullen, inland water feature for water sports, bio diversity walks, pedestrians, cyclists and boating enthusiasts, in one of the largest regional population and commercial growth areas outside of Dublin, from an existing and under-utilised facility, should be strongly pursued and not ignored for financial or short, delivery-term, gain. The opportunity is now and decisions now, will fashion the credibility of today's wisdom when viewed in thirty years time and by future Naas Residents and youth of the next period.

Water Supply Doubts.

To assist all proposals of water based sports interests, I wish to highlight the need for guaranteed water levels and water supply to Naas Harbour. The original Corbally Canal, was to my knowledge, built on the route of the Corbally River. The constancy of water supply to Naas Locks, where 30 tons of water are released from headwaters

every time a boat entered the harbour channel at the 5th Lock was guaranteed during its commercial lifetime.

When that ceased in the mid 1950s, water over-flow became a problem in the Naas Canal area. In 1983, during the construction of the Naas By-Pass, the feeder streams to the Corbally Canal and to the original Corbally River, were diverted at Newhall, Naas, to the River Liffey at Thomastown, beyond Caragh. Since then, the Naas Canal is very dependent for water re-supply on the small Rathasker River that flows into Naas Harbour. Reports from Inland Waterways Members (Eastern) that annually bring a flotilla into Naas, would indicate that canal water levels drop below navigable levels after a small number of boats enter the harbour channel at the 5th lock. Subsequent boats must wait 24 hours to allow levels rise to a navigable level. This must be repeated throughout a week to bring a flotilla of 30 boats into Naas. The same planning must be arranged when the boats are leaving Naas after an event. This anomaly must be checked by specialist engineers, before any embarrassments are encountered after substantial investments are made in promoting water sports in the area.

Public Transport Route to the North West Quadrant.

I believe the Local Authority should pursue the ownership status of two houses on the south side of Sarto Road that may only have been leased to the Eastern Health Board to facilitate the residency of a Nurse to the nearby local dispensary. The purpose of the dispensary has long since passed as has the demise of the nurse. The acquisition of such buildings would enhance the creation of a bridge facility for public transport between town centre Naas and the North West Quadrant or workers on the south side of Naas in Aras Chill Dara, Local Schools, Naas Garda Station, Court Services or Naas General Hospital. The Harbour Area is the correct Linkage Point.

Folklore

Local folklore would promote the idea that a tunnel exists between the site of the Old Gaol (now St Martins Avenue) and the Naas Court House, to facilitate necessary court appearances of defendants during a past troubled time in Naas.

Abbey Street Development

The Abbey Street Corridor badly needs Street Design and buildings that will reflect it as the second street in Naas Town Centre. In view of the number of footprint sites in the ownership of state service bodies or subsidiaries, action to acquire those properties is long overdue even before this effort of a Master Plan.

The House on Moat Hill

Finally, I should like to put it on record that despite the number of listed buildings that have been or may be acquired in the future to help in the Regeneration of Naas, the oldest monument in the town has been overlooked. The Naas Moat dates back at least to the time of Danes or certainly to the Kings of Tara. The Local Authority owns the monumental moat structure but does not own the old, small, poorly conditioned, house at the top of the monument. Hence, without formal access, all future promotions of the Naas Moat must be done from nearby road levels. This would be derisory to the whole Review of the Town. The compulsory acquisition of the House atop The Moat Hill is essential to the build up to the Promotion of a Regenerated Naas.

Yours sincerely,

Seamie Moore Cllr Naas MD Kildare CC 087 2497813

Appendix M – Respondent 6

Hi there,

I see that I missed the deadline for survey submission on this project but am hoping I can still submit my feedback as below

Thanks,

- Naas Harbour – peaceful space to sit/socialise in centre of town but feels neglected at the moment – bare grass, lots of feathers/excrement from swans. Would be great to see more landscaping/greenery and general refresh and clean of the benches/footpaths that makes it a more attractive space to be in
- Harbour and canal – take advantage of it being a pedestrian transit route. Consider ‘play on the way’ initiatives to make it more attractive and welcoming for children (see Sport New Zealand Neighbourhood Play System for examples)
- Green field space beside Sarto/Abbey Bridge. Depending on ownership, this could be a great space for urban agriculture. In the form of community garden, allotments or tender it out as a space for a Community Supported Agriculture farm (see Derrybeg Farm in Celbridge for successful example)
- Along the canal – more benches along the length of it
- Harbour safety – the area feels unsafe at night. Consider ways to address this?
- Would be a shame to see the old library building lost as a community space, particularly the upstairs area. Perhaps it could still be open to book as a space for community events/exhibitions etc?

