

# Chief Executives Report on Submissions

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

GRAND CANAL CYCLEWAY /WALKWAY  
SHARED WALKING AND CYCLING ROUTE FROM  
CONVENT VIEW, TULLAMORE, TO SRAH BRIDGE, BALLYDROHID, (TULLAMORE)



Offaly County Council



May 2019

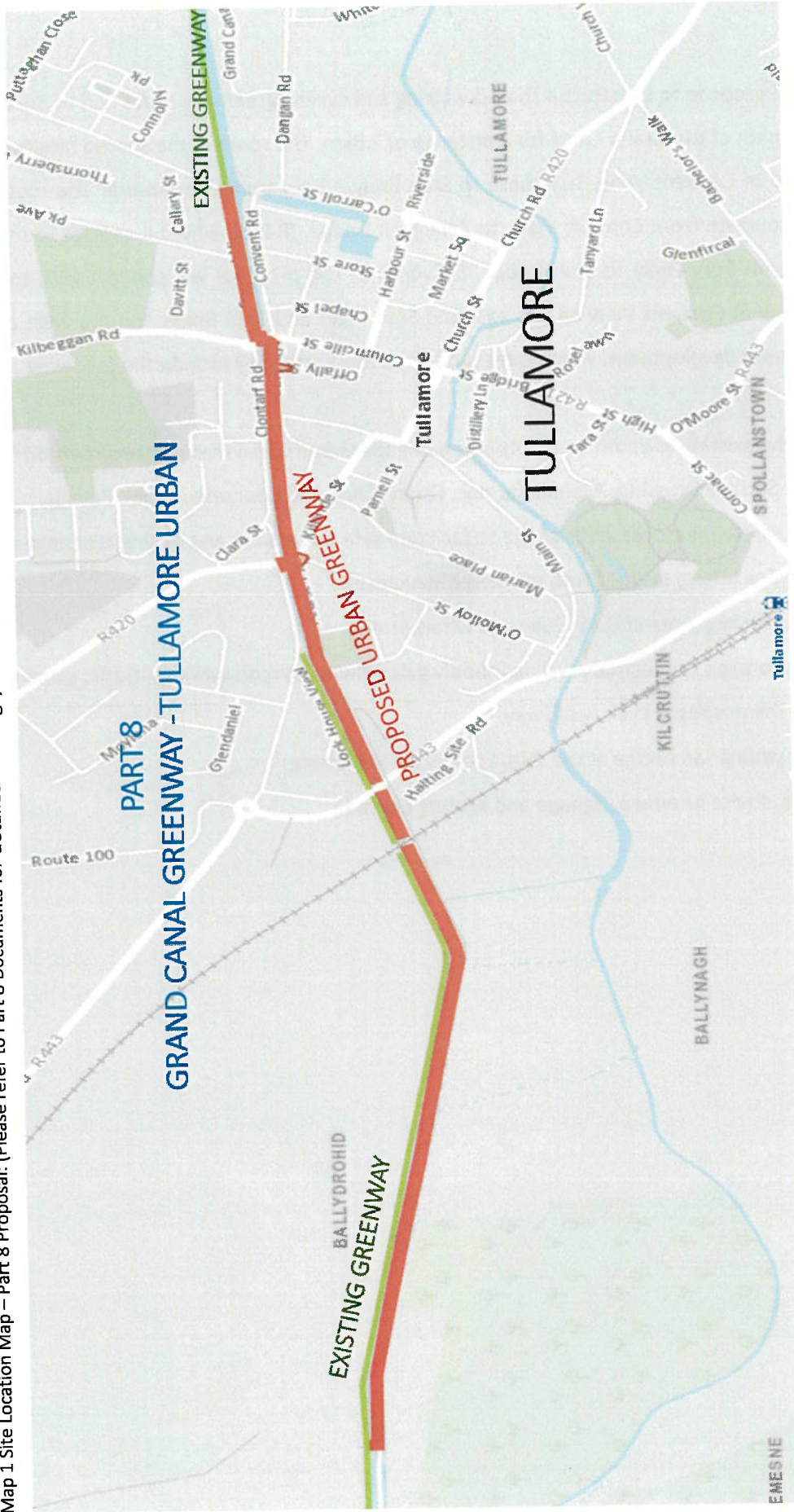


## 1) NATURE AND EXTENT OF THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND THE PRINCIPAL FEATURES THEREOF

Offaly County Council propose to construct a shared walking and cycling greenway route (2.5 to 3m in width) along the towpath of the Grand Canal for a distance of 2.8km. The route of the shared facility is from the eastern end of Convent View, Tullamore to Srah Bridge, Ballydrohid, Tullamore. The route tracks the northern towpath from Convent View, to Kilbeggan Bridge, (R421), where it crosses to the southern towpath, from Bury Quay to Srah Bridge, Ballydrohid. The proposal will connect with the Grand Canal Greenway at Convent View on the east and Srah Road and Srah Bridge, on the west of Tullamore. The proposed development, which is the subject of this Part 8, will include the following:

1. Improvements to the existing towpath and footpaths along the Grand Canal through the provision of a suitable surface i.e. Surface Dressing, Asphalt Tarmac, Quarry Dust and Concrete / Stone Paving.
2. Provision of traffic safety measures and signage to facilitate safe pedestrian and cycling crossings at Kilbeggan Bridge and Cox (Clara) Bridge (both protected structures).
3. Provision of Shared Surface Area at Bury Quay and Offaly Street.
4. Provision of access controls (pedestrian/cycling friendly gates/bollards) road makings, traffic calming measures facilitating the proposed cycle/walk way.
5. Provision of a new pedestrian bridge at the 28th Lock, Srah, Tullamore.
6. Information boards, street furniture, signage and lighting upgrade.

Map 1 Site Location Map – Part 8 Proposal: (Please refer to Part 8 Documents for detailed drawings)



## 2. LIKELY IMPLICATIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE PROPER PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA

Proposal to construct a shared walking and cycling greenway route (2.5 to 3m in width) along the towpath of the Grand Canal for a distance of 2.8km.

This Part 8 proposal incorporates the development of a high quality shared cycleway and footway from Convent View Tullamore to Srah Bridge through upgrading the existing towpaths of the Grand Canal. This will be an extension to the permitted Part 8 2015 which connects Tullamore to Lough Boora.

The following policies, studies, guidelines, plans and schemes are relevant to the Part 8 proposal:

- Project Ireland 2040 - National Planning Framework;
