

Waterways Corridor Study 2004



The Shannon River
between Roosky and Lanesborough

The Royal Canal
between Cloondara and Thomastown

Appendix One – Consultation Report

Prepared by

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LAND PLANNING AND DESIGN



Prepared for

The Heritage Council



In Association with

Waterways Ireland

And

Roscommon County Council • Longford County Council • Westmeath County Council

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Submissions	2
2.1	Example Consultation Letters	4
2.1.1	Lakeland Angling Club	4
2.1.2	Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering	5
2.1.3	Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer and Planning Department	7
2.2	Schedule of Written Submissions Received	8
2.2.1	IWAI Athlone Committee Member, F Elliott	8
2.2.2	Royal Canal Amenity Group (Longford Branch)	8
2.2.3	Leisureways Holidays, Derek and Una Whelan	8
2.2.4	Longford Community Resources Limited, Monica O'Malley	9
2.2.5	Nini and Roy Stevenson, Tarmonbarry	9
2.2.6	Ballymahon Branch of RCAG, Pat Kiludff	9
2.2.7	Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering Design, Jim Harvey	9
2.2.8	Keenagh Branch of RCAG, Pat Newman	10
2.2.9	IWAI Heritage and Conservation Committee, Rosaleen Miller	10
2.2.10	Scoil Mhuire Clondra, Colette McManus (principal)	10
2.2.11	The Walshe Family, Clondra	10
2.2.12	Cloondara Area Action Group, Crea Nolan	10
2.2.13	Anne Skelly (personal submission)	11
2.2.14	Clondra Village Concerned Residents	11
2.2.15	Waterways Ireland Marketing and Communications, Éanna Rowe	11
2.2.16	John Dunne, Author: "Towpath Tours - Exploring Ireland's Waterways"	11
2.2.17	Royal Canal Ventures, Peter Holland	12
2.2.18	Roosky Residents Association, M Nugent	13
2.2.19	IWAI – Athlone, P D McMahan	13
3.0	Public Workshops	14
3.1	St. Barry's Hall Termonbarry, Wednesday 19th November 2003	15
3.1.1	Summary of Proceedings	15
3.2	Lough Ree Arms Hotel, Tuesday 11th November 2003	16
3.2.1	Summary of Proceedings	17
3.3	Mullingar Park Hotel, Monday 10th November 2003	18
3.3.1	Summary of Proceedings	18

1.0 Introduction

The Heritage Council's brief to the consultants stressed that *"To be effective, a waterway corridor study must be adopted by the relevant groups, and its strength will be directly related to the amount of support it has gained."* Accordingly, a consultation strategy was devised to inform as many potentially interested and affected parties as possible of the study, and to solicit their views on means to better manage and develop the waterways corridor. Consultation was ongoing throughout the study. The strategy involved:

- A. Regular communication with the Steering Group. Following project initiation, three Steering Group meetings were held over the course of the study prior to the launch of the report:
- Stage One Progress Meeting, 30th September 2003, Mullingar.
 - Stage One Conclusion and Progress Report, 11th November, Glassan.
 - Stage Two Progress Meeting, 13th January 2004, Glassan.

In addition to the meetings, the Steering Group was kept up-to-date with progress by means of interim reports:

- Stage One Progress Report, 22nd September 2003.
- Stage One Conclusion Report, 4th November.
- Stage Two Progress (Draft Final) Report, 15th December 2004.

- B. Requests for submissions. Letters to potentially interested and affected parties (identified with assistance from the Steering Group) were followed by telephone calls where appropriate. The letters informed of the parties of the study and requested submissions to the consultants by mail or telephone, as well as attendance at the public workshops. Each member of the project team engaged with the parties relevant to their particular discipline and responsibility.

In addition, notices of the study were placed on the web sites of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWAI) and the Royal Canal Amenity Group (RCAG).

- C. Public workshops. Three public workshops were held:
- Monday 10th November 2003, 19h00. Mullingar Park Hotel.
 - Tuesday 11th November 2003, 18h30. Lough Ree Arms Hotel, Lanesborough. *Held in conjunction with Colin Buchanan and Partners, consultants on a the Waterways Corridor Study of the Shannon from Lanesborough to Shannonbridge.*
 - Wednesday 19th November 2003, 19h00. St. Barry's Hall, Termonbarry.

The workshops were advertised by invitations to the identified interested and affected parties, by the display of notices in public places in all settlements within the study corridor, by notices / articles in local news papers (Longford Leader) and on the web sites of the IWAI and RCAG, and by word-of-mouth.

The information gathered throughout the consultation process informed the direction and results of the study and is thus incorporated into the content of the final report. This Consultation Report provides a synopsis of the process and results of consultation undertaken by the consultants throughout the study. The remainder of the report comprises the following:

- Section 2 - List of identified potential interested and affected parties (to whom letters and invitations to public workshops were sent).
- Example letters to interested and affected parties (Generic letter, Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering, Westmeath County Council).
 - Schedule of written submissions received.
- Section 3 - Example of notice of invitation to public workshops.
- Lists of attendance to public workshops.
 - Summaries of proceedings of public workshops.

