

**APPENDIX B**

**DRAFT FINGAL ACTIVE TRAVEL STRATEGY CONSULTATION**

**– WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS**

Hi, there are a few things that I think Fingal could do to promote active travel. Firstly, to remove kissing gates at access points to parks, along the canals and elsewhere. Kissing gates hinder access and make routes less attractive for cyclists and pedestrians. Taking a zero tolerance approach to anti-social car parking such as footpath or cycle lane parking to really deter this prevalent behaviour. Specifically, I would love to see the proposed 'Hamilton Way' cycle route between Dunsink Observatory and the Phoenix Park progressed. I would also love to see a cycle route along the River Road, following the route of the Tolka between Dunsinea Lane and Dunsink lane/Navan Road. It would be great to be able to follow the Tolka all the way from town to Clonee.

Can this area please be included in the plans. We have been living here for nearly 20 year in Knocksedan and there is not even a footpath to local shops and amenities. Every single journey needs to be take by car or bus. There are hundreds of houses here and every household must use cars etc for short trips multiply times a day. This doesn't fit with 2030 or the Councils plans.

It is surprising there have been no deaths on the road as pedestrain traffic has increased and there is no footpath / cycling options available and public light is very poor.

Our family is very happy and excited about this plan. We enjoy cycling however, Lusk seems to be left aside and isolated when it comes to cycling. There is no way to cycle outside Lusk without putting ourselves in danger. There are multiple destination that are very close by but are unreachable without a car. Ardgillan castle and gardens, Rush beach, newbridge farm. These are all destinations that could easily be reached given we have FCCs interest in providing a safe means to. Thank you

Travel between settlements in Fingal often requires travelling distances that are not feasible by walking and cycling alone. New public transport provision (DART+, new bus fleet) should allow for onward journeys by facilitating bikes carried onboard. Fingal should work with the NTA to emphasise the specific importance of this to Fingal and its population patterns.

Current infrastructure in Fingal relating to Active Travel appears to focus on metropolitan areas (Swords, Baldoyle). For settlements such as Skerries/Lusk there is less need for large scale cycle lanes, but much need to calm traffic and pedestrianize in order to make active travel possible. These settlements should not be left behind in terms of infrastructure spending.

Adoption of cycling is often held back by lacking of parking facilities. Fingal should massively expand these facilities, including for cargo bikes, as well as focussing on point-to-point infrastructure. In towns with a cycleable urban core (e.g. Skerries, Rush) addition of copious cycling parking will go a long way to making cycling viable for journeys.

We live in Skerries. We would like our children to walk or cycle to school but it's too dangerous. Compared to other western countries, the US and France for example, the Irish road system provides such a low level of safety for pedestrians and cyclists. Some examples of the dangers for pedestrians and cyclists in Skerries that I have noticed are:

Ballygossan estate (we don't live there) was built in the south part of Skerries. There is no pedestrian access. There is a narrow piece of road where the occupants venture across at their peril. How can a housing estate be built without safety infrastructure?

Skerries Community College. There's no pavement on one of the sides of the road on which many of the students walk. There is a 'lollipop' lady on duty for a couple of short periods on school days. Use the money paid to that lady to locate a pedestrian crossing there. It would serve the whole community, and would be available 24/7.

Educate Together. There is a lollipop lady at the traffic lights. She presses the button for the pedestrians. Less than 100 meters away there is a road crossing for Barnageeragh Cove. It has the road elevated at the crossing, but it is not marked or lit. Why do you need a lollipop lady at a set of traffic lights, but not spend the money on a badly needed pedestrian crossing.

There are numerous other road crossings along the Barnageeragh Cove road: Kelly's Bay Drive, Northcliff Heights, The Green, and Town Parks road, which are used by children and cyclists. Why is it not possible to place pedestrian crossings at these locations?

The intersection of Miller's Lane and Shenick road is an accident waiting to happen.

I respect that there are many challenges to governing an area. I understand that there are regulations. However, there just seems such a slow, and impractical approach to solving the very real problems in our town. When one visits other western countries there seems to be a sense of pride that drives people to want improvements.

Page 17 lists one action as "reducing travel demand." Does this relate to private car journey demands only or also for commerical purposes such as business deliveries?

Reference .png file ending referring to page 17 below

On Page 19 of the draft document setting up one-way systems for vehicles only is mentioned as a possible measure. I would recommend re-wording to "(for motor vehicles only)". I feel future policymakers using the existing draft document may otherwise make systems one-way for cycling as well as driving.

In my experience having a system which is one-way for cars but still allows pedestrians and cyclists to travel in either direction is beneficial and safe while being fairly simple to get through. It also makes it clear to drivers that cycling would be a simpler approach and may incentivise them to try cycling in future.

Reference .png file ending referring to page 19 below

Page 22 lists electric vehicles as possibly promoting active travel. I want to point out that the term "Electric Vehicles" would also count electric cars which are not helpful to active travel. They are still cars, and are in fact much heavier than combustion engine cars due to their electric powerpack making them more dangerous to pedestrians and cyclists if a collision occurs.

I would suggest making it clear electric cars do not promote active travel, regardless of any positive effects they may have on our carbon footprint, and editing the "Electric Vehicles" tag to specify electric bicycle or similar.

Reference .png file ending referring to page 22 below

This comment is to outline broader views I think the draft should include.

Firstly I note that signage can be unclear to cyclists. I often come across signs which claim there is no access or no through road available ahead only to find that it only applies to motor vehicles, and cyclists/pedestrians can indeed take the short and convenient route. This mistake is rampant throughout the Phoenix Park, as an example. It is important that if steps are taken to incentivise active travel, that local signage represents this accurately.

I'd also like to highlight that when cycling, stopping is onerous. This is why we so often see cyclists go through red lights entirely when they think it is safe, as they do not wish to stop-start. In order to make cycling convenient and possible for people, routes should be designed attempting to minimise the number of times a cyclist needs to stop-start. Currently roads are designed with drivers in mind and bike lanes then tacked on to the side such that cyclists often are stopped for long periods at red lights. This is not an issue for a driver where the power is provided by an engine but can be an issue when you have to pedal as the lactic acid will build up in your legs and make it painful.

I would also like to express that segregated cycling spaces are hugely superior to having to "share" the road with cars.

Kissing gates are a huge inconvenience and I note several are even found on the royal canal greenway of all places. I believe these are not in Fingal CoCo's remit but am bringing it up just to highlight how unnecessary and unappealing they are in general.

The "taller" kissing gates, such as those found at park entrances, can be altered by removing the semi-circular enclosure found inside the park while leaving the gate itself unchanged so the park or area can still be locked at night. The .png I have attached shows a rough sketch of this.

Reference for "taller kissing gates" is .png ending in "Kissing Gate Picture 1" and co-ordinates on google maps are 53.398711855653794, -6.388679325988047 while the red edit on this .png is to highlight the part of the structure that should ideally be removed.

The wider kissing gates just need a gap large enough for one person to fit through to be left. Reference for this is the .png ending in "Kissing Gate Picture 2" and co-ordinates on Google Maps are 53.38235333424809, -6.365566432875626 The green edit just shows where enough space is left to make it amenable to cycling.

A Chara,

I note with interest the Active Travel Strategy Consultation, in particular the commitment to having a stakeholder communication strategy and a collaborative approach and wanted to share some feedback.

Communication, in my experience, requires two key elements - conveying information on the one hand and receiving/listening on the other, and to be successful this must be a two way process.

Should the Council engage with stakeholders with a predetermined outcome or narrowly defined parameters that only allow for limited outcomes, or equally receive feedback that is contrary to the what the Council believes the policy or initiative should be, then it must be heeded. If this is not the case, then the consultation with stakeholders is nothing more than a sham. Furthermore it is vital that the public at large have a fair opportunity to input into such schemes as may arise as a result of the strategy.

It is my experience with New Street, Malahide, that Fingal County Council can at times be deficient in these matters.

Is mise le meas,

name redacted

Malahide

Currently, there are no dedicated cycle lanes available to cyclists who wish to cycle in or out of Donabate Portrane peninsula. Turvey Avenue and Hearse Road are both very busy and unsafe roads for cyclists. It is imperative in order to promote more cycling and cycling to work that dedicated cycle lanes are incorporated and provided as part of Fingals Active Travel plan. This will enhance safety for both vehicle road users and cyclists.

As the Principal of (name redacted), I am very concerned about the safety of the pupils in my school on their journey to school. We are a proud Green Flag School and are actively encouraging the pupils to walk, cycle or scooter to school. We have applied to become part of the safe routes to school programme. We have been approved for funding for a new cycle parking facility .Regular messages are sent from me to the school community asking people to leave their cars at home and allow their children to walk or cycle. I am now between two minds whether I can continue to do so as my heart is in my mouth when I see the children coming along the path, swerving out onto the road as cars are parked on the paths. There are a few dangerous points on the road. It starts at the top of the hill at Rosepark, cars are travelling at speed and children have to run the gauntlet here to get across the road. The next danger point is outside the hairdressers. There is no path. The next danger point is directly outside the school. There are no school ahead warning signs and daily as I stand at the gate there are lorries, tractors and cars flying past the school. Parents are reluctant to allow the children to cycle or walk to school. The location of the school in the centre of the village is perfectly placed for children to travel independently to school.

I notice other schools around the country have a flashing yellow warning light before their schools. I see schools in Skerries, Malahide and in Balbriggan with traffic wardens. Do we here have to wait for an accident to happen before pedestrian crossings and warning lights are provided?

The Department of Education is encouraging schools to use outdoor learning environments. In fact the latest enhanced Minor Works Grant circular advises that along with purchasing HEPA filters we can use some of the money to create an outdoor learning space. We have the most wonderful outdoor learning space on our doorstep, the field beside the playground. We use this regularly to do tree trails and we use it for PE. We have the Heritage Centre which has local history in abundance. However as we walk a class of pupils through the village it is dangerous. Now in the summer term we are prioritising sporting events to support the well-being of our pupils. Our sports day will take place in the Man O War GAA pitch as it is much too dangerous for the whole school to walk up to Glebe Park. We have to hire buses for this. Our preference would be to use the park on our doorstep.

I would have thought with the major world issue of climate change that co. councils would prioritise funding to make villages safe places to walk, cycle or scooter. The children of the present are the adults of the future. Let it become a habit for them to travel on foot, by bike or by scooter to school. This will transfer into their adult life.

Finally I cannot understand why there is a 50km speed limit outside the school, a place where children are crossing the road completely dependent on a driver's goodwill to let them cross. I ask you to take a second look at this issue and to address the issues as a matter of urgency. I ask you to include the school area on the Active Travel Plan. I ask that we are moved up the list on the Safe Routes to School Initiative. We applied but were unsuccessful.

I have walked through the village with representatives from Fingal Co Council pointing out the areas of concern as mentioned above. However nothing has changed.

If you would like any further discussion please do not hesitate to contact me. Regards, Name redacted, School name redacted, Co Dublin

Insert objectives below:

Aim to report and map the Level of Traffic Stress (LTS) of all current cycle lanes in the county. All future cycle lanes would be graded on Level of Traffic Stress and mapped to provide accurate data on the standard of cycling infrastructure. Level of Traffic Stress quantifies the amount of discomfort that people feel when they cycle close to traffic, with four being the highest (sharing roads with bikes) and 1 being the lowest (completely segregated bike lanes). References and video on Level of Traffic Stress below: <https://montgomeryplanning.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Appendix-D.pdf> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p36skNda3KE>  
<https://blog.altaplanning.com/level-of-traffic-stress-what-it-means-for-building-better-bike-networks-c4af9800b4ee>

Some speed bumps have been installed which do not cover the width of the road and large SUVs etc do not slow down for these as they don't need to making some roads in the county very unsafe e.g. Diswellstown Road, Carpenterstown. These need to be replaced with full width speed bumps. We also need to ban the large polluting cars from our roads as a priority. The air quality is appalling when these pass by

Many cycle lanes are not joined up meaning some dangerous stretches of road. These need to be prioritised over car needs.

Here are my top of mind from a Skerries perspective:

The junction of Shenick Road/Miller's Lane/Golf Links Road/Sherlock Terrace is very dangerous for pedestrians and some sort of pedestrian crossing is badly needed.

There is far too much traffic on Millers Lane/Sherlock Terrace which are residential streets acting as a major artery for cars and heavier vehicles in Skerries. Because of the length of the road cars reach significant speeds quickly. I understand there has been talk of a relief road up in Ballygossan direction for some time. It is badly needed. In the meantime something should be done now to slow down traffic e.g. speed bumps. Currently crossing the road or cycling on it are both precarious activities.

A proper complete cycle lane is needed on the Barnageeragh road on the train station side (leaving plenty of room for vegetation and wildlife including pollinators on inside) or automated pedestrian and bike crossings at each junction on the town side. The lane on the town side is incomplete and the numerous junctions are very dangerous for cyclists as joining traffic has limited visibility and therefore pushes out obstructing the path of cyclists and ignoring right of way of cyclists.

Significant parts of the Dublin Road on the town side of the road has no footpath. Even a narrow footpath would be preferable to none. In some parts this may involve narrowing of road for cars. If we are truly moving to a world where active travel takes priority over cars for health and environmental reasons then these are the trade offs that must be made.

The road surface on the hill down from Ardgillan to the railway bridge at Barnageeragh is very dangerous for cyclists who naturally descend at some speed. Resurfacing is urgently needed.

The same applies to the road outside Ardla cemetery on the way down and at the end of the hill. These need to be resurfaced asap.

It would be good to have a running track put around boundary of some parts of the sports fields in the town park. Wouldn't it be great if Skerries could host it's own parkrun?

Whilst active travel should be a core for any area the Fingal plan disregards the reality of life for those who work and pay taxes.

By implementing plans that impact on those who work, raise families, elderly who rely on their cars to live a social life, work those who can bike or get public transport due to physical and mental care needs those who bring children to school, shop etc you have failed before you've even started.

Cultural change and acceptance for change requires all stakeholders to be invested. As it stands we do not have the infrastructure, public transport nor weather to demand that all use bikes or public transport.

Fingal CC seems intent on criminalising those who drive cars, making life as hard as possible for them forgetting that the vast majority of those driving have little choice, pay tax and are bringing up families. You've reduced roads for cycle lanes which is great but show with little to no increase in bike use. You've built estates with no green areas, little if any infrastructure or planning yet have made them impossible to drive through or get emergency services vehicles through due to the tiny road ways, is this done to push people to use bikes or public transport or to fit even more houses onto land with no amenities for the future I wonder.

