

# Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway

## Strategic and Route Corridor Assessment Report

Cork County Council and Waterford City and County Council

February 2022



# Notice

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# 1. Introduction

The Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway is a proposed walking and cycling path that would connect the town of Dungarvan in County Waterford to Mallow in County Cork. The development of the greenway will follow Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII's) Project Management Guidelines (PMGs) which identify a seven-phase process to go from initial project concept through construction and project closeout. These phases are:

- Phase 0: Scope and Pre-Appraisal
- Phase 1: Concept and Feasibility
- Phase 2: Options Selection
- Phase 3: Design and Environmental Evaluation
- Phase 4: Statutory Process
- Phase 5: Enabling and Procurement
- Phase 6: Construction and Implementation
- Phase 7: Close Out and Review

The current feasibility and route options assessment study will progress the project through TII PMG phases 0, 1 and 2. Based on the outcome of this study, additional phases of development may be progressed in the future.

To complete phases 0, 1 and 2, the current study will use a four stepped process. These steps are listed below. An overall summary of the TII PMG phases as well as the four-stepped delivery process to be used for this project is provided in Figure 1-1.

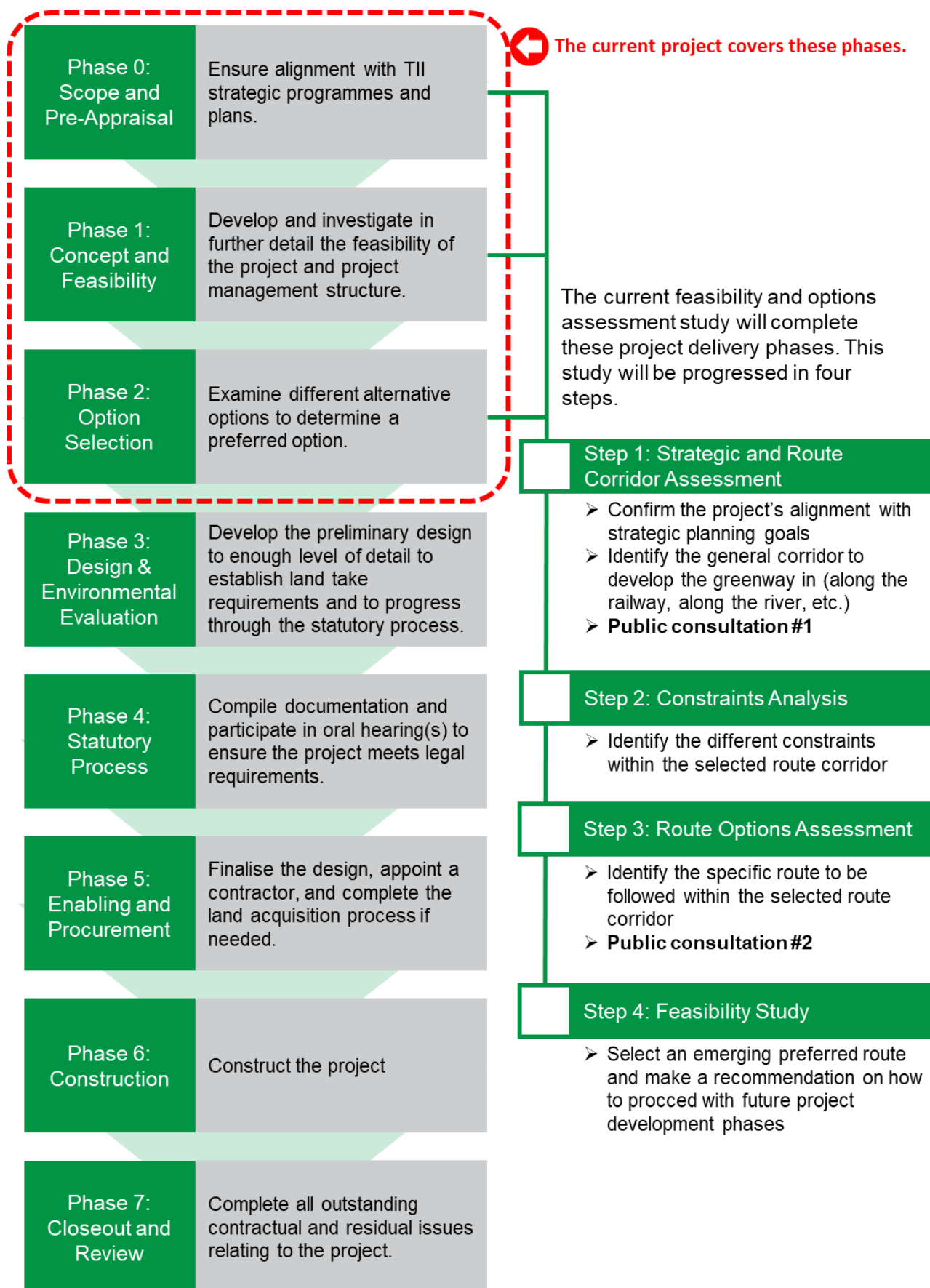
- Step 1: Strategic and Route Corridor Assessment
- Step 2: Constraints Analysis
- Step 3: Route Options Assessment
- Step 4: Feasibility Study

The purpose of this report is to document the analysis methodology and outcomes from the strategic and route corridor assessment process. This process evaluated two key questions:

1. Does the development of a greenway between Dungarvan and Mallow align with current government policies and planning objectives?
2. What corridor should the greenway be developed in?

The analysis methodologies and analysis results answering these two questions are presented in the remainder of this report.

Figure 1-1 - Summary of the Project Delivery Process for the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway



## 1.1. Project Vision

A project vision statement states the desired outcome(s) for a project and is used/referenced throughout the project development process to ensure incremental decisions contribute to the larger collective aspirations for which the project was initially undertaken. This helps keep the project focused on holistically addressing issues while maintaining appropriate limits to prevent the project from trying to address every issue and ultimately becoming undeliverable.

The Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway Feasibility and Route Options Assessment Scheme's project vision was developed collaboratively between representatives from both CCC and WCCC. This vision statement is presented below:

*The vision for the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway is to create a walking and cycling path between Dungarvan and Mallow that provides for a world class tourism and recreational experience for people of all ages and abilities. Following the path of the now abandoned Dungarvan to Mallow railway, the greenway will integrate with and enhance the existing natural and built features of the region to support the economic development of communities and health of citizens in County Waterford and County Cork.*

## 2. Assessment of Strategic Alignment

Assessing how well a proposed project aligns with strategic planning document ensures that individual public investments contribute to the larger goals and priorities of the government. The following sections document the methodology, results and conclusions of the strategic assessment that has been completed for the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway.