2.0 Submissions

Interested and affected parties approached by CSR

Longford Co. Co. Planning Department	Tony McDonnell
Leitrim Co. Co. Planning Department	Ciaran Tracey
Roscommon Co. Co. Planning Department and Heritage Officer	Nollaig McKeon
Westmeath Co. Co. Planning Department and Heritage Officer	Bernie Guest
Lanesborough Tourism Cooperative	John Farrell
Longford Tourism Committee	Maire Flynn
Longford Community and Enterprise Development Officer	Laura Henegan
Longford Community Resource Ltd	Monica O'Malley
Lough Ree Development Cooperative	Pat Collum
Roscommon County Council Director, Community and Enterprise	Rita McNulty
Roscommon Community and Voluntary Forum North	Maud Brady
Roscommon Community and Voluntary Forum South	Gerry Murphy
Tarmonbarry Development Association	Thomas Crosby
Killucan Canal and Community Development Group	Eileen Gaynor
Cloondara Concerned Residents Group	Anne Skelly
Cloondara Area Action Group	Crea Nolan
Soil Mhuire, Cloondara	Colette McManus, Principal
The Walshe Family, Cloondara	
Westmeath County Development Board Director of Community and Enterprise	Pat Gallagher
Westmeath Environment SPC	Cllr. Egbert Moran
Westmeath Transportation and Infrastructure SPC	Cllr. Frank McDermot
Leisureways Holidays	Derek Whelan
Mid Shannon Cruising	Liam Finnegan
Royal Canal Ventures	Peter Holland
Irish Canoe Union	
Inland Waterways Association of Ireland Heritage Committee	Rosaleen Miller
IWAI Carrick on Shannon	Paul Garland, David Nowlan
IWAI Athlone	Pat McMahan, Niamh Herraghty
IWAI Boating and Leisure	Tom Murphy
Longford Environmental Alliance	
Athlone Rowing Club	Eamon Fahy
Barge Restoration Project	Walter Kenny
Lough Ree Rowing Club	Claire Brennan, Nini Stevenson
Mountainbiking Association of Dublin / Irish Cycling	Peter Purfield
CycleWest Ireland	
Irish Cycling safaris	Eamon Ryan
Irish Farmers Association Regional Office	
IFA Western Committee Longford	Tom Fagan
IFA Western Committee Roscommon	Ambrose Kilcline
IFA Western Committee Westmeath	Fintan Nally
Teagasc Chief Agricultural Officer, Longford	Des Keegan
Teagasc Chief Agricultural Officer, Roscommon	Oliver Burke
Teagasc Chief Agricultural Officer, Westmeath	Conor Maguire
Central Fisheries Board Coarse Fisheries Development	
Shannon Regional Fisheries Board Head Office, Limerick	
Shannon Regional Fisheries Board Angling Section	Brian McManus
Lakeland Angling Club Rooskey	Derek & Mary Rowley
Lanesborough and District Coarse Angling Club	Noel Rhattigan

Midland Angling	Michael Flanagan
National Anglers Representative Association	Paddy Byrne
Mullingar Coarse Angling Club	Pascal Weymes
National Coarse Fish Federation	David Egan, Brendan Coulter
Royal Canal Amenity Group Abbeyshrule	Gabriel McGoey
RCAG Ballymahon	Pat Kilduff
RCAG Ballynacarrigy	Watson Mills
RCAG Keenagh	Pat Newman
RCAG Killashee	Mel Skelly
RCAG Longford	Noel McGeeney
RCAG Mullingar	Sarah Caffrey, Sean Elliffe
RCAG Richmond Harbour, Cloondara	Des McPartland, Norman Good
RCAG National Secretary	Patrick Greene
Voice of Irish Concern for the Environment	
Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering	Nigel Russel
Waterways Ireland Marketing and Communications	Martin Dennany
Bord na Móna	Gerry McNally

Interested and affected parties approached by WYG

Heritage Division, Eastern Regional Manager, Dúchas	Mr Sean Casey
Heritage Division, Deputy Eastern Regional Manager	Mr Val Swan
Heritage Division, Mid Western Regional Manager	Mr Tim O' Connell
Heritage Division, Mid Western Deputy Regional Manager	Dr. Enda Mooney
Heritage Division, Mid Western District Conservation Officer	Mr Pdraig O'Donnell
Heritage Division, Northern Regional Manager	Mr Joe Gatins
Heritage Division, Northern Deputy Regional Manager	Mr Dave Duggan
Heritage Division, Northern District Conservation Officer	Mr M.J. Hackett
Central Fisheries Board	Dr Joe Caffrey
Central Fisheries Board	Mr Killian Farrell
Shannon Regional Fisheries Board	Mr Niall Collins
Eastern Regional Fisheries Board	Gretta Hannigan
Conservation Policy Officer, Birdwatch	Christine Croton
Irish Wildlife Trust	Ms Caren Lavine
Irish Peatland Conservation Council	Peter Foss
BSBI Westmeath	Mr C Breen
BSBI Longford	Mr S Howard
BSBI Leitrim	Dr D C F Cotton
BSBI Roscommon	Mr J J Earley
Co-author of Ecological survey of the Royal Canal (1991)	Ms Brigid Johnston
Co-author of Ecological survey of the Royal Canal (1991)	Mr Richard Nairn
Botanist and author/expert on the Shannon Callows	Mr Stephen Heery
Mollusc expert	Dr Evelyn Moorkens
Writer and broadcaster on the subject of waterways	Mr Dick Warner
Bord na Móna	Donal Wynne
Co-author of Ecological survey of the Royal Canal (1991)	Ms Marie Dromey

Interested and affected parties approached by CRDS

IWAI Heritage Committee	Rosaleen Miller
Westmeath Archaeological and Historical Society	Mary Mahon
Underwater Unit, National Monuments Section, Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government	Karl Brady and Auriel Robinson
County Council Heritage Officers (Co. Roscommon and Co. Westmeath)	Nollaig Mckeeon and Bernie Guest

Interested and affected parties approached by TRC

Acting Regional Tourism Manger for Midlands East Regional Tourism Authority	Norman Black
Ireland West Tourism	
Roscommon Tourism	Joe Bruen
Co. Roscommon Rural Tourism Co-op	Una Bhan
North West Tourism Development Officer (Leitrim)	Damien Brennan
Arigna Leader Tpourism Development Officer, Carrick on Shannon	Lorna Broomfield
Longford County Tourism Committee	Maura Flynn
Westmeath Community Development Tourism Development Officer	Bernie Lynn
Leisureways	Derek Whelan
Faite Ireland – Inland Cruising, watersports, sailing, walking, cycling, outdoor persuits	Paddy O'Mahony
Angling???	Margaret Caulfiend
Strokestown Park House	???
Corlea Trackway Visitor Centre	???
Central Fisheries Board	Area representatives
Waterways Ireland Marketing Department	???
Waymarked Ways – Royal Canal Way, Irish Sports Council	Joss Lynam / Cormac MacDonell
Irish Cycling Safaris	Eamonn Ryan

2.1 Example Consultation Letters

2.1.1 Lakeland Angling Club

Derek and Mary Rowley
Lakeland Angling Club
Lakeland Fishery
Rooskey
Co. Roscommon

1 September 2003

Dear Derek and Mary,

Waterways Corridor Study - The River Shannon between Rooskey and Lanesborough, and the Royal Canal between Thomastown and Cloondara are to be the subject of a Heritage Council sponsored study aimed at improving the understanding and appreciation of the waterways corridors, ensuring retention of their heritage value, and optimising their use through appropriate management and development. The consultants request submissions from interested and affected parties.