Has Fingal considered those working who can't get the bus, elderly who rely on the car independence the car gives them, those who suffer anxiety who can't take public transport, those who work in the multitude of areas where public transport does not go, the simple fact that we live in a Country where the weather is so bad for long periods of the year removing the possibility of bike travel, the fact Fingal has little infrastructure developed to accommodate us now least of all when the thousands of new homes are built with single lane roads to move about all of which will become the next gettos as seen in many areas already (isolating communities due to infrastructure that favours high density housing over amenities and social connection)

It's clear from this plan that there is a heavy dose of bias to the car driver with no incentive, plan, or forecast of what this will do to those who pay tax, require their cars to do so and those who rely on their independent travel to live a social life.

It is a shame that Fingal have put the cart before the horse, have vilinised the most productive members of society and refused to look at the actual use of their cycle ways! As outlined by many Councillors to date, this plan is to get rid of cars from Fingal- great plan but when you offer nothing in exchange you've already failed. Nobody in the cycle lanes proves this, no metro link, limited and over crowded public transport proves this, no trains for Swords, the skerries Rush and Lusks road system proves this ( I dare you to cycle from Rush village to the train station). Most people know that to change a culture requires alternatives that are functional, easy to use, meet the needs of the people and are cost neutral to get involvement. Fingal have shown a complete disregard for common sense and future planning sadly.

I just want to say thank you to the Active Travel Department for bringing forward such a comprehensive document. There is certainly the tools here to deliver transformative change in the way we move around our communities that will deliver safer streets, more connected communities, improved air quality, better health outcomes for individuals, boost local trade, increase tourism in Fingal, lower carbon emissions and generally improve quality of life in our towns and villages.

I think it is important that document contains targets for modal shift relating to short journeys. We need to work towards getting the highest number of trips under 3 kilometers taken by walking and cycling. The tools to deliver this are almost all in the hands of the council and as such the council can credibly set its own targets. We should be looking to international standards when it comes to these targets and aspiring for 75%+ of short journeys taken by active travel in our towns and villages.

The strategy should set short journey targets for each town and village every year over the current decade starting from the current levels. This target should be communicated to workers, businesses, students, parents, community groups and sporting clubs, etc. They should be asked how they are going to help meet this and encourage walking and cycling in their area.

The national targets around active travel for transport are going to change substantially in the next 12 months as the sectoral emissions ceilings under the Climate Act form part of the revised Climate Action Plan. The overall target for transport of a 51% reduction by 2030 is very ambitious. This is going to lead to a significant increase in the active travel modal share to achieve our emissions target. When this does occur this strategy should take that on board and incorporate those targets into a revised strategy and any subsequent work plan.

Cycling and walking needs to be monitored in a committed way to make sure the changes that are being made are leading to the projected changes. This information should be made publicly available. Short feedback loops on active travel information should be created. People should be able to see day-to-day or even hour-to-hour changes in numbers cycling and walking in a given area. This would allow schools or businesses to see who is using active travel and who is not. It will give insight into what kind of measure works and what hasn't.

The GDA expected mode share bar graph on page 34 needs to be removed. It is spectacularly unambitious and is already woefully out of step with the government's climate ambitions. It shouldn't really form part of any future strategy and will need to be overhauled when the first sectoral ceilings are announced.

Overall the publication and introduction of an Active Travel Strategy should be welcomed.

I used to commute <15km each way per day by bicycle into Dublin city centre, and have recently changed to running/cycling as a new office is closer to home.

It's important that all new road design and travel infrastructure properly considers cyclists and other active walkers/runners. This should include the following:

Integrated cycle paths with footpaths are typically poorly built and not fit for purpose. This applies to the vast majority of cycle infrastructure in Fingal built over the last decade or more. Cycle paths, when integrated with footpaths, typically have uneven surfaces and are not conducive to cyclists travelling at speeds which are necessary for a reasonable commute time. Cycle paths integrated with footpaths are prone to pedestrians walking in them, and are therefore unfit for purpose. Cycle paths integrated with footpaths are also usually subject to manhole covers which are exceptionally slippery when wet. They are also usually interrupted by bus stops and other road signage. The result is that it is generally safer for cyclists to cycle on road rather than on path. When commuting, I aim to travel at speeds of <25km/h and <30km/h where possible. It is wholly unsafe to do this where pedestrians can step in front so quickly and easily. Many curb/entry and exit ways for these paths are also not suitable for road bikes, with high lips being the equivalent of nearly a 1 foot climb for a car to make. Greenway infrastructure as designed (e.g. along the Royal Canal) is also not conducive to effective commuting by cycling. Non-segregated cycle paths lead to the same issue as above, meaning it is typically quicker to travel on parallel roads. It's important that engagement with TFI and other councils occur to design proper cycle routes, both into/out of the city and orbital routes. In an ideal world, whole roads would be set aside for cyclists to give safe access to entry/egress of the city to main suburb hubs, but that would not be a realistic proposal. Cycle tracks should be built, ideally on road with clear boundaries to prevent motorists from entering them. These tracks should be wide enough to permit cyclists to overtake one another safely. The council should set itself a high minimum standard for cycling infrastructure on all new projects and require a business case from the project manager to sanction any deviation to lower standards in any regard. More signage should be put in place to remind motorists of their obligation of the 1.5m/2m rule when overtaking. At the moment, this signage is sparse across Fingal (and appears to be located in more well-to-do areas, such as Castleknock as opposed to Huntstown...).

Naul and surrounding areas have no cycleways or walkways to facilitate the residents of the area or any visitors to the area. The roads around Naul are extremely busy as it is so close to the motorway, a very large volume of traffic slip off the motorway and use Naul as a rat run. There are a number of quarries around Naul so the roads are very busy Monday to Friday with trucks constantly on the road. The speed limits on all approach roads to Naul village are 80km an hour until you are virtually in the village so residents have to walk and cycle with cars, vans, and trucks traveling at 80km with no margin of safety for them. Residents are in so much danger walking and cycling on these roads. Residents have also expressed that they feel like prisoners in their own homes, they cannot take their children or their dogs for a walk outside Naul village at all. They can go to Clann Mhuire but dogs are not allowed and there are only so many times you can walk around a pitch. It is great for fitness but not for social walks where you can enjoy nature. Residents feel they are deprived of enjoying the beauty that the Naul surrounding area has to offer.

Residents of Naul village would be delighted to see bleeper bikes being installed in Naul village. They have been very successful in Balbriggan, Skerries etc. We would love to be able to join in on this wonderful success. It would be a great benefit for those that do not have access to a bike but would to be able to cycle. It would also benefit the youth of the area. It would reduce emissions and help with our carbon footprint. The health of the environment needs all of the help it can get and this would be a way for us to play our part.

A mobility hub would be a great addition to Naul village. It is being trialed in 2 areas in North County Dublin and it is very successful. A lot of elderly and disabled people living in Naul do not have access to a car. It would be great if they had access to a mobility hub to take them to their doctor/hospital appointments or to the bank or post office. They do not like having to rely on others to take them to their places of need. It would give them a sense of independence.

A lot of people in Naul and surrounding areas found the process of submitting a submission online too difficult or they did not have a computer. A lot of residents were not aware of the Draft Active Strategy For Fingal but all of them wished to submit a submission. We at Naul Road Safety put all of their concerns together and printed them off for them. They signed them and they were very happy that we could deliver them to Fingal County Council at the address in Dublin 15 named on the Draft Active Strategy For Fingal information. We delivered 70 individual submissions on Friday 20th May 2022. The residents look forward to being able to enjoy a cycle or a walk with their children and dogs in the beautiful surrounding of Naul village.

The overall thrust of the draft strategy is very welcome and is supported. Fingal County Council should pursue this strategy energetically and commit the necessary resources.

The draft strategy should be amended to take greater account of the potential of changes to speed limits to support active travel.

It is submitted that in town or village centres where segregated cycle lanes are not provided and where on street parking is allowed, that speed limits below 50 km/hr should be implemented forthwith. For cyclists, the careless opening of car doors can be a real hazard when cycling past parked vehicles. There is danger of the passing cyclist being knocked off his/her bicycle and being hit by a passing vehicle. The danger is diminished if the speed limit is low, preferably not more than 30 km/hr.

It is also submitted that on roads that attract higher than average numbers of cyclists, or on roads that are narrow, and that haven't got segregated cycle lanes, speed limits should be reduced forthwith. Examples would be the Portmarnock to Malahide Coast Road and Hearse Road.

Id like to thank FCC for all the work done to date for active travel.

I welcome the ambitious strategy & would like to see this strategy supported by the council & its also important that there are set targets over the lifetime of the plan. The importance of active travel projects in a climate emergency cannot be underestimated.



Very much welcome the overall strategy. From it's supporting policy context prioritising active travel to aims to proactively embed active travel across Fingal CC policies. Communities across Fingal are in the grip of a congestion crisis. Other modes of transport besides cars have to be prioritised. The hearts of our communities should not be relegated to mere thoroughfares for elsewhere.

There have been many ambitious plans launched down the years translating into very little protected cycling infrastructure and impermeability for pedestrians across our communities. This drives people into their cars (half of all car journeys are under 2km) for even local trips.

I would strongly recommend publishing the Active Travel Delivery Plan and monitoring & evaluation framework so the rollout of protected cycleways and better walking infrastructure can be shown to be clearly improving (or not!).

It's an excellent strategy, well done but please deliver more protected cycle infrastructure for our gridlocked communities.

To whom it may concern

First of all, I would like to commend Fingal County Council on this thoroughly-thought-through plan and the excellent report and documentation. There is so much good to say about the aspirations and objectives and the only thing that I would like to see more of is concrete timeframes for achieving them. I may have missed references to those if they are mentioned somewhere.

My main concern around active travel in Lusk is that there is not enough of it. Cycling, in particular, is a hazardous undertaking in Lusk and it's immediate environs. The road Dublin Road is very treacherous as is the Rush Road with which serves the local train station.

Many of the recent Active Travel initiatives such as the Coastal Greenway and the Bleeper scheme, seem to either include Lusk as an afterthought or even ignore the town completely. In terms of cycling and walking infrastructure, we really need to be coupled with Rush and be seen as a single entity.

Another aspect that I would like to see expanded upon is the role of clubs and associations in promoting active travel. No two points in Lusk are more than twenty minutes walk apart and yet there are large volumes of cars at most training sessions from young children up to adulthood. Also, many sporting events involve matches with teams far from Lusk and therefore inevitably involve large volumes of traffic travelling between clubs. If more fixtures or race meetings could be arranged within close proximity to each other, cycling might become an option more often.

Again, thank you for your hard work on this and best wishes to the Council in seeing the plan worked through.

Fingal County Council's decision to prioritise Active Travel is welcomed. As a pedestrian, cyclist and motorist, I would like to use my car less and walk and cycle more. Fingal County Council could make this easier by considering the following points:

Skerries has a growing number of residents choosing active travel for their daily trips. I would like to see better cycle lanes, safer pavements, pedestrian crossings and ramps at useful points that consider the needs of people with disabilities, pushchairs, bicycles and scooters. Here are the areas I would like to see improvement on, some quite urgently:

The junction between Millers Lane and Shenick Road is unavoidable for a huge portion of pedestrians and cyclists for whom the mini-market and pharmacy on Shenick Road are literally their only option for buying groceries and medicine without using a car. There is no pedestrian crossing on any of these roads and it is extremely dangerous to navigate on foot or by bike, especially for children. This is a very dangerous intersection. I would like to see this area made safer.

For residents of Shenick, Hillside, and Ballygossan who choose active travel to reach any of the local schools, there are no pedestrian crossings on Shenick Road, Golf Links Road and Millers Lane except for those at the townparks roundabout. There is also a section on the Dublin Road where the pavement on one side dissolves into non-existence, forcing pedestrians to cross this very busy point. This is very dangerous. I would like to see continuous footpaths and pedestrian crossings on this side of the town.

The cycle lanes in Skerries are welcomed and well-used by children and adults, but at times are incomplete and should be redesigned/improved/extended. Eg. The cycle lane from the Dublin Road along Barnageeragh Road is incomplete and the decision to place this cycle lane on the side of the road near the streets leading from the housing estates means that cyclists must stop at several junctions and look out for traffic coming from three different directions (behind them, ahead of them and to the right). Considering this is a cycle lane that leads to a primary school, its placement at these junctions does not take into consideration how difficult it is for children to navigate these crossings on a bike. Adding a cycle lane to the other side of the road would increase safety and could easily still allow for a no-mow/pollinator friendly zone to the side.

Many residents of Skerries choose to visit Ardgillan and would most likely do so on foot or by bike if this were possible. Unfortunately it is not at all straightforward or safe to do so. I would like to see this given serious thought and I would like the council to take on board any suggestions from the Skerries Cycling Initiative on any plans to implement cycle lanes connecting Skerries to Ardgillan.

[continued] Finally, town planning needs to move away from a culture of creating “gated/walled-in communities” where estates are surrounded by brick walls which allow very limited pedestrian access. There are a number of examples of this in Skerries, where pedestrians will notice that they are unable to choose the fastest, safest or most pleasurable route from A to B because they suddenly encounter a dead end obstructing their route with a brick wall or a metal fence. If native hedgerows were used to define the boundaries between one estate and another, those choosing active travel would have more contact with nature on their walk, pollinators would have more fuel stops, and the council could easily make adjustments to allow openings for pedestrians to get from one estate to another in a safe and timely manner. Vulnerable members of our community should not be forced to rely on lifts from well-meaning motorists simply because the layout of their town means they have to walk twice as long as they should, down lonely lanes or by the side of a road full of traffic.

I am grateful for the opportunity to express my views on this plan, and hopeful for a society that prioritises active travel.

Having recently read the draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, I am heartened by the priority put on biodiversity.

With regard to Active Travel, I am concerned about the grass verges and wildflowers that could be replaced with tarmac and the hedgerows that could be cut down, to facilitate the construction of more cycle and pedestrian paths.

This is of particular concern to me, along the Royal Canal and any Active Travel route proposed for the Liffey Valley/Strawberry Beds. While Active Travel is important, constructing a 4 metre wide lane, through unspoilt greenspaces, is irresponsible and leads to additional infrastructure measures, such as 24/7 lighting, which discourages wildlife from settling in the area.