### 2.1. Strategic Alignment Methodology

To determine if a greenway between Dungarvan and Mallow would align with current government policies and development goals, a comprehensive review of existing planning documents was completed. This review identified the strategic planning objectives and development goals that the proposed greenway would assist in achieving. Documents that were reviewed include:

#### National Documents

- National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040
- National Development Plan 2021-2030
- Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways
- Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025
- Tourism Development and Innovation – A strategy for Investment 2016-2022
- Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025
- National Countryside Recreation Strategy
- Climate Action Plan 2021

#### Regional Documents

- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

#### Local Documents

- Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017
- Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Waterford County Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2020
- Cork County Development Plan 2014
- Draft Cork County Development Plan 2021
- Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan
- Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District Local Area Plan

### 2.2. Strategic Alignment Conclusion

Based on the review of existing plans and policies, it is confirmed that the development of a greenway between Dungarvan and Mallow is in alignment with strategic objectives and would contribute to archiving planning goals and objectives. Therefore, the project should be further developed.

A full discussion about specific development goals and objectives which are likely to be satisfied and/or influenced through the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway can be found in Appendix A of this report.

## 3. Route Corridor Assessment

Due to the length of the proposed greenway, there are many different routes that could be followed. To identify the best route, a two-part options assessment methodology will be used. The initial part, referred to as the Route Corridor Assessment, will evaluate high-level corridor options for the greenway. A corridor is an area a few hundred metres wide and will define the study area for which more detailed analysis will be focused. Once the route corridor has been identified, then the second part of the options assessment, called the Route Options Assessment, will be used to determine the detailed link-by-link path for the greenway. The Route Options Assessment will only consider detailed routes within the identified preferred route corridor.

The remainder of this chapter documents the methodology and outcomes of the Route Corridor Assessment. This will form the basis from which more detailed route options will be assessed.

### 3.1. Route Corridor Identification

Potential route corridors for the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway were collaboratively identified by the project team and were generally based on the predominant geographic features of the area, existing transportation corridors and consideration of land ownership. In total, five different potential route corridors were identified and evaluated. These corridors are described in Table 3-1.

**Table 3-1 - Route Corridor Options Evaluated**

Concept Number	Name	Description
1	Along the Abandoned Rail Line	This concept would have the greenway follow the abandoned rail line in all locations, even those where it is no longer identifiable on the ground.
2	Along the Abandoned Rail Line with Some Detours	This concept would have the greenway follow the abandoned rail line where the rail line is still remaining/identifiable. Where, for example, development has encroached upon the abandoned rail line or where following the line would result in severance of a continuous field, then this option would create local detours following field boundaries.
3	Follow Field Boundaries	This concept would have the greenway follow along existing field boundaries and would result in a new transportation corridor that does not currently exist.
4	Parallel to Existing Roads	This concept proposes to run the greenway alongside roads as a fully segregated off-road path.
5	Follow Waterways	This concept would have the greenway generally follow the banks of waterways. Based on the context of the study area, it is envisioned a majority of the greenway would likely run along the River Blackwater.

### 3.2. Route Corridor Assessment Methodology




Route corridors were evaluated using multiple criteria (Table 3-2). These criteria were developed based on the project's vision and objectives and are broadly in line with the key criteria outlined in the Department Of Transport's Common Appraisal Framework which gives a defined, common basis for assessing projects such as this. Each concept was qualitatively evaluated on a three-tiered scale on how well it satisfies/achieves each criterion. Table 3-3 summarizes this three-tiered evaluation scale.



**Table 3-2 - Route Corridor Assessment Criteria**

Category	Criteria
Provide a safe and accessible walking and cycling path for users of all ages and abilities	Provide a safe design
	Minimising the likelihood of steep grades
Create a world class tourism attraction that can support greater economic development in the region	Provide a path that is away from vehicles
	Maximising a user's exposure to industrial heritage and areas of interest
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment	Minimise impacts to existing hedgerows, historic walls, and other distinctive boundary features
	Minimise land severance
	Minimise impacts to structures (excluding those associated with the abandoned railway line)
	Maintain a buffer space (10-15m) between development and the high-water mark of rivers and waterways.
	Avoid impacts to SACs and SPAs.
Promote public health	Maximise the attractiveness of the greenway for recreational users to encourage exercise
Capital Cost	Minimise the need for compulsory purchase orders (CPO)/land take
	Minimise the need for new structures

**Table 3-3 - Route Corridor Assessment Evaluation Scale**

Evaluation	Description
	Highly satisfies/achieves the stated criteria
	Moderately satisfies/achieves the stated criteria
	Does not satisfy/achieve the stated criteria

Due to the distance between Dungarvan and Mallow and the variable conditions that exist between the two towns, it was considered possible that a different route corridor could be better suited to one area over another. To capture this, the route corridor evaluation was completed on a segment-by-segment basis with the space between Dungarvan and Mallow being sub-divided into four segments around the larger towns and villages. These segments included:

- Segment 1: Dungarvan to Cappoquin
- Segment 2: Cappoquin to Lismore
- Segment 3: Lismore to Fermoy
- Segment 4: Fermoy to Mallow

### 3.3. Route Corridor Assessment Results

The route corridor options assessment results are summarised in Table 3-4 and Table 3-5. Results for Segments 2, 3, and 4 are presented in the same table because the corridor options scored the same in each of these segments. Additional details about why each option received a specific score for a specific criterion can be found in the full assessment tables provided in Appendix B of this report.

Although evaluation results did vary between the segments, the outcome of the route corridor options assessment indicates that the best corridor concept is to follow the abandoned rail line where possible and,

where the rail line is no longer available, developing localised detours as necessary. The key benefits to this option as compared to the others include:

- Minimising the need for land take.
- Provides the best opportunity for shallow grades suitable for all users.
- Minimises impacts to hedgerows, walls, and other boundary features commonly found along roads.
- Maximises opportunities to reuse existing structures (bridges and viaducts).
- Avoids SPAs and SCAs.

**Table 3-4 - Segment 1: Dungarvan to Cappoquin Route Corridor Assessment Summary**

Category	Criteria	Option 1 – Along the Abandoned Rail Line	Option 2 – Along the Abandoned Rail Line with Some Detours	Option 3 – Follow Field Boundaries	Option 4 – Parallel to Existing Roads	Option 5 – Follow Waterways
Provide a safe and accessible walking and cycling path for users of all ages and abilities	Provide a safe design	●	●	●	●	Dungarvan and Cappoquin are in two different watersheds. There are no continuous waterway routes connecting these two towns together. Therefore, this option was not considered for this segment.
	Minimising the likelihood of steep grades	●	●	●	●	
Create a world class tourism attraction that can support greater economic development in the region.	Away from vehicles	●	●	●	●	
	Exposure to industrial heritage and areas of interest	●	●	●	●	
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment	Minimise impacts to existing hedgerows, historic walls, and other distinctive boundary features	●	●	●	●	
	Minimise land severance	●	●	●	●	
	Minimise impacts to structures (excluding those associated with the abandoned railway line)	●	●	●	●	
	Maintain a buffer space (10-15m) between development and the high-water mark of rivers and waterways.	●	●	●	●	
	Avoid impacts to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).	●	●	●	●	
Promote public health	Attractiveness to encourage exercise	●	●	●	●	
Capital Cost	Minimise CPO/land take	●	●	●	●	
	Minimise the need for new structures	●	●	●	●	