The Heritage Council in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath County Councils, has appointed a multi-disciplinary team of consultants to undertake the study. The team, to be led by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Town Planners and Landscape Architects (CSR), includes Cultural Resource Development Services - specialists in archaeology and built heritage, KT Cullen White Young Green - hydrogeological and environmental specialists, the Dublin Institute of Technology Tourism Research Centre, and rural development / agricultural economics specialist Brendan Kearney.

The aims of the Study, as defined in the brief to the consultants, are as follows:

- To identify ways to manage the waterways corridor environment to the benefit of all, i.e. heritage-related, land- and water-based users, and

- To improve the understanding of the area, and by this understanding, ensure retention of the distinctiveness of the place, while allowing for development and evolution of use for the future.

The waterways corridors can be described as the canal / river and the adjacent land, buildings and land uses, which due to their proximity are influenced by, and in turn influence the waterways. It is intended that the study be employed by planning authorities to inform their Development Plans and planning decisions, by Waterways Ireland to inform further management and development of the waterways, and by community and user groups to describe their resource, promote a sense of ownership of the waterways, and assist in the realisation of their aspirations for the waterways' management and development.

It is vital that the consultants engage all interested and affected parties to fully comprehend the range of stakeholders in the waterways corridors. To this end **we request of yourself / your organisation to assist in the identification of features, resources and / or aspects of the waterways corridors that contribute to their significance or value, their continued use and appreciation, and to their future development and usage potential.** Any such features or combinations of these that are related to the waterways directly, or are accessible by the waterways and thus provide an opportunity for expansion / development of the resource, are of interest. **Your views regarding the management and future development of the waterways, as well as any advice or recommendations that you may have concerning the study would also be appreciated – how can the Royal Canal and River Shannon be better managed, developed, promoted and used, for the benefit of all?**

Please mail your written submissions to Richard Butler, CSR at 3 Molesworth Place, Dublin 2 or Email rbutler@csrlandplan.ie. Stakeholders' workshops will be held in November this year, at which those that have expressed interest in the study will gather to discuss the issues.

If you require further information or would like to discuss the study with the consultants, please telephone Richard Butler or Declan O'Leary at CSR, tel. 01 661 0419. Your interest and assistance would be much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,...

2.1.2 Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering

Nigel Russel
 Director, Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering
 Elliot House
 5 – 7 Belmore Street
 Enniskillen
 Co. Fermanagh
 BT746AA

16 September 2003

Dear Nigel,

Waterways Corridor Study - The River Shannon between Rooskey and Lanesborough, and the Royal Canal between Thomastown and Cloondara are the subject of a Heritage Council sponsored study aimed at optimising the waterways' use through appropriate management and development – QUERY CONCERNING THE LIFTING OF CULVERTS CURRENTLY OBSTRUCTING THE NAVIGATION IN Co. LONGFORD.

The Heritage Council in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath County Councils, has appointed a multi-disciplinary team of consultants, led by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Town Planners and Landscape Architects (CSR), to undertake the study.

The study will be employed by planning authorities to inform their Development Plans and planning decisions, by Waterways Ireland to inform further management and development of the waterways, and by community and user groups to assist in the realisation of their aspirations for the waterways.

Having initiated the study with a survey of the study area, and with consultation with various stakeholders, the issue of removal of culverts to facilitate re-opening of the navigation to the Shannon has emerged as central to the future management and development of the waterway. Previous (admittedly impractical) timeframes for the re-opening of the navigation, announced by various parties, have raised expectations, and subsequent delays have caused frustration among stakeholders.

A central aim of the Waterways Corridor Study is to address and clarify the issue to some extent, so that Waterways Ireland and other stakeholders in the Royal Canal can adopt a common strategy and broadly accepted (and practicable) timeframe for the removal of the culverts. A common position amongst stakeholders will lead to improved cooperation and consequently the most efficient conclusion to the required engineering works. To this end, we request that you provide us with information on the following:

1. Please list (providing locations / names) the culverts currently obstructing the navigation in Co. Longford (including the Main Line and the Longford Branch).
2. Please list the culverts that are currently the subject of projects that will result in their removal and replacement with bridges allowing the passage of vessels along the Canal.

Also provide details of the status quo of these projects and in your view a realistic timeframe for their design finalisation / submission for planning approval, as well as the projected duration of construction once planning approval is received. (i.e. when might these projects be completed?)

3. Please provide an anticipated sequence / prioritisation of the remaining culverts (i.e. those not covered by Item 2 above), and if possible a projected timeframe for initialisation of projects that will result in their removal.

Please mail your reply to Richard Butler, Cunnane Stratton Reynolds, at 3 Molesworth Place, Dublin 2 or Email rbutler@csrlandplan.ie. If you require further information or would like to discuss the matter, telephone 00353 1 661 0419. Your assistance would be much appreciated.

I was referred to your Section by Brian Mullen (WI, Enniskillen) via Michael Bane (WI, Tullamore). Waterways Ireland (Canals) is represented on the Waterways Corridor Study Steering Committee by Joe O'Sullivan (Tullamore, joe.osullivan@waterwaysireland.org), and the Heritage Council by Beatrice Kelly, Inland Waterways / Marine Officer (Kilkenny, 00353 56 70777, bkelly@heritagecouncil.ie).

Yours sincerely,...

2.1.3 Westmeath County Council Heritage Officer and Planning Department

Bernie Guest
Heritage Officer
Westmeath County Council

6 October 2003

Dear Bernie,

WATERWAYS CORRIDOR STUDY - Shannon River between Rooskey and Lanesborough, and the Royal Canal between Thomastown and Cloondara.

As you are aware, the Heritage Council in partnership with Waterways Ireland and Longford, Roscommon and Westmeath County Councils, has appointed a multi-disciplinary team of consultants, led by Cunnane Stratton Reynolds Town Planners and Landscape Architects, to undertake the Waterways Corridor Study. The study will be employed by planning authorities to inform planning policy and decisions, by Waterways Ireland to inform management and development of the waterways, and by community and user groups to assist in the realisation of their aspirations for the waterways.