If the ultimate aim is to take more cars off the roads, I would propose that certain routes in D15 be trialled as one way streets, with the other lane being dedicated to cyclists. There are so many grid routes in D15, that it would be easier to implement here, than elsewhere in Fingal. This would enable safer cycling, without the destruction of green spaces, while enabling cars to use alternative routes.

The strategy to prioritise active travel is very welcome. I would like to see more protected cycle-ways in my area. I try to cycle as much as possible for local journeys but I often end up in the car because cycling is not safe (especially with my children). For example, my kids have had activities within a few kilometers of home in Dublin 15 (e.g. National Aquatic Center, Junction 6 Sports Center, Coolmine swimming pool, Porterstown Park) which are well within range for cycling but the route is too dangerous in my view (because of lack of separation from car traffic).

I would also like to see delivery of a web of connected active travel pathways for town-to-town connectivity (Blanch to Lucan; Blanch to Swords; Swords to Malahide; Swords to Skerries etc). I heard from a German friend that these kind of routes have been created between towns in Germany and work very well.

I think a program to raise awareness of active travel options would be useful. For example, I think there are a lot of households with 2 cars who could easily switch to a formula of 1 car + more cycling/walking/public transport + occasional use of car share like Go Car. This is better for health/well-being, better for the environment in general, and also saves lots of money at the household level.

There have been a lot of good strategy documents that lead to not much implementation. I would like to see explicit targets, strong focus and regular progress reports on delivery of cycling/walking infrastructure.

Active Travel Strategy Submission:

Support: Fingal Chamber fully supports Fingal County Council's Active Travel Strategy from an improved health and wellbeing, social inclusion and addressing climate change perspective. However, Fingal Chamber would like to see a business specific piece in the Active Travel Strategy document and more emphasis on the economic benefits to be gained from a successful Active Travel Strategy.

For example, the pedestrian of Main Street, Malahide which brings many people from the surrounding areas into the village have the opportunity to explore new shops and services. The village is a thriving hub of activity everyday and more so at the weekends. This model should be brought to more villages around the county.

While there are sections dealing with active travel to/from schools, Greenways proposed, cycle lane projects, bleeeper and e-bikes etc there is no section dealing specifically for businesses in Fingal which is disappointing.

Business Perspective: Employers need to recognise the importance of Fingal's Active Travel Strategy and incorporate it as part of their improved health and wellbeing for their employees. Education and buy-in from businesses around the county will be key in the success of the active travel strategy. In supporting Fingal's Active Travel Strategy businesses in the region will need to invest in travel friendly areas such as covered bicycle stands, showers and washrooms and Fingal County Council should consider an incentive to support businesses who buy into the Strategy.

Fingal Chamber would like to see how business enterprise and innovation can be part of the an Active Travel Strategy and environment. More Greenways/enhanced public realm areas will lead to more people being brought into towns and villages. This can present an ideal opportunity for local entrepreneurs to showcase their business products via a Fingal County Council template pop up shops/stands enroute around Greenways. It's also a great opportunity for local artists to exhibit their work, in addition it is also a fantastic opportunity to highlight Fingal's fantastic agri-business with F&B mobile trucks can offering the best of food the region has to offer. There are endless possibilities for these Greenways.

Fingal Chamber has collaborated with Fingal Tourism and Fingal County Council for many years in seeking opportunities to make the region more attractive for tourists. With so many fantastic initiatives included in the Active Travel Strategy already implemented and planned, now is an ideal opportunity to include a piece on Adventure Tourism in the region.

[continued] Fingal Chamber fully supports and endorses the Active Travel Strategy and encourages Fingal County Council to implement it without delay. Unfortunately great initiatives such as those outlined in the Strategy are taking a frustratingly long time to implement.

May 23, 2022

As Fingal County council is aware, the Strawberry Beds area is covered by a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO), as per S.I. 59 of 1990. The reasons for the SAAO covering the Strawberry Beds are stated as “its outstanding beauty” with areas of “special recreational value” which “exhibit a need for nature conservation”.

The SBRA strongly support;

- The Vision that walking, cycling and wheeling should be the first and natural choice for everyday journeys.
- The Benefits of Active Travel, which are in line with the principles of the Strawberry Beds community
- The Fingal Tourism strategy and the importance of walking & cycling. We believe the ‘outstanding beauty’ of the Strawberry beds is best seen on foot, by cycling or on the Liffey by Kayak or Canoe.

Of the 6 pillars of Active travel, Road Safety would be the biggest concern in the Strawberry Beds and a reason why walking and cycling is often not used for local journeys. The speed and defensive driving of commuters through the strawberry beds deters pedestrians and cyclist. The Children of the Strawberry Beds travel to school via Rugged Lane, Somerton Lane, Knockmaroon hill and all these routes are treacherous during peak morning traffic.

The SBRA is keen to be involved in active travel interventions such as walkability audits, Low traffic Neighbourhoods and Safe routes to school measures and we would also welcome an initial discussion on No Car days in the Strawberry Beds.

In a publication by Leo Varadkar in March 2021 on ‘Government Funding for Active Travel’ a project and funding was announced for a Review of the Strawberry Beds Mobility Plan. We are extremely interested in being involved in the project and any consultation.

The SBRA would like to thank the FCC for this opportunity to submit on the Active Travel consultation and commend the FCC for their efforts in relation to the Strawberry Beds. The SBRA appreciate your consideration of the issues raised in this submission and are available to meet with you to discuss anything herein further if required.

Public transport. Theme:Active Travel

The public transport system for Naul is very poor. There is Local Link service with approx 6 runs on weekdays, but mostly with 3 hour intervals. As a mother of 3 young adults, I often find I am doing 2 or 3 runs into Balbriggan a day, on top of my own commute to work. This is just pushing every young person into buying their own cars, increasing the volume of traffic on the roads. If the bus service was increased, this would diminish this increase in cars.

Speed cameras. Theme:Active Travel

The volume and speed of traffic on the Naul to Balbriggan road makes it very unsafe for pedestrians and cyclists. There are some digital speed signs but a lot of drivers seem to ignore them. If speed cameras were introduced on the road and fines were issued, this would make the roads safer for all.

Footpaths and cycle lanes. Footpaths and cycle lanes on all approach roads to the village would be of great benefit in particular for the young people of the surrounding areas of Naul village. They would safely be able to make their way to school, GAA pitch and youth club without the need for cars to be used to drop them off. As it is, if I walk on the Naul Balbriggan road, I spend half the time standing the ditch to allow cars pass. The road is for everyone, drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

To convert people to more active forms of travel in Fingal, better infrastructure is required. While the focus on greenways is nice, proper segregated cycle lanes for commuting are necessary. I would urge the council to introduce segregated cycle lanes from M1 to Blakes Cross (at a minimum) on R132, R127 from Blakes Cross to Lusk and R128 from Lusk to Rush. This would introduce safe routes to Swords, Dublin Airport, Dublin City centre (via rail) and further, while also making the roads safer for all users.

Like many others, I cycle and walk regularly for commuting, going to the shops, socialising or travelling to and from the local school. I welcome the ideas in the plan and the general philosophy presented with regard to Active Travel. To implement the plan hard decisions will need to be made and there needs to be a strong will to make it happen. It would be all too easy for it not to come to anything, as has happened with plans in the past, such as the 2009 Cycle Study for Malahide and Skerries.

As part of the plan there are many opportunities to improve permeability in the town, where estates and cul-de-sacs are walled in unnecessarily. The simple act of making an opening in a wall, fence or hedge in many of these places would straight away make journeys shorter for people walking or cycling around the town. Also, a fresh look could be taken at the 2009 study, mentioned above, to use the townpark area as an active travel hub for the town, linking up all the surrounding areas, including home, schools, shops.

There is much to be said about the increased motorised traffic levels in Skerries and the effect this is having on our health and the health of the planet. For instance the rush hour peak of the school run, or people driving to the train station makes crossing the road quite hazardous at points, since much of the town is lacking in any pedestrian priority or crossing points. The placement of the station in relation to the local estates and town centre coupled with the lack of clear, safe, routes means many drive to it rather than walk. The lack of a bus service to the station and rest of Skerries compounds this problem.

A joined up approach to travel between schools, shops, train, bus stops and homes would be most welcome in Skerries and the wider area of Fingal. For instance improvements could be made on Barnageeragh Road, Dublin Road, Millers Lane, Golf Links Road, Shenick Road, the Rush Road and the coastal road to Balbriggan along with many other parts of the town to provide priority and better crossing points for pedestrians and improved infrastructure for cyclists. Too much valuable road space is taken up by private parking that could be better utilised for active travel, especially on the main roads around the town.

More bicycle parking in the estates and cul-de-sacs as well as in the town centre would be most welcome and is a necessary part of active travel. After all, once you get to your destination where do you put your bike? Skerries has a paltry number of cycle racks and if you wish to go shopping on your bike (as I do a few times a week) there are lots of places missing racks (Thomas Hand street for instance, but there are more examples).

[continued] On private land there is scope for updating the planning rules to allow people to replace their off-street car parking space with a secure bike storage.

Ardgillan Castle lacks an active travel route from both Skerries and Balbriggan. What a shame that the jewel in the crown of this part of Fingal requires a car to get there! Hopefully the coming greenway goes some way to addressing this but could the area behind (to the west of) the rail line be looked at also? There is scope, with some imagination, for a walking and cycling track from the town to the Ardgillan main entrance by running alongside the agricultural land, perhaps coming out on to Margaretstown road or joining up close to the Lancaster Cottages.

Finally, a project that is massively important to Skerries, Balbriggan, Rush, Malahide and surrounding areas is the proposed Fingal Coastal Way. This project has the scope to revolutionise travel options in Skerries and while perhaps being seen as a tourist project by the council it will have great value as a utility route for people all along the coast. It is a pity how long it is taking to deliver it. Anything that can be done, such as delivery of sections in parallel, should be done so this project is not delayed any further. I look forward to the day there is a safe cycling route from Skerries to the County Hall in Swords.

Please do not let this plan go the way of so many others, there is an opportunity right now for real change which could have an impact on the quality of life of not just this generation but many to come.

Sustainable Skerries whole heartedly welcomes the draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal.

Better health and wellbeing, improved local air quality, a more attractive public realm, lower travel costs and improved access to education and employment opportunities all bode well for our vision of empowering our community towards a sustainable and resilient future for Skerries. In order to make Skerries resilient, regenerative and a great place to live for all, now and in the years to come, active travel must be prioritised, but to do so we need to do more than just make sustainable travel more attractive.

To bring about significant changes in our travel behaviour while protecting and promoting the environment across the county, sustainable travel infrastructure needs to be looked at in a way that truly understands the needs of individual towns and addresses the existing barriers to building active travel into everyday life as part of normal daily routines.

The mounting evidence that a substantial daily shift from car journeys to active travel and public transport can reduce congestion and make sustainable travel choices more attractive is undeniable, but it can lead to a chick and egg situation if the pressure to make better travel choices is placed solely at the door of the individual resident.

That is why putting active travel first in planning, design and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives is something that Sustainable Skerries applauds and is eager to see in practice.

Existing infrastructure needs to be carefully assessed and connected to new developments to ensure a connected approach is adopted and ensure a more sustainable outcome for Skerries.

Existing entrances to shops which prioritise those arriving by private car, roads with no pavement for pedestrians, areas where pedestrian access is neither prioritised nor visible, insufficient bike parking, disconnected cycle lanes, inappropriate placement of ramps where road crossings are not safe, to name but a few, all present opportunities for Fingal County Council to really zoom out and look at our town as a whole, before zooming back in and looking at the way many small changes can be connected to one another to make big changes.

National design guidance being issued to support planners, developers and scheme designers is to be commended, and Sustainable Skerries would encourage Fingal County Council to see the importance and urgency of ensuring such guidance is followed at all times.

Skerries needs a more joined up approach when planners and developers of separate housing estates are told to provide safe routes to schools for its residents. Unfortunately, there are too many examples where good intentions at the design phase have not materialised into substantial change.

[continued] The inclusion of a cycle track in a new housing estate, along with accessible pavements is to be commended, but in many cases in Skerries these stop short of reaching their intended goal. Some new cycle tracks begin and end on only one stretch of road in the estate and do not connect to any other cycle track outside the estate or on surrounding roads as cycle tracks (and at times pavements) often simply do not exist in these places. Such examples only serve to put an appearance of active travel infrastructure, but do not provide the residents with actual safe ways of getting from their home to the nearest amenities, which in Skerries often means joining a road when leaving the estate that has been designed with the motorist in mind. Such failures in joined up planning can often serve to actively discourage residents from choosing active travel when leaving their estate, as the contrast between the safety of their newly designed estate and the surrounding roads highlights the dangers pedestrians and cyclists are faced with when undertaking their daily routines.

As housing developments expand throughout Skerries, permeability needs to be addressed if Fingal County Council is to succeed in encouraging more individuals to choose active travel over the private car. Walled off estates that are kept separate from one another creates problems for pedestrians and cyclists. Where residents prefer cul de sacs for the obvious benefits of reduced traffic, such boundaries should not be closed to those choosing active travel. The safety of our children when going about their daily lives is affected by permeability in urban areas. Where there is an option to choose a boundary that is open to pedestrians, provides connection with neighbouring estates, green spaces and playgrounds without necessitating crossing main roads or walking in secluded areas, these options should always be implemented, both at the design stage and retrospectively. We would like to see the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets prioritising active travel in practice. Fingal County Council has highlighted Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas. Sustainable Skerries would like to see the implementation of plans for villages that do not require residents to walk or cycle for more than 15 minutes to access local amenities.

Sustainable Skerries welcomes the National Cycle Manual, but would like to see it implemented and real changes to the infrastructure that respect individuals' need for autonomy when going about their daily business are urgently needed.

From a biodiversity perspective, any changes to existing infrastructure or implementation of new infrastructure should carefully consider the long term effects of changes made to our flora and fauna. Wherever trees are cut down (and only if absolutely necessary), these should be replaced with equivalent numbers of mature trees. Wildflower corridors should be maintained and where pavements and cycle tracks need to be placed on grass verges, increased surface area should be included in the no mow areas to allow more wildflower meadows to establish and bee corridors to be created and maintained. Natural, pollinator-friendly alternatives should be sought when designing the surrounds of playgrounds, schools, estates, car-parks etc. as opposed to brick walls. If Fingal County Council aims to make active travel more attractive, then working hand in hand with the rewilding of our environment can achieve this in a sustainable and highly effective way.