**Table 3-5 – Segments 2, 3, and 4: Capped to Mallow Route Corridor Assessment Summary**

Category	Criteria	Option 1 – Along the Abandoned Rail Line	Option 2 – Along the Abandoned Rail Line with Some Detours	Option 3 – Follow Field Boundaries	Option 4 – Parallel to Existing Roads	Option 5 – Follow Waterways
Provide a safe and accessible walking and cycling path for users of all ages and abilities	Provide a safe design	●	●	●	●	●
	Minimising the likelihood of steep grades	●	●	●	●	●
Create a world class tourism attraction that can support greater economic development in the region.	Away from vehicles	●	●	●	●	●
	Exposure to industrial heritage and areas of interest	●	●	●	●	●
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment	Minimise impacts to existing hedgerows, historic walls, and other distinctive boundary features	●	●	●	●	●
	Minimise land severance	●	●	●	●	●
	Minimise impacts to structures (excluding those associated with the abandoned railway line)	●	●	●	●	●
	Maintain a buffer space (10-15m) between development and the high-water mark of rivers and waterways.	●	●	●	●	●
	Avoid impacts to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).	●	●	●	●	●
Promote public health	Attractiveness to encourage exercise	●	●	●	●	●
Capital Cost	Minimise CPO/land take	●	●	●	●	●
	Minimise the need for new structures	●	●	●	●	●

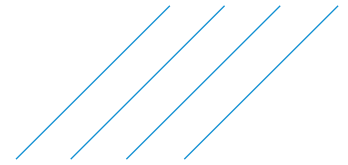
## 4. Next Steps

Following the confirmation of the preferred route corridor, the next step of project development is to identify and evaluate the constraints within the corridor. These constraints will be used to inform the development and evaluation of more detailed route options.

# Appendices



# Appendix A. Strategic Analysis Summary



## 1. Strategic Analysis Results

The following sections provide a summary of the key planning objectives that would be, at least in part, satisfied by the proposed greenway. For organisational purposes, these document reviews are grouped together by national, regional, and local documents.

### 1.1. National Documents

#### 1.1.1. National Planning Framework – Project Ireland 2040

The National Planning Framework (NPF), called *Project Ireland 2040*, is the government's high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland to 2040. It is expected that by 2040 there will be roughly an additional one million people living in Ireland. The NPF identifies a strategic approach to managing this growth to ensure that the population increase enhances the entire country.

One of the key aspects of the NPF is to ensure that residents in Ireland can lead healthy and sustainable lives. This includes having access to a clean environment that encourages active lifestyles and sustainable transport modes. In support of these aspirations, the NPF defines several objectives that are relevant to the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway:

- National Strategic Objective (NSO) 4 - Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
- NSO 6 - Regenerate and rejuvenate cities, towns, and villages of all types and scale as environmental assets, that can accommodate changing roles and functions, increased residential population and employment activity, and enhanced levels of amenity and design quality in order to sustainably influence and support their surrounding area.
- NSO 22 - Facilitate tourism development and in particular a National Greenways, Blueways and Peatways Strategy, which prioritises projects on the basis of achieving maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level.
- NSO 27 - Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed developments and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.

#### 1.1.2. National Development Plan 2021-2030

The National Development Plan 2018-2027 (NDP) sets out the investment priorities that will underpin the successful implementation of the NPF. The NDP steers planning policy and guides investment decisions at a national, regional, and local level. Relevant priorities identified in the NDP are summarized below.

- NSO 2 – Enhanced Regional Connectivity: The NDP lists the strategic investment priorities with active travel being the most important, followed by public transport, and finally national roads. In line with this prioritization, the plan highlights the need to deliver high-quality greenways across Ireland to support the shift to active travel modes.
- NSO 3 – Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities: The NDP notes two key areas with respect to greenways. Firstly, it notes the importance of providing active transport options for rural communities as a critical part of improving connectivity and meeting climate action goals. Secondly, it notes the importance of sustainable tourism to rural economies. As such, the NDP prioritises investments which can strengthen the tourism sector. A particular priority is an investment in activity-based tourism such as greenways. It notes that this type of investment helps to grow rural tourism which is a central part to the national tourism policy.
- NSO 4 – Sustainable Mobility: The NDP puts the highest priority for mobility investment on active travel. It notes that increasing modal share of walking and cycling is critical in ensuring Ireland meets its climate action goals.
- NSO 8 – Transitioning to a Climate-Neutral and Climate-Resilient Society: The NDP commits to encouraging a significant modal shift away from fossil-fuel based transport. A key part of this is the provision of cycling and walking routes to provide sustainable transport options.



### 1.1.3. Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways

This strategy, as published by the Department of Tourism, Transport, and Sport, sets out the overall vision for the development of a network of national, regional, and local greenways in Ireland. The strategy sets out the role of greenways in the context of the Project Ireland 2040 NPF and the NDP 2021-2030, and in particular identifies that such trails offer a unique alternative means for tourists and visitors to access and enjoy rural Ireland.

This strategy identified five key objectives for the development of greenways within Ireland. These include:

- The development of a strategic greenway network of national and regional routes—defined to be routes of greater than 100 km and 20 km respectively—that can be extended and/or link with local greenways and other cycling and walking infrastructure
- The development of greenways of scale and appropriate standard that have significant potential to deliver an increase in activity tourism to Ireland and are regularly used by overseas visitors, domestic visitors, and locals thereby contributing to a healthier society through increased physical activity
- The development of greenways that provide a substantially segregated off-road experience linking places of interest, recreation, and leisure in areas with beautiful scenery of different types with plenty to see and do
- The development of greenways that provide opportunities for the development of local businesses and economies
- The development of greenways through collaboration with all relevant stakeholders in line with an agreed code of practice

This strategy also identifies the desire for greenways to be developed in a sustainable manner. It notes that the preferred model for the development of greenways is to use land which is already in state control. This provides long-term certainty that the public investment will be usable by the public into the future. When full land ownership by the state is not possible, the following things should be valued:

- Severance of landholdings is minimised
- Impact on landholdings is minimised as much as possible

### 1.1.4. Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025

*Healthy Ireland Strategic Action Plan 2021-2025* is the national framework for seeking to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in Ireland. The framework identifies several broad inter-sectoral actions to be taken to help improve the physical, emotional, and social health of people and communities in Ireland.

One aspect of the action plan is the continued support and promotion of active travel options. The strategy notes that walking and cycling can improve health outcomes. Therefore, the plan notes its support for the development of programmes of infrastructure investments which encourage people to walk or cycle more.

### 1.1.5. Tourism Development and Innovation – A Strategy for Investment 2016-2022

This strategy published by the Department of Rural and Community Development, sets out the framework and mechanisms for delivery of investment to cities, towns, villages, communities, and businesses across the country. This strategy has been formulated in the context of the government's policy framework and longer-term objectives for the tourism sector. It identifies priorities to support innovation in the sector to retain and grow Ireland's competitiveness in the marketplace. Its ultimate aim is to strengthen the appeal of Ireland for international visitors.

