

Draft Cavan
CYCLE
Network



1. Introduction

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle plans for counties outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), including Cavan County Council. CycleConnects is intended to form a comprehensive cycle network for all cycle user types across each county in Ireland and to develop on from the cycle network proposed for the counties in the GDA.

This will include existing cycle networks such as urban cycle routes, greenways and interurban routes. This will be supplemented by proposed cycle routes/links outlined in latest development and transport plans, and other networks required to maximise the connection of the network to communities. It should be noted that this network does not specify any infrastructure types on any route and is focused on highlighting the key links required to form a comprehensive cycle network connecting all major communities and destinations.

This note will briefly summarise the proposed cycle network for Cavan. For details of methodology, national policy and the overall aspirations for CycleConnects, please refer to the main report of which this technical note is an appendix of.

2. Cavan Population and Settlements

County Cavan is in the north of the country on the border with Northern Ireland, in the province of Ulster. It is also bordered by counties Monaghan and Meath to the east, Leitrim and Longford to the west and Westmeath in the south.

According to the CSO Census 2016 the county has a population of 76,176 inhabitants. Table 2.1 below shows the population of towns within Cavan with at least 1,000 people. Cavan town is the only settlement with over 5,000 people with all other towns having a population of less than 5,000.

Table 2.1: Population of settlements in Cavan

| City/Town | Population (2016) |
|----------------|-------------------|
| Cavan | 10,914 |
| Bailieborough | 2,683 |
| Ballyjamesduff | 2,661 |
| Virginia | 2,648 |
| Kingscourt | 2,499 |
| Cootehill | 1,853 |
| Belturbet | 1,369 |
| Mullagh | 1,348 |
| Ballyconnell | 1,105 |

3. Existing Cavan Policies and Plans

Draft Cavan Development Plan 2022-2028

The draft Cavan County Development Plan (CCDP) published in 2022 for consultation, sets out the Council's proposed policies and objectives for the development of the county over the plan period. The Development Plan seeks to develop and improve, in a sustainable manner, the social economic, environmental and cultural assets of the County.

The strategic vision of the Plan is as follows;

'A progressive, vibrant county which is smart, connected, innovative, inclusive and sustainable.'

This vision has a number of key ambitions for nature and all places to realise their full potential and these include to:

- Protect and enhance the environment;
- Work to achieve economic prosperity and improve quality of life for all;
- Accommodate expanded growth and development in suitable locations; and
- Promote the region's international reputation as one of Europe's most creative, innovative and greenest liveable regions.

Chapter 7 of the CCDP proposes the plans for transportation and infrastructure in addition to sustainable transport. Cavan County Council is committed to the promotion of sustainable modes of travel including public transport, walking and cycling and where possible the encouragement of modal change from the private car.

The transport and infrastructure objectives relating to the development of walking and cycling infrastructure within County Cavan are:

Walking and Cycling Development Objectives

- **WC 01** - Promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of transport by securing the development of a network of direct, comfortable, convenient and safe cycle routes and footpaths, particularly in urban areas and in vicinity of schools.
- **WC 02** - Design pedestrian and cycling and electric bike infrastructure in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards set out in the Transport Infrastructure Ireland Rural Cycleway Design Standard (Offline), National Cycle Manual and the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and international best practice.
- **WC 03** - Encourage and seek sustainable transport movement at the earliest design stage of development proposals, to ensure accessibility by all modes of transport and all sections of society and promote the provision of parking spaces for bicycles in development schemes.
- **WC 04** - Improve the streetscape environment for pedestrians, cyclists and people with special mobility needs by providing facilities to enhance safety and convenience, including separation for pedestrian infrastructure from vehicular traffic.
- **WC 05** - Provide better sign posting and public lighting where considered appropriate and ensure that the upgrading of roads will not impact negatively on the safety and perceived safety of cyclists.

- **WC 06** - Work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, the Department of Planning, Housing and Local Government, the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling.