Finally, Sustainable Skerries would like the Council to remember that those without access to a car and whose mobility is impaired actually do make up a substantial number of our residents. Children are not born with automatic access to cars and individuals of any age can suddenly find themselves unable to drive a car. Active travel is not just a choice. Active travel is a necessity.

Many people of all ages in Skerries walk and cycle locally as part of their commute, as part of the school run or as part of their regular routine (shopping, socialising etc.). The Skerries Cycling Initiative welcomes many of the ideas presented in the Active Travel Plan for Fingal and would be very pleased if they were implemented. To do so requires practical changes in our infrastructure, but even more so requires a will to carry the plans through. There have been grand studies and plans announced before but then nothing came of them.

#### 2009 Cycle Study

In 2009 a detailed report was made, namely the “Malahide and Skerries Cycling Study Report”. Many of the proposals in that study are still relevant and could be implemented today. For instance the Skerries Townpark, from the roundabout near the railway tunnel at the Lusk road, all the way to the tennis courts, are underutilised from an active travel point of view. Serious effort should be made to look at implementing the proposals for joining up cycling and walking routes through that area. It has the advantages of unlocking routes for people and also has no impact on the roads. The plans have details of a new short boardwalk across the Mill Stream to link the Mill Pond area in Greenlawns with the main Townpark and a series of paths and cycle routes linking up the parts of the town around the whole green area. The rest of the plan is similarly useful as a guide to what is possible in Skerries with a small investment.

#### Permeability and Connectivity

Coupled with this there are a number of estates which are “walled off” from a cycling/ walking point of view and require entering and leaving the same way as cars. Many teenagers just climb over the walls, so if the intention was to stop them taking a shortcut then that has failed. This is not just the case with older estates (such as Downside which has a big wall at one end where there should be a pedestrian link through to the Golf Links Road) but also new estates such as Ballygossan Park. While there is a walking route that links up with the end of Hillside Gardens (which is welcome) there is the bizarre situation of the Hillside and Ballygossan greenspaces being next to each other but fenced off from one another, facing each other as if across the Berlin Wall. If children from Hillside wish to use the Ballygossan playground they must make a large detour from their greenspace to the other one. All that is needed is a gap in the fence the size of a gate and tiny path. This would also open up a pedestrian route from Ballygossan, through Hillside and into the Mills near the Mill Pond etc.

#### Protected Cycleways

Sadly many children in Skerries are driven to school, and you can see the effect of this between 8am and 9am any weekday morning, as well as at pickup times, as the roads are jammed with cars heading to and from the schools. This is totally avoidable and in fact was not the case when many of us were at school.



[continued] We are fortunate in the town to have a train station, but its position in relation to the rest of the town means many drive to it rather than walk. Furthermore there is no all-day bus service to the station itself, linking the station to the town centre and surrounding estates. Joining up our schools, shops, transport hubs and homes with active travel routes would both make it easier for people to make choices around active travel but also make it easier for people who must drive a private vehicle since many unnecessary car journeys would be removed. Within Skerries there are many specific actions that could be taken to promote active travel. A case in point is the Barnageeragh Road, but the principles could be applied to many other parts of the town. This road now forms part of the main route to Balbriggan, and also connects the train station, Skerries Point, Skerries Educate Together National School (ETNS) and many local estates. There is an obvious opportunity to connect all of these places up together in a cohesive way to promote active travel. For a short stretch from the Train Station car park, to a pedestrian crossing on the main Barnageeragh Road there is a reasonably good quality cycle/walking track (through the Ballast Pit). However at the pedestrian crossing cyclists must join the main road.

There are few double yellow lines so cars park on this road to avoid paying for the car park at the train station. This means that to cycle along this stretch of road and to avoid being hit by a parked car door opening you must cycle in the middle of the road. Children cycling to school here face the choice of cycling in this fashion on a busy road or crossing the road and cycling on the footpath. So, when cycling on this road with children many people opt to cycle on the footpath, thus adults are breaking the law by doing so to ensure the safety of themselves and their children.

Heading North towards the Skerries ETNS you meet a number of side roads leading either into estates or joining up with the R127 coast road. For the entire stretch to the school there is not a single pedestrian or cycle crossing, nor any signage or colour-coded surface to indicate to drivers that this is a crossing point. Cars on the side roads have in most cases a Yield sign and pause in front of the point where people cross the road thus impeding their ability to cross safely. At busy times you are reliant on goodwill from drivers to cross at all. For some parts of the journey there are some badly maintained narrow cycle paths next to the footpath with only a painted line for segregation. Each of these cycle paths (which are travelling with the main flow) are expected to yield to cars on the side roads, who are in turn yielding to traffic on the main road. At the same time the cyclist or pedestrian must look three ways to avoid being hit by a car. The cycle lane itself is supposed to be two way but is not actually wide enough to be two way, meaning to overtake you must, potentially illegally, cycle on the footpath.

If the active travel plan has teeth then situations like this must be addressed. For the example above there is another, better solution. Along the entire stretch of the Barnageeragh Road from the Ballast Pit to Skerries Point there is a grass verge on the Western side of the road which could easily be converted into a high quality two way cycle track. This could join up with the existing cycle infrastructure at Skerries Point via a Toucan-style raised crossing to enable crossing the main road. Also double yellow lines could be put in along the full stretch of main road if required. To deal with pedestrian safety on the crossings previously outlined on the Eastern, housing-estate side, the intersections could be altered so cyclists and pedestrians have priority, along with using coloured raised junctions and moving stop lines behind a clearly marked crossing. All the Yield signs on the side roads should be changed to Stop signs. It is quite important that the crossings are clearly marked. As it is, the current crossing points are simply not safe.

[continued] As it stands at present, due to how bad the cycle lanes are, nearly all adult cyclists end up just cycling on the main road itself.

**Bicycle Parking.** For the cycling aspect of active travel there needs to be greater investment in cycle parking at key locations. Many of the estates around the town have no cycle parking at all, so visitors to those estates have nowhere to lock up. Bleeper rental bikes are regularly seen locked in inappropriate places at entrances to estates because there is nowhere else to lock them.

Again, this is not just in old estates but cycle parking is lacking generally regardless of the vintage of the area. In the town centre itself there is very little cycle parking. For example Thomas Hand Street, if you go to the hardware shop in Skerries on your cargo bike there is nowhere to lock-up. There are many other examples.

While cycle parking at Red Island is welcome on a warm summer's day, on a more practical level we need far more infrastructure in the town centre itself for daily use.

**Ardgillan Castle.** Ardgillan Castle is a fantastic resource for the people of Balbriggan and Skerries and hence it is quite sad to see that there is no safe pedestrian route from Skerries to it. As it is, you have to walk along the coast road and face some dangerous pinch points. This is impossible in a wheelchair or with a buggy, and of course there is no way for wheeled road users to get across the bridge at the Lady's Stairs. Again, a solution stares us in the face - Kelly's Lane leads up from the coast road to Skerries Point. To the north of Skerries Point there is an overgrown lane which leads to lanes on the Western side of the rail tracks. This is currently fenced off. If a modest sized track were put in along the agricultural land on the Western side of the rail line you could put a safe active travel route from Skerries Point all the way virtually to the main entrance of Ardgillan. There are in fact tracks already there and in centuries past these would have been used by local people to make this journey. A modest investment here by Fingal CC would yield a great reward - linking up with safe travel routes to the train station and the town.

**Further Afield.** Connecting Skerries with Balbriggan, Rush, Lusk, Donabate and Malahide with the proposed Greenway would not just be a draw for tourists and leisure users of all ages but would also be a viable commuting alternative for many who work in the neighbouring towns, and with that greenway and onward links from perhaps Malahide to Swords this part of Fingal would really open up for many people. The slow pace of the delivery of the greenway so far is disappointing and anything that can be done to speed up its implementation would be welcomed. Coupling the greenway with active travel infrastructure within Skerries and the surrounding towns would transform the quality of life for all - and we really do mean all, even car drivers would benefit by the reduction in the number of cars on the road!

Incorporating active travel into the street and road maintenance process. Theme:Active Travel

Re p. 22, 32 and 33, the reference to funding from road and street maintenance is welcome. However it's vital to make this stronger and clearer. The Strategy should commit to ensuring that the improvement of roads and streets for walking and cycling is integrated into the maintenance programme

Ensuring planning applications deliver quality environments for walking and cycling. Theme:Active Travel

Re p. 20, the commitment in relation to planning applications should be stronger. It should specify that all planning applications will be subject to expert review to ensure the highest quality of provision for walking and cycling. (Unfortunately, this has not been the case to date. While some ne...

Miscellaneous. Theme:Active Travel

Re p. 15, the draft Active Travel Strategy refers to the updated GDA Cycle Network Plan. This is still a draft and there hasn't been any explanation of the changes proposed between the current plan, and the updated draft. Instead there has been an acknowledgement that it needs further work. (We need to ensure that there is proper public consultation on the updated Plan before adoption.) Furthermore some important routes in Fingal have not been included in the current GDA Plan nor the draft update. Ideally this would be explained or rectified. In any event, the Fingal Strategy should be clear that there are important routes which may not be included in the GDA Plan and that we are also committed to routes in the County Development Plan and to taking other opportunities for delivering walking and cycling connections as they arise.

Re p. 34, the strategy should not display the AM Peak period mode share projection (target?) from the draft GDA Transport Strategy. It is not sufficiently ambitious in terms of shift to walking cycling or public transport and is part of a draft which itself acknowledges that it fails to meet national climate targets and needs to be reviewed. The figures in the GDA strategy are for the entire GDA and not Fingal.

I strongly support this strategy and overall express strong support for general active travel as outlined in both this strategy and in the most recent Fingal Development Plan. I would note that Fingal is a county with a very diverse mix of urban and rural areas, often acting as commuter hubs to Dublin city center, and to other regional towns such as Blanchardstown, Swords, Malahide etc.

Living in a rural area (St Margaret's) and commuting to urban areas (mainly Dublin, and Swords) I am very aware of the overwhelming congestion issues throughout the county. My preferred method of travel is by bike, but sometimes, due to safety issues, I have to drive. The promotion of active travel in the county needs to be prioritised. In particular, creating access routes throughout Fingal will provide a viable alternative to commuting via car/motor vehicle.

While the strategy outlines many positive targets but am concerned the stated goal of 2042 for modal share does not highlight the urgency of the climate crisis in which we currently find ourselves. I appreciate the focus on health and education and believe that influencing children towards thinking positively about active travel solutions at an early age is crucial. With that in mind, promoting methods of active travel to commute to all schools in the county should be prioritised. This would create a network of safe and reliable cycle and walking routes, rapidly tilting the shift towards active travel over motor vehicles as the primary method of travelling.

In relation to St Margaret's, I have previously expressed concerns over the safety of cyclists and e-scooter users, who are very prominent in the area due to the presence of industrial and mass agricultural businesses. In particular, the lack of hard shoulders or safe areas for these commuters along the R108 and R122 roads is especially problematic and has led to multiple deaths and injuries over recent years.

It goes without saying that cycleways are crucial, but even more important is the installation and effective delivery of segregated cycleways. Locally, I have used the segregated cycleways in the River Valley area of Swords and am delighted with their effectiveness at protecting cyclists, and encouraging formerly disillusioned or concerned cyclists to start using their bikes as a regular form of transport. The promotion of active travel should also take center stage and I welcome the recent appointments of cycling officers and active travel officers in the Fingal County Council organisation. Further work should be done to engage with local groups such as Fingal Active Travel, Skerries Cycling Initiative, and other resident groups.

Lastly, many roads could benefit from filtered permeability which would reduce traffic congestion and promote healthier neighbourhoods. It goes without saying that Kissing Gates are ineffective and not suitable for people with disabilities, an important group that should also be considered and prioritised in any active travel decisions.

Thank you for your continued work on active travel solutions.

Public transportation is really not good for swords area. Millers glen have been developed for past 7 years and still the residents have to walk for 15-20 min to get a bus that to for specific places. there is no dart for that area, that needs special attention as well.

Swords is growing so fast in terms of resistance and industry. kindly give it a thought

I am very much in support of the overall strategy. From it's supporting policy context prioritising active travel to aims to proactively embed active travel across Fingal CC policies. Communities across Fingal are in the grip of a congestion crisis.

We need to restore balance in our travel networks, years of being smothered by cars with very little in the way of safe alternatives, our towns and roads have been choked and gone beyond saturation point with cars and SUVs. There is a generation ready to embrace bicycles, but to set this in motion other modes of transport besides cars have to be prioritised. The hearts of our communities should not be relegated to mere thoroughfares for elsewhere. They come alive and businesses and communities thrive when people are allowed to connect and integrate through cycling and walking.

A protected and connected network of segregated cycle paths will encourage a large amount of people not to choose the car (half of all car journeys are under 2km) for local trips. Parents and kids will feel more confident in using bikes to travel to school and sports. And far from the misguided fear of bike lanes making driving impossible, this culture shift will free up space for those that need to take the car, whether for health or age reasons or for long commutes etc. Look at the roads in the area during mid terms to get a feel for how big a change that will be.

I would strongly recommend publishing the Active Travel Delivery Plan and monitoring & evaluation framework so the rollout of protected cycleways and better walking infrastructure can be shown to be clearly improving (or not!).

It's an excellent strategy, well done but it is essential that you deliver more protected cycle infrastructure for our gridlocked communities. The interest is there. From the moment it is in place, and just looking one age group alone, so many people under 18 have bikes and try to use them. If you build this network, unlike the generations of the last 30 years who were forced off bikes because of safety issues and the saturation of cars, they won't stop using them. And we'll never look back.

This submission is on behalf of (names redacted) Naul. They would like to see cycleways and walkways around Naul village and surrounding areas. The roads are not safe to walk or cycle on as there are no margins of safety on the roads. There are trucks continuously on the roads with so many quarries in the area. It is not good on a social level as you do not get to meet members of the community as you have to drive to a park for a walk in safety or a cycle. It also effects mental health as they feel confined to there homes. Naul is a beautiful area but unfortunately you cannot enjoy a safe walk or cycle outside of the village.

#### Beeper bikes

We would like to see beeper bikes installed in Naul. Not everyone has access to a bike and this would make cycling available to everyone in the community.