The two most relevant desired outcomes identified in this plan with regard to the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway include:

- Distribution of traffic and spend: this outcome hopes to distribute visitors to more of Ireland's attractions as opposed to just a few key ones. The strategy particularly calls out the need to better distribute visitors to less-known attractions in Ireland's Ancient East where the proposed greenway is located.
- Engaging with the outdoors - access to the landscape: this desired outcome hopes to increase visitor accessibility to the lush landscapes of Ireland and to provide sustainable access options to visitor experiences. This is particularly important for projects in Ireland's Ancient East where part of the brand proposition is exposing visitors to Ireland's landscape.

#### 1.1.5.1. Ireland's Ancient East Brand

The proposed Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway is located on the southwestern boundary of Ireland's Ancient East brand. This brand was established by Fáilte Ireland and aims to create a cohesive visitor experience that focuses on the history, culture, and lush landscapes of the area.

### 1.1.6. Our Rural Future: Rural Development Policy 2021-2025

This document outlines the government’s plan to develop the economies of rural places within Ireland including villages and towns. Part of this plan highlights the importance of tourism to rural economies. Because of this importance, the plan sets out a policy (policy measure 36) to “invest in greenways, blueways, walking trails and other outdoor recreation infrastructure to support the growth in outdoor recreational tourism.”

### 1.1.7. National Countryside Recreation Strategy

The National Countryside Recreation Strategy lays out a plan to manage and develop recreation activities and amenities within rural areas responsibly and sustainably. The focus of the study is on recreational activities that utilize rural areas, such as hiking, walking, cycling, fishing, etc. and not recreational activities that just happen to be located in rural areas, such as an event venue that is simply located in the countryside.

One of the objectives identified in this plan is the development of sustainable and responsible recreation in the countryside. As part of this objective, the plan encourages the use of formal infrastructure facilities, such as disused railway lines, as trails for walking, equestrian pursuits, cycling, and other recreational activities.

### 1.1.8. Climate Action Plan 2021

The Climate Action Plan 2021 identifies the policies to be pursued and actions taken to ensure Ireland meets its climate goals. One of the key findings of the report is that transport represents approximately 20 percent of Ireland’s carbon emissions. Therefore, reducing emissions from transportation is a core goal to the climate action plan.

To achieve this goal, the plan emphasises a reduction in trips made by internal-combustion-engine powered vehicles and instead transferring those trips to active travel modes, public transport, and non-fossil-fuel based vehicles. Specific actions identified in the plan that relate to the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway project are listed below.

- Action 225 – Continue the improvement and expansion of the active travel and greenway network
- Action 227 – Construct an additional 1,000km of cycling and walking infrastructure
- Action 228 – Encourage an increased level of modal shift towards active travel (walking and cycling) and away from private car use.

## 1.2. Regional Policy

### 1.2.1. Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Southern Region

The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Southern Region identifies how the Southern Region will implement the policies and goals of the NPF and NDP. A summary of the regional planning objectives (RPOs) that are relevant to this greenway project is provided below.

- RPO 46: Digital and Physical Infrastructure in Rural Areas – It is an objective to expedite the completion of infrastructure servicing diverse settlements to support innovation, enterprise start-ups and competitiveness. This includes high quality broadband and mobile communication services to all rural locations, water and wastewater facilities for the growth of settlements, sustainable energy supply, enhanced transport connectivity including rural public transport services and greenway walking and pedestrian corridors between settlements.
- RPO 53: Tourism – it is an objective to:
  - Promote activity tourism subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes;
  - Sustainably develop walking and cycling trails opening greater accessibility to the marine and countryside environment by sustainable modes and promote the sustainable designation and delivery of Greenway and Blueway Corridors.
  - Facilitate appropriate tourism development and in particular National Greenways,
  - Blueways and Peatways Strategy, prioritising sustainable projects that achieve maximum impact and connectivity at national and regional level.
- RPO 124: Green Infrastructure – Any future development of greenways, blueways, peatways, cycleways or walkways will include an assessment by the relevant authorities of any impacts that may arise from increased visitor pressures, in particular, on sensitive European sites and the design of the network will consider the provision of protective measures on sites sensitive to disturbance/visitor pressure.

- RPO 158: Intra-regional Rural Connectivity – It is an objective to seek investment in the sustainable development of fully accessible infrastructure that strengthens intraregional rural connectivity including rural public transport services as “life lines” which are important routes on the road network connecting communities in remote locations and smaller scaled settlements with larger scaled settlements to access important services.
- RPO 159: Role of Transport in Enabling Access for All – It is an objective to seek investment in transport networks and services in the Region that are socially inclusive and provide a quality of service, connectivity and facilities to meet all societal needs disabilities (including mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments) and meet the needs of aging cohorts.
- RPO 166: Investment in Strategic Inter Regional Multi-Modal Connectivity to Metropolitan Areas and Economic Corridors – Facilities for sustainable transport are supported in strengthening the quality of inter-regional connectivity
- RPO 174: Walking and Cycling – The following walking and cycling objectives are supported and will guide investment subject to the required appraisal:
  - Delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects (subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes), having regard to the *Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways* (Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport, 2018)
  - Delivery of high-quality safe cycle route network across the Region and cycling environments (applicable to cities, towns, and villages) with provision for segregated cycle tracks
  - Development of a safe cycling infrastructure to cater for the needs of all groups of cyclists, especially new cyclists, school children, elderly etc.
  - Greenways in the Region shall be linked up to a network to improve connectivity within the Region for walking routes and commuter cyclists in addition to recreational amenity functions
  - Support sustainable pedestrian and cyclist greenway initiatives and the potential for inter connections between greenways subject to robust site selection processes and environmental assessment processes
  - A buffer distance shall be maintained between walking, cycling, Greenway and Blueway corridors and from coastal areas, particularly those subject to current and future erosion, as well as rivers and canals to ensure protection of riparian zones
- RPO 181: Equal Access – It is an objective to promote disability awareness and improve equal access for all through universal design for public transport access, housing, social, cultural and recreational facilities and the public realm to improve quality of life equally for abled and disabled citizens in our Region. Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to investment in infrastructure and facilities is informed by engagement with representatives of disability support organisations to ensure that perspectives of those they represent (e.g. wheelchair users) are understood and an appropriate level of environmental assessment.
- RPO 182: Ageing Population – It is an objective to support Smart Ageing and National Positive Ageing policies and An Garda Síochána Older People Strategy and ensure that local planning, housing, transport/accessibility and leisure policies meet the needs and opportunities of an ageing population. Local authorities should ensure that the development of housing, transport, accessibility, and leisure facilities/infrastructure is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment of potential impacts from such development.
- RPO 201: National Trails, Walking Routes, Greenway, and Blueway Corridors – It is an objective to support investment in the development of walking and cycling facilities, greenway, and blueway corridors within the Region between settlements and the potential for sustainable linkages to create interregional greenways. Proposals for investment in walking and cycling facilities, greenway, and blueway corridors should be based on rigorous site/route selection studies and Local authorities should ensure that decision-making in relation to such developments is informed by an appropriate level of environmental assessment, including all necessary reports to assess the potential impact on designated European sites and on biodiversity outside of formal protections such that proposed development does not contribute to loss of biodiversity. Local authorities and other public agencies shall seek to promote and support access to rural areas including upland areas, forestry, coastal areas and the development of existing walking routes, pilgrim paths, mountain trails and nature trails in conjunction with other public bodies, representative agencies and community groups and shall identify and protect existing paths, walkways and rights of way.

