

COMHAIRLE CONTAE CHILL DARA

KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

Record of Executive Business and Chief Executive's Orders

Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) – Part XI
Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) – Part 8

**Revised Greenway Route with 2 additional Pedestrian Bridges at Lowtown and Bonyngge Bridge
Co. Kildare**

Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Determination

Pursuant to the requirements of the above, Kildare County Council is proposing to provide 2 pedestrian bridges with a revised route to the Grand Canal Greenway scheme. The Grand Canal Greenway is a 38.5km walking and cycling facility in Co. Kildare which follows the route of the existing Grand Canal towpath. The towpath stretches from Kildare's border with Dublin to Kildare's border with Offaly. The Grand Canal Greenway consists of two phases. Phase 1 stretches from Aylmers Bridge on the Kildare-Dublin border to the proposed pedestrian bridge in Sallins, Co. Kildare. Phase 2 stretches from Sallins to Clonkeen on the Offaly border. Phase 1 of the greenway route is currently under construction and is expected to be open to the public in 2024. Phase 2 is currently at the detailed design stage.

The proposed additional bridges seek to improve on the safety and user experience for all. The proposed bridges will allow greenway users to move safely across the canal with one bridge located in Lowtown, and the second adjacent to Healy's/Bonyngge Bridge in Co. Kildare. The proposed route would follow the Canal south bank from Robertstown along the public road for 950m to where the proposed bridge in Lowtown is to be located. Proposed development mainly comprises of the following;

- A revised route to continue westwards on the south bank of the canal from Roberstown to proposed bridge at Lowtown. The new pedestrian bridge is proposed just west of the connection between the old barrow line and the grand canal. The new bridge at Lowtown will allow users to cross the old barrow line, where they may then cross the existing Fenton's bridge before continuing their journey westwards using the previously consented route along the north (north east) canal bank.
- The proposed bridge at Lowtown will greatly improve the safety of this area of the Greenway by segregating greenway users from the traffic on the L3073 and avoiding the dangerous crossing at Binns bridge. In addition, the proposal will also provide improved connectivity between the Grand Canal Greenway and the Barrow Blue Way as well as providing additional recreational spaces for users to enjoy.

- The proposed pedestrian bridge at Lowtown will be of similar form of construction as the pedestrian bridge recently constructed on the Grand Canal Greenway in Sallins. The proposed bridge will have a minimum 3.5m clearance to the canal water level below to allow for safe passage of canal boats. The pedestrian ramps required to allow greenway users to get up to the correct height above the canal will be constructed from reinforced earth and shall have a grass surface finish. The ramp width and gradient shall be designed to allow for universal access. The proposed bridge decking shall be a high friction buff coloured epoxy type surfacing. A 1.45m high painted steel parapet shall be provided to protect greenway users from the exposed edge.
- In the second location east of Robertstown, A new pedestrian footbridge is proposed circa 180m east of the existing Healy's/Bonyngne bridge. The proposed bridge will allow greenway users travelling west to cross the canal and continue their journey into Robertstown on the south bank by passing under the L7081 at Healy's/Bonyngne bridge. This proposed change will significantly increase the safety and sense of security of greenway users and is considered a necessary amendment to the originally proposed route of the Grand Canal Greenway. The proposed arrangement will completely separate greenway and road users in this location, significantly increasing both safety and sense of security.
- The proposed pedestrian bridge in the second location will be of similar size and form of construction as the pedestrian bridge recently constructed on the Grand Canal Greenway in Sallins. The proposed bridge will have a minimum 3.5m clearance to the canal water level below to allow for safe passage of canal boats. The pedestrian ramps required to allow greenway users to get up to the correct height above the canal will be constructed from reinforced earth and shall have a grass surface finish. The ramp width and gradient shall be designed to allow for universal access. The proposed bridge decking shall be a high friction buff coloured epoxy type surfacing. A 1.45m high painted steel parapet shall be provided to protect greenway users from the exposed edge.

Having regard to EIA Directive 2011/92/EU as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU (the EIA Directive), the guidance contained in: “*Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Guidance for Consent Authorities regarding Sub-Threshold Development*” (published by the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2003); “*Environmental Impact - Assessment of Projects - Guidance on Screening*” (published by the European Commission in 2017); “*Guidelines for Planning Authorities and An Bord Pleanála on carrying out Environmental Impact Assessment*” (published by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government in 2018); and on the basis of an examination of the Part 8 drawings and documents, Kildare County Council, as the Competent Authority, determines that the proposed development along the Grand Canal Greenway, Co. Kildare, individually, and in combination with other plans and projects, does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Full consideration is given to the EIA Directive and in particular to Annex I, II and III of that Directive, which set out requirements for mandatory and sub-threshold EIA.

As the proposed development is sub-threshold, it has, therefore, been assessed on a case-by-case basis in accordance with the criteria for determining whether or not a development would or would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment as outlined within Annex III of the EIA Directive.

Having regard to the foregoing and in particular:

- The size and design of the whole project;
- Cumulation with other existing and/or proposed projects;
- The use of natural resources, in particular land, soil, water and biodiversity;
- The production of waste;
- Pollution and nuisance;
- The risk of major accidents and/or disasters which are relevant to the project concerned, including those caused by climate change, in accordance with scientific knowledge; and
- The risk to human health (for example due to water contamination or air pollution).

It is considered that the environmental effects arising from the proposed project will generally be localised and minor in nature. It is considered that the proposed development is not likely to give rise to significant environmental impacts and does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment Report to be prepared or an Environmental Impact Assessment to be conducted.



Kehinde Oluwatosin
Senior Executive Planner
23/07/2024



Aoife Brangan
A/SP
23/07/24

ORDER: That Kildare County Council as the Competent Authority hereby makes a determination that the proposed pedestrian bridges with revised route along the Grand Canal Greenway, Co. Kildare Co. Kildare, would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the proposed project does not require an Environmental Impact Assessment.

Date: 24/7/2024



Chief Executive