#### Mobility hub

A mobility hub in Naul would benefit the elderly and disabled residents of the area.

To whom it may concern. Nice document. Ambitious plans but not easy to follow progress on a year on year basis by monitoring increases in cycling numbers. Keep up the good work and Fingal CoCo can become a leader in active travel in Ireland. Here are some ideas for the strategy document.

11.9 % target by 2042 doesn't seem ambitious enough during a climate and biodiversity crisis and in light of recent energy crisis.

A review of most dangerous roads in the county to improve cycling and walking safety such as traffic calming measures such as zebra crossing along Clonsilla road which is currently in progress. This simple interventions will make a huge difference to this area and slows down vehicles speeds for cyclists too.

Please use more normal photos instead of all the Hi-Viz and helmets in the strategy document. These show cycling is dangerous when it is not.

More bicycle counters installed around the county to monitor progress. The counter along the castleknock road just outside the Phoenix park doesn't pick up cyclists during into the park and is in the wrong location.

Publish routes that are planned as part of the GDA cycle network and Fingal CoCo plans to construct cycle lanes over the next decade. Publish yearly progress reports on cycle lanes installed, repaired and upgraded?

Increase the use of protected cycle lanes.

Increase cycle path cleaning and repairs. Many damaged and littered cycle lanes with glass in Dublin 15.

Retrospectively install segregated cycle lanes around large roundabouts in Fingal area

Clarify the removal of kissing gates. Lots of them still installed around parks in Dublin 15 after recent statement from Fingal CoCo to remove them.

Higher standards used as designs are sometimes below National Cycle manual & DMURS.

Can Fingal CoCo trial cameras to reduce speeds along Ongar distributor road. It has segregated cycle lanes but its very dangerous cycling along it with cars speeding and undertaking along bus lanes on a daily basis. If this is not possible can you design traffic calming measures along this route?

Promotion of Cargo bicycles for bike parking etc as they have multifunctional uses and important for linked journeys such as going from Creche to the shops and home.

Swords is a large suburban area with limited public transport links from one side to the other - more frequent buses are required within swords to facilitate people to travel to the village to shop, eat and socialise. Or to other areas of Swords where shops/restaurants should/could exist to service local areas., and not something such as Airside, which has absolutely no soul. I live in Address Redacted and it is a 30 min walk to the village - while I would do it sometimes to eat, socialise, I would go a lot more if there was a bus stop with a frequent service at the top of the estate. Currently it's a 15 min walk to the nearest bus stop from here when ideally it should be no more than 5 minutes to make it an easy and desirable way to travel.

Other than the 41 and the Swords Express. all other bus routes servicing Malahide Dart Station, 33 and the 43 all leave from the village, which is a 30 minute walk from where I live (and other parts of Swords too) - these routes should be more inclusive to make it easy for all to access either by changing the routes or ensuring that there's a local connector bus servicing all areas of Swords. There is also no transport service from Swords or other local areas to Blanchardstown, though it's an industrial hub and many people travel that direction for work. In their cars! Additionally there is no public transport links to the more rural areas of Fingal such as The Naul, Ballyboughal, Garristown etc. Perhaps a serviced central transport hub, with ample parking for those that live in more rural areas of fingal so they can park and ride should be considered? It should be easier for people to get to places within their county without having to resort to cars.

Swords has a large population but the various different areas are under serviced when it comes to leisure amenities such as restaurants, wine bars, shops, etc. meaning that you have to travel by car for entertainment. If you want people to walk, cycle, then amenities have to be reachable and that means building better infrastructure and this should be by design at the planning stage. Millers Glen is here now for 7 years and still growing, The supermarket only opened 5 months ago. There is no other amenities, creche or playground completed, when I'm sure this is what the developer agreed to as part of their planning permission being granted. Yet still not delivered. Why build vast tracts of housing and no community infrastructure - what else will people ever do except get into their cars?

If you want to change behaviour you need to provide things close by that people will want to walk/cycle to before you put in paths or cycle lanes, otherwise it's just a waste of time as people will not walk long journeys to avail of services/amenities that they can reach quickly in a car. If you want people to use public transport then the service has to be frequent, cheap and easily accessible for all. 15 minute walking distances to bus stops for non essential journeys won't happen. People will just stay home or get into their cars. And you will not persuade them otherwise no matter how many times you mention the word sustainability.

[continued] Swords village is not a desirable place when compared to Malahide, Skerries etc. The village has been sacrificed to ugly buildings and a large shopping centre that has sucked the life out of the main street. As the centre of Swords it should be easily accessible from all areas by public transport and be a hub of community living - shopping, entertainment, restaurants, farmers market etc. Instead it's a place that people avoid meaning that small, indigenous local businesses struggle to do well. A complete rethink of what makes a town people friendly and an enjoyable place to be is needed - clearly it can be done as in other areas that are thriving in Fingal, so the question is, has Swords village daily life been traded by making it the "commercial" town rather than a pretty community based one to live and thrive in? Who is Swords village for? Right now it appears to be for the large retailers to make money at the expense of local communities when most of this money leaks out of the economy.

Amenities, shops & leisure options need to be decentralised out of one main area and multiple smaller hubs created instead. This will help to make journeys shorter and create local communities within larger communities that people will want to shop and socialise in, helping to forge better social connections and pride in the areas they live in, making it more likely that people will invest in measures to promote sustainability.

In terms of climate change - there needs to be better communication about what this really means and what the other planetary boundaries are that we need to manage if we are to save the planet. Talking about sustainability is disingenuous if there are not going to be radical changes to how we live and this doesn't start with getting people out of their cars. Yes, it will help a little but it's better urban planning, better transport links, building strong communities that shop local, are involved in sustainability projects because they understand the benefits to both people and planet, doughnut economics to guide all local decisions and design thinking to help identify the best problems to solve. Without radical change, we will not move fast enough to save the planet by 2030. This strategy on paper will not be enough.

I welcome the focus of Fingal County Council on Active Travel. However I believe delivery has to be sped up and more cost efficient measures used to expedite delivery. Suggestions I would have are;

A permeability audit of each town in Fingal should be completed and pedestrian/cycle routes opened up to facilitate more direct routes for active travel and the benefit of using quiet routes. Using Swords as an example a lot of access points have been closed up over the years that have added substantial distances for active travel and consigned many people to car use. Realm enhancement should be used as a carrot for these measures and where anti-social behaviour is a concern then the Council should take an active role in managing any problems (along with the Garda Síochána) post the launch of any new routes.

The council should take a firmer approach in removing car parking spaces where active travel routes could be used in their place. This could also enable quick build temporary routes e.g. Malahide to Portmarnock while we wait for the official route to be finalised.

Cycle route signage needs to be rolled out. This should not necessitate any extra pole clutter. The Sustrans cycle routes in Northern Ireland are well signposted without a lot of Street clutter and are excellent in helping new cyclists or those unfamiliar with the area to follow the safer cycling routes.

Work with State owned/ Education bodies in Fingal to use their land for active travel routes. St Cronan's school in Swords is a good example of where popular a walking route is routed through a School campus.

Work with Publicly funded and Private bodies in Fingal to use their facilities for Public parking during non business hours. This will help with car parking capacity if we move to reduce on-street parking. E.g. National Learning network locks their car park at evening and weekends when park usage across the road in Balheary park is at it's highest.

Good job developing an in-depth active travel plan, the main points I'll make are the following:

1. Emphasize safe routes to schools, raised zebra crossings with flashing lights or signals, protected cycle lanes/paths, etc
2. Increased pedestrian crossings with prioritized timing (i.e. light changes fairly quickly after button pressed)
3. Reduced speed limits to 30kph anywhere within town limits
4. Segregated bike and pedestrian infrastructure within and between neighbouring towns to allow for traveling for life, work, shopping, hanging out with friends, etc within and between towns
5. Most of us are tax payers and productive members of society, whether we ride a bike, walk, take the train/bus or drive, or some combination of the above. For too long the car has been prioritized over all other users of the streets. This needs to change
6. Increased permeability and connectivity between and across estates, cul de sacs, playing fields, schools, etc
7. Improve multi-modal travel, connecting all parts of the towns to the train stations and bus stops, encouraging the ability to bring bikes on the train or racks on the front of buses
8. More bike parking everywhere
9. Cycle and walking paths on main roads should have priority over incoming minor roads. All minor roads should have stop signs before a raised crossing path
10. Reduced car parking in scenic areas, such as waterfronts, beach strands, Red Island. These areas should be converted to plazas and boardwalks
11. Make the Fingal Coastal Way and other major active travel projects happen
12. All pavement entrances should be dished smoothly to the crossing level, or else the road surface should be raised to meet the curb

Thanks for your time and looking forward to seeing Fingal become more welcoming and inclusive for all, (name redacted)

Swords Tidy Towns endorse Fingal Active Travel Policy as it promotes the UN SDG's. We would like to see more funding being made available to expand safe cycle routes around Swords and between Swords and Malahide and between Swords and Dublin Airport.

Travel for all

Theme:Active Travel

It is good that the Active Travel Strategy considers those with reduced mobility e.g. wheelchair and adapted cycle users. Infrastructure that accommodates these users will be suitable to those with more mobility.

The strategy should start as soon as possible. I believe that the initial Covid lockdown, with the 2km limit, introduced many to the joys of walking - like those mentioned in chapter 2 e.g. reduced noise levels, improved air quality and improved health and wellbeing.

We must build on that before the return to motor vehicles is cemented into a habit.

Online portal to report road traffic offences

Theme:Active Travel

With Health and Wellbeing, FCC Active Travel department should work with the RSA and their Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 to strongly encourage the Gardai to create an online portal to allow for the reporting of road traffic offences. It appears to work very well in (some districts) in the UK.

Advertise safe routes parallel to main roads

Theme:Active Travel

For Protected Cycleways, while safety is a legitimate concern of those not currently cycling (and one for those actively cycling), in some areas there are existing quiet routes parallel to main roads. While waiting for new cycling infrastructure these quiet routes could be highlighted and advertised. When my family cycles from western Carpenterstown to Castleknock we use very quiet routes that are significantly less stressful to use than the busy main road.

The Hartstown Road segregated cycle track is brilliant and my wife uses it as a safe and quiet route between Carpenterstown and Clonee.

Maybe liaising with Google Maps to suggest these routes when people request cycling routes or having an online database of routes for residents to browse.

These routes will also help with Connectivity and Road Safety.

Speed up delivery of Safe Routes to School

[continued] For Protected Cycleways, while safety is a legitimate concern of those not currently cycling (and one for those actively cycling), in some areas there are existing quiet routes parallel to main roads. While waiting for new cycling infrastructure these quiet routes could be highlighted and advertised. When my family cycles from western Carpenterstown to Castleknock we use very quiet routes that are significantly less stressful to use than the busy main road.

Speed up delivery of Safe Routes to School

Theme:Active Travel

With respect to Safe Routes to School, I am very disappointed with the slow pace (or zero visible progress) for Scoil Choilm and St Patrick's National School near me. Both already have off road cycle tracks leading to them so it should be an easy task.

Weather - dispel the myths

Theme:Active Travel

You must dispel the myths about the amount of rain we get in Dublin. It's a lot less than people think.

It is good to see the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal going on Public Display and hopefully there will be a number of submissions from the Public to help inform this Strategy, which is arguably the most important strategy to have been produced by Fingal since its establishment as a Local Authority in 1994, in that it will have the ability to bring about positive change to so many Urban Areas, improving peoples health and well-being and helping the Environment, there really are so many wins by facilitating people to use Active Travel modes.

Climate and Health Alliance submission to Fingal County Council  
Active Travel strategy

## Introduction

How we travel everyday impacts not only on our environment but also on our individual and collective health. Hostile conditions for people walking and cycling arising from poor planning, an under-resourced and fragmented public transport system, and over-investment in motorways, have created a car culture responsible for some of the worst traffic congestion in Europe<sup>i</sup>.

This has resulted in an increasingly unhealthy, sedentary lifestyle coupled with rising transport greenhouse gas emissions polluting our air. Our inactive car commuter culture has contributed to the growing levels of physical inactivity in Ireland, with just 31% of male adults and 34% of female adults (18+ years) reaching the recommended physical activity levels set by the WHO<sup>ii</sup>. For children (10-12 years) and adolescents (12-18), just 19% and 12% in Ireland meet the sufficient physical activity levels<sup>iii</sup>.

Our built environment has created a toxic culture that prioritises private vehicles over any form of active travel, thereby restricting physical activity and resulting in unhealthy lifestyles. According to the WHO, this can have serious consequences for our health as physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality<sup>iv</sup>.

Meanwhile, as over 98% of our vehicle fleet is still powered by fossil fuels, the transport sector acts as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and toxic levels of air pollution<sup>v, vi</sup>. This has major health ramifications as the WHO has described air pollution as the 'single biggest environmental health risk' and even more worrying, air pollution is the fourth-highest mortality risk factor, responsible for 1,410 premature deaths a year in Ireland.

Between 1990 and 2017, transport emissions have grown by 133% resulting in the sector being the second-largest emitter behind agriculture, at 19.8% of total national emissions<sup>vii</sup>. Moreover, private car use accounted for 52% of national transport CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in 2017, further illustrating the skewed nature of our transport sector and its detrimental impact on the environment.

Evidently, our current mobility structure is wholly unsustainable and requires a radical overhaul to reverse such trends. In line with the Climate Action Plan, Ireland has committed to an ambitious target of halving its transport sector emissions by 2030 and becoming net-zero by 2050. Meeting these levels will require a complete societal transformation as we move away from an over-reliance on private fossil-fuel vehicle use and towards a more sustainable form of transport.

As such, ***active travel such as walking, wheeling, and cycling represents the best, most cost-effective, and suitable means of travel that we should structure our transport system around.*** Significantly increasing active travel in favour of private vehicle use will result in a multitude of benefits for both human and planetary health.

As an alliance that seeks to highlight the enormous public health harms that arise from climate change while emphasising the significant health benefits that can be unlocked by tackling global warming, we believe as Ireland overhauls its transport infrastructure, active travel must be prioritised in the creation of a more sustainable, healthier, and greener society.

We welcome Fingal County Council's invitation to provide feedback on its Active Travel Strategy. As stated in the draft consultation, we urgently need to reassess the priority that we have traditionally



given to the private motor car and promote active travel as part of the normal daily routine. In this submission, we will set out our recommendations on how Fingal County Council can best prioritise active travel to benefit all users and residents.