## 1.3. Local Policy

### 1.3.1. Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017

The *Waterford County Development Plan 2011-2017* sets out the policies and objectives for the continued growth of the county. Policies and objectives relevant to the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway are listed below.

- Policy ECD 22 – It is the policy of the Council to continue to promote and facilitate, where possible, the provision of high-quality walking and cycling routes in Waterford
- Policy ECD 23 – It is the policy of the Council to promote Waterford as the “Walking Capital of Ireland.”
- Policy NH16 – The preservation of riparian corridors is a requirement for the protection of aquatic habitats and facilitation of public access to waterways. No development shall take place within a buffer zone of 15m measured from the top of the riverbank.
- Policy NH 17 – To protect hedgerows in all new developments, particularly species rich roadside and townland boundary hedgerows
- Policy NH 18 – To protect and preserve existing hedgerows and seek their replacement with new hedgerows with native species of local provenance where their removal is necessary during the course of road works or other works. There will be a presumption against the removal of hedgerows where there is a reasonable alternative
- Policy NH 20 – The Council will preserve and enhance the amenity and biodiversity value of the County by preserving as far as possible trees, woodlands and hedgerows and will consider Tree Preservation Orders in order to protect trees of significance throughout the County.
- Policy CS 12 – It is a policy of the Council to promote the principle of Universal Access.
- Policy INF 14 – To implement the smarter travel policy framework as produced by the DOT and to encourage the sustainable creation of cycle and pedestrian friendly communities through the provision of cycle paths and other initiatives to curtail the dependency on private motor vehicles whilst seeking to minimise the depletion of the hedgerow resource that could potentially arise from cycle path provision.
- Objective ECD 5 – To facilitate, as the opportunities arise, the sustainable development/enhancement of tourist trails and designated walking and cycling trails that do not cause landscape or environmental degradation throughout County Waterford. The Council shall also encourage the development of off-road cycling at appropriate locations.
- Objective ECD 8 – To identify and develop visitor trails where appropriate to promote the landscape heritage, demesnes, and great gardens open to the public and promoting appropriate accessible sites of industrial heritage in the County
- Objective NH3 – To protect riparian habitats along watercourses by maintaining an ecological buffer zone of at least 15m from the top of the watercourse riverbank. The Council will consult with the Fisheries Authority on the establishment and protection of riparian habitats where appropriate

In addition to county-wide policies and objectives, the plan also identified specific objectives for the towns and villages within the county. Relevant, location-based objectives are provided below and organized by town/village.

#### 1.3.1.1. Dungarvan Environs

- DO2 – It is an objective of the Council to protect and promote the amenity and pedestrian access to the River Colligan and enhance/provide public walkways, riverside parks, and routes. As the opportunity arises, the Council will develop a linear walkway along the Colligan estuary.

#### 1.3.1.2. Cappoquin Development Objectives

- DO2 – It is an objective of the Council to protect and promote the amenity and pedestrian access to the River Blackwater and enhance existing public walkways and riverside routes subject to compliance with Articles 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive and ensuring no negative impact on the integrity on the River Blackwater special area of conservation (SAC).
- DO3 – The flood plain of the River Blackwater shall be preserved free from development.
- DO4 – It is an objective of the Council to provide cycle-paths, footpath improvements and public lighting as the opportunity arises.



- DO10 – It is an objective of the Council to retain and enhance the existing stone walls and trees on the approach roads into the town.

#### 1.3.1.3. Ballyduff Development Objectives

- DO2 – It is an objective of the Council to protect and promote the amenity of the River Blackwater and enhance existing access to the riverbank subject to compliance with Articles 6 and 10 of the Habitats Directive and ensuring no negative impact on the integrity of the River Blackwater SAC.
- DO3 – The flood plain of the River Blackwater shall be preserved free from development.
- DO5 – As opportunities arise, the Council shall provide a new footpath/cycle path from the Upper Village to the Lower Village.

### 1.3.2. Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022-2028

The *Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan* lays out the priorities, goals, and strategies for Waterford as it continues to grow over the next six years (2022-2028). Policies and objectives relevant to the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway are listed below. It should be noted that at the time of review, the document was still in draft format. Therefore, policies and objectives may be modified prior to the documents finalization. When the plan is formally adopted, the final version will be reviewed to account for any changes made during the finalization process.

- ECON 21: Tourism - cooperate with various stakeholders and tourism agencies to build on the strengths of the City and County in their promotion as a tourism destination of choice. To this end, facilitate and encourage sustainable tourism 'products' and activities/ attractors in appropriate locations which are based on and reflect the city and county's distinctive history, natural and/ or cultural heritage, agri-food, marine and horticultural sector, and outdoor pursuits and recreation
- ECON 23: Tourism Product and Infrastructure - In collaboration with local communities and social enterprise, promote, facilitate, encourage investment, and deliver improvements to our tourism product, infrastructure and facilities, including improved car, bus and bicycle parking, walking and cycling trails, directional signage/information boards, and service/rest facilities.

Proposals for development shall ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network. Improvements to, and new access/parking arrangements for local attractions, walking and cycling trails etc within the county shall be developed with the co-operation of local landowners and other relevant stakeholders.

Tourism product developments and infrastructure/ facilities will be subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. The potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.

Any such works shall incorporate and integrate elements of green infrastructure, where appropriate, and be designed in accordance with the principles of universal design. In particular, continue to advance initiatives aimed at encouraging, strengthening and delivering investment and improvement to rural economic development and tourism assets in the following principle (rural cluster) areas and tourism-related initiatives: Blackwater Valley, Waterford Blueway, Coastal Walks, Comeragh Uplands, Waterford Greenway, Copper Coast Geopark, Waterford Estuary, and Gaeltacht na nDéise.

- Trans 07: Supporting Active Travel - promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy, and environmentally friendly, modes of transport by delivering a comprehensive network of safe walking and cycling routes, and investigate the potential for quiet routes which will be a high quality, fully connected and inclusive, across the Waterford City and County with associated placemaking, green infrastructure corridors and public realm improvements in accordance with best accessibility practice and promotion of the initiatives contained within Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020 or any update thereof. All proposals shall ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network.
- Trans 10: Route Networks: Continue to develop an integrated network of greenways/ blueways and green/ blue routes within Waterford and linking to adjoining counties. All proposals shall ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network.
- SC 38 - To enhance safe access to the Waterford Greenway and form new links to our rural settlements.
- Place 16 - To encourage a mix of uses, activities and key destinations in appropriate locations, for example in our town centres and neighbourhood centres, to encourage social interaction and the use of more sustainable transport modes.