- National Development Plan 2018-2027;
- The Government's Smarter Travel Initiative;
- The National Cycle Policy Framework;
- The Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020;
- Connecting People – Connecting Places – A Strategy for Walking and Cycling in Offaly (2015) and
- Midlands Cycling Destination Offaly - Feasibility Study, 2016.
- Tullamore Town and Development Plan 2010 -2016, (extended to 2020)

### **Project Ireland 2040**

In February 2018 the Government of Ireland launched the National Planning Framework - A vision and development strategy for the country which includes the following overarching objectives in relation to tourism, transport and Greenways;

**National Policy Objective 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.

**National Policy Objective 46-** In co-operation with relevant Departments in Northern Ireland, enhanced transport connectivity between Ireland and Northern Ireland, to include cross-border road and rail, cycling and walking routes, as well as blueways, greenways and peatways.

**National Strategic Outcome 7 - Enhanced Amenities and Heritage-Amenities and Heritage:**

'Implementation of planning and transport strategies for the five cities and other urban areas will be progressed with a major focus on improving walking and cycling routes, including continuous greenway networks and



targeted measures to enhance permeability and connectivity.’

#### **National Development Plan 2018-2027**

In February 2018 the National Development Plan was also launched as a companion to the National Planning Framework. This is a ten-year strategy for public capital investment of almost €116 Billion. This document includes the following investment Actions.

#### **Outdoor Recreation Plan for Public Lands and Waters in Ireland, 2017-2021**

Under the Outdoor Recreation Plan for Public Lands and Waters - Operational Programme; The Midlands Cycling Destination Project – National Scale (Offaly) is identified under the theme of *Upgrading and Developing of Infrastructure* as a key objective; and the Grand Canal Greenway is the central spine of same.

#### **Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020**

In 2009, the Department of Transport unveiled Smarter Travel as the new national transport policy document for Ireland. One of the main aims of the policy is to develop walking and cycling as viable commuter modes in the short to medium term with the long term aim of fostering a lasting walking and cycling culture in Ireland.

The government has set a key national target for a reduction in the levels of those commuting by private car from 65% to 45% by 2020 with the remainder of trips made up of sustainable travel modes such as cycling, walking and public transport.