The brief for the project stipulates that the study should take account of the county development plan and strategies, local area plans, landscape character assessments, biodiversity plans, heritage appraisals, etc. Proposals arising from the study should be able to be integrated into these and other appropriate County policy documents. In addition the study should take account of the waterways' socio-economic / planning context.

Since the study covers areas of four counties, the volume of documentation requiring our assessment is substantial. Therefore, in order to ensure that the Counties are thoroughly and fairly represented in the study and the resulting documentation, we request that you coordinate the compilation of a formal submission from the County to ourselves. Your intimate knowledge of the relevant policy documents and local issues will be invaluable in steering our investigations and the resulting proposals. Please address the following in your submission:

1. The County's vision and aspirations for its waterways, with reference to the various County policy documents.

Please advise as to the status of these documents currently. Also, for the purpose of our assessment of the documents, which of them are available on the Internet, and which should we collect from your offices, perhaps at a meeting to discuss these issues?

2. Any projects and / or initiatives of the County and / or its partners that may be of relevance to the study.
3. Development pressure on the waterways. Where along the County's waterways is there a notable concentration of development pressure? Are there recognisable trends in the location and nature of proposed developments? What has been the County's response to such applications thus far? A map, preferably in digital (GIS) format, identifying the applications for planning approval in the vicinity of the waterways (within 2.5km) would be particularly useful.

We have noticed (due probably to Section 23 allowances, *or*, a growing appreciation of the waterways as an amenity / lifestyle resource?) a proliferation of residential estates adjacent the waterways, for example the impending developments at Rooskey, Longford, Tarmonbarry, Lanesborough, Ballymahon, Mullingar, etc.

In addition to your written submission, we would be happy to meet with you and / or a suitable planning officer to discuss the matter, or do so by telephone. The information received will be integrated into the final report and will therefore represent the Counties' appreciation of and

aspirations for the waterways, and will inform the compilation of policies and actions accordingly.

Please mail your reply, preferably by October 21st, to Richard Butler, Cunnane Stratton Reynolds, at 3 Molesworth Place, Dublin 2 or Email rbutler@csrlandplan.ie. If you require further information or would like to discuss the matter, telephone 01 661 0419.

Yours sincerely,...

2.2 Schedule of Written Submissions Received by CSR

In response to the requests for submissions and participation CSR received 19 no. written submissions, briefly summarised below (in order of receipt), as well as several telephonic responses.

2.2.1 IWAI Athlone Committee Member, F Elliott

- Shannon has changed – more flooding.
- High floods in summer - erosion of the river.
- Weir in Athlone dry last week. River level maintained artificially high to compensate for rising bed.
- Co-ordination of opening gates at different points important to avoid excess boats / water? At key locations.
- Fewer anglers coming to river because of poor river management.

2.2.2 Royal Canal Amenity Group (Longford Branch)

- Provision of accommodation suited to activity type holidays, i.e. hostels, B&B and farmhouses.
- Development and promotion of a circular navigation route linking the Royal, The Grand and The Shannon Erne.
- On a more local level providing short boat trips to local towns on the canal.
- Development of tow paths for walking.
- Walking routes/ circular routes bringing the tourist back to their starting point.
- Signposting, parking, picnic facilities.
- Provision of promotional brochures outlining routes of varying scale. Also highlighting features of interest.
- Cycling can be developed but considering the impact it may have on walkers on the narrower sections and the possibility that it may encourage motorbikes.
- Promotion of canoeing and boating on the canal. Providing supporting services; changing rooms, storage, car parking and launching facilities.
- Promotion of course fishing on the canal attracting Shannon anglers.
- Cooperation with Inland fisheries Board to maintain fish stocks.
- Maintain water flow throughout the system
- Provide information/ signage making reference to navigational and fishing roles of the canal.
- Longford town in the Heart of Ireland is an ideal place to begin an exploration of the Midlands.
- Proper facilities in Longford harbour as well as the proper integration of the canal/harbour into the town is essential to attract Shannon vessels and compete with other locations on the Irish waterways.
- Promotion is essential to justify investment in tourism infrastructure.
- It is up to the private sector to provide commercial interest.

2.2.3 Leisureways Holidays, Derek and Una Whelan

- Residential development along the tow paths should not be allowed between Thomastown and Clondra where it is largely rural except for a few hundred metres west of Mullingar.

- Commercial development should be monitored carefully where it impinges on views from the canal or encourages traffic on tow paths. Agricultural buildings are likely to be the main culprits.
- Walking holidays along the canal has not expanded even though paths / signage have already been developed by Waterways Ireland.
- There is no increase in the number of overseas anglers in recent years despite excellent fish stocks. Parking facilities and fishing points are inadequate – parking on towpaths causes inconvenience to other canal users.
- Low private usage of canal despite number of boat owners within 10 miles.
- Low usage discourages Waterways Ireland from cutting weeds, affecting those who do try to use the system.
- Facilities on the canal will have to match those on the Shannon when it opens to Clondra.
- Cooperation of both private and public bodies as seen on the Shannon - Erne with the provision of services and marketing both at home and overseas.

2.2.4 Longford Community Resources Limited, Monica O'Malley

- Promote awareness and appreciation of water systems.
- Promote development which takes account of socio economic and environmental considerations.
- Preserve unique character of the area including protection of flora and fauna.
- Support cultural and heritage based tourism.
- Support development of water based activities - sensitive to rural environment and ecosystems.
- Access to canal/river, inc. disabled access.
- Informative signage at points along both corridors.
- Infrastructure to heighten enjoyment of area around waterways; cycling, walking etc.
- Link project initiatives of various state agencies.

2.2.5 Nini and Roy Stevenson, Tarmonbarry

We recommend the preservation of the following in Tarmonbarry;

- Explosive storage box.
- Slipway/wash area and attached rail beside the above.
- Stone wall (part of original bridge) stretching from bridge to lock road.
- Stone sheds attached to Corner House on the lock Road, owned by Barry Keenan.
- Village pump.
- St Barrys Well.
- Development of amenity area has not progressed despite investment in the project by the people of Tarmonbarry.
- Toddlers pool should be repaired as an amenity for local and visiting children.
- Toilet block already constructed should be opened to the public.
- More jetties.
- Water taps suitable for attaching hoses for boats.

