

**GREENWAY ASSOCIATED WORKS
SITE 3 POLES CROSS
PART VIII REPORT**



SYSTRA

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PART VIII REPORT

IDENTIFICATION TABLE

Client/Project owner	Meath County Council
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1. INTRODUCTION / OBJECTIVES

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 This report supports the Part VIII planning application for works associated with the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway, in particular the construction of an 850m footpath between the junction of the R162 and the L74034 in the south-east and the gypsum plant in the north-west, and the construction of a 19 space car park adjacent to the greenway at Poles Cross.

1.1.2 The objectives of the scheme include:

- Ensure amenable and safe access to the Greenway for pedestrians and cyclists alike;
- Attract and guide visitors to and around the area;
- Enhance safety between pedestrians, cyclists and motorists;
- To provide quality car parking facilities; and
- Comply with environmental requirements.

1.2 Description of Scheme

1.2.1 Meath County Council, in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, is advancing works associated with the Boyne Valley to Lakelands Greenway, at Poles Cross, Co. Meath, to improve connectivity to the Greenway. The proposed works include the provision of a 2m wide footpath, approximately 850m in length, connecting the Kingscourt Gypsum Plant to the junction between the R162 and the L74034 and provision of a 19 space car park adjacent to the Greenway at Poles Cross, Co. Meath. The proposed footpath is to be constructed along the northern/eastern side of the R162 Regional Road, and have associated surface water drainage, boundary treatments, uncontrolled pedestrian crossings, and provision for future utilities. Visibility improvement measures are proposed on the R162 at Poles Cross. The proposed car park is to accommodate 19 car parking spaces, including two disabled parking spaces. The car park is proposed to have footpaths, boundary treatments and ancillary features.

2. PLANNING AND POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Policy Context

2.1.1 Table 2.1 below outlines the key existing National, Regional and Local policies, plans and guidelines relevant to the proposed works.

Table 2. Planning and Policy Documents

National Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework 2040• Project Ireland 2040: National Development Plan 2021 2030• National Climate Action Plan 2023• National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland 2021• National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022
Regional Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Eastern and Midlands Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019 - 2031
Local Level
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meath County Council Development Plan 2021 – 2027• Meath County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029

2.1.2 These policies and plans provide strong support for investment in active travel infrastructure in Meath. The Department of Transport’s National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) contains an Intervention Hierarchy which aims to maximise the potential, and benefits, of existing infrastructure and services already in place.

2.1.3 NIFTI also sets out a hierarchy of travel modes to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are made. The sustainable modal hierarchy is:

- Active Travel
- Public Transport
- Private Car

2.2 Regional Policy

2.2.1 Meath County Council Climate Action Plan (2024 – 2029)

The Meath County Council Climate Action Plan aims to create a low carbon and climate resilient County, in line with the National climate Objective to pursue and achieve the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy. The below is the specific goal and objective in relation to this scheme:

- Goal 2: Achieve local government carbon emission and energy targets for 2030.

- Objective 2.1: Minimize the Council's contribution to climate change by increasing energy efficiency, reducing carbon emissions and encouraging sustainable opportunities for the broader County Meath community.

2.2.2 Meath County Council Development Plan (2021 – 2027)

The Meath County Council Development Plan states that a key priority for this Plan is the development of a sustainable transport system, promoting measures to increase the use of public transport, while also increasing the modal share for walking and cycling in towns and villages across the County. Its objectives align with current policies that focus on active travel, such as Project Ireland 2040, the NTA Cycle Network Plan (Greater Dublin Area) 2013, National Cycle Manual, among many others. MCC recognises the importance of both walking and cycling to the overall well-being and quality of life of residents. Walking and cycling trends are noted to vary across the county. This highlights the difference in the convenience of walking or cycling as an option, due to the level of connectivity, road safety and quality of facilities provided. The below are specific objectives and policies of the Development Plan which are in relation to this scheme:

- MOV POL 9: To ensure that the design and planning of transport infrastructure and services accords with the principles of sustainable safety, in order that the widest spectrum of needs, including pedestrians, cyclists, the ageing population and those with mobility impairments are taken into account.
- MOV POL 17: To identify and seek to implement a strategic, coherent and high-quality cycle and walking network across the County that is integrated with public transport and interconnected with cultural, recreational, retail, educational and employment destinations, and attractions.
- MOV POL 28: To promote the carrying out of Road Safety Audits and Road Safety Impact Assessments on new road schemes, road and junction improvements and traffic management schemes in accordance with the TII Publication TII-GE-STY-01024 and advice contained in the DTTAS (DTO) Traffic Management Guidelines 2012
- INF OBJ 14: To require the use of SuDS within Local Authority Developments and other infrastructural projects in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works.
- INF OBJ 15: To require the use of SuDS in accordance with the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works for new developments (including extensions).
- INF OBJ 16: To ensure that all new developments comply with Section 3.12 of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works V6 which sets out the requirements for new developments to allow for Climate Change.
- ED POL 62: To support developments which will enable and encourage countryside recreation and an increased appreciation of the natural environment, through facilitating the development of community walks, off road trails / rural trail developments, parks and other outdoor amenities and recreational infrastructure. All proposals will require screening to determine if a full Appropriate Assessment of the likely significant effects on Natura 2000 sites, is required.
- ED OBJ 78: d) To deliver the Lakelands Greenway (Navan-Kingscourt–Monaghan) in co-operation with Irish Rail and neighbouring Local Authorities and subject to obtaining all relevant assessments and consents.

3. DESIGN GUIDANCE

3.1.1 The following design guidance was used in the design of this scheme:

- TII Publications;
- Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS);
- Guidance on the Use of Tactile Paving Surfaces;
- MCC Public Lighting Technical Specification and Requirements;
- Traffic Signs Manual; and
- Greater Dublin Area Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works.

4. PROPOSED SCHEME

4.1 Overall Layout and General Requirements

- 4.1.1 The proposed scheme includes for the construction of 850m of footpath on the northern/eastern side of the R162, a 19 space car park, and associated drainage, boundary treatments and surfacing works.

4.2 Land Acquisition Requirements

- 4.2.1 Land is to be acquired on the northern side of the R162 in order to accommodate the scheme.

4.3 Broad Environmental Impacts

- 4.3.1 An AA Screening has been undertaken for the scheme. The location, scale and nature of the works is such that it will not directly or indirectly impact on any of the habitats or species of the Natura sites considered, nor will it contravene their conservation objectives, plans or targets. The development location consists of non-annexed habitat. The proposed development does not require water abstraction or direct discharge to surface water, land or air. No changes to surface water quality (microbiologically, chemically, physically or quantitatively) are anticipated given that there are no direct discharges or abstraction from surface water.
- 4.3.2 An EIA Screening has been undertaken for the scheme. Given the scale and nature of the proposed development the overall risk posed to the environment is considered to be low with no significant impacts anticipated following the implementation of suitable mitigation measures associated with standard construction practices and an EIA is not required [Article 120(1B)(i)].

4.4 Road Safety Audit

- 4.4.1 A Stage 1 Road Safety Audit will be commissioned for the scheme. Any issues arising from this audit will be addressed during the Detailed Design process.

4.5 Construction Methodology

- 4.5.1 All construction activities will be controlled within the construction site. Materials, waste handling and storage will be within confines of the site. Temporary traffic management will be implemented.

5. CONSULTATION

5.1 Statutory Bodies

- 5.1.1 As part of the Preliminary Design, regular meetings were held with Meath County Council (the Client). These meetings consisted of progress updates, highlighting any issues that arose and discussing potential solutions or variations to the design. There have been no issues in relation to the works to date. As part of the planning process for this project, the project proposals including scheme drawings will be available for public inspection at the offices of the Meath County Council.

5.2 Affected Landowners

- 5.2.1 Preliminary meetings and discussions have been held between Meath County Council and directly affected landowners.

5.3 Affected Stakeholders

- 5.3.1 Preliminary discussions have taken place with some of the potentially effected stakeholders.