#### **The National Cycle Policy Framework (NCPF) 2009-2020**

The NCPF recognises the potential of cycling to significantly improve various aspects of people’s lives through the obvious personal benefits of improved health and finance but also, in a more communal sense, it benefits society in terms of lower CO2 emissions and also has positive social impacts in that it gets people out walking and cycling together. The overarching objective of the NCPF is that 10% of all trips in Ireland will be made by bike by 2020.

### **Offaly County Development Plan 2014-2020 Relevant Policies and Objectives**

#### **STAP-06**

It is Council policy to promote walking and cycling, subject to appropriate environmental assessments, including Habitats Directive Assessment, as an alternative mode of transport for travelling to work and for recreational purposes, to require the provision of cycle ways and walkways and associated facilities as part of new development and to support safer walking and cycling routes to schools under the Green Schools Initiative where feasible.

#### **STAP-07**

It is Council policy to facilitate and support a cycling route along the canal towpaths in County Offaly (from Edenderry to Shannon Harbour) for recreational purposes and to enhance tourism potential.

#### **STAP-08**

It is Council policy to support, subject to appropriate environmental assessments, including Habitats Directive Assessment, the continued development of cycle routes by identifying routes both within the County and at national and regional level. Particular emphasis will be placed on those that link existing cycle routes and tourist destinations. Cycle routes shall adhere to the principles contained within the national policy document Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020, and the National Cycle Policy Framework document or updated/amended guidance document where appropriate.

#### TP-05

It is Council policy to further investigate the potential of and opportunities for the development of trails in County Offaly to include a mixture of walking, cycling and driving trails, for the provision of appropriate services along these trails, and for the development of linkages between these trails in Offaly and adjoining counties. The Council will only support such developments where it is demonstrated that no significant environmental effects will arise as a consequence of their construction or operation.

#### Midlands Cycling Destination (Offaly) - Feasibility Study, 2016.

This Feasibility Study was commissioned by Offaly County Council, in partnership with Bord na Móna and Coillte on the development of a major cycling destination in the midlands of Ireland, and sets the clear ambition of establishing Offaly as a national and international destination for cycling. It identifies over 600km of potential cycle trails in Offaly with the Grand Canal Greenway being a Phase 1 priority, as well as the central spine of same.

Setting the policy documents aside the proposal if delivered, will have numerous direct and indirect benefits for the area and its residents, such as;

- A quality outdoor recreational amenity.
- A tourist attraction which compliments the existing tourist offer for the County.
- A potential commuter route/ modal shift.
- Health Benefits.
- Economic benefits – potential for job creation.
- Social and cultural gains.

#### Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan 2010-2016, as extended to 2020

##### 8.2.3.4 Cycle Networks and Cycle Parking

The Councils recognise the opportunity to market Tullamore as a “green cycle/transport town”. The provision of a cycle network in the town and environs will give:

- Residents - the opportunity for healthier lifestyles.
- Investors - An attractive place to do businesses.
- Tourists - An exciting way to see the built heritage of the town and environs.

**TTEP 08-12** It is the Councils’ policy to have regard to government guidelines on transport including “Smarter Travel; A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020” and “Smarter Travel; Ireland’s First National Cycle Policy Framework”.

**TTEP 08-13** It is the Councils’ policy to promote Tullamore as a “green cycle/transport town”. Having regard to short distance trips within Tullamore town and environs, it is the Councils’ policy to encourage and facilitate the shift from private car to different modes of transport, such as walking, cycling and environmentally friendly methods of travel. The integration of environmentally friendly/smart methods for short-distance travel, along with the car-user, will make Tullamore a safer, pleasant and efficient town to live, work, do business and visit.

**TTEP 08-14** It is the Councils’ policy to continue the programme of improvement of footpaths/cycle paths throughout the town and to further develop/extend the network of interlinked pedestrian/cycle routes throughout the town and environs.

In light of the fore-going list of plans, policies and guidelines, which have steered this proposal and the commentary on likely positive impacts, it can be stated that the proposed Part 8 will be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.