2.2.6 Ballymahon Branch of RCAG, Pat Kiludff

- Finish the Royal Canal restoration!

2.2.7 Waterways Ireland Structural Engineering Design, Jim Harvey

- Culverted road at Abbeyshrule – Old bridge (Webb's) to be strengthened and approach road realigned. Requires land acquisition. To be submitted for planning approval in the near future. Construction period of one year.
- Longford Bridge, 10.5km west of Abbeyshrule. New fixed bridge to be built and approach roads ramped, requiring land acquisition. Construction period of one year.
- Mosstown, 8km west of Longford Bridge. Culvert / bridge to be removed and vertical lifting bridge installed, requiring land acquisition. Scheme at preliminary design stage. Construction period one year.

- Lyneen / Ballinamore, 4.5km west of Mosston. Culvert / bridge to be removed and vertical lifting bridge installed, requiring land acquisition. Scheme at preliminary design stage. Construction period nine months.
- Begnagh, 7km west of Lyneen. Culvert / bridge to be removed and vertical lifting bridge installed, requiring land acquisition. Scheme at preliminary design stage. Construction period nine months.
- Bord na Móna culverts, 1.5km west of Begnagh Bridge. Culvert / bridge to be removed and vertical lifting bridge installed. Scheme at preliminary design stage. Construction period nine months.

All schemes should be complete by 2006 subject to land acquisition, planning approval and the necessary finance being made available. It is hoped that design finalisation on all projects and planning approval will be achieved in 2004.

- Two road culverts on the Longford Branch, at Churchlands Bridge and Knockanboy Bridge. Neither is on any current programme of works. Anticipated that Longford Branch restoration will follow completion of mail line, subject to approval and finance.

2.2.8 Keenagh Branch of RCAG, Pat Newman

Recommend preservation of following features;

- Cottage at Foigha Bridge.
- Cut stone overflow system after Keenagh harbour on the right (north).
- Also on the right (north) side a series of ponds which served the Old Mosstown Mill.
- The Mill and Millers Cottage.
- On the left (south) the Bog lake, Lough Bawn, partly dried out due to turf cutting.
- Siphon system enabling small stream to pass under the canal even though it is at a similar level, just before Coolnahinch lock.
- Coolnahinch lock keepers cottage.
- Ards lough lock keepers cottage.

2.2.9 IWAI Heritage and Conservation Committee, Rosaleen Miller

- Preservation of old stone "cairns" and in particular the red plaque at entrance to Camlin River.
- Preservation of architectural features in Clondra.
- Remains of old canal and lock in Roosky.

2.2.10 Scoil Mhuire Clondra, Colette McManus (principal)

- Safety for children attending the school

2.2.11 The Walshe Family, Clondra

- Consultation necessary with all interested parties.
- Safety, security.
- Information to landowners of their responsibility to waterways.
- Pollution by boat owners, sewage, industry, agriculture.
- Protection of fish stocks, wildlife, scrubland.
- Protection of canal banks from inappropriate uses.
- Resist over-development of hinterlands.
- Protection of archaeological features.
- Collection and collation and display to public of all historical (waterways) information.
- Interpretive centre in Clondra.
- Appoint archaeologist to oversee the above.
- Celebrate 200 years since the completion of the canal to Richmond harbour 2017.

2.2.12 Cloondara Area Action Group, Crea Nolan

- Preservation of natural heritage in future development of canal to Clondra.
- Royal canal is proposed NHA.
- Highlighting wetlands as being of global importance.

- Look at potential for sustainable development while protecting, managing and planning the various landscapes.
- Preservation of cultural heritage with links to the canal (Abbey, Omer House, The Mill, Clondra Village and Harbour, Bridges and stone walls).

2.2.13 Anne Skelly (personal submission)

- Detailed survey of landscape, fens, woodlands, callows, bog lands, archaeological features.
- Development to complement vernacular styles and not interfere with landscape character.
- Lough Ree National Park.
- Development of sustainable tourism infrastructure and amenities. Correct siting of marinas, toilets.
- Upgrade wastewater treatment from tourist enterprises. Pump out facilities for cruisers.
- Walkways along canal / ecological corridor. Inc. signage, footpaths and education.
- Create links with other county villages within close proximity to the canal.

2.2.14 Clondra Village Concerned Residents

- Opportunity due to convergence of three waterways.
- To maintain “getting away from it all”, feeling.
- To create forestry, picnic area, toilets and parking.
- Navigation house- information centre.
- Heritage centre, coffee shop, restaurant, play facilities.
- Create a development boundary around harbour for developers to fill in.
- Cycle paths.
- Boat rental (small boats).
- River pollution/ inadequate sewage system/ phosphates.
- Preservation of architectural features.
- Maintenance an enhancement of existing amenities.
- Toilet and showers at harbour.
- Development of the Mill.
- No oversized, unsuitable and destructive developments.
- Non-pub entertainment.
- Walks connected with the bog.
- Traffic management as a result of canal development.
- Public lighting.
- Footpaths.

2.2.15 Waterways Ireland Marketing and Communications, Éanna Rowe

- Enclosed Waterways Ireland Corporate and Business Plan 2002 – 2004.
- Waterways Ireland Marketing and Promotions Strategy is finalised and will be published shortly. It was formulated by the Division in conjunction with consultants CHL following public consultation.
- Strategy for Enhanced Customer Service to be finalised shortly.
- Press Office has been established.
- Waterways Liaison structures are currently being developed.
- Other initiatives include a review of visitor services, new publications and development of corporate identity.

2.2.16 John Dunne, Author of “Towpath Tours – Exploring Ireland’s Waterways”

In a substantial submission the following issues were discussed:

- *Present position for cyclists:* Waterways Ireland’s remit is to manage, maintain and develop the waterways for *recreational* purposes, which by definition includes cycling. But Waterways actively discourages cycling, arguing that in order to facilitate cyclists a black-top surface would need to be installed, at considerable expense. This denies

local people and visitors the opportunity to experience waterways and rural heritage, and overlooks a promotional / marketing opportunity.

