

Report on	Interim Update Ballysaggart Lough Development Project
Date	Thursday 11 th February 2021
Reporting Officer	Head of Parks
Contact Officer	Nigel Hill

Is this report restricted for confidential business? If 'Yes', confirm below the exempt information category relied upon	Yes	
	No	x

1.0	Purpose of Report				
1.1	To update members on Ballysaggart Lough, Dungannon Development Project.				
2.0	Background				
2.1	<p>In November 2017, Mid Ulster Council commissioned Outdoor Recreation NI to undertake a Strategic Outline Business Case for the proposed development of Ballysaggart Lough, Dungannon.</p> <p>Development proposal for Ballysaggart Lough provided four indicative cost options</p> <p>Option 1 £0 (do nothing), Option 2 £610,500 Option 3 £239,500 Option 4 £163,500 (bare minimum)</p> <p>Ballysaggart Lough development poses significant challenges in relation to securing land ownership which may impede options 2 or 3. Option 4 (bare minimum) costed at £163,500 would enhance the overall experience to the site mainly through providing toilets and upgrading the existing trails and visitor services.</p>				
2.2	<p>Consideration of Options to meet the Project Need – Ballysaggart Lough</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Option</th> <th>Description</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Option 1 Do nothing/Status Quo</td> <td> <p>Ballysaggart Lough would remain as is, with no further investment.</p> <p>Although Ballysaggart Lough would continue to provide a recreational resource for the local community, the site would continue to offer a lower quality experience than expected with no investment in the existing visitor services.</p> </td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Option	Description	Option 1 Do nothing/Status Quo	<p>Ballysaggart Lough would remain as is, with no further investment.</p> <p>Although Ballysaggart Lough would continue to provide a recreational resource for the local community, the site would continue to offer a lower quality experience than expected with no investment in the existing visitor services.</p>
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Option 1 Do nothing/Status Quo	<p>Ballysaggart Lough would remain as is, with no further investment.</p> <p>Although Ballysaggart Lough would continue to provide a recreational resource for the local community, the site would continue to offer a lower quality experience than expected with no investment in the existing visitor services.</p>				

		<p>Consequently, the opportunity to attract new visitors to the site and from all sections of the community would not increase.</p>
	<p>Option 2 (see Fig. 1 for Development Proposals)</p>	<p>This option costed at £610,500 would provide the local community with a quality, shared and accessible green/open space. It would also open the site to new members of the community, increasing cross community cohesion and increased social inclusion. This option involves;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new pedestrian footpath along Windmill Hill Road linking Ballysaggart Lough to the residential area of Fairmount and Annaghshee and ultimately Railway Park 2. 370m of new boardwalk path to link the end of the pedestrian footpath to the existing trail around the shore of the Lough. 3. A new 790m category 1 trail which would join into the existing trail and complete a circular walking trail around the Lough. 4. A new toilet facility with appropriate lighting that is accessible from the car through a new 'all ability trail'. 5. A new art/sculpture based on the Lough's birdlife. 6. People counters. 7. Upgrading of the existing trails (1600m) and visitor services including bins, benches, picnic tables, signage railings, gates, horticultural planting. Benches, picnic tables, signage etc to be bespoke based on the Lough's birdlife. 8. Upgrading of the existing jetty to a new slipway, rock armouring and upgrading of the car park.

<p>2.3 Ballysaggart Lough Concept Development Proposal 2017 Option 2 : £610,500 (draft estimate 2017)</p>	<p>Option 3</p>	<p>This option costed at £239,500 would provide the local community with a quality, accessible green/open space. It would not open the site to new members of the community, increasing cross community cohesion and increased social inclusion given that the pedestrian footpath is not included. This option involves delivering option 2 as set out above, but excludes;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the pedestrian link to Railway Park (high risk as dependent on successful landowner negotiation) 2. the new section of boardwalk trail (high risk as dependent on pedestrian footpath going in) 3. the new section of category 1 trail around the eastern side of the Lough (high risk as dependent on successful landowner negotiation) 4. upgrading of the car park, developing a slipway and rock armouring (deemed lower priority as will not increase the visitor experience)
	<p>Option 4 (Bare minimum)</p>	<p>This option costed as £163,500 involves delivering option 3 as set out above but in addition, reduces the quality and uniqueness of the visitor services product developed on-site, that is, specific elements are no longer bespoke to Ballysaggart Lough e.g. seating and specific elements are reduced in scope and scale e.g. art/sculpture and access signage.</p> <p>This option would therefore involve doing the bare minimum.</p>



3.0 Main Report

3.1 Mid Ulster District Council approved the current Outdoor Recreation Strategy in March 2020. The Outdoor Recreation Strategy provides a clear direction for the sustainable development, management and promotion of future outdoor recreation facilities, programs, infrastructure, resources and investment over the period 2020-2025 within the Mid Ulster District Council area. The strategy sets out the agreed projects and programme. Ballysaggart Lough development project is listed as a year 4/5 objective.

3.2 However, development work on the project is ongoing. The Ballysaggart Lough project is already taking shape under the current capital works programme associated to the councils responsibilities as Reservoir Managers as required under the Reservoirs (NI) Act. Ballysaggart Lough Flood Map (6.1). Council appointed Aecom Consultancy (Reservoir Engineers) in November 2020 to progress the necessary preliminary investigations and design/advise on structural remedial works for both Ballysaggart and

3.3	<p>Park Lake Reservoirs. The programme of works to include a tendering process and construction period projects a completion date in August 2022, subject to variation.</p> <p>The reservoir works are pivotal to the overall development of Ballysaggart Lough as the dam wall embankment (crest) is an option to achieve safe pedestrian access across the top of the dam to access the current network of paths that circumscribe the Lough (6.2). This option links into Ballysaggart Lough Concept Development Proposal 2017 (2.3).</p>
4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	<p><u>Financial</u> Financial: The Outdoor Recreation Five Year Strategic Plan retains provision for the planned development of Ballysaggart Lough and is resourced from central capital budget allocations as presented and approved by Council in March 2020. Capital works associated to the responsible management of reservoirs is budgeted for under the council's capital programme 2020-2024.</p> <p>The Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan may be subject to variables associated to opportunities of additional external funding that may enhance or change the delivery objectives over the life of the strategy.</p>
4.2	<p><u>Human</u> Current staff structure sufficient to deliver on Outdoor Recreation Strategic Plan in conjunction with the appointments of appropriately qualified and experienced consultancy (ICT) and Integrated Supply Teams (IST).</p>
4.3	<p><u>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</u> Extensive consultation was conducted with Council Officers, Elected Members, public and statutory agencies, community associations and groups, clubs and the general public.</p>
4.4	<p><u>Rural Needs Implications:</u> In line with the Mid Ulster Council Community Plan outcomes. Within the Strategy, it is the aim of Council to address this deficiency and ensure citizens of all abilities are adequately provided for across rural areas.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	<p>Members are invited to note the content of the report as presented for updates and information purposes.</p>
6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	<p>Ballysaggart Lough Flood Map.</p>

6.2



Ballysaggart Lough Dam Wall Crest. Potential for pedestrian access path as part of proposed development plan to link Ballysaggart Lough and Railway Park.