3. LIST OF PERSONS AND BODIES WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS OR OBSERVATIONS

8. no. submissions were received within statutory timeframe; these include:

Sub. No.	Name
1.	Beth O Loughlin
2.	Fergal McCabe
3.	Westmeath Co. Co.
4.	Rights for the Elderly
5.	Royal Canal IWAI
6.	IWAI Nav.- Watch Group
7.	IWAI – (national)
8.	Cyclist.ie

4. SUMMARIES AND RESPONSES

i) PRESCRIBED BODIES WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS OR OBSERVATIONS:

Submission No. 3 Westmeath County Council -.

Summary:	Response:
<p>The proposal is of Regional and National significance, in providing greater connectivity, enhanced recreational facilities and promoting tourism for local communities and visitors to the area and its regional hinterland.</p> <p>Westmeath endorse this element of the scheme.</p>	<p>Submission is noted and welcomed. The members will note Offaly County Council and Westmeath County Council are currently working in cooperation with Waterways Ireland to create a strategic link, connecting the Grand Canal Greenway with the Royal Canal Greenway and Old Rail Trail Greenway via the Kilbeggan Branch of the Grand Canal, from Ballycommon to Kilbeggan Harbour.</p>

(ii) ISSUES WITH RESPECT TO THE PROPER PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA RAISED BY PERSONS OR BODIES WHO MADE SUBMISSIONS OR OBSERVATIONS, AND RESPONSES THERETO

7 No. submissions were received from the following persons or bodies:

Beth O Loughlin	Fergal McCabe	IWAI Nav. Watch
Rights for the Elderly	IWAI- Royal Canal branch,	Cyclist.ie
IWAI Offaly		

Submission no. 1: Beth O Loughlin.

Summary:	Response:
<p>Concerns raised relating to increase in pedestrian &amp; cyclist use of Kilbeggan and Cox's Bridge crossing points and the impact on vehicular traffic and pedestrian and cyclist safety, resulting from this.</p>	<p>The members will note that Waterways Ireland have agreed that a pedestrian bridge at this location is feasible and can be accommodated without impacting on the canal navigation.</p>
<p>Concerns relating to the proposed new bridge at the 28<sup>th</sup> Lock;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Raises concerns relating to the proposed Pedestrian Bridge at the 28<sup>th</sup> Lock.</li><li>• Impact on heritage of the Lock and the Canal</li><li>• Structurally will the Lock walls accommodate the bridge?</li><li>• Impact on Navigation of Canal Boats?</li><li>• Anti-Social Behaviour concerns at Bridge?</li><li>• Impact on Heritage of Lock setting</li><li>• Health and Safety of Boat Users</li></ul>	<p>The final design of the proposed pedestrian bridge at Lock 28, will be carried out, in conjunction with Waterways Ireland prior to the commencement of construction and will be designed and located so as to not impinge what so ever on the navigation of the canal or on the safe operation of the Canal Lock/ Swing Beams.</p> <p>The concerns raised in relation to impact of the proposed heritage of the protected structure are also noted. Please note that any works (including design) in the vicinity of the 28th Lock will be carried out in consultation with the Conservation Architect of Offaly County Council. The architectural heritage of the Grand Canal and in particular Lock 28 will not be impacted upon negatively.</p>
	<p>The members will note that the proposed pedestrian bridge at this location is necessitated due to the requirement to give greenway users the safest possible passage to and from the existing Grand Canal Greenway at Srah to Bury Quay (Town Centre). The alterantive route from the Clara Road Bridge (Coxs Bridge,) via Srah Road, would be sub-optimal due to the restricted nature of the carriageway, difficult gradients and the presence of two way traffic at this location.</p>

Submission no. 2 Fergal McCabe

Summary:	Response:
<p>Notes that the preparation of the <b>Public Realm Strategy</b> was an objective of the Tullamore Town and Environs Development Plan, (TTEDP) 2010. The proposals of this Part 8 have no specific Development Plan basis and in the absence of the Public Ream Study should not be advanced <b>Cycling Network</b>. – the establishment of a comprehensive cycle network in the interests of</p>	<p>The objective for the preparation of a Public Realm Strategy for Tullamore, remains an objective for Offaly County Council, subject to appropriate resources. The Grand Canal Greenway would be a fundamental part of the Public Realm Study, when it is carried out. Due to the availability of funding, and time frames attached to same, it is timely to proceed with this project now.</p>

health and safety is an integral element of the 2010 TTEDP and Transportation Study 2011.

The provision of a Cycle lane along Store Street but not Harbour Street is questioned.

