

Cabinet Approval sought for Meath MASTER Plan



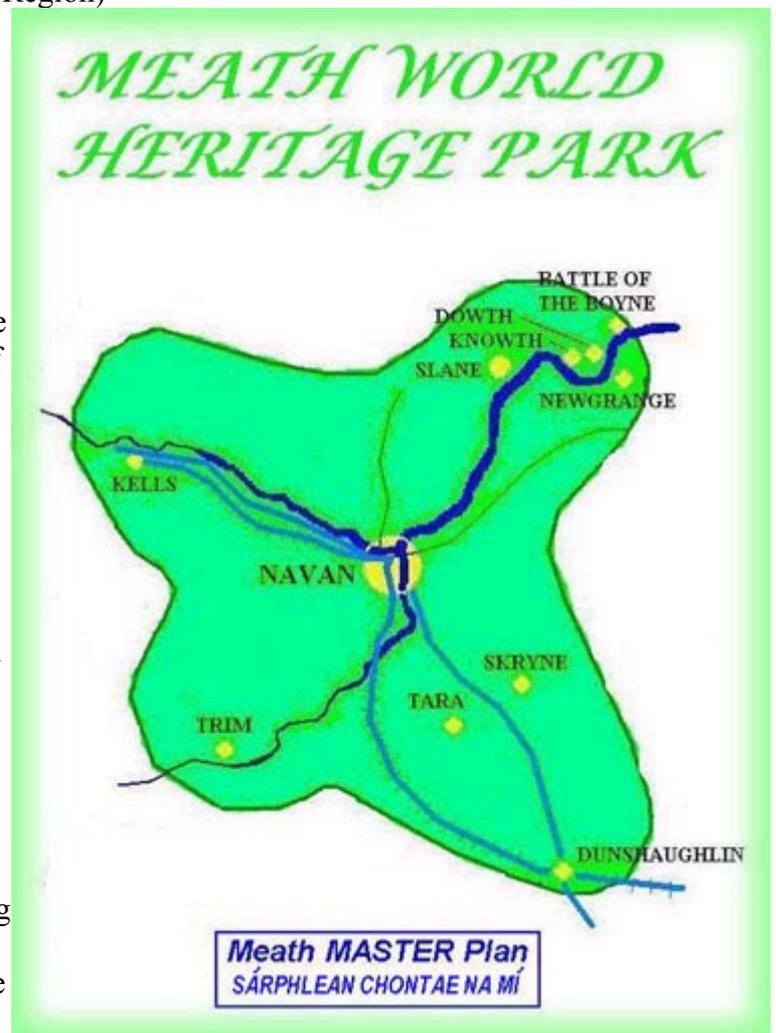
Breakthrough Sustainable Development Plan Solves M3 Legal, Environmental & Heritage Issues

CABINET approval is sought for the new Meath MASTER Plan (Model Archaeological and Sustainable Economic Region) -

an advanced development plan that solves the current legal, environmental and heritage issues around the controversial M3 motorway, and which also provides a wider model for sustainable economic, heritage and tourism development in Meath.

The innovative plan, which has been briefed to the media, avoids re-routing the M3 as it uses much of the current road scheme "footprint". By switching to the existing N3 in the sensitive Tara-Skryne Valley area, it preserves the threatened Lismullin monument and other archaeological sites, automatically resolving the EU legal issues whilst still providing much-needed bypasses of Dunshaughlin and Navan. It further prioritises the much-sought after rail link to Navan and Kells and provides for new coach services, thereby also cutting traffic and harmful CO2 and other emissions. A HGV ban in the valley would further cut traffic volumes and air and noise pollution.

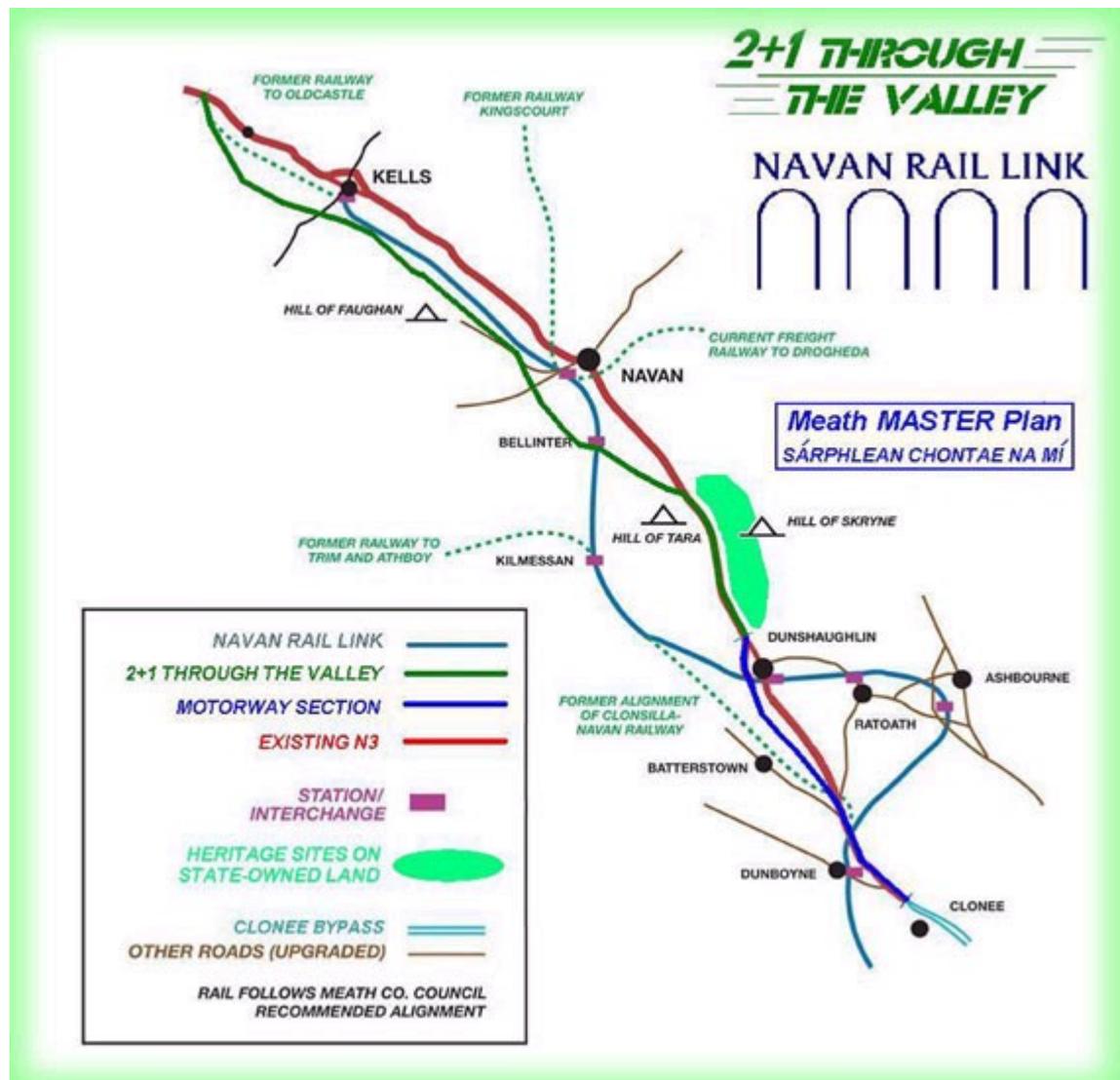
The plan also facilitates the designation of the region as a UNESCO World Heritage site, resulting in the preservation, protection and sustainable management of the archaeology in the valley while bringing a potential increase of €75 million in tourism revenue per annum. Development in the designated region would be eco-designed and promoted on a small scale, in line with recent guarantees by the Minister for the Environment to protect the unique character of the area





Under the plan the M3 motorway is retained to Roestown, north of Dunshaughlin, then switches to a less costly "2+1" upgrade of the existing N3 ("2+1 Through the Valley") as far as the currently-threatened amenity of Dalgan Park. North of Dalgan Park, the road would re-join the current M3 alignment, and continue also in the 2+1 format, to Carnaross, beyond Kells.

The developers of the plan, Mr. Brian Guckian and Mr. Tadhg Crowley, stressed that although the NRA has recently moved away from the "2+1" format as a preference for appropriate road upgrades, it remains an approved design option and has been used without problems in other European countries such as Sweden and Denmark, with a 50% reduction in fatal crashes in the case of the former. They further stated that their context for the use of 2+1 in the Tara-Skryne Valley was different, with use of the format being made possible by the reduced traffic volumes brought about by the rail and coach transport elements of the plan.



The road would also be toll-free as the modifications to the motorway would save very significantly on the capital costs, which would then be used to buy out the PPP contract, and the tolls.

The land within the Tara-Skryne Valley purchased for the M3 would be held in state ownership and designated for heritage interpretation and protection.

The extent of the World Heritage site area would encompass the five major centres of Navan, Kells, Trim, Dunshaughlin and Slane, bringing a major tourist and economic dividend for the region, the promoters say.

Mr. Crowley and Mr. Guckian indicated today that they had submitted the MASTER Plan to the Ministers for Transport and the Environment, and that elements were also relevant to the Minister for Communications, Energy and Natural Resources and the Minister for Arts, Sport and Tourism. But full cabinet approval was being sought due to the national and wide-ranging importance of the proposal. Details have also been sent to Meath Co. Council.

"This is a powerful, creative and responsible intervention in an issue that has caused great distress both nationally and internationally", they said today. "It is something that everyone can have ownership of, and we are very positive and excited about it".

Backing for the new proposal is now being sought from all parts of the political and public spectrum, both nationally and internationally.

To view summary [click here](#)

Contact:

Brian Guckian 087 9140105 railprojects@eircom.net

Tadhg Crowley 085 7159013 tadhgcrowley@gmail.com

Public Presentation September 20th. Venue Dalgan Park. For details [click here](#)

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<http://sacredireland.org/linx.html>

for more information about the campaign to save the Tara valley
see

www.savetara.com

the main campaign site

also

www.tarawatch.org

www.Indymedia.ie

for the latest news – search for “ Tara “

www.tarasolidarityvigil.net/

the site for the Vigil on Tara Hill- not updated – but the protesters are still there !

www.tarapixie.net

the activists site – videos and photos

www.protect-tara.org

good explanation and background

www.beyondpluto.net

bits and pieces – links to sites and downloads – flyers , logos and poems