- *Contribution of cycling visitors to Irish economy:* Cycling and walking are two of the fastest growing leisure activities internationally and are usually marketed together. Together they far outweigh golfing in terms of overseas visitor spend in Ireland. Statistics show that only 8% of cycling visitors to Ireland spend time in the Midland/East and South-East regions, through which the Royal and Grand Canals pass. Authors experience suggests these areas are far more attractive than areas cyclists are currently concentrating on.
- *Why cycling and waterways go well together.* Joe O'Reilly and Catriona Killally's "Through the Locks" makes numerous references to waterways employees cycling on the towpaths historically.
 - Towpaths provide cyclists with a safe, clean and traffic free environment;
 - Greater part of towpaths are fully accessible and navigable to mountain and hybrid bikes for the entire year;
 - Terrain is gentle and paths relatively flat;
 - Towpaths are quiet with only the odd fisherman, hiker, fellow cyclist or boat impinging on the tranquillity;
 - Better access to the myriad natural and cultural-historic heritage than by boat, car or foot. Cycling allows greater coverage of distance than walking or boating – particularly important for foreign visitors, whose time in Ireland is limited.
 - Variety for long or short cycle tours.
 - National Waymarked Ways already embraces portions of the waterways and they have been documented and signposted accordingly.
 - Encouraging cycling will allow boat hire companies to enhance promotion of their product.
- *Benefits to Waterways Ireland from encouraging cycling.*
 - Enhanced promotional opportunities: Message needs to be spread that waterways are not for boaters or anglers but also for non-motorised users. Enhanced appreciation of historic towns and villages, archaeological sites, landscapes, etc. Promotion in keeping with Government policy to get people exercising.
 - Monitoring assistance. Distance covered by cyclists in any journey is greater than by other means. Therefore cyclists are better positioned to report misuse or unsavoury behaviour to authorities.
 - Increased resources. Waterways are currently hugely underutilised and underpromoted. The more attention waterways receive the more resources are likely to be devoted to them. If deemed exclusive however they would be considered less deserving of public funds.
- *Impact of cycling on waterways.* Bicycles are a benign form of transport, and environmentally friendly (more so than engine-powered boats and maintenance vehicles used by Waterways Ireland). Bicycle wheels leave only a temporary trace, not unlike the print of a hiking boot.
- *Overseas experience.* Author has travelled extensively by bicycle along waterways in the UK, continental Europe and India. Greenways for Europe (Reseau Vert Europeen – REVER) identified canal towpaths as very appropriate for cycling and other non-motorised uses.
- *Possible solutions to Waterways Ireland's concerns regarding cycling.* Do the minimal from an infrastructural viewpoint. "Sanitisation" of the towpaths would reduce their value – maintaining them in a state as close as possible to nature and history will give them unique appeal among the waterways of Europe. Installation of black-top surfaces would impact on ecology and aesthetic appeal and would be conducive to speeding. Requirement of a permit, with Good Conduct Code and disclaimer exonerating Waterways Ireland from liability for accidents would improve the current "blind eye" approach, which is very ambiguous.

2.2.17 Royal Canal Ventures, Peter Holland

- Information sessions at national School level informing the youth of the waterways.
- Highlight importance as a leisure amenity for Irish and International tourists.
- Highlight damage of pollution.
- Highlight wildlife diversity.

- Educate children to the damage littering has on wildlife.
- Attribute responsibility of pollution to relevant businesses.
- Installation of CCTV cameras in harbours.
- Promotion of the canal as walking amenity.
- Create links with other European waterways.
- Maintain water levels throughout the year.
- Installation of power points.
- Pump out facilities.
- Better weed control.
- Improved signage explaining history/ecology.
- Restoration of lock keepers houses.
- Run award schemes for people living along banks to take pride in their property.

2.2.18 Roosky Residents Association, M Nugent

- Development of angling as a use - *access, fish stocks (conduct survey and address any imbalance), wheelchair fishing stands, extensive marketing.*
- Service block/ public toilet for harbour/village.
- Pump-out station.
- Canal walk, picnic area to west side of old derelict canal in village.
- Promotion of flora and fauna (of which a detail study is almost complete).
- Maintenance of hedgerows.
- Multi-lingual signs.
- Street lighting upgraded, up-lighting on road bridge, lighting along Lock Rd and at adjacent berthing areas for security.

2.2.19 IWAI – Athlone, P D McMahon

- Provision of Shannon Authority to manage the waterway.
- Protection archaeological sites.
- Provision of water-side trees.
- Protection of callows.
- Monitoring rather than banning uses contributing to noise control, pollution and speeding.
- Promote water /land access to maximise use.

3.0 Public Workshops

The following notice was displayed at prominent public locations in all settlements within the waterways corridor for several weeks prior to the workshops being held.



**The
Heritage
Council**

**CUNNANE
STRATTON
REYNOLDS**

Town Planning
Landscape Architecture

PUBLIC WORKSHOP – WATERWAYS CORRIDOR STUDY

The River Shannon between Rooskey and Lanesboro, and the Royal Canal between Thomastown and Clondra are the subject of a Heritage Council sponsored Waterways Corridor Study.

Cunnane Stratton Reynolds (CSR) on behalf of the Heritage Council, together with Waterways Ireland and Westmeath, Longford, Roscommon and Leitrim County Councils, would like to invite you to attend a Stakeholders' Workshop for communities, user groups and individuals with an interest in the waterways. Three workshops will be held, at the following venues:

	Date and Time	Venue	Subject Area
	Monday 10 November, 19h30 –	Mullingar Park Hotel, Dublin Road, Mullingar – Aoife Suite	The <u>Royal Canal</u> from Thomastown to Clondra, and adjacent settlements
	Tuesday 11 November, 18h30 –	Lanesboro Arms Hotel	*The <u>Shannon River Navigation</u> including Lough Ree, and Lanesboro
	Wednesday 19 November, 19h30 –	St. Barry's Hall, Tarmonbarry	The <u>Shannon River Navigation</u> from Rooskey to Lanesboro, and adjacent settlements including Clondra, and the Royal Canal

We wish to discuss a "Vision" for the future of the waterways and its communities, to identify ways to manage the waterways corridor environment for the benefit of all and to discuss areas that may be suitable for future developments whilst retaining the distinctive elements that contribute to the sense of place.

Please RSVP by phone to Richard Butler, CSR, on 01 661 0419.

If you know of anyone who may be interested in this study please ask them along. Your interest and attendance would be much appreciated.