The Council recognises the numerous benefits arising from the further development of Greenways in Cavan in particular as a tourism product with a significant potential to attract overseas visitors, local communities and all users as an amenity for physical activity and a contributor to health and wellbeing. It is the Councils policy to continue to expand and create an integrated network of greenways across the County and maximise pedestrian and cycle access to same.

Figure 3.1 illustrates planned future greenway trails to complement the existing greenway infrastructure in place already.

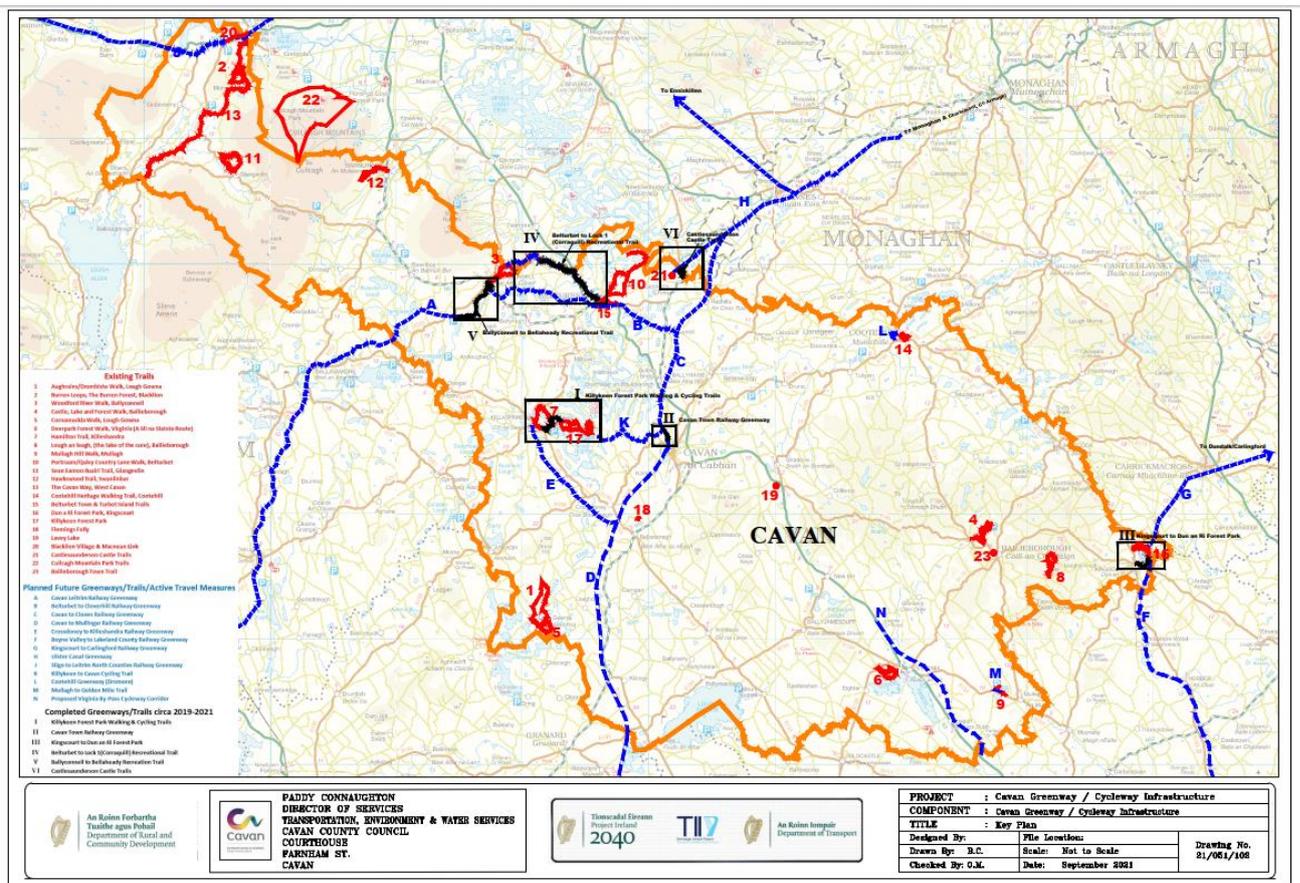


Figure 3.1: Existing and Planned Greenways in Cavan

The following objectives have been extracted from the Cavan Greenway Development Objectives due to their relation to cycling infrastructure development.