- BGI 06: Enhancing Waterford Greenway - To support the enhancement of the existing Waterford Greenway and expansion of the Greenway network in Waterford City and County by examining the feasibility of developing a Waterford to Tramore Greenway and extending the Waterford Greenway to the west of Dungarvan.
- BGI 13: Community Engagement and Sustainable Amenities - Support communities and ensure recreational trails and outdoor recreational amenities and associated facilities are developed in sympathy with the natural environment and do not pose adverse impacts on habitats, species, the ecological integrity of the Natura 2000 Network and landscape amenity or affect ecosystem services including flood risk and climate change impacts such as coastal erosion. In doing so ensuring to realise the positive impacts of development of outdoor recreational amenities and trails including health & wellbeing, social, cultural, economic and tourism benefits as well as enhanced community resilience.
- BH 20: Industrial Built Heritage – It is the policy of the Council to identify, protect and encourage the sympathetic reuse of elements of the industrial heritage and to encourage sustainable reuse of underutilised/vacant industrial buildings for residential, commercial or tourism use.

### 1.3.3. Waterford County Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2020

The purpose of the *Waterford County Local Economic & Community Plan 2015-2020* is to layout the strategic objectives and goals for the county to take to grow and sustain key economic sectors. Goals relevant to the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway are identified below.

- Goal 3.4: Enhance the connectivity between and within our urban centres – Link the three main urban centres by Greenway and seek to become part of a sustainable strategic national trail
- Goal 4.2: Develop a world class tourism product – Sustainable development of the Waterford Greenway

### 1.3.4. Cork County Development Plan 2014

The *Cork County Development Plan 2014* sets out the policies and objectives for the continued growth of the county. Policies and objectives relevant to the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway are listed below.

- County Development Plan Objective TO 7-1: Promote the development of walking and cycling routes throughout the County as an activity for both international visitors and local tourists in a manner that is compatible with nature conservation and other environmental policies.
- County Development Plan Objective TM 2-1: Encourage and facilitate a safe walking route network and a culture of walking where possible and practical
- County Development Plan Objective TM 2-2: Cycling
  - Encourage and facilitate a safe walking and cycling route network and a culture of walking and particularly cycling in the county, as a viable alternative travel choice. Local Area Plans will set out Active Travel Strategies (cycling and walking) for individual towns and their hinterlands
  - Promote the development of an integrated and coherent local and countywide cycle network to form part of the wider National Cycle Network. Routes will be promoted which generally seek to avoid or minimise impacts on the environment and on European Union (EU) designated sites.
- County Development Plan Objective WS 5-2: Ensure that where practical development is kept at 10m or other appropriate distance from stream and riverbanks and adequate protection measures put in place.
- County Development Plan Objective HE 2-5: Where appropriate, to protect mature trees/groups of mature trees and mature hedgerows that are not formally protected under Tree Preservation Orders.
- County Development Plan Objective GI 4-1: To support the diversification of the rural economy through the development of the recreational potential of the countryside in accordance with the *National Countryside Recreation Strategy* (Department of Rural and Community Development, 2018).
- County Development Plan Objective GI 6-1: Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.

In addition to the county-wide development plan, CCC has also prepared development plans for the individual municipal districts within the county. Relevant objectives from these plans are identified below.

#### 1.3.4.1. Fermoy Municipal District Local Area Plan

- FY-GO-06: All development shall contribute to improved, safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and shall include proposals for the provision of improved pedestrian/cycle access routes, provision of new footpaths or improvement of existing footpaths and provision of facilities for cyclists, as appropriate.

- FY-GO-07: Support implementation of the Fermoy Traffic Management Study and the Fermoy Walking and Cycling Strategy set out in Active Travel Towns.

#### 1.3.4.2. Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District Local Area Plan

- MW-GO-08: Improve and enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity throughout the town particularly north/south across the river and east/west across the railway line and N20.
- MW-GO-10: Enhance the overall tourism product of the town. Promote the town as a heritage tourism destination by raising awareness of the heritage of the town and through the appropriate use of its built and archaeological heritage.

#### 1.3.5. Draft Cork County Development Plan 2021

The *Draft Cork County Development Plan 2021* lays out the priorities, goals, and strategies for Cork as it continues to grow over the next six years (2022-2028). Policies and objectives relevant to the development of the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway are listed below. It should be noted that at the time of review, the document was still in draft format. Therefore, policies and objectives may be modified prior to the documents finalization. When the plan is formally adopted, the final version will be reviewed to account for any changes made during the finalization process.

- County Development Plan Objective TO 10-7: Long Distance Walks
  - Support and promote the development of long-distance walkways at appropriate locations around the County, while having consideration for any environmental, social, and economic impacts.
  - Promote cross boundary linkages and walkways to develop a network of wider routes and long walkways beyond the county boundary.
- County Development Plan Objective TO 10-8: Walking/Cycling and Greenways - Promote the development of greenways, walking and cycling routes throughout the County as an activity for both international visitors and local tourists in a manner that is compatible with nature conservation and other environmental policies.
- County Development Plan Objective TO 10-10: Tourism Facilities - Support environmentally sensitive small-scale tourism enterprises including Agri-tourism enterprises and eco-tourism initiatives that are developed in conjunction with established rural activities such as, fishing, walking, cycling, mountain biking, surfing, equestrian sports and other activities where these are compatible with environmental legislation. A limited amount of tourist accommodation could be included in association with such enterprises subject generally to the renovation of existing structures redundant agricultural farm buildings as well as limited new buildings on an appropriate scale
- County Development Plan Objective TM 12.2.2: Active Travel - Promote and facilitate an active travel culture in the County where active travel is a viable choice.
  - Support delivery of cycle routes, Greenway and Blueway corridor projects subject to appropriate site selection and environmental assessment processes, having regard to the *Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways* July 2018.
  - Support the development of a safe, coherent, and continuous cycling infrastructure to cater for the needs of all groups of cyclists, especially new cyclists, school children and the elderly and support safe walking and cycle routes particularly in the approach to schools.
  - Promote sustainable pedestrian and cyclist greenway initiatives, maximising the potential for inter connections between greenways, and connections from residential and employment areas to greenways, subject to robust site selection processes and environmental assessment processes.
  - Seek to improve connectivity within the County and region for walking routes and commuter cycling routes and recreational amenity functions.
- County Development Plan Objective TM 12.3: Transport – Support and prioritise the following key Rail Transport initiatives:
  - Support other agencies in delivering an appropriate integrated land-use and transportation framework to maximise rail use and facilitate connectivity with other transport modes.
  - Provision of enhanced rail station access and multi modal facilities to include secure, sheltered bicycle parking, public bicycle sharing facilities, bicycle maintenance stations, EV charging, park and pool facilities, car sharing facilities, where appropriate.
- County Development Plan Objective TM 12.6: Local Link - Support investment in sustainable transport infrastructure that strengthens the connections between rural and urban areas.