## Health benefits

Promoting walking and cycling in favour of unsustainable forms of transport such as private vehicle use brings a multitude of health, environmental health, and economic benefits<sup>viii</sup>. Evidence shows that these forms of active mobility are significantly associated with improved cardiovascular health and lower body weight<sup>ix</sup>, while communities with higher levels of walking and cycling have lower levels of obesity<sup>x</sup>.

Active travel can prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer, and their risk factors such as hypertension and obesity, with regular cycling, such as commuting to work, can reduce the total risk of mortality by about 10%<sup>xi</sup>.

A 2013 systematic review of the relationship between active transport and health outcomes found that active transport was significantly associated with improved cardiovascular health and lower body weight<sup>xii</sup>. However, our current sedentary habits, coupled with the high prevalence of obesity in Ireland, will contribute significantly to increased rates of chronic disease in the future.

These active forms of mobility are much more environmentally sustainable, helping to reduce air pollution, meaning lower greenhouse gas emissions and cleaner air for everyone to breathe. For example, if a car trip is replaced by a bicycle trip, then one saves, on average, approximately 150 grams per kilometre. When one replaces 2000km of car trips with bicycle trips, then one saves 300 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

As 98% of our vehicle fleet is powered by fossil fuels, the transport sector acts as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and toxic levels of air pollution<sup>xiii</sup>. Whilst this causes untold damage to our environment, the consequences on health are just as extreme and often overlooked

Diesel-powered motorised vehicles produce large amounts of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) which is significantly harmful to respiratory health, particularly to those most vulnerable such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly. Reducing our dependence on cars in favour of walking and cycling would radically improve our air quality and overall collective health.

Moreover, air pollution and physical inactivity can have major implications for our mental health as recent evidence suggests an association between air pollution exposure and increased rates of mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety<sup>xiv</sup>, while participating in active modes of travel is linked with improved mental wellbeing<sup>xv</sup>.

As 51% of Fingal residents commute to work or college by car and only 18% walk or cycle, it is wholly unsustainable in the long-term meaning radical action is required to prioritise active forms of transport for the benefit of human and planetary health. In line with the government's Climate Action Plan to add a half-million daily journeys by walking, cycling, and public transport, by 2030, it is the position of the Climate and Health Alliance that the Fingal Active Travel Strategy must be ambitious and aim for 50% of daily commutes to be taken by these active travel modes by 2030.

## Hierarchy of road user models

For too long, Ireland's transport infrastructure was centred on prioritising the need of private car users to the detriment of public health. The government recently published its National Sustainable

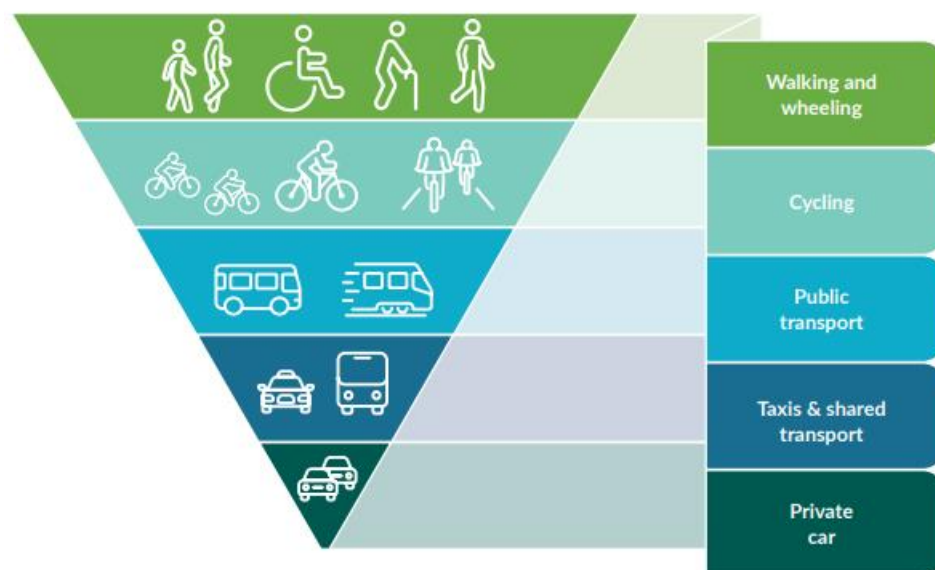
Mobility Policy and within it, it set out the Hierarchy of Road Users model, which can be seen below. It recognised that by prioritising design for pedestrians first, the number of short journeys taken by car can be reduced and public transport more accessible<sup>xvi</sup>.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) seeks to put well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities. It advocates for this internationally recognised ‘pedestrian first’ hierarchy of road users as a means to encourage and facilitate more sustainable travel patterns. It provides four practical measures that Fingal County council can follow to active travel users in favour of private car use:

- Highly connected streets which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to-find manner
- A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages
- Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities
- Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment

The prioritisation of wheeling, along with walking, in this hierarchy, is welcome as too often disabled users are omitted from healthy sustainable forms of active transport. If we focus on the needs of our most vulnerable users, we can improve sustainable mobility options for everyone. The active travel strategy must be updated to incorporate the hierarchy so that all infrastructure planning, design, and construction taken by the county council adheres to this model.

Figure 8: Hierarchy of Road Users model



## Safety

To increase active travel participation among new users and make it the default priority option of travel, it must be made **safe, accessible, and easy to use for all user groups and demographics**. As noted earlier, only 18% of Fingal residents walk or cycle to work/college.

In Ireland, lack of safety for active travel, particularly cycling, is cited as the main barrier. For example, in a survey of parents of primary school children, 23% said they drove their children to school because walking was too dangerous, whilst the corresponding figure for cycling was 43%<sup>xvii</sup>. Figures from the National Transport Authority starkly highlight this as in 1986, 24% of primary school students were driven to school but by 2016 this had risen to nearly 60%. Meanwhile, the percentage of walking and cycling to school fell dramatically from just under 50% in 1986 to only 24.8% in 2018.

This trend is also sadly seen among secondary school students as 23.3% either walked or cycled in 2016 compared to 47.2% in 1986.

For girls cycling to school, the reduction is even more acute and shocking. Research from the Green schools' campaign revealed that only one girl in every 250 pupils cycle to school<sup>xviii</sup> compared to 19,000 back in 1986<sup>xix</sup>. Unsurprisingly, among the reasons cited for this alarmingly low figure is that female students see it as a safety issue with risks to them in traffic.

A 2020 Transport for Ireland report on women's view of our current transport system found that while women view cycling as good for health, it is negated by the perception that it is the least safe way to travel<sup>xx</sup>. It concluded that to compete with the car, walking and cycling, as well as public transport infrastructure had to deliver on the breadth of women's needs in delivering the functional needs of being reliable, safe, accessible, and convenient, and additionally meeting experiential needs of providing comfort, inclusion, joy, community, and belonging.

Where infrastructure is provided for active travel, or where pedestrians and particularly cyclists must share road space with motorised vehicles, legislation that is intended to protect these users is rarely enforced. Far too often, vehicles park on footpaths and cycle lanes or do not provide a safe distance when passing cyclists on the roads. Without proper enforcement of these laws to protect pedestrians and cyclists, active travel will never appeal to non-users who may wish to walk or take their bikes to school, work, and leisure.

Sadly, as well as lack of safety, girls and women are put off cycling due to the high levels of harassment and abuse they receive from drivers and young men. As a depressing reflection of wider society, everyone, but especially women, need to feel physically and socially safe if we are to see the required public shift to active travel<sup>xxi xxii</sup>.

As Fingal County council incorporates large parts of north Dublin which are sparsely populated and rural, this active travel strategy must not omit to facilitate those living in these areas to walk and cycle safely. All rural roads within Fingal County council must be provided with safe, segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, particularly the former, of high quality.

In that manner, it is welcome that the consultation draft aims to achieve this behavioural modal shift by providing best in class infrastructure, policies and amenities that prioritise walking and wheeling for the people of Fingal. It envisages that walking, cycling, and wheeling be the natural first choice for everyday journeys for people of all ages and abilities, and this will be realised by putting active travel first in all planning, design, and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives.

To facilitate greater take-up of walking, wheeling, and cycling, physically segregated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure must be widely expanded and provided. To improve safety, we recommend the following policies be implemented by Fingal County Council:

- Conduct an audit of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in all towns, villages, and busy urban areas within Fingal County council
- Conduct an audit of all footpaths to ensure that all infrastructure is of high quality and accessible to those living with disabilities
- Provide all urban areas, towns, and villages in Fingal County Council with wider and properly lit footpaths of quality materials and ensure regular maintenance to facilitate all age demographics and wheelchair users

- Provide separate, physically segregated footpaths between cycling and walking. Cyclists and walkers do not mix well, and paint is not infrastructure.
- Provide more zebra crossings to prioritize walking and introduce new regulations to reduce the waiting time to a maximum of 30 seconds for pedestrian signal times to ensure that pedestrians of all ages have adequate time to cross the road
- Expand the pedestrianisation of Fingal County council towns and villages e.g., Malahide main street
- Provide and construct safe, segregated and high-quality pedestrian pathways on all rural roads in Fingal County council
- Construct an expansive network of physically segregated, safe, and high-quality cycling paths between all urban and residential areas in Fingal County council
- Ensure that all future and existing cycling paths are physically segregated from roads and pedestrian paths, signposted, maintained to a high standard and well lit
- Carry out a road audit to identify the most dangerous junctions and roads for cyclists. Accordingly, retrofit all dangerous junctions and roads to the standards set out in the National Transport Authority's National Cycle Manual and the Department of Transport's 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a minimum
- Ensure that all road upgrades and new roads include provision for cycling built with Dutch-style cycling infrastructure
- Ensure all new roundabouts are built to the Dutch-style roundabout design while retrofitting existing roundabouts
- Provide safe, secure and well-lit bicycle parking in all towns of villages; DART, train, and bus stations; and all park and ride facilities
- Promote cycling using "soft interventions" such as public awareness campaigns, bike week and information targeting certain users
- Allow contra-flow cycling in one-way streets on specifically signed roads with low volumes of traffic

To ensure successful implementation, each of these recommendations must be assigned to the relevant department with the county council, along with strict timelines and KPIs.

## Schools

As outlined earlier, the number of schoolchildren walking and cycling to school has declined dramatically in the past few decades, particularly among girls. Often, schoolchildren want to make their own way to school by walking and cycling but are prevented from doing so due to a lack of safety. To achieve a societal shift away from our over-reliance on private vehicle use, we must instil

a culture of independent active travel in the next generation so that it becomes normalised and embedded.

This can only be achieved if we make walking, wheeling, scooting, and cycling safe attractive, safe, and fun for young people to use. We recommend the following:

- Expand and resource the Safe Routes to School initiative to every school in Fingal County council
- Expand and resource the School Streets initiative to every feasible school in Fingal County Council
- Implement low-traffic neighbourhood (LTN) schemes around schools, where feasible, in Fingal County Council
- Provide safe walking and cycling routes to all educational facilities, including third-level colleges.
- Host Bike to School weeks or months
- Carry out an audit of every school and routes leading to the school from residential areas
- Provide regular cycling training and safety to every school in Fingal County council
- Implement the cycle bus initiative, which has been working with and adopted by several local country councils, nationwide. A cycle bus is a system whereby a group of parents and school children cycle to school together, the children on the inside, the parents forming a barrier all around them, protecting them from vehicles on the road<sup>xxiii</sup>.
- Expand the Green-Schools Programme, the environmental and awards initiative that promotes sustainable travel, to all schools in the state

To ensure successful implementation, each of these recommendations must be assigned to the relevant department with the county council, along with strict timelines and KPIs.

### **Economic benefits**

As well as the expansion of active travel infrastructure being favoured by the majority of the public<sup>xxiv</sup>, the economic benefits of walking and cycling such as higher retail spending and lower absentee rates, have been proven by numerous reports<sup>xxv xxvi</sup>. Moreover, when built, walking, and cycling infrastructure such as the reallocation of road space has been shown to increase active travel levels and is strongly supported by both the community and local businesses<sup>xxvii</sup>.

For example, a considerable majority of businesses, over 70%, responded in strong favour of the pedestrianisation of Blackrock Main Street citing it as a positive addition with some noting that it increased footfall and people coming to the village<sup>xxviii</sup>. Moreover, research from London on the economic benefits of investment in walking and cycling found that high-street walking, cycling and public realm improvements can increase retail sales by up to 30%<sup>xxix</sup>.

There is further evidence on an international level indicating the positive economic benefits of active travel infrastructure. A study of business in Portland found people who walked and cycled spent more in a month than drivers while research from New York showed that streets with dedicated cycle lanes in New York saw a larger rise in retail sales compared to the surrounding area<sup>xxx</sup>.

At times, local businesses can be resistant to active travel infrastructure in their area due to concerns that it will impact economic activity. The research outlined above shows otherwise as walking and cycling infrastructure can create numerous economic benefits for the individual, society, and businesses. The benefits of active travel infrastructure must be communicated and highlighted to the public and businesses as it is rolled out to ensure that there is local buy-in and support.

The economic benefit of active travel is overwhelmingly positive, with the UK Department of Transport stating that investment in walking and cycling brings benefits of £5.50 for every £1, a far higher return than for many large road and rail schemes. Businesses can greatly benefit from utilising forms of active travel such as cycling, and the infrastructure provided such as e-cargo delivery bikes.

According to a study, electric cargo bikes deliver about 60% faster than vans in city centres, had a higher average speed, and dropped off 10 parcels an hour, compared with six for vans<sup>xxxi</sup>. Moreover, the bikes cut carbon emissions by 90% compared with diesel vans, and by a third compared with electric vehicles. In that regard, it is encouraging to see within the consultation document the e-cargo bike pilot initiative which will provide 4 e-cargo bikes that will be trialled by local businesses for 12 months. This pilot should be rolled out across the county council to encourage businesses to move away from motorised delivery vans and towards more sustainable, faster, and greener forms of delivery in the form of cargo bikes.

## Climate change

The world is currently in the midst of a climate emergency and every nation must contribute to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions rapidly to halt and ultimately reverse the warming of the planet. In line with the Climate Action Plan 2021, Ireland has committed to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030<sup>xxxii</sup>.

