

**DO: GACH BALL DE CHEANTAR BARDASACH DHÚN GARBHÁN/LEASA MHÓIR
TO: EACH MEMBER OF THE MUNICIPAL DISTRICT OF COMERAGH MUNICIPAL DISTRICT**

Economic Development Report to the end of July 2022

**1. Mount Congreve
New Visitor Centre**

The new visitor centre will house a café, along with a retail space for visitors. Works to this area are progressing well, with glazing of the courtyard area now complete. A substantial completion date of 31st August 2022 is anticipated, with fitout of the retail area to follow.

The replacement of the east wing roof is ongoing, which is being funded by the Historic Structures Fund.

Carpark

Works to resurface the existing Dairy carpark are now complete. WCCC continue to liaise with the Office of Public Works regarding the construction of a new 80 space carpark adjacent the main avenue to the house.

Integrated Constructed Wetlands

The wetlands will treat wastewater from the new visitor centre and act as a hub for biodiversity, once complete. The planting of the wetlands is complete and finishing works are underway.

Interpretation, Orientation & Wayfinding

The interpretation, orientation & wayfinding scheme is a crucial part of the visitor experience. This will involve the telling of the story of Mount Congreve through an interactive visitor experience in the main house, as well as various installations throughout the garden. Contractors to undertake all interpretive signage and internal fitout works have been appointed and manufacture and installation of these elements is due to commence in coming weeks.

Food & Beverage

CaToCa Fine Foods Ltd have been appointed as operator for the food and beverage (F&B) offering in the new visitor centre.

Garden Works & Play Features

Numerous elements throughout the garden will be upgraded and improved as part of the works. These include the resurfacing of 3kms of the path network, which has now been completed. Works to repair the waterfall and restore the temple are also now complete. A proposal to clean the façade of the house is expected to be agreed imminently.

A contractor has been appointed to design and build the new bespoke play scheme for Mount Congreve. Design works to commence in the coming weeks.

Rural Regeneration & Development Fund (RRDF) Application

The project has successfully been awarded additional funding of €1,125,235, which now brings total RRDF contribution to €4,851,135.

**2. Trails
Outdoor Recreation Infrastructure Scheme (ORIS) 2020:**

- Measure 1: Boolas Loop Walk/Curraheen Trails-maintenance and upgrade project in progress: New signage, boardwalk/bog crossings and re-surfacing of access path all complete. Small section of new fencing to be completed.
- Measure 1: Nire Valley Walks-maintenance and upgrade project complete. Claim submitted to DRCD June 2022.
- Measure 2: Mahon Falls improved trailhead, parking and passing bays. Planning approval in place. Tender documents currently being prepared. Ecological Clerk of Works being procured.

ORIS 2021:

- Measure 1: Cleary's Boreen, Portlaw, improvement works. Works commenced in early July. Project to be completed by 31 December 2022.
- Measure 1: Walk Waterford ongoing promotion. Revision and re-print of trails brochure and promotional materials. RFQ being drafted.
- Measure 2: Kilmacthomas River Walk improvement works. Project has commenced with surfacing of section of walkway. Further works to be carried out during 2022.
- Measure 2: Installation of footfall counters at key trails and outdoor recreation amenities countywide. Tender documents being prepared.
- Measure 3: Mahon Bridge/Crough Wood trailhead and improved car parking area. Design consultant in place.
- Project Development Measure: Copper Coast Walking Trail Feasibility study. Tender documents to engage design team currently being drafted.

Waterford Greenway:

- Durrow Station Casual Trading area: EOI sought from operators. Successful operator in place since June bank holiday weekend.
- Durrow Playground: Site cleared, and groundworks currently being carried out at location 300 metres from Durrow Car Park. Due for completion late summer 2022.
- Ongoing Greenway improvements and enhancements: with funding support from TII.

Waterford Greenway to Suir Blueway Connection:

- WCCC and Tipp Co Co have engaged TOBIN consulting engineers to carry out feasibility study into recreational trail connecting Waterford Greenway and Suir Blueway: Kilmeadan-Portlaw area-Carrick-on-Suir. Section 85 agreement in place. Feasibility study progressing.

Comeraghs Wild 2022

- Trails Officer involved in the organisation of Comeraghs Wild 2022. Very successful festival this year. Some fantastic concerts and events. Some very successful outdoor recreation events including the Nire Valley Drop, guided walks, surfing etc. highlighting the importance of outdoor recreation and activity tourism to the Comeragh area.

3. Rural Economic Development

2022 Streetscape Enhancement Scheme

Waterford City & County Council received guidance from the Dept. Rural & Community Development that the roll out of the 2022 Streetscape Enhancement Scheme has been paused. It is expected further clarification regarding the Scheme will be received shortly.

Town Village Renewal Scheme 2022

Rural Development Team are liaising with selected communities to develop applications for submitting on 22nd July 2022 to the Dept. Rural & Community Development.

Stradbally 2020 Town Village Project

Stradbally Biodiversity Park majority of the works are completed and final elements such as signs and listening post to be installed before the end of month.