Notes the provision of a greenway along the Grand Canal is welcomed. The opportunity for enticing cyclists into the town centre should be exploited, and should be done as part of an integral part of an overall plan to enhance the attractiveness of the town

The members will note that the Tullamore Local Area Plan process will commence in 2021 and this is likely to incorporate a comprehensive Cycling Network which will build on the recommendations of the Tullamore Transportation Study 2011 and additional more up-to-date studies which may feed into the LAP Process.

It should be noted that the Grand Canal Greenway will form a strategic artery for cyclists and pedestrians, from which a network of cycling and pedestrian routes can radiate from.

#### Submission no. 4 Rights of the Elderly

##### Summary:

Welcomes proposals to improve access to the Grand Canal and its amenities, in particular access for older people.

Acknowledges the proposed amenity area at Kilbride Park.

Requests that the cycleway and amenity area would not prevent any future development of the St. Kryan's, St. O Connell St. Kilbride St. carpark area.

Seeks improvement to footpaths to connect the nearby residential areas and town centre with the Greenway.

Requests the planting of both sides of the canal with colourful shrubs and flowers and maintenance of same.

Requests Picnic areas and benches etc. to be provided in conjunction with the Greenway and amenity area.

Requests exercise machines, suitable for older users, along the greenway

Requests that the footbridge would be maintained. (Cleaned and Planter boxes incorporated.)

Expresses the hope that the poplar trees lining the canal are maintained.

##### Response:

The members will note that Tullamore is an Age Friendly Town and the proposed development will have regard to the Age Friendly Strategy for Offaly, 2018-2021 in particular, in relation to *Outdoor Spaces & Buildings; Goal to make our outdoor spaces and buildings across Offaly pleasant, accessible and safe for older people, creating walkable communities and Age Friendly spaces.*

The entire development will be designed to maximise accessibility for all.

Suitable areas for seating and picnic areas will be identified and will be provided as appropriate.

The request for suitable locations for exercise machines suitable for older users can be examined outside this process subject to appropriate funding.

There are no proposals to remove any of the poplar trees lining the canal under the proposed works.

Submission no. 5 IWAI Royal Canal Branch

**Summary:**

Raises concerns relating to the construction of the bridge immediately above the lock as this has the potential to endanger the crew members and the vessel itself, within the lock.

Raises concerns in relation to any proposals for cutting and weighting of the balance beams as this does not replicate the relative ease with which a completely untouched beam operates.

The locks of the Grand Canal are included on Offaly Co. Co. List of Protected Structures and on this basis alone it is considered that the positioning of a bridge here is unacceptable.

Raises concerns that the aesthetic view of the Lock would be severely affected by the addition of this bridge.

States that Low Bridges Prevent Passage and Reduce Traffic.

Highlights that Tullamore has some of the lowest bridges on the Grand Canal and that the pedestrian bridge adjacent to the Kilbeggan Road Bridge, is problematic for navigation of the Grand Canal, and has resulted in the reduction in the no. of canal boats which can use this section of the navigation channel.

Acknowledges the important work Waterways Ireland are doing but highlights that the budgets for maintaining the navigation of the canal are not adequate.

Expresses the sentiment that in recent years Waterways Ireland are focusing on Linear tourism projects such as Blueways rather than the maintenance of the Canal itself.

See response to Submission No. 1, Beth Loughlin above.

Some of the issues raised in this submission do not relate to the Part 8 process and have been forwarded to Waterways Ireland for their information.

Submission no. 6 IWAI Nav. – Watch Group

**Summary:**

Raises concerns relating to the location of the proposed pedestrian bridge at the 28<sup>th</sup> Lock.

States that any impact on the swing beams will negatively impact on the use of the canal lock by boaters.

**Response:**

See response to Submission no. 1 Beth Loughlin above

Some of the issues raised in this submission do not relate to the Part 8 process and have been



Highlights the difficulties to boat users of debris and weeds which can be present in the lock chamber, with photographic evidence. forwarded to Waterways Ireland for their information

States that the Canal Locks and Bridges are listed structures and should not be modified from a preservation perspective.

Raises concerns relating to the walls of the locks not being structurally strong enough to support the extra weight of the proposed bridge.

Any proposals to shorten the Balance Beams would be a health and safety concern.

The shortening of the balance beams will increase the manual effort involved and therefore increase risk of injuries/slips etc.