As transport accounted for 17.9% of greenhouse emissions in 2020, nearly double its 1990 level of 9.5%, evidently our transport system has been allowed to expand in a wholly environmentally unsustainable manner<sup>xxxiii</sup>. The Climate Change Advisory Council has proposed three sequential five-year period carbon budgets that provide for a reduction of 51% of emissions by 2030 relative to 2018.

These budgets will be applied to every sector, including transport. While the transition of the private motor fleet to electrification will help, it is not the silver bullet repeatedly voiced by certain industry groups. Ireland must move away from its private car-commuter culture and towards a more sustainable, clean, and shared form of transport infrastructure.

Active travel, such as walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport represents the best, most cost-effective, and most suitable means of travel that we should structure our transport system around. The consultation briefing notes that the Fingal County council climate action plan 2019-2024 commits to increasing public bike facilities; promoting mode shift; delivering a county cycle/greenway network; promoting a cycle to work scheme with council staff and working with stakeholders along public transport routes.

While these are welcome, the active travel strategy must be much more ambitious. In June 2021, the Joint Committee on Environment and Climate Action (JCOCA) published a report on reducing emissions in the transport sector by 51% by 2030. The Climate and Health Alliance would urge the Fingal County council to include the recommendations put forward in its final active travel strategy and to implement them by 2025. The following recommendations put forward by the committee

would dramatically increase levels of active travel while reducing harmful levels of emissions:

- Implement a policy of road space reallocation away from the private car and towards sustainable transport modes for cities, towns, and villages
- Examine road user charges – including targets for car mileage reductions – and reallocate any revenue from such charges to more sustainable alternatives
- Develop a national network of cycling superhighways such as those in Denmark and London for those living outside major cities
- Develop family-friendly cycling infrastructure to achieve wider and more diverse uptake of cycling
- Develop a ‘green network’ of cycling and/or pedestrian routes providing safe alternative access to towns or villages and key amenities from homes in the surrounding area.

## Recommendations

As mentioned from the outset of this report, with only 18% of Fingal residents walking or cycling in their commute to work or college, compared to 51% by car, it is simply unsustainable in the long run. In contrast, in the Netherlands walking and cycling accounted for 18% and 27% of all trips made<sup>xxxiv</sup>, nearly half of all journeys. For the sake of the health and wellbeing of those residing in Fingal County council, this active travel strategy must be ambitious in its targets.

As 51% of Fingal residents commute to work or college by car and only 18% walk or cycle, it is wholly unsustainable in the long-term meaning radical action is required to prioritise active forms of transport for the benefit of human and planetary health. In line with the government’s Climate Action Plan to add a half-million daily journeys by walking, cycling, and public transport, by 2030, it is the position of the Climate and Health Alliance that the Fingal Active Travel Strategy must be ambitious and aim for 50% of daily commutes to be taken by these active travel modes by 2030.

To meet this target of 50% however, along with the delivery of the recommendations set out throughout this document, can only be realised by setting relevant and ambitious KPIs. Moreover, each action set out above must be assigned to the relevant department within Fingal County council. The majority of which will fall to the Operations department, as well as Environment, Planning and Strategic Infrastructure, and Community and Sports.

## Conclusion

Ireland faces a host of difficult challenges in the coming decades in the form of climate change, mass congestion, and a growing and physically inactive population. Realising a sustainable mobility future through prioritizing well-resourced, planned active travel infrastructure will be critical in addressing these obstacles. Local government and county councils can play a significant role in achieving this transition and we believe the recommendations made within this submission can enhance active travel within Fingal County council.

The Climate and Health Alliance envisages a future where every citizen in Ireland has access to safe, reliable forms of sustainable active mobility. Achieving such a scenario is entirely viable with proper planning and investment and has the potential to radically improve the quality of life on this island, creating a cleaner environment while improving the health and wellbeing of our society.

**About**

The Irish Climate and Health Alliance is made up of several public health organisations and advocacy groups from around the island of Ireland. The Alliance seeks to highlight the enormous public health harms that arise from climate change while emphasising the significant health benefits that can be unlocked by tackling global warming; provide a platform for health professionals and organisations to act, and advocate for greater government action in addressing the climate crisis so that the health benefits are attained.

Contact: [info@climateandhealthalliance.ie](mailto:info@climateandhealthalliance.ie)

Visit: [www.climateandhealthalliance.ie](http://www.climateandhealthalliance.ie)

*Members of the Climate and Health Alliance*

- Association for Health Promotion Ireland
- Asthma Society of Ireland
- British Heart Foundation Northern Ireland
- Irish Cancer Society
- Irish Doctors for the Environment
- Irish College of General Practitioners
- Irish Gerontological Society
- Irish Global Health Network
- Irish Heart Foundation
- Irish Medical Organisation
- Irish Nutrition and Dietetic Institute
- Irish Society of Chartered Physiotherapists
- National Children’s Hospital Ireland
- Royal College of Physicians of Ireland
- Royal College of Surgeons of Ireland
- Stroke Association Northern Ireland
- University College Dublin, School of Public Health, Physiotherapy & Sports Science
- University College Cork, School of Public Health





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**RODERIC  
O'GORMAN TD**

MINISTER FOR CHILDREN, EQUALITY,  
DISABILITY, INTEGRATION AND YOUTH

**CLLR. PAMELA  
CONROY**  
**CASTLEKNOCK**



May 2022

**Re: Draft Active Travel Strategy For Fingal Consultation**

To whom it may concern,

We are delighted to have the opportunity to make a submission on the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal and would like to thank the Active Travel Unit for their work in producing this draft strategy.

We'd also like to commend the Active Travel Unit for the work they have undertaken to date to increase the number of residents in Fingal who are opting to use active travel options instead of private vehicles. The Walking and Cycling Index 2021, produced by Sustrans on behalf of the NTA, indicated that walking and cycling took 330,000 cars off Dublins roads every day. We feel that the work of the Active Travel Unit in promoting active travel and creating better infrastructure has played a significant role in taking private cars off the roads in Fingal.

While we are generally supportive of the strategy we have set out some thoughts below that we would like to be taken into consideration when finalising it.

Kind regards,

Roderic O'Gorman, TD and Cllr Pamela Conroy

#### **Inclusion of the latest data**

We appreciate that when the draft was written and put out on public consultation, the Walking and Cycling Index 2021 has yet to be published. Following the launch of this report by Minister Eamon Ryan on the 19<sup>th</sup> May 2022, we feel it would be appropriate to update the final version of the strategy to include data from this report.

### **Inclusion of images of adapted bikes for disabled people**

It was great to see the level of inclusive images and pictures used in this report. Given that the Walking and Cycling Index 2021 found that 8% of disabled people cycle once a week, we feel it would be a good opportunity to promote the fact that disabled people cycle by including some images in the report that represent this.

### **Car Free Neighbourhoods**

Following the inclusion of an objective in the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, following a motion from the Green Party Group, to promote the creation of car free neighbourhoods, we feel that the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal should include the creation of car free neighbourhoods as an active travel intervention.

### **Appropriately located street cycle counters**

We welcome the use of street cycle counters to encourage Active Travel but want to highlight the importance for these to be located appropriately in order for them to be as effective as possible. For example, the street cycle counter located near the Castleknock Gate in Phoenix Park does not count those bicycles which go into the park as they are not captured when they move into the correct lane to access the park and therefore the data on display is incorrect. While Cllr Conroy has asked for this cycle counter to be moved so that it can accurately capture data, we feel that it would be best if they were located appropriately in the first instance.

### **Cycle parking at public transport connections**

The draft strategy states that "better integration with public transport will include...secure cycle parking at bus and rail stations". While we agree that secure cycle parking is needed at bus and rail stations to encourage active travel, we also feel that this needs to be offered on a much larger scale than it is at the moment in order to make integration with public transport as effective as possible.

### **Electric vehicles**

We are confused as to how electric vehicles has a part to play in promoting active travel. While the other items listed on page 22 relate to cars, they all refer to means by which the volume of cars on our roads can be reduced. Whereas electric vehicles simply involves swapping one vehicle type for another and doesn't result in fewer cars on the road. We would ask that consideration be given to removing the reference to electric vehicles from this list.

### **Communication**

The Active Travel Unit have been providing a weekly email updating Cllrs on the progress of active travel projects in their area. We feel that this is a useful communication tool and that the Active Travel Unit should consider sharing this information publicly via the Council's social media channels as a means of both promoting Active Travel and informing the public on the progress of projects



daa cuideachta phoiblí theoranta

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The Secretary  
Fingal County Council  
Active Travel Department  
County Hall  
Swords  
Co. Dublin

Date: 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

**Re: Draft FCC Active Travel Strategy - Public Consultation Submission**

daa plc, Head Office, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin, welcomes the 'Fingal County Council Active Travel Strategy' initiative and commends Fingal County Council on its ambition to produce a comprehensive, holistic and structured active travel strategy across the county.

**Dublin Airport and Active Travel**

Daa are delighted with their recent 'Silver' accreditation as part of the EU Cyclists Federation's 'Cycle Friendly Employer' scheme and we are working towards 'Gold' accreditation. In addition, in the near future, in consultation with on-campus internal stakeholders, we intend to be recognised as '**Europe's Largest Cycle Friendly Airport**'. Our accreditation is in line with recent Department of Transport Guidelines on 'Sustainable Mobility', announced by the Minister for Transport in April 2022.

Daa has also recently hosted its inaugural 'Cycle Clinic' week, beginning on the 9<sup>th</sup> May 2022, in advance of National Cycling Week. Airport staff were offered a free cycle service of their bike, various 'Cycle to Work' bicycle options were on display from a local Fingal supplier. Additionally, the Fingal appointed public hire contractor, 'Bleeper' was on site, with their standard bike and a cargo bike on display, for staff to see and discuss the scheme.

The event was hosted at Dublin Airport Central's, 'The Green' courtyard in the centre of the airport and by all regards was cited as a successful, discussion provoking/generating event.



Given the airports national strategic asset status and contribution the Irish and Fingal economy coupled with the c.20,000 staff travelling to and from the Airport on a daily basis we believe there are significant opportunities for active travel improvement in the county with a dedicated short-term focus on the specific access routes to the airport. This short-term focus is consistent with the immediately realisable benefits of the active travel strategy.

### **Dublin Airport Planning and Strategic Asset Context**

daa looks forward to working collaboratively and in partnership with the Council and the National Transport Authority, in support of the active travel opportunities identified within the Active Travel Strategy. We would encourage the consideration of a specific section within the strategy tailored to the airport as with the recent draft Fingal Development Plan 2023 - 2029. An extract from the draft 2023 - 2029 Plans states that:

*'Dublin Airport is a major employment cluster and a strategic business location nationally as well as being the single most significant economic entity in Fingal and the wider Dublin City region.'*

*'More than any other business or economic driver, Dublin Airport and its ongoing growth generates significant benefit for the County of Fingal, allowing for a diverse local economy to flourish.'*

*'The latest estimates of employment and Gross Value Added (GVA) associated with the airport denotes it as a major employment cluster and a strategic business location nationally. Dublin Airport supports 129,700 jobs and contributes €9.8 billion annually to the national economy. 21,500 of these jobs result from direct employment supported by ongoing operations at Dublin Airport, with the total GVA generated directly by the airport estimated to be over €1.8 billion.'*

<https://consult.fingal.ie/en/consultation/fingal-county-development-plan-2023-2029-strategic-issues-paper/chapter/theme-4-employment-economy-dublin-airport>

Dublin Airport is Ireland's major international airport and is situated just south of Swords. It is also a major public transportation hub, a role which will continue to grow with the development of the MetroLink rail service and delivery of BusConnects along the R132 Dublin City-Swords corridor. The strategic relationship between Swords and Dublin Airport is well-established and is recognised in the Eastern and Midland Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES), which acknowledges:

*"...opportunities to create a strategic employment node maximising opportunity presented by Swords' strategic location well served by air, Metrolink and the national road network"<sup>1</sup>.*

Regional Policy Objective 4.31 provides the RSES will:

*"Support Swords-Dublin Airport as a **key location for airport related economic development and employment provision** linked to the protection and enhancement of access to Dublin Airport lands including the delivery of Metrolink"<sup>2</sup>*

As a key location for industry and employment, Dublin Airport provides important employment opportunities for current and future residents of Swords. This role is further enhanced by the recent addition of significant high-end employment space at Dublin Airport Central and the opportunities to attract additional inward investment into the region presented by the remaining 'High Technology' zoned lands and general airport growth.

We would also propose that **daa be invited to be a member of the FCC 'Active Travel Steering Group'** given the strategic nature of the airport, the high volume of staff and passengers accessing it on a daily basis, (116,000 on a busy day in 2019), in addition to local community, business and suppliers' interests in accessing and egressing the area.

Feedback from consultations has indicated that many staff and internal campus stakeholders have cited the lack of external access routes as a challenge to cycling to the Dublin Airport campus.

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<sup>1</sup> Northern and Western Regional Assembly. (2020). Northern and Western Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Page 73

<sup>2</sup> Northern and Western Regional Assembly. (2020). Northern and Western Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Page 73

## Draft FCC Active Travel Strategy 'Themes'

In terms of the various strategy themes within the draft document, daa would suggest:

- A cycling trip from Swords is consistent with the '15-minute towns/cities' concept. We would respectfully request enhanced cycle connectivity from Swords to Dublin Airport in line with the Strategy Theme 4, 'Connectivity' of the draft Active Travel Strategy.
- We would further appreciate that the external connection links from Swords and Santry/Northwood be considered within County's Road Safety Plan.
- We would encourage FCC to consider including the airport in their ambitions to 'integrate the County's transport and tourism strategies to promote increasingly sustainable travel patterns and improved linkages between the city centre, villages and the coast among visitors to the county'. As previously advised, Dublin airport carried 32m passengers in 2019, pre covid, the majority of which were tourists.
- Dublin Airport would encourage the consideration of a 'protected cycleway' (as per the Active Travel Strategy's designated 'Strategy Theme'), from Swords/Santry to the airport, even if it is a temporary scheme in advance of the full BusConnects infrastructure.