* The Lanesboro Workshop will be held by CSR in conjunction with Colin Buchanan and Partners, consultants on a similar Waterways Corridor Study of the Shannon from Lanesboro to Shannonbridge.

3.1 St. Barry's Hall Termonbarry, Wednesday 19th November 2003

List of Attendance

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Karen Kennedy	LCRL	Crea Nolan	Cloondara Area Action group
Tom Crosby	Termonbarry	Nini Stevenson	Termonbarry
Roy Stevenson	Termonbarry	M Skelly	Cloondara
Anne Skelly	Cloondara	N Walshe	Cloondara
Peggy Baxter	Cloondara Community Association	Frances McPartland	Cloondara Area Action Group
Derek Rowley	Lakeland	Mary Rowley	Lakeland
Patrick Nugent	Roosky	Margaret Nugent	Roosky
Kathleen Hickey	Cloondara	Hugh Hickey	Cloondara
Finbarr ???	Termonbarry	Pat ???	Termonbarry
Mick Farrell	Newtownforbes	Anne Hartnell Murtagh	Cloondara
Seamus Murtagh	Cloondara	Phelim Nevin	Cloondara
Eddie FLynn	Cloondara Area Action	Tom O'Neill	IWAI Roosky
Denis Glennan	MCC Longford	Maire Flynn	Longford Tourism
David Rogers	Longford Tourism	Eugene Murphy	Roscommon Co. Co.

3.1.1 Summary of Proceedings

Among the issues discussed were the following:

Boating. Insufficient Mooring capacity on Shannon in general. River is not congested - more jetties required. Only 8 berths in Termonbarry – Jetties were delivered but Waterways Ireland has failed to install them for several years.

Policing. A Shannon Authority is required. Speeding is a problem. Large boats are conflict with rowing. Poor river courtesy. Need a code to inform people.

Water quality. EPA monitoring shows slight improvement, but policing of IPC licenses insufficient. Management of waste disposal on river – visitors need to understand how to use facilities. Access to pump-outs is difficult. Repair and servicing is insufficient. Bin provision for waste disposal at harbours is insufficient, as is waste collection. Impact of sewerage from riverside developments (e.g. tax-driven schemes) increasing. Possible use of reed bed systems (cheap, natural) should be explored. Agricultural run-off including fertilisers and slurry requires control – foam at Termonbarry. Zebra mussel requires attention. Bord na Móna responsible for river siltation. Afteruse of bogs needs to be addressed early – feasibility study underway for Peatland Wilderness Park, drivers based in Strokestown. Potential afforestation concerning.

Walking. Walking on private lands beside river raises liability issues. Solution required, to increase access and use – Disability consciousness on the Shannon is lacking. Personal Responsibility needs to supersede landowners' liability.

Settlements. Quality of life in riverside villages is because they are small. These places are special. Development levies imposed on water-related development should be ploughed into Shannon communities, e.g. Tarmon Harbour development.

Roosky

- Public toilet closed due to vandalism;
- No mooring north of the bridge for boats waiting for bridge lifting;
- Lighting in mooring areas required;
- Walking as a leisure pursuit requires development;
- Improvements to bridge to allow for pedestrian crossing to be undertaken by County Councils;

- Sewerage system limits capacity of the village for growth;
- Nearby Kilglass lake recreational / amenity area requires environmental improvements (parking, seating, mooring) – Responsibility of Roscommon Co. Co;
- Improved access for fishermen;
- Provision of wheelie bins in harbour and regular collection – Half-drums not adequate - Requirement for recycling facilities;
- Derelict courthouse requires attention;
- Rooskey Bridge requires cleaning (moss, etc.).

Termonbarry

- Schedule for raising of the bridge. Debate inconclusive. Further investigation required. (Already undertaken by Waterways Ireland resulting in decision to retain current system of lifting as required by navigation traffic.);
- Improvements to mooring north and south of bridge required – access to village – Tarmon Harbour development to provide 25 new public berths;
- Derelict amenity area including swimming pool requires attention – Tarmon Harbour development levies to be directed towards this;
- Village should be developed sympathetically;
- Local community has initiated substantial environmental improvements but support from County Council lacking.

Cloondara

- Cloondara has potential as “Hub” of a Longford navigation / waterways amenity system;
- All development to take cognisance of Clondra 2020 document - Protection of built heritage, listing of stone walls and bridges important;
- Narrow streets / bridges are an inherent constraint to over-development – Speed limits should be properly imposed;
- Omer Lock House owned by OPW – should be restored;
- Harbour / streetscape Improvements required, including lighting, etc;
- Walks along the canal require development. Also walks through Coillte forest to SAC;
- Possibility of pony trekking on towpaths requires investigation;
- Car parking at church required;
- Link between Cloondara and Termonbarry requires planning attention from County Coucil.

Longford. Opening of harbour is vital.

Lanesborough. Lack of facilities at historic harbour (toilet, etc.). Sewage system inadequate – smelly, unsightly. Development on Slieve Bawn hotel site unsightly.

3.2 Lough Ree Arms Hotel, Tuesday 11th November 2003

List of Attendance

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
P D McMahon	Athlone	D Robinson	Underwater Archaeology Unit, DOEHLG
Fionbarr Moore	Underwater Archaeology Unit, DOEHLG	John Mahoney	IWAI Kilglass
Dermot Lyons	Longford	??? Farrell	Longford
Ray Hogan	Longford	Sean Cahill	Lanesborough
Mairead Cahill	Lanesborough	Pat Collum	Lough Ree Dev.
J Cary	Ballyleague	Michael Cesey	Newtowncashel
Eileen Fahey	Kilteeran Community Dev.	Brian Hyland	Longford
Trevor Tomsett	Dromod	Mary Tomsett	Dromod
Liam ???	Newtowncashel	Mark Shieras	Lanesborough
Sam Nalam	Lanesborough	Niall Moore	Waterways Ireland

Ian Hester	Lanesborough	Jenny Thompson	Ballyleague
Patrick Dowlan	Roscommon Regional Game Council	Elizabeth Fallon	Lough Ree Dev.
Mark Wilkinson	Lough Ree Island	Eve Harrison	Roscommon Co. Co.
Robert Hall	Longford	Sile Moles	DOEHLG Conservation Ranger

3.2.1 Summary of Proceedings

Among the issues discussed were the following:

Water quality

- Elevated level of ammonia in the Shannon points to leakage from peat harvesting.
- Presence of Formaldehyde suggests additional industrial pollution.
- Evidence of damage to reed beds by speeding boats. Reed beds are important for phosphate & nitrate reduction.
- Inadequate sewage treatment in Lanesborough.
- Code of conduct for is required for the navigation.
- Introduce registration of boats to ensure vessels comply with requirements. Possibly a cap on power of boats.
- Investigate effects of jet skis – consider noise pollution.
- EPA is not enforcing laws of IPA licences

Callows

- Are these being affected by water level control?
- Callows north of Lanesborough not designated.
- Callows need to be grazed if they are to be maintained as the unique habitat they are. Therefore the role of the farmer is paramount to their existence.
- Farmers should be given incentive to farm Shannon edge - they understand grassland management.