The position of the proposed bridge over the lock chamber will impair access to the lock gates for the removal of debris. This debris is a significant factor and cause for concern at the lock chamber.

The location of the bridge will also impair visual communications between boat crews and lock operators, and this will increase the risk of accidents to boats and their crew.

The proposals are unsympathetic to the existing canal users/ boaters.

Submission no. 7 IWAI, Tim Meehan

Summary:

Objects to the proposed pedestrian bridge as there are two other bridges in proximity to this, Clara Road Bridge and Srah Bridge.

The 28<sup>th</sup> Lock is a protected structure, and the construction of a footbridge is totally out of place and unsympathetic.

The location of the bridge will prevent the operation of the lock by preventing the movement of the balance beams.

Reference is made to the low pedestrian bridge, close to the Kilbeggan Bridge which was constructed in recent years which it is stated is in part, responsible for the loss of tourist boat, from Tullamore.

Response:

See response to Submission no. 1 Beth Loughlin above

Some of the issues raised in this submission do not relate to the Part 8 process and have been forwarded to Waterways Ireland for their information.

States that the council is responsible for closing of an outlet drain from the Dry Dock in Tullamore Harbour resulting in the closure of this facility to boaters.

Proposals to shorten the balance beams would not be acceptable.

The submission raises health and safety concerns, The shortening of the balance beams will increase the manual effort involved and therefore increase risk of injuries/ slips etc.

The position of the proposed bridge over the lock chamber will impair access to the lock gates for the removal of debris.

The location of the bridge will also impair visual communications between boat crews and lock operators, and this will increase the risk of accidents to boats and their crew.

The construction of the proposed bridge would favour one user group over another and diminish the historic navigation right of way.

The submission also includes 2 Appendices Appendix 1, which gives an introduction on IWAI its objectives, Membership and Structure, its Linkages and Major Activities. Appendix 2- A brochure on the Green and Silver IWAI Initiative

#### Submission no. 8 Cyclist.ie

Summary:	Response:
<p>Overall supportive of the scheme; <i>'The scheme has the general potential to encourage greater levels of walking and cycling locally in the immediate Tullamore area, thus helping to reduce private car use. The scheme will also be a vital link in the overall Grand Canal Greenway extending from Dublin to the Shannon, and is a key element of the greater Offaly cycling development plan. It will undoubtedly open up commercial opportunities for increased visitor numbers and links to the various attractions within Tullamore town, and throughout the County. It should also help to increase the daily use of bicycles to access schools and to commute'</i>.</p> <p>Seeks clarification of a no. of issues.</p> <p>Lack of clarity as to the actual extent of this Part 8 proposal and in particular the proposal for 'a future cycle/footpath subject to funding'. No details are supplied of how the crossing of the Western Relief Road</p>	<p>This Part 8 scheme includes proposals to construct a greenway along the former towpath, from the 28th Lock westwards on the southern towpath to Srah Bridge, in Ballydrohid. This element of the proposal currently has no funding in place and will be constructed, if appropriate funding was available.</p> <p>It is proposed to use the under pass of both bridges (Western Relief Road Tunnel and Railway Bridge) to accommodate the Greenway.</p> <p>The proposed link between the existing eastern Grand Canal Greenway will be seamless. It is an ambition of OCC in conjunction with WI to construct a greenway across the 72km of the Grand Canal in Offaly in a seamless and uniform</p>

tunnel is made, or crossing under the railway bridge on this 'future' section.

Clarification sought on the following;

- The design details of proposed link between the existing eastern Grand Canal Greenway and Town Greenway are not included, and are important to ensure there is a seamless change.
- The lack of clear cycle connections to other parts of Tullamore Town, and in particular the discontinuity of the only proposed town link through Store St. It is not clear why this short section has been included.
- The lack of a cycle link from the Greenway to the Main (Columcille) St is disappointing.
- The loss of the opportunity to improve the directness of the canal crossing between Store Street and Convent View. This should be reviewed critically
- The seeming haphazardness of the location of raised tables and improved surfacing.
- While we welcome a controlled crossing on Kilbeggan Bridge, the use of a Pelican Crossing is inappropriate at this location, as it requires the cyclist to dismount. This controlled crossing should be upgraded to a Toucan crossing.
- The proposed location, and overall design, of the controlled crossing at Clara Bridge, is inappropriate and will result in widespread misuse by walkers and cyclists on both sides of the canal. We suggest that the crossing be moved to the southern side of the bridge and it should also be upgraded to a Toucan Crossing to ensure continuity of the cycle experience. This junction design overall needs to be reviewed.
- Detail B as shown on Drawing 5 suggests that there is a proposed continuous centre line along the route to separate cyclists and pedestrians. Besides being unworkable in practical terms it does not make sense in the context of a Greenway. We suggest no major road markings.
- Quarry Dust Surfacing seems to be proposed for this high grade cycle route. This is totally inappropriate for an urban situation, and in particular if high route usage is envisaged. The surface should be an asphalt finish to guarantee a smooth cycle ride quality. Quarry dust will also involve greater long term maintenance costs.