## Daa Suggestion for consideration

Daa would welcome:

- Proposals, aligned to a short timeline/timeframe, 2022/23, to improve the access routes from Swords and Santry/Northwood for cyclists, and,
  - Extension of the current shared public bike scheme in South Fingal to the Airport campus and terminals
  - With approximately 20,000 staff on site daily, many of whom reside in Swords and South Fingal, it is expected that infrastructure and promotional activities are tailored to include Dublin Airport and access to such as a priority/Low hanging fruit
  - We would also propose that daa be invited to be a member of the **FCC 'Active Travel Steering Group'** given the strategic nature of the airport to the county and nationally.
-



## **Conclusion**

daa looks forward to working collaboratively with the Council in support of the active travel opportunities identified within the FCC Active Travel Strategy. We wish to emphasise that due regard should be had to the important relationship between Dublin Airport and Swords, particularly in terms of airport staff, and the opportunities presented for short term active travel growth and the continued economic development of Swords and its surrounding areas.

Swords is one of largest and closest urban areas in proximity to the airport and hosts many airport workers. It is therefore anticipated that cycle connectivity between the Airport and Swords be prioritised, in order that it can set in motion the development of the overall connectivity routes between Dublin Airport and the surrounding urban areas.

Should you have any questions or queries regarding the above, please do not hesitate to get in touch.

Yours sincerely,

pp. 

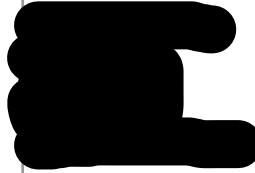
**Mark Finegan**  
**Head of**  
**Strategy and**  
**Engagement**



The Member for Ireland of:



Cyclist.ie - the Irish Cycling Advocacy Network



www.cyclist.ie

RCN 20102029

Addressee: **Fingal County Council**

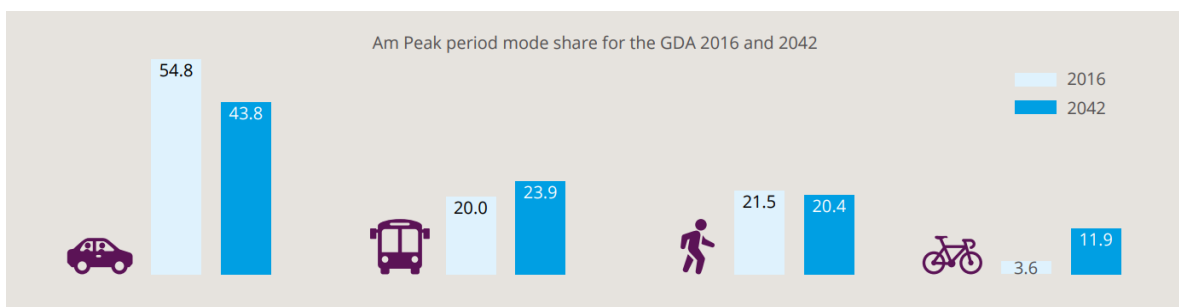
Date: 23rd May 2022

Re: **Active Travel Strategy**

## 1 Introduction

[Cyclist.ie](http://cyclist.ie), the Irish Cycling Advocacy Network (ICAN), is the Federation of Cycling Advocacy Groups, Greenway Groups and Bike Festivals on the island of Ireland. We are the Irish member of the [European Cyclists' Federation](http://european-cyclists-federation.org). Our vision is for an Ireland with a cycle friendly culture, where everyone has a real choice to cycle and is encouraged to experience the joy, convenience, health and environmental benefits of cycling.

*Cyclist.ie* welcomes this initiative by Fingal County Council to outline their broad strategy over the coming years in developing Active Travel in the County. The active travel targets as outlined in the Draft Strategy - see image below - though modest in nature, to our mind, still emphasise the task ahead for the Council



Fingal is very much a mixed urban and rural county, but Cyclist.ie would be hopeful that the target figures for sustainable transport and active travel will be revised upwards at later review stages, as a number of major projects come on stream to encourage the switch to sustainable modes? It is also critical that the Vision is actively transposed into a realistic Action Plan.

We make some comments on the Draft Strategy content below.

## 2 General Comments

### 2.1 Vision

Cyclist.ie notes in the Vision Statement on Page 6 of the draft strategy the desire that active travel '*will be the first and natural choice for everyday journeys*'. With respect this 'vision' appears somewhat unrealistic, and might be rephrased as '*will become a realistic and safe choice for everyday journeys*'?

We also note the reference to journeys '*to the city centre*'? What does that mean in a Fingal context? It should be omitted?

### 2.2 Policy Context

We note in Chapter 3 (Page 12) the outline of the various policy contexts, but in particular in the national context we note the glaring omission of the recently launched national [Sustainable Mobility Policy](#), which is now the backbone of active travel policy in Ireland and outlines very specific measures and actions to be implemented by Local Authorities. While an older draft version of this SMP is referenced in the Appendices, this agreed national SMP needs to be referenced upfront in the main body of the Strategy.

We note also on Chapter 3 on Page 15 in the box on 'National Design Guidance' the omission of the [TII Rural Cycleway Design](#) guidance, despite its very direct relevance to a number of critical projects in Fingal? This omission needs to be rectified for clarity.

### 2.3 Strategy Themes

Cyclist.ie broadly agrees with the 6 strategy themes as outlined in Chapter 4, but we suggest that 2 further themes should be added:

- 'Engagement' should actually be a main strategy theme as well, despite its inclusion in Chapter 6 under 'Changing Travel Behaviour' ?
- 'Data Gathering & Analysis' must form a cornerstone of any strategy and it is patently missing from this draft strategy. The collection and analysis of data enables better and more realistic future planning, and decision making.

We also object to the recurrence of the adverb 'may' in this Chapter, as exemplified on Page 20 in 'we may invite towns and villages' and 'we may review existing

development'? These conditional statements have no place in a Strategy Statement, and need to be unequivocally stated.

Under the Strategy Theme of 'Strategic Planning' we particularly welcome the reference to active travel considerations in new planning developments.

#### 2.4 Changing Travel Behaviour

Cyclist.ie welcomes the commitment to deliver an Active Travel Delivery Plan and a Communications Strategy, given in this chapter, but would wish to see a specific time commitment on delivery, and an outline of the processes, to back up these statements.

#### 2.5 Leadership Governance & Partnership

Chapter 7 outlines the welcome broad leadership and partnership approach. We look forward to the operation and reporting of the Active Travel Steering Group, and the proposal to appoint an 'Active Travel Champion'. We are happy at any stage to assist the Council in this process.

#### 2.6 Funding and Value for Money (VFM)

Openness and transparency on VFM of all projects should be a cornerstone of local government. It is critical that the general public understand that public projects, particularly those promoting Active Travel, provide very clear VFM and generally higher rates of return than other transport projects. We recommend that Chapter 7 include a specific commitment that Benefit-Cost Analysis (BCAs) of projects be openly made available, to reinforce this message.

#### 2.7 Strategy Outcomes

We welcome the inclusion of a 'Monitoring & Evaluation Framework' in this final chapter, but suggest that it should in reality come under Data Gathering & Analysis in Chapter 4 as a suggested specific theme, as it must be a cornerstone of any ongoing policy and development. We note there is no reference in this data context to the NTA/Sustrans Walking & Cycling Index, which will be a cornerstone of the measurement of general movement in Active Travel.

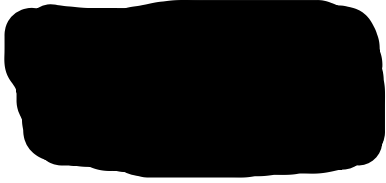
### **3 Summary/Conclusion**

Cyclist.ie broadly welcomes this Active Travel Strategy, but we have suggested above a number of potential additions, and noted some omissions:

- We propose a rewording of the Vision statement in Chapter 1
- We propose the addition of 2 critical themes to the existing 6 Strategy themes, outlined in Chapter 4. They are Data Gathering & Analysis, and Engagement
- We note the omission of references to the new national Sustainable Mobility Policy, and the Rural Cycleway Guidance in Chapter 3
- We suggest a commitment to publishing Benefit Cost Analysis of projects to

bolster public confidence in Active Travel projects.

- We welcome the commitment to develop an Active Travel Delivery Plan, and also a Communications Strategy and look forward to their quick delivery?





# An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal

Fingal Active Travel Group Submission

## INTRODUCTION

Fingal Active Travel Group is a member of the Fingal Public Participation Network representing the environmental pillar and is a sub-group of registered charity, Dublin Cycling Campaign (RCN: 20102029). We strongly believe that Fingal should be an area that provides liveable villages, suburbs and urban centres that prioritise people over cars.

We warmly welcome this draft strategy and the opportunity to review the Active Travel Strategy Document. Overall, it is visionary and comprehensive. It is really positive and encouraging to read about the prioritisation of active travel. There has been a plethora of plans down the years. From Smarter Travel (2009) aiming for a 10% cycling modal share to the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network (2013) aiming for a 2,400km cycle network. It is absolutely essential that these strategies and plans are translated into action.

## Policy Context

There is strong support across many Local (Fingal Development Plan, Local Economic Community Plans), Regional (Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy), National (National Planning Framework) policies. This has not been translated into an effective walking and cycling network. The proposed updated Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network was a regression on the 2013 plan with many routes missing or absent. Examples of which can be found in Appendix 1.

*The UK Government has recently launched a new active travel strategy for England aimed at encouraging and facilitating safe cycling and walking. The strategy, as set out in ‘**Gear Change – a bold vision for cycling and walking**’, is backed by £2bn of funding over five years; the biggest ever funding increase for these modes of transport.*

We support the key points of *The NIFTI Modal Hierarchy outlines which modes are to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are made.* In Appendix 1 of the Draft Strategy. There should be a strong focus on:

- Cleaning of current cycling infrastructure
- Upgrading and resurfacing current cycle lanes as many are degraded in Fingal. This could have an immediate impact.

- More bicycle counters to collect data and monitor progress
- Bicycle upcycling scheme similar to bike to work scheme but promoted and supported by Fingal CoCo such as the re discovery centre to help disadvantaged groups and refugees.
- Kissing gates. It should be stated quite clearly that they are to be removed from all regions within Fingal CoCo including greenways.

## Strategy Themes

In Strategic Planning, we think the top priority should be the theme of “Protected Cycleways.” Segregated safe cycleways are the most important factor in encouraging people to cycle. The strategy should weight the “Protected Cycleways” theme accordingly.

We welcome the commitment to ensure all relevant council policy supports active travel. We would like to specifically highlight:

*Joined up Health and Education policies can influence journey choice, for example by prescribing walking and cycling in patient care plans or embedding Safe Routes to School designs in all new school build projects. Operational strategies such as highway maintenance, car parking, and town centre access will be aligned to support active travel.*

Proactively embedding safe to routes to schools and aligning car parking policy to support active travel are two powerful levers that can make cycling and walking genuine alternatives.

Something to note, our group submitted to the BusConnects Rd 3 Consultation regarding CBC05 route (Blanchardstown). The design for one of the main entry points for a new 1000 student school did not meet best practice. The following is an example routinely highlighted on our submissions: Missing Local (or site specific) Knowledge & Use of Shared Space (Contravening the National Cycling Manual).

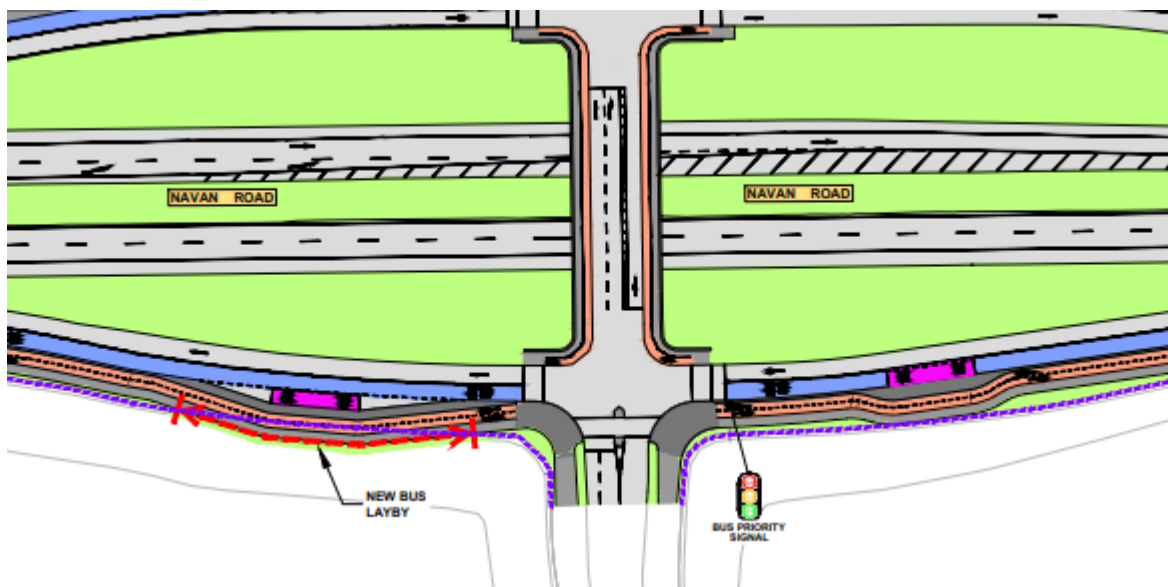


Figure 1 Future Entrance to Edmund Rice Post Primary School (Navan Road Overpass at the Phoenix Park Racecourse)

*“Significant shared space with pedestrians here, contradicting NCM Section 1.9.3. This junction will become the entrance to the new Edmund Rice Post-Primary school due to be completed in 2021. Consequently, cycle facilities should be kept separate from pedestrian movements and this junction should be upgraded to accommodate a 1,000 student school. Cycle and pedestrian facilities should be prioritised and segregated in accordance with the Transport Modelling Report and NCM guidelines respectively. There should be cycle facilities designed to integrate with any cycling facilities resulting from the schools construction. An elevated cyclist and pedestrian crossing should be strongly considered for this crossing to assert that pedestrians and cyclists do in fact have priority.”*

## Changing Travel Behaviour

We strongly support trialling of new schemes whilst making adjustment for local concerns. Our group provides expert local user feedback on projects in our members’ communities. Refining proposals based on feedback from local communities is essential to ensure a project’s success.

For the *“Inspiration Theme”* a member local to Ongar suggested the following:

*Ongar distributor road is a classic example of 2-3 kms of cycle lanes situated beside fast flowing traffic which always feels very dangerous and noisy cycling along. Can the council trial average speed cameras along this route to slow speeds down?*