Navigation

- Requirement for a Shannon River Authority.
- Section north of Termonbarry is shallow. Increased incidents of boats bottoming out – rocks or siltation or size of modern vessels the cause?
- County Council should develop sites for landing / jetties. Coordination required in developing access to water edge.
- Under utilised access points – lack of information.
- Illegal Harbours.

Tourism

- Access to river from land very limited. Waterways Ireland control up to 123m contour so there is no river bank in their control on which to develop riverside walks. Landowner liability therefore an issue. Possible use of styles to facilitate walkers. Consider bank erosion should walking be promoted.
- Promotion of non-mechanised sports, e.g. walking and cycling on underused country roads.
- Tourism infrastructure and information points are lacking.
- Incentives for local tourism development required.
- Opportunities for guided tours of heritage and islands in particular.

Lanesborough

- Inadequate sewage treatment in Lanesborough though on Roscommon side there is state of art sewage facility
- Blanket restrictions on development on roads around lakes. No further ribbon development.
- Protected views should remain protected. One in Ballyleague has been compromised by recent Slieve Bawn development.
- Quay between bridge new harbour (north of bridge) needs re-development - Wall is falling down, railing are unsightly and useless. Owned by Roscommon Council.

Heritage

- Create awareness of underwater archaeology among developers.
- National monuments below water are not yet documented.
- Education, access and awareness helps protect sites.
- Leave the textile factory as it is – an industrial ruin – not to be developed for housing. Ensure there is no risk of contamination.

VISION

- Protection, education, access.

3.3 Mullingar Park Hotel, Monday 10th November 2003

List of Attendance

Name	Organisation	Name	Organisation
Thomas Campbell	Private	Gerald Daly	Private
Noel McGeeny	RCAG	Rhona Rogers	Westmeath Tourism Council
Pat Newman	RCAG	Colin Becker	IWAI / Heritage Council
Rosaleen Miller	IWAI	Pat Caffrey	RCAG
Mike Miller	IWAI	Sarah Caffrey	RCAG
Micky Shaw	Mullingar Course Angling Club	Gabriel McGoey	RCAG
Pascal Weymes	MCAC	Jim Mitchell	RCAG
Noel Spaine	RCAG	Philip Butler	RCAG
Alan O'Leary	RCAG	Brendan Quigley	RCAG
Pat Kilduff	RCAG	Niall Galway	RCAG
Ian Bath	RCAG / Heritage Council	Paddy Greene	RCAG
Pat O'Connor	RCAG	Olive Greene	RCAG
Peter Holland	RCAG	Conor McGuire	Teagasc
Tom Slanly	RCAG	Eamonn Corrigan	RCAG
Watson Mills	RCAG	Peter Caffrey	RCAG
Bernie Lynn	Westmeath Community Development (LEADER)	Geoff Gallagher	RCAG
Joe McGuire	RCAG	Frances Holland	RCAG

3.3.1 Summary of Proceedings

Among the issues discussed at the workshop were the following:

Angling. Poor consultation between Waterways Ireland and angling clubs in terms of weed management. Improved weed control required - Late autumn is a good time for weed management from anglers' point of view. Spraying in conflict with swans. Dual use keeps weeds down. Waterways Ireland in process of converting from chemical to mechanical weed control.

Signage. Required in villages, centres of activity, etc. highlighting history, ecology, recreational uses.

Walking. Provision for the elderly to walk close to village & towns required. Grassy banks in rural areas more pleasing, and discourages undesirable uses. Town Council responsible for Mullingar tow paths

Longford Branch. Follow on project beyond 2006 main line restoration. Longford within one day easy cruise from Shannon, therefore an essential destination Commitment by CIE for Longford Draw Bridge required to save Longford Harbour. Town Council required to take a

role in restoration / development of the canal. 10 acres have been acquired by Council to develop should Longford branch be restored.

Mullingar. Security Cameras required as Mullingar Harbour is unsafe. Novelty value of boats passing through attracts undesirables. Portion of privately owned land beside dry dock / store has potential for development that could encourage life in the harbour.

Ballynacarrigy. Monument / burial place of canal engineer nearby alongside remains of Abbey & Leper Hospital – potential for promotion. Plans to develop old harbour buildings as restaurant and cottages on Harbour Road to into showers / pump out facility – To be completed on schedule with canal opening. Royal twinned with French canal - Promotion abroad with view to future opening.

Abbeyshrule. Abbeyshrule is the priority culvert. Whitworth aqueduct should be highlighted. Network of facilities along canal to compete with other waterways, i.e. so pump-out stations, toilets, showers, etc. Potential for development of camping facilities. Leader program could provide these in cooperation with others. Cistercian Abbey requires preservation. Car parking required for increasing angling visitors.

Clondra. Dry dock in cannot be restored until canal is finish because the water level in the harbour is artificially maintained.

General development / promotion.

- Sites of importance should be added to the canal navigation guide;
- Remove closed signs on map and rephrase with “in-restoration”;
- Involve communities;
- Pump outs must be manned;
- Taps not designed for putting water into boats – requires attention;
- Promotion in UK - they have familiarity with canals;
- Cost of bringing boats from England is prohibitive;
- Presence of boats on canals acts as economic magnet - they present a good image.
- Longford has very little else in tourist value;
- Increase co-operation from Longford County Council.
- Education / promotion of canals in schools required.
- Policing of derelict, stationary boats required.