Greenways Development Objectives

- **G 01** - Continue to develop an integrated and connected network of sustainable greenways and green routes within Cavan and to adjoining counties, in accordance with the ‘Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways’.
- **G 02** - Progress the development of the proposed Cavan Railway Greenway from Cavan Town to the Ulster Canal Greenway and to the Cavan Leitrim Greenway at Ballyconnell.

- **G 03** - Progress the development of the Cavan Leitrim Greenway and Sligo Leitrim Northern Counties Railway (SLNCR) Greenway in partnership with Sligo and Leitrim County Councils.
- **G 04** - Progress the development of the Ulster Canal and Navan to Kingscourt Greenways.
- **G 05** - Maximise both pedestrian and cycle connectivity to the network of existing greenways within the County.
- **G 06** - Protect established Greenways within the County against inappropriate new vehicular access and increased traffic movements
- **G 07** – Support the enhancement and progression of existing and planned future greenways/trails as outlined in Figure 3.1

As part of the opportunity to develop tourist opportunities, Cavan County Council, working with strategic partners at a national, regional and local level, are strongly committed to greenway development and recognises their strong potential particularly for generating tourism activity and associated positive wellbeing, quality of life and economic benefits.

The development of further cycle paths and the ongoing development of Greenways is a priority of the Cycling and Walking Strategy for County Cavan, as such the following extracted tourism development objectives relating to greenway and cycling infrastructure development include:

Greenways, Cycling and Walking Development Objectives

Below are key objectives from Chapter 9 – Tourism of the CCDP which development of the Cavan County Development can help achieve.

- **GCW 01** – Continue to develop the greenways in the country and to augment the visitor experience through the provision of infrastructure, having regard to the Department for Transport, Tourism and Sport various Guidelines along with high quality signage and links to nearby visitor attractions and places of interest.
- **GCW 02** – Support the provision of visitor services within existing towns and villages, such as cafes, accommodation and changing facilities, by providing linkages with greenways and trails where appropriate.
- **GCW 03** - Continue to support the development of Sligo Leitrim Northern Counties Greenway, the Cavan and Leitrim Trailway Greenway, the Boyne Valley to Lakelands County Greenway, the Ulster Canal Greenway and the Sligo to Cavan Greenway by working with Regional Authorities (EMRA and NWRA), neighbouring counties and national bodies to develop and complete these routes.
- **GCW 05** - Continue to maintain and further enhance the County's walking and cycling trails, striving to achieve National Trails accreditation and other standards as set by Sport Ireland, in partnership with local communities and landowners.
- **GCW 06** - Continue to support the development of the Cavan Town and Killykeen Greenways, Belturbet to Cloverhill Railway Greenway, Cavan to Clones Railway Greenway, Crossdoney to Killeshandra Railway Greenway, Kingscourt to Carlingford Railway Greenway, and the Cavan Railway Greenway.
- **GCW 08** - Support the provision of services for visitors using walking and cycling trails which are appropriate to the location and activity, including bike rental and

service points, picnic benches at scenic locations, public toilets, and other ancillary services in remote areas

- **GCW 13** - Continue to implement the objectives and actions outlined in the Walking and Cycling Strategy for County Cavan 2016.

Local Area Plans

Draft Cavan Town Local Area Plan 2022-2028

As there is no longer a Town Council for Cavan Town, the 2014-2020 Cavan Town Development Plan will be superseded by the Cavan Town Local Area Plan 2022-2028 Network Development Methodology. The Cavan Town Local Area Plan 2022-2028 is merged with the new Cavan County Development Plan 2022-2028, and as such the visions policies and objectives shall be contained within the Draft Cavan Development Plan.

Within the development plan relating solely to Cavan town, it is acknowledged that there is a lack of cycling options around Cavan town in addition to the need for further marked trails and extension of the existing short greenways/creation of new greenways would be transformative for the area.

With this the following Cavan town tourism development Objectives that relate to cycling are detailed below:

- **CTT 09** - Facilitate the development of walking and cycling routes in and around the town, in particular the development of greenways.

In addition to the development of further cycling infrastructure to facilitate tourism growth, as part of sustainable communities the local area plan proposes residential zoned lands to be located within good infrastructure for walking and cycling to the town centre.

The following sustainable community's development objective that relates to cycling is listed below:

- **CSC 08** - Promote cycling and walking within the community through the implementation of improved walking/cycling infrastructure within the Town and its hinterlands and at areas of interest and attractions.
- **CSC 09** - Promote appropriate development opportunities in the vicinity of Swellan Lough, Green Lough and Killymooney Lough to create an amenity site that could provide for a walking cycling route around the Loughs.

Within the Development plan written statements are also provided for various towns sitting within the settlement hierarchy, each with their own objectives that pertain to the development of cycling infrastructure within their respective towns.

Future Local Transport Plans

Cavan County Council are required to develop Local Transport Plans as part of their Development Plan process. While the cycle network outlined in this plan have been created to reflect current transport arrangements, it may be subject to change based on the more detailed analysis and recommendations developed as part of the LTP process

4. Proposed Cavan County Cycle Network

Introduction

Following a review of existing data, policies and conducting workshops with Cavan County Council to review the draft county cycle network, the following summarises the methodology and proposed county cycle network development for Cavan. The full details of how all the county cycle networks were developed are available in the NTA Consultation website.

Prior to developing the Cavan County Network, a GIS model was established for the county. This model mapped all existing information made available for the county, supplied by various bodies including the NTA, Department for Transport, Department for Education, Transport Infrastructure Ireland and Cavan County Council. The data collected includes;

- Locations of major employment and job density
- Existing cycle infrastructure and routes
- Existing bus stops, rail lines and other public transport
- Location of schools and education centres
- Shopping centres, hospitals and other destinations that may attract cyclists

The collation of this data has aided the selection of cycle routes in Cavan that are available to as many people as possible. It has also allowed for the servicing of key destinations within County Cavan.

Methodology

Following the collation of existing data, the cycle network plan for Cavan was developed. This is based on a three-tier system outlined in Figure 4.1 below.