- County Development Plan Objective TM 12.12: National, Regional, and Local Road Network
  - Support the sustainable development of infrastructure that strengthens the quality of inter-regional connectivity from Cork to Limerick (proposed M20 and Rail), and from Cork to Waterford (N25) as identified in the NDP.
  - Support the M20 Cork to Limerick Motorway and N20 mallow Relief Road projects as outlined in Project 2040 and the RSES for the Southern Region.
  - Support improvements to the N71, N72, N73, inter-regional corridors, and intra-regional corridors
- County Development Plan Objective GI 14-1: Countywide Green and Blue Infrastructure Objectives - Integrate the provision of green infrastructure with infrastructure provision and replacement, including walking and cycling routes, as appropriate, while protecting biodiversity and other landscape resources.
- County Development Plan Objective GI 14-6: Public/Private Open Space Provision - Promote the provision of high quality, accessible and suitably proportioned areas of public open space and promote linking of new open spaces with existing spaces to form a green infrastructure network.
- County Development Plan Objective Gi 14-7: Countryside Recreation - Support the diversification of the rural economy through the development of the recreational potential of the countryside in accordance with the *National Countryside Recreation Strategy*.
- County Development Plan Objective GI 14-9: Landscape - Discourage proposals necessitating the removal of extensive amounts of trees, hedgerows and historic walls or other distinctive boundary treatments.
- County Development Plan Objective BE 15-2: Protect sites, habitats, and species - Protect and where possible enhance areas of local biodiversity value, ecological corridors and habitats that are features of the County's ecological network. This includes rivers, lakes, streams and ponds, peatland and other wetland habitats, woodlands, hedgerows, tree lines, veteran trees, natural and semi-natural grasslands as well as coastal and marine habitats.
- County Development Plan Objective HE 16-6: Industrial and Post Medieval Archaeology - Protect and preserve industrial and post-medieval archaeology such as mills, limekilns, bridges, piers and harbours, water-related engineering works and buildings, penal chapels, dwellings, walls and boundaries, farm buildings, estate features, military and coastal installations. There is a general presumption for retention of these structures and features. Proposals for appropriate redevelopment including conversion should be subject to an appropriate assessment and record by a suitably qualified specialist(s).
- County Development Plan Objective CA 17-2: In order to achieve a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions, an increase in renewable energy production, an increase in energy efficiency and enhanced biodiversity, support the transition to a low carbon, competitive, climate resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050 through implementation of the policies of this plan that seek to deliver compact growth, integrated land use and transport, sustainable transport choices, liveable settlements, renewable energy production and reduced energy consumption, enhanced ecological biodiversity, and climate adaptation measures.

In addition to the county-wide development plan, CCC has also prepared draft development plans for the individual municipal districts within the county. Relevant objectives from these plans are identified below.

#### 1.3.5.1. Draft Cork County Development Plan 2021 Volume 3: North Cork

This document identified the development plan and objectives for north Cork. The area of interest relating to the Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway is the Fermoy Municipal District and a small portion of the Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District. Relevant planning objectives are identified below:

##### **Fermoy Municipal District –Objectives for Fermoy**

- FY-GO-04: All development should contribute to improved, safe pedestrian and cyclist connectivity and should include proposals for the provision of improved pedestrian / cycle access routes, provision of new footpaths or improvement of existing footpaths and provision of facilities for cyclists, as appropriate.

##### **Kanturk-Mallow Municipal District –Objectives for Mallow**

- MW-GO-06: Prioritise the development of the Mallow Relief Road.
- MW-GO-07: Support the delivery of the M20 and protect any emerging route corridor identified during the route selection process.
- MW-GO-08: Improve and enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity throughout the town particularly north /south across the river and east / west across the railway line and N20.



# Appendix B. Route Corridor Assessment

**Dungarvan to Mallow Greenway - Route Corridor Options Assessment**

Category	Criteria	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line with Some Detours	Follow Field Boundaries	Parallel to Existing Roads	Follow Waterways
<b>Segment 1: Dungarvan to Cappoquin</b>						
Provide a safe and accessible walking and cycling path for users of all ages and abilities	Safe design	●	●	●	●	
	Minimising the likelihood of steep grades	●	●	●	●	
Create a world class tourism attraction that can support greater economic development in the region.	Away from vehicles	●	●	●	●	
	User experience (exposure to industrial heritage)	●	●	●	●	
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment	Minimise impacts to existing hedgerows, historic walls, and other distinctive boundary features.	●	●	●	●	Dungarvan and Cappoquin are located in two different watersheds. There are no continuous waterway routes connecting these two towns together. Therefore this option was not considered for this segment.
	Minimising land severance	●	●	●	●	
	Minimising impacts to non-abandoned railway structures	●	●	●	●	
	Maintain an appropriate buffer space (10-15m) between development and the high water mark of rivers and waterways.	●	●	●	●	

Category	Criteria	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line with Some Detours	Follow Field Boundaries	Parallel to Existing Roads	Follow Waterways
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment (cont.)	Avoid impacts to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	Dungarvan and Cappelquin are located in two different watersheds. There are no continuous waterway routes connecting these two towns together. Therefore this option was not considered for this segment.
Promote public health	Attractiveness to encourage exercise	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Be adjacent to vehicle traffic makes this option less attractive people exercising and is therefore less likely to maximize the potential public health benefits of the greenway.	
Capital Cost	CPO/land take	Portions of the abandoned rail line are within state ownership. Use of this space would minimize land take requirements.	Portions of the abandoned rail line are within state ownership. Use of this space would minimize land take requirements.	This option would require completely new land to be acquired for the greenway.	Existing roads do not have sufficient verges to accommodate a greenway within the existing boundaries of the road. Therefore, new land will likely be required to accommodate the greenway.	
	Need for new structures	Following the abandoned rail line allows for the potential reuse of existing structures.	Following the abandoned rail line allows for the potential reuse of existing structures.	Following field boundaries would likely miss opportunities to reuse existing structures present along the abandoned rail line.	Existing road structures are not wide enough to accommodate the addition of a greenway. Therefore, many new structures are likely to be required.	