fashion albeit in various stages as funding allows.

It should be noted that the inclusion of a cycle lane along Store Street is included so as to connect the Grand Canal Greenway with the Grand Canal Harbour area and also to entice passing Greenway users into the centre of Tullamore.

The street enhancement works include a no. of measures such as narrowing of streets and improved junctions and visibility and slowing down of traffic which will make the main thoroughfare of Tullamore a more cycle and pedestrian friendly environment.

The members will note that the Tullamore Local Area Plan process will commence in 2021 and this is likely to incorporate a comprehensive Cycling Network for the town.

It should be noted that the Grand Canal Greenway will form a strategic artery for cyclists and pedestrians, from which a network of cycling and pedestrian routes can radiate from. The raised tables are included so as to slow traffic coming into the zone where pedestrian and cyclist will be crossing at designated crossing point.

Various options were looked at for the two bridges.

It is proposed under the current design that users would dismount at the both Kilbeggan and Clara road bridge and use a pedestrian / pelican crossing to cross the two regional roads in question, at the best vantage point in terms of visibility. It will be the only two locations within the town that cyclists will be required to dismount.

It is not envisaged that the greenway will be marked with road markings. The photo referred to in detail b was for indicative purposes.

It is proposed to use the following surfaces at various locations along the proposed route of the Grand Canal Greenway for Tullamore Urban;

- Surface Dressing,
- Asphalt Tarmac,
- Quarry Dust
- and Concrete / Stone Paving.

- A width of 3metres for a shared urban greenway suggests a lack of ambition to grow cycling levels to a high level. The TII Manual - Rural Cycleway Design 2017 DN-GEO-03047-02, Table 4.1, recommends 3metres as the 'MINIMUM' width for a low volume greenway. This is a likely high volume urban and tourism greenway.
- We strongly urge the adaptation of 30 kph speed limits in the Town of Tullamore overall, but particularly in the vicinity of the proposed greenway. This will help to reduce general traffic speeds and protect vulnerable road users.

The concerns raised in relation to quarry dust are noted. It is not envisaged that quarry dust will be favoured in the environs of Tullamore, as it is deemed more appropriate to more rural locations.

For much of the 2.8 km of the proposed greenway the towpath is restricted due to presence of two-way traffic roadways and streets and the existing built environment. 3 metres was the most that could be achieved in many locations.

The entire town centre of Tullamore is undergoing significant street enhancement and public realm works, will be in compliance with DMURS, guidance documentation, and contains measures such as such as;

- the narrowing of streets/widening of footpaths,
- improvement of junctions, addition of raised tables
- pedestrian friendly zones,
- and general traffic calming measures.

The operational speed may well be reduced to 30kph for much of the central area of Tullamore. The speed limits maybe reviewed following the proposed safety audit of the scheme.

5: ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

- i) ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT: A screening exercise for EIA has been carried out and it has been determined that there will be no likely significant effects that would trigger the need for EIA.
- ii) HABITATS DIRECTIVE ASSESSMENT: A screening exercise for an Appropriate Assessment has been carried out and it has been determined that the development is unlikely to have significant effects on any Natura 2000 sites.

PROPOSALS

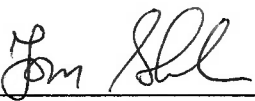
The proposed development is consistent with the objectives of the County Development Plan 2014-2020, and TTEDP 2010 as extended. The development is in keeping with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended to proceed with the proposed development as set out in Paragraph 1, (page 2 of this report) taking into consideration the submissions and observations received.

Signed:   
Senior Planner

Date: 15/5/19

Signed:   
Director of Services,

Date: 15/5/19