

Ref: POL/IB/Project No. 23765

Date: 23rd September 2025

Re: Planning Ref 24/60025 - Raised Platform Walkway / Cycleway
Subject: Route Options – Analysis Summary

A Chara,

As part of the initial design process, MWP considered the functional requirements, various site constraints, environmental, ecological and visual impacts in developing a walkway/cycleway solution which would ensure for a safe route to traverse from the Dinis carpark to the Torc carpark. In rural areas, where traffic volumes are high and pedestrian pressure exists, offline or separated active travel infrastructure is recommended under TII's NR2040 commitments.

The table hereunder provides the analysis summary of the route options considered in terms of the following considerations:

- Health and safety
- Environmental/Ecology
- Derogation licence – Kerry slug
- Visual impact
- Usability/Universal access
- Buildability
- Cost implications

Yours sincerely,



Ian Brosnan, Director. BEng (HONS) CEng MIEI MStructE, MICE
for MWP

Considerations	Route Option A	Route Option B	Route Option C	Route Option D	Preferred Route
	<i>Adjacent to the N71 roadway</i>	<i>On the hillside south of the N71</i>	<i>Lake Shore – Floating Deck</i>	<i>Area between the N71 and the Lake Shore</i>	
Health and Safety	Shared roadway sections will remain high-risk due to geometry and traffic mix. Full segregation is the most effective safety solution to protect vulnerable road users	Full segregation from the N71 can be achieved but overhead footbridges required.	Risk of excessive vertical movement due to high winds and wave action. Access for Emergency services can be difficult. Closure may be required during inclement weather due to wave action. Greater construction risks associated with working over water.	Full segregation from the N71 can be achieved. No cross over of the N71 by walkers and cyclists required to complete the Dinis to Torc trail.	Option D would provide greatest Health and safety benefits.
Environmental/ Ecology	Likely to require significant verge widening and rock cut, with direct loss of roadside woodland habitat and a significant number of mature roadside trees. Impacts on trees, shrubs, ground flora, bryophyte and lichen communities and faunal species. Run-off management critical to avoid pollution of adjacent woodland streams.	Substantial cut and fill would be required with large-scale clearance and loss of semi-natural woodland. Significant soil disturbance and elevated risk of erosion/sedimentation into adjacent streams during construction. Impacts on woodland and bryophyte-rich habitats and range of fauna. Woodland fragmentation. Large parts of route comprising extensive, well-established stands of mature rhododendron which would require to be managed and controlled.	Significant construction risks to aquatic habitats and water quality during piling/anchoring. Potential disturbance to designated features (otter, birds, aquatic vegetation). Visual and shading effects on littoral zone vegetation. Long-term maintenance risk: fluctuating water levels and wave action.	Located within the narrow-wooded strip between the N71 and the lake. Requires trimming/removal of a small number of trees but avoids wholesale woodland clearance or removal of any significant trees or in-lake construction. Walkway design informed by existing ecological features to minimise ecological impacts. Elevated walkway design minimises habitat loss, trampling etc, retains woodland floor integrity, and allows light and water penetration to ground habitat.	Option D still requires management of rhododendron. Overall, the least ecologically damaging route compared to other options, with potential for net ecological benefits if invasive species control is delivered.
Derogation Licence – Kerry Slug	Required – additional land take required to accommodate segregated walkway/cycleway lanes. Habitat suitable for Kerry slug.	Required – additional land take required to accommodate walkway/cycleway. Habitat suitable for Kerry slug.	Required – additional land take required to accommodate walkway/cycleway access and egress onto land. Habitat suitable for Kerry slug.	Required – additional land take required to accommodate walkway/cycleway. Habitat suitable for Kerry slug.	All options would require a derogation licence for the Kerry Slug.
Visual Impact	Significant visual impact as roadway/carriage would need to be widen by 6.0m minimum.	Screening would be provided by existing vegetation. However, overhead footbridge would have significant visual impact	Significant visual impact on lake and surrounding area. No screening when viewed from across the lake on northern side. Pontoon structure would be visible from the curtilage of Muckross House.	Visual impact substantially screened by existing vegetation.	Option D would have the least and minimal visual impact
Usability/ Universal Access	Unlikely to provides a route compliant with universal access requirements without adjustment of existing N71 vertical alignment grade	Walkers and cyclists would need to cross over the N71 to access and egress off the proposed new walkway/cycleway which would require an overbridge or underpass at both locations. It would not be suitable for universal access.	Risk of excessive vertical movement due to high winds and wave action could limit usability and universal at certain times.	Provides a route compliant with universal access requirements. Route would be accessible to wheelchairs users and people with mobility issues.	Option D would provide a fully compliant walkway/cycleway to meet universal access requirements.
Buildability	Requires minimum 5m additional land take over entire length involving substantial cut through rock.	Require substantial cut and fill, ground clearance and tree felling	Can substantially be prefabricated off site. Requires construction access from the lake on floating barges and from land. Substantial anchor piles to lakebed required. The substantial fluctuation of the water level means that access and the egress ramp from land would be unworkable. Long-term, substantial maintenance requirements due to fluctuating water levels, wave action/storm damage.	Can substantially be prefabricated off site with no requirement to have construction access from the lake.	Option D would have lesser buildability challenges than the other 3 options.
Cost implications	High Level Order of cost - €8.4million (National transport Authority - Cost Guidance Pedestrian Path & Cycleway - €7m/km) 1.2km long x €7m/km = €8.4m	High Level Order of cost - €6million (National transport Authority - Cost Guidance- Urban Greenways - €4m/km -High complexity Pedestrian Bridges - €17k/m2-High complexity Walkway/Cycleway €4m/km x 1.1km=€4.4m plus 2 Nr Overbridges €0.8m x 2 = €1.6m Total - €4.4m + €1.6m = €6.0m	High Level Order of cost - €6million Floating Deck 3000m2 X €1250/m2 = €3.75m Anchor piles = €1.25million Floating ramps x 2 = €0.5m x 2 = €1.0m Total - €3.75m + €1.25m + €1.0m = €6.0m	High Level Order of cost - €5.2million Walkway Deck 3000m2 x €1400/m2 = €4.2m Foundations + rock anchors = €1.0m Total - €4.2m + €1.0m = €5.2m	Option D would be the most cost-effective and economically viable solution.