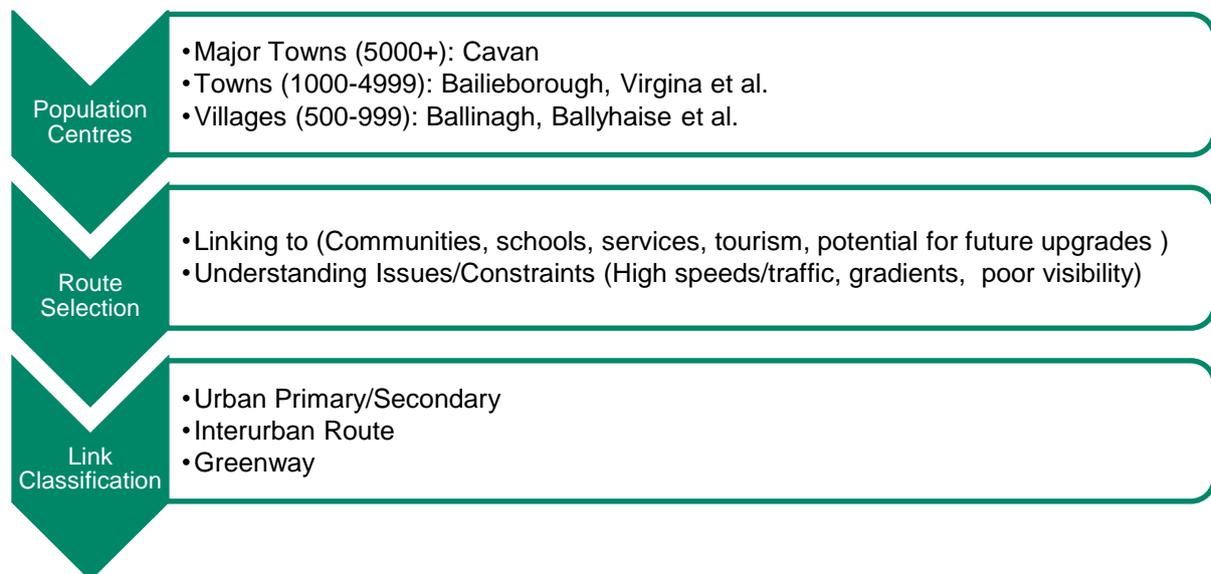


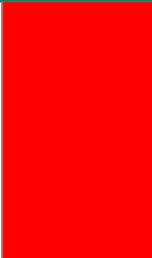
Figure 4.1: County Cycle Network Development Methodology

Population Centres: The Cavan County Cycle Network will look to link towns and villages together as part of a fully connected network. Thus, all towns were mapped with the larger towns such as Cavan noted. By mapping all towns and villages, a profile emerged of where most people in Cavan were situated and where potential cycle routes should be provided. CSO Settlement data was also referenced to inform where people were located within the county.

Route Selection: Once the population areas were established, potential routes were then considered along strategic corridors. This allowed multiple communities to be linked along individual interurban routes. Where possible, these routes were also located within TII National Cycle Network Corridors. This avoided too many parallel cycle routes being developed and for an integrated cycle network to be developed within the county.

Cycle Route Classification: The route classification for each route has been summarised below in Table 4.1. It should be noted that this link classification does not reflect the existing condition of roads for cycling but seeks to highlight their potential for various route classifications. For example, while there are many interurban routes that currently have no cycle infrastructure, the aspiration will be to target these over the next decade for appropriate upgrades.

Table 4.1: CycleConnects Route Classification

| City/Town | Colour | Description |
|-----------------|---|---|
| Urban Primary |  | High quality cycle route that can accommodate a high volume of cyclists typical in most urban areas. These will look to feature on major desire lines in town centres and form distinctive radial and orbital cycle routes in the major towns and cities. These primary routes should also form a cohesive and connected network within the urban area that will be simple for cyclists to navigate |
| Urban Secondary |  | Second tier cycle route in major urban areas to link with urban primary network to add greater route density and options on the network. These will typically be passing through residential areas, school and employment areas |
| Interurban |  | On-road cycle route to link all key settlements and destinations outside urban areas both within the county and into adjacent counties. These may have potential to provide off-road/segregated routes parallel to the existing road in later years. |
| Greenway |  | Off-road cycle route with no adjacent traffic for the majority of its route. These are typically located on old rail trails with cyclists sharing the route with pedestrians. |

Proposed Cavan County Cycle Network

Following the methodology outlined above, the Cavan County Cycle Network has been outlined in a series of maps shown in Table 4.2 below. These are also available to view as an individual PDF when selecting county Cavan in the NTA consultation page.

Table 4.2: Cavan County Cycle Network – List of Maps

| Cycle Map List |
|----------------------------|
| Cavan County Cycle Network |
| Cavan Urban Cycle Network |

The Cavan County Cycle Network primarily extends the network beyond the key settlement area of Cavan town. In summary, it will consist of an urban cycle network for Cavan, with interurban connectors between the towns of Bailieborough, Ballyjamesduff, Virginia, Kingscourt etc. These then extend into adjoining counties forming a comprehensive and connecting cycle network nationally and across the border to Fermanagh in Northern Ireland.

Interurban Link Development

The primary towns with a population of over 1,000 were connected via interurban links. Where possible, towns with a lower population that were located along the route were included in the routes. Connections were also made to larger cross border towns in order to create a more comprehensive cycle network. The selection of interurban routes was also influenced by the location of schools/sports grounds on various parallel routes.

As part of the development of the interurban network, the Google travel planning tool was utilised to assist in selecting the most appropriate route between the various settlements. This included avoiding routes/routes with excessive gradients. In some cases, selecting a sufficiently flat route was not available. Thus, the most available flattest route was selected. However, some routes were modified slightly to connect with adjacent towns/villages or key destinations such as schools, sports pitches or tourist attractions.