Category	Criteria	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line with Some Detours	Follow Field Boundaries	Parallel to Existing Roads	Follow Waterways
<b>Segments 2, 3, and 4: Cappelquin to Mallow</b>						
Provide a safe and accessible walking and cycling path for users of all ages and abilities	Safe design	The greenway would be constructed to current engineering safety standards.	The greenway would be constructed to current engineering safety standards.	The greenway would be constructed to current engineering safety standards.	The greenway would be constructed to current engineering safety standards.	The greenway would be constructed to current engineering safety standards.
	Minimising the likelihood of steep grades	Rail lines have inherently shallow grades. Following the rail line would have the greatest potential to minimize steep grades along the route.	Following the abandoned rail line would minimize grades. However, in areas where local field boundaries are followed the greenway would be subject to existing grades which may exceed what is recommended for walking and cycling paths. There would likely be little opportunity to regrade the land to mitigate for this impact.	Following field boundaries would likely result in sections of the greenway exceeding recommended gradients. This would make it more difficult for some users to travel along the greenway.	Paralleling existing roads would likely result in sections of the greenway exceeding recommended gradients. This would make it more difficult for some users to travel along the greenway.	The banks of waterways in the area generally have shallow slopes that would be conducive to users of all ages and abilities.
Create a world class tourism attraction that can support greater economic development in the region	Away from vehicles	This option would have the greenway substantially removed from vehicle traffic. This provides a more relaxing/attractive recreational experience for visitors and is aligned with greenway best practices.	This option would have the greenway substantially removed from vehicle traffic. This provides a more relaxing/attractive recreational experience for visitors and is aligned with greenway best practices.	This option would have the greenway substantially removed from vehicle traffic. This provides a more relaxing/attractive recreational experience for visitors and is aligned with greenway best practices.	Having the greenway run adjacent/parallel to roads will expose greenway users to greater vehicle noise and emissions. This is likely to reduce the attractiveness of the greenway.	This option would have the greenway substantially removed from vehicle traffic. This provides a more relaxing/attractive recreational experience for visitors and is aligned with greenway best practices.
	User experience (exposure to industrial heritage)	Following the abandoned rail line would expose users to the industrial heritage of the area and provide for an enriching user experience.	Following the abandoned rail line would expose users to the industrial heritage of the area and provide for an enriching user experience.	Following field boundaries is likely to result in the greenway avoiding old rail bridges, railway stations, and other elements of industrial heritage that provide points of interest/attraction to the greenway. Without these unique features, the greenway is less likely to provide a unique/interesting visitor experience.	Following existing roads is likely to result in the greenway avoiding old rail bridges, railway stations, and other elements of industrial heritage that provide points of interest/attraction to the greenway. Without these unique features, the greenway is less likely to provide a unique/interesting visitor experience.	Following waterways (assumed to be primarily the River Blackwater) would expose users to numerous historic bridges, viaducts, estates, and castles. These would provide points of interests for tourists and likely result in a more attractive greenway.
Integrate and enhance the existing natural and built environment	Minimise impacts to existing hedgerows, historic walls, and other distinctive boundary features.	Where the abandoned railway line is remaining, this option would place the greenway along the old rail line and thus avoid impacts to boundary features on either side. Where there is no abandoned railway remaining, this option has the greenway travel across existing fields. This may require small portions of field boundary features to be removed, but would likely avoid the need to remove substantial linear sections of boundary features.	Where the abandoned railway line is remaining, this option would place the greenway along the old rail line and thus avoid impacts to boundary features on either side. Where local diversions are made along field boundaries, some hedgerows or walls may need to be removed.	Following field boundaries may require some hedgerows or walls to be removed.	Existing roads in the area are narrow and generally lack verge areas of sufficient width for a greenway. Therefore, construction of the greenway parallel to these facilities would likely require the removal of existing hedgerows, boundary walls, fences, and front gardens.	There are few boundary features along the River Blackwater. Therefore it is unlikely a greenway following the river would have impacts to such features.
	Minimising land severance	Where the abandoned railway line is remaining, this option would not create any new divisions to land. However, where the abandoned railway line is no longer remaining this option would bisect existing fields and properties.	Where the abandoned railway line is remaining, this option would not create any new divisions to land. Where local diversions are made due to gaps in the remaining abandoned rail line, this option would minimize bifurcation of existing land/fields. However, because multiple fields may have a single landowner it is possible that this option bifurcates properties even if it minimize severance of individual fields.	This option would minimize bifurcation of existing land/fields. However, because multiple fields may have a single landowner it is possible that this option bifurcates properties even if it minimize severance of individual fields.	Because existing roads travel along existing property boundaries or already bifurcate property, having the greenway parallel these roads would minimize/avoid any new land severances.	The River Blackwater is an existing feature that bisects lands. Having the greenway parallel the river would minimize/avoid any new land severances.
	Minimising impacts to non-abandoned railway structures	Some structures have been built on top of the abandoned railway line. This options would require these structures to be removed.	Where structures have been constructed on top of the abandoned railway line, this option would divert from the abandoned railway path and travel along nearby field boundaries. This would avoid the need to remove or impact existing structures.	Following field boundaries would avoid the need to remove or impact existing structures.	Some structures have been constructed close to existing roadways. This option may require some structures to be modified or removed to create space for the greenway.	Very few structures have been constructed directly adjacent to the river. Therefore, following the river would avoid the need to remove or impact existing structures.
	Maintain an appropriate buffer space (10-15m) between development and the high water mark of rivers and waterways.	This option would have the greenway travel more than 15m away from waterways. The only exception would be where the greenway crosses a waterway in which the greenway is expected to cross the waterway perpendicularly and have minimal interaction with the waterway.	This option would have the greenway travel more than 15m away from waterways. The only exception would be where the greenway crosses a waterway in which the greenway is expected to cross the waterway perpendicularly and have minimal interaction with the waterway.	This option would have the greenway travel more than 15m away from waterways. The only exception would be where the greenway crosses a waterway in which the greenway is expected to cross the waterway perpendicularly and have minimal interaction with the waterway.	This option would have the greenway travel more than 15m away from waterways. The only exception would be where the greenway crosses a waterway in which the greenway is expected to cross the waterway perpendicularly and have minimal interaction with the waterway.	This options is likely to have portions of the greenway within 15m of existing waterways.
	Avoid impacts to Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	This option would avoid SACs and SPAs to the maximum extent possible. The only areas of potential impact would be where the greenway crosses an SAC or SPA. The number and length of these crossings will be minimized to the greatest extent possible.	The River Blackwater and most of its tributaries are designated as SPAs and SACs. Constructing the greenway adjacent to these waterways is likely to impact these zones.

Category	Criteria	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line	Follow the Abandoned Railway Line with Some Detours	Follow Field Boundaries	Parallel to Existing Roads	Follow Waterways
Promote public health	Attractiveness to encourage exercise	●	●	●	●	●
		Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.	Being away from vehicle traffic makes this option less attractive people exercising and is therefore less likely to maximize the potential public health benefits of the greenway.	Being away from vehicle traffic would make this option the most attractive to recreational users for exercise and would therefore have the most benefit to public health.
Capital Cost	CPO/land take	●	●	●	●	●
		Portions of the abandoned rail line are within state ownership. Use of this space would minimize land take requirements.	Portions of the abandoned rail line are within state ownership. Use of this space would minimize land take requirements.	This option would require completely new land to be acquired for the greenway.	Existing roads do not have sufficient verges to accommodate a greenway within the existing boundaries of the road. Therefore, new land will likely be required to accommodate the greenway.	This option would require completely new land to be acquired for the greenway.
	Need for new structures	●	●	●	●	●
		Following the abandoned rail line allows for the potential reuse of existing structures.	Following the abandoned rail line allows for the potential reuse of existing structures.	Following field boundaries would likely miss opportunities to reuse existing structures present along the abandoned rail line.	Existing road structures are not wide enough to accommodate the addition of a greenway. Therefore, many new structures are likely to be required.	Following waterways would mostly avoid existing abandoned railway structures. Therefore many new structures would likely be required.

**WS Atkins Ireland Limited**

Atkins House  
150 Airside Business Park  
Swords  
Co. Dublin  
K67 K5W4  
Atkins House  
150 Airside Business Park  
Swords  
Co. Dublin  
K67 K5W4

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