

Report on	Scoping Studies: Davagh to Beaghmore Solar Walk & Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre projects
Date of Meeting	March 2019
Reporting Officer	Michael Browne/Nigel Hill
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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	<p>To update Council on the requirement to commission Scoping Studies to be undertaken for:</p> <p>a) Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Stone Circles Solar Boardwalk and b) Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre Scoping Study.</p>
2.0	Background
2.1	<p>Following a number of meetings with Mid Ulster Council Officers and Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs (DAERA) representatives during December 2018 and early January 2019, Mid Ulster District Council have been invited by DAERA to submit two applications to the Rural Tourism Scheme for two potential projects.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Solar Walk 2. Fivemiletown Round Lake proposals.
2.2	<p>At this stage and prior to making application a scoping study is require, which DAERA will fund up to 75%. The scoping study/appraisal along with all procurement needs to carry out, and needs to submitted, along with the application on, or before 31st July 2019.</p> <p>When the calls for Expressions of Interest was issued the Department of Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs provided clear indication of the priorities it was intending to address, namely that proposed projects should:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) be flagship, Iconic, Unique b) increase out of State visitors c) create capital infrastructure d) create Job(s)

Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Stone Circles Solar Boardwalk.

- 2.3 The Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Stone Circles Boardwalk, has been identified by Mid Ulster District Council as one of its core projects which links strategically to two of the three themes identified with the Council's tourism strategy, Heritage and Outdoor Hubs.
- 2.4 The basis of this project is to provide a unique first of its kind in Ireland Davagh Solar Walk, which will be a 4.25km walkable with scale model of the solar system, between Davagh Forest and Beaghmore Stone Circles. The walk will be combination of board and mountain walks along with a digitally immersive experience, linking the surrounding heritage of the area. The walk will provide both a daytime and a night-time experience, which will complement the local built heritage and the unique natural heritage.
- 2.5 During the day, the walk will emphasize the beautiful Sperrins landscape and heritage that, connects the landscape with the sky above. In contrast, the evening walk will be an immersive experience, which will go from the Visitor Centre to Beaghmore Stone Circles. The walk will comprise of both boardwalks to protect the ground and hard-core trails with a small pedestrian bridge taking you over the Davagh River.
- 2.6 This unique solar walk will complement the current developments of the new Davagh Dark Sky Visitor Centre, both physically and an animated guide, presented in a digital format of the solar system and the wider galaxy and beyond.
- 2.7 This will present the visitor with an experience exploring space and planets in real time, whilst getting a sense of distance and space. This project will also link the night sky to the uniqueness of the local ancient and natural heritage.

Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre

- 2.8 Round Lake Caravan Park is located amidst the lush Clogher Valley and is a short walk from busy Fivemiletown. The existing Round Lake a caravan park that is close to the Blessingbourne Mountain Bike Trails, beautiful Fermanagh Lakelands, Carleton Trail, is a 20-minute drive from the bustling shopping Centre of Enniskillen and within walking distance of the Fivemiletown.
- 2.9 Presently the site has a range of facilities for the camper including 12 fully serviced hard standing pitches, space for tents, coarse angling facilities with slipway for boat anglers, lakeside walks, children's play area, picnic site, television lounge and a visitor amenity.

<p>2.10</p> <p>2.11</p> <p>2.12</p> <p>2.13</p>	<p>We are proposing to add to and upgrade the facility at the Round Lake, Fivemiletown, to broaden the appeal of this beautiful area to a wider potential audience that will encourage the visitor to stay and play in the Fivemiletown area.</p> <p>This will include an on water/floating glamping village with a water ski/wake board cable line in the middle of the lake. In addition, we are proposing to upgrade the existing building as a central facility building for administration and changing.</p> <p>With the addition of the floating glamping pods village and the Water Ski/Wakeboard, this will create a different experience and attraction to the area and will broaden the demographic appeal and complement and enhance the recent village enhancement scheme.</p> <p>Cable water skiing and wakeboarding offers the most cost effective and sociable way to take to the water and can accommodate both beginners and advanced users.</p> <p>This facility will appeal to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Social Energisers • Great Escapers • The Culturally Curious <p>With the unique experience of the on water glamping pods and the wakeboard/water-ski cable facility, this will also have an international appeal.</p>
<p>3.0</p>	<p>Main Report</p>
<p>3.1</p> <p>3.2</p> <p>3.3</p>	<p>DAERA have now asked the Council to proceed to full capital application stage for both projects. In order to complete the full capital application, it is a requirement of the Funder that all procurement and planning needs to be secured in advance.</p> <p>In addition, a request to DAERA will be submitted to DAERA to access Technical Assistance funding to develop Scoping Studies for both the Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Stone Circles Solar Boardwalk and Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre.</p> <p>A Letter of Offer has now been received by Mid Ulster District Council for the two projects. We now recommend to progress with the Scoping Studies for both the Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Stone Circles Solar Boardwalk and Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre, in preparation of full capital applications, which we are required to submit on 31st July 2019.</p>

4.0	Other Considerations
4.1	Financial, Human Resources & Risk Implications
	<p>Financial:</p> <p>Scoping Study for the Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Solar Walk, total of £19,450 match funding required is £4,863, subject to approval by DAERA.</p> <p>Scoping Study for Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre, total £19,450 match funding required is £4,863, subject to approval by DAERA.</p> <p>Financial support from Mid Ulster District Council for each scoping study can be met from within the current Tourism and Parks Budgets.</p>
	<p>Human:</p> <p>Staff time.</p>
	<p>Risk Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Specific conditions within the Letter of Offer states that all overrun costs in the development of the projects will be met by council. • Failure to apply for the full capital grant may lead to clawback of the Technical Assistance grant award.
4.2	Screening & Impact Assessments
	<p>Equality & Good Relations Implications:</p> <p>All Equality and Good Relations Implications will be considered and addressed within Scoping Studies undertaken</p>
	<p>Rural Needs Implications:</p> <p>Rural Needs Implications will be considered as part of the Scoping Studies undertaken.</p>
5.0	Recommendation(s)
5.1	To approve signing of Letters of Offer for commissioning of Scoping Studies for a) Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Solar Walk and b) Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre
5.2	To approve 25% match-funding requirement for scoping Studies, to be met from within existing Tourism and Parks and to fund an economic appraisal, if required.

6.0	Documents Attached & References
6.1	Letter of Offer - Davagh Forest to Beaghmore Solar Walk and Fivemiletown Round Lake Activity Centre