The TII National Cycle Network Corridors have also been used to overlap corridors. These include corridors and routes into counties Fermanagh, Monaghan, Meath, Westmeath, Longford and Leitrim.

Greenway Route Integration

Cavan Greenway

The proposed Cavan Greenway is 40 kms long, which will connect the towns of Cavan, Ballyconnell, Belturbet and Clones in Co. Monaghan. It will form part of a regionally significant greenway that will provide linkages with other proposed greenways in the Cavan/ Monaghan/ Leitrim/Fermanagh region and will provide an excellent outdoor experience and recreational activities for all visitors. Some sections of this greenway are still unknown at this stage so may be shown as being indicative only on the relevant maps and may be subject to change at once the finalised route on various sections are known.

Cavan Greenway will form part of a regionally significant greenway, providing linkages to the following:

- Ulster Canal Greenway
- Cavan - Leitrim Railway Greenway
- Cavan Town Urban Greenway (Phase 1)
- Belturbet to Corraquil Greenway
- South Cavan Greenway

Crossdoney to Killeshandra Greenway

This greenway route is a future proposal by Cavan County Council. The finalised route for the greenway is still unknown at this stage so it is shown as being indicative only on the relevant maps and may be subject to change at once the finalised route is known.

South Cavan Greenway

This greenway route is a future proposal by Cavan County Council. This route follows the old railline between Cavan and Mullingar. The finalised route for the greenway is still unknown at this stage so it is shown as being indicative only on the relevant maps and may be subject to change at once the finalised route is known.

Urban Network Development: Cavan

With a population of over 5000, an urban cycle network was developed for Cavan town. The urban network design comprises smaller inner primary orbital routes and a larger amalgamation of both primary, secondary and greenway routes that encompasses the town. The inner orbital route in the centre of the town is comprised of Farnham Street, Church Street, Main Street and College Street. A second orbital primary route in the south of the town consists of Dublin Road, Main Street, Cock Hill, and Eastern Access Road. A third orbital route in the north of the town consists of Loreto Road, the R212 Cathedral Road, Farnham Street, Railway Road and Golf Links Road

Locations which are served by these orbital routes include but not limited to:

- Cavan Bus Station
- Cavan Town Centre (Various shops and services)
- Cavan General Hospital
- Cavan Institute
- St Clare's Primary School
- Gaelscoil Bhréifne
- Royal School Cavan
- Cavan Gaels GAA Club
- Cavan Golf Course.
- St. Felim's National School
- Cavan Lawn Tennis Club
- Cavan Swimming Pool and Leisure Complex
- Cavan Innovation and Technology Centre
- Killygarry National School
- Farnham National School
- Kingspan Breffni Stadium

In addition to the orbital route, a number of radial routes are also provided to provide connectors with interurban routes in addition to serving locations that were not picked up on the orbital loop roads. The radial routes usually travel in a north/south and east/west direction and comprise of normally primary routes however some secondary routes formulate part of these routes. The radial routes are described below:

- An east/west radial route from the roundabout junction between the Dublin Road and L2543 continues east through the Dublin Road Roundabout, along the N3 and ceases at the Killygarry National School.
- A north/south radial route starts at the southern end of James Connolly Street and
- The next north/south radial route starts at the southern end of the Cootehill Road, travels Northeast along the R188 and ceases after the interurban route connection which begins at Cois Na hAbhainn.

A number of secondary routes are also proposed on streets such as Keadue Lane, Drunalee, John Paul Avenue, and Swellan Lower. These are intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on orbital or radial routes previously mentioned.

5. Next Steps

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle routes for County Cavan and the town of Cavan.

The network design for Cavan has now been made available for public consultation. This will allow for members of the public to submit their feedback. Individual maps are available to view on the National Transport Authority website and are available in the links below:

Table 5.1: Cavan County Cycle Network – List of Maps

| Cycle Map List |
|----------------------------|
| Cavan County Cycle Network |
| Cavan Urban Cycle Network |

Following the public consultation, submissions will be reviewed, and the network maps updated as required.