

## Evaluation Committee Minutes

**Date:** Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> March 2026

**Time:** 10:30 am

**Venue:** TEAMS

**Present:** John Harnedy (Chairperson), Donal Connolly, Anita Geoghegan, Mary O'Halloran, Ray McAndrew and Eamon McGrath

**Apologies:** John Moloney and Gerry Cummins

**Company Officers:** Christine Rossi, Claire Connors & Angeline Drennan

Mr John Harnedy (Chairperson) welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a minute's silence to remember Paul Clerkin and Eamon McGrath's mother.

Ms Christine Rossi welcomed everyone and explained the purpose of the meeting was to consider an appeal submitted by the promoters of project number IE31WAT103066 Our Nature Corridor. Ms Rossi explained the timeline of events;

- November 2025, the Evaluation Committee reviewed the project and recommended that it should not be funded.
- December 2025, the recommendation was submitted to the LCDC/LAG and they agreed with the recommendation.
- January 2026, the promoter was advised of the decision, and the appeal process was outlined.
- February 2026, the promoter submitted a 14-page appeal.
- March 2026, the appeal was reviewed by the LCDC/LAG, and they decided to request the Evaluation Committee to review and provide a recommendation.

Ms Claire Connors, the project officer, advised that the promoter has been in contact with the St Declan's Way Committee. They have been invited to present their proposal to the Committee, but the meeting has not happened yet.

The Evaluation Committee proceeded to discuss the appeal.

It was observed by a Committee Member that there was an honest attempt by the promoter to answer the points raised regarding outcomes, the scale of the project, and stakeholder engagement. The appeal showed more engagement with people from the area. The promoter did provide some measurable outcomes and explained the process better. The project was in better shape but there needed to be goals and strategies in place.

The Committee discussed the possibility of putting targets and monitoring in place as a condition of approving the project. But the general feeling was that it wouldn't work in the case of this project as it was not typical for LEADER projects to be coached through the delivery.

The benefits of a feasibility study were discussed, and it was agreed that it would provide more opportunity for stakeholder engagement and developing measurable outcomes for a project of this scale. A feasibility study would allow the promoter to get land stewards on board and get buy-in. The project is very aspirational in its current format, and a feasibility study will provide more information which will determine if it is viable.

Ms Connors commented that there may be an option to allow them to come in under a rolling call or they could apply for a feasibility study under the next targeted call in July 2026.

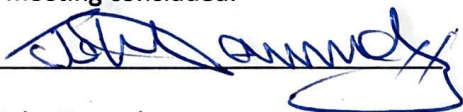
**Recommendation to the LAG:**

- The Evaluation Committee agreed that their original decision to recommend not funding the project stands.
- The Evaluation Committee recommend that the promoter is advised to seek LEADER funding for a feasibility study instead.

Ms Connors advised that if the decision is upheld by the LCDC/LAG, at their next meeting to be held on 09.04.2026, then the promoter does have the option of appealing to the regional inspector, if they wish.

John Harnedy thanked everyone for attending the meeting and confirmed that the next meeting will be held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2026 in The Park Hotel.

The meeting concluded.



Date: 31/03/2026

Mr John Harnedy,  
Chair