

The Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration



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What is the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration?

The Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration Scheme is proposed to consist of over 26km of a canal and riverside greenway from Navan to Oldbridge Drogheda via Slane and is proposed to incorporate the restoration of the Boyne Navigation. The Navigation Restoration would extend from the canal harbour in Navan to Oldbridge guard lock. The scheme would encourage physical activity, facilitate sustainable travel to work and school where possible and has the potential to be a flagship tourism scheme of regional, national and international significance.

Who can use the scheme?

Any non-motorized user will be able to enjoy the Boyne Greenway and will be able to travel the entire route. A key objective of the scheme is to ensure universal accessibility. This includes pedestrians, runners, cyclists of all experience, and wheelchair users (including powered wheelchairs and mobility scooters). Key aspects of the greenway that will help achieve this is that it will be mostly if not all off road and will have appropriate surface quality and width subject to localised physical restrictions.

At what stage is the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration project at?

In terms of the greenway, the scheme is currently at route options development stage with a number of route options developed that will shortly be assessed in order to determine an emerging preferred route. The Navigation Restoration is currently at feasibility assessment stage.

What is the purpose of this public consultation?

The purpose of this public consultation process is to present the greenway route options that have been identified and to collect feedback through comments and completed questionnaires. This feedback will then be used to inform the route option assessment process which will then lead to the identification of the Emerging Preferred Route for the greenway.

When will the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration be open?

In order to reach completion and opening of the greenway there are many milestones to be achieved. The first of these is to submit a planning application. This will most likely be to An Bord Pleanála. The current programme indicates that a planning application can be submitted by Q2/Q3 2022. Beyond that timeframe, assuming that planning approval is achieved, it is not possible to be definitive on when construction of the scheme would start as this would be subject to available funding at that time.



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How will the Boyne Greenway and Navigation Restoration be built and how much will it cost?

It is difficult to be definitive about how the scheme will be built at this early stage. However, it is quite possible that the greenway element of the scheme could be built in phases due to the scale of the project. There is also potential that the navigation restoration element could be developed separately to the greenway. However, decisions on this can only be made when feasibility has been confirmed and once statutory planning approvals are achieved. In terms of costs, these vary widely depending on the terrain, the need for structures and other features, and the navigation restoration element adds another layer of cost complexity to the scheme. Thus, there is not enough detail advanced on the scheme to accurately estimate costs at this stage. This will be estimated, once a preferred scheme has been designed for the project, towards the end of 2021.

How will landowners be consulted?

The preferred model for the proposed greenway is to use lands already in the undisputed ownership or control of the State. However, whilst there are areas of land in State ownership within the study area it is most likely that no matter what route becomes the emerging preferred route, sections of it will traverse land that is in private ownership. It is essential in those cases that proposals and routes are developed in a consultative and proactive manner with the potentially affected landowners, that is sensitive to their needs, that maximises their support for, and goodwill towards, the proposed Greenway.

Will the scheme impact on flooding?

Given the context and characteristics of the Boyne River corridor, flooding presents a significant challenge to the design of the scheme. A key element of the greenway is to ensure that it does not transfer flooding issues to other locations along the River Boyne. Opportunities will be explored to see if the scheme can alleviate flooding problems on the existing towpaths and whilst it is likely that it will not be possible to completely remove flooding impacts, mitigation measures will be developed to ensure that the greenway is available as much as possible throughout the year.

