



10<sup>th</sup> April 2013

### 3. *Ring of Kerry Trail – Glenbeigh to Renard, Cahersiveen.*

South Kerry Development Partnership (SKDP) has prepared a feasibility report on the development of 26km of the abandoned railway line, from Glenbeigh to Cahersiveen. Some advanced work has been carried out by the local development agency on a further 3km spur from Cahersiveen to Renard, bringing cyclists onto Valentia Island and the Skellig Loop. The preliminary estimated cost of the 26km trail is approximately €8 million, but a more detailed analysis of the ground conditions, particularly on the elevated sections of the route and the existing structures, is required.

This trail has the potential to be the ultimate Greenway route mirroring the iconic Ring of Kerry and the long term objective is to develop the “Ring of Kerry” cycleway. The Ring of Kerry Cycle is held annually in July, with over 8,000 cyclists partaking in the event last year. The route is an iconic route for cyclists, (recreational, tourist and sport participants).

Currently negotiations are on-going between the SKDP and landowners along and adjacent to the route, with the support of Kerry County Council, on its development.

The feasibility study has identified a number of constraints that merit further investigations, including structural assessments of the Glensk Viaduct & Tunnels and Cahersiveen Bridge. Furthermore, there are sections of the route which are elevated and a geotechnical assessment of the existing ground is required to allow for the development of a more detailed appraisal, including costing of the works. In this regard, the Council seeks seed funding of €50,000 to engage Consultants on these aspects of the project.

The opportunity to provide a safe cycleway route along this section of the Ring of Kerry with the undoubted tourism, recreational and economic benefits that would arise would be worthy of seed capital to carry out design works, environmental assessments to enable the project to be taken to full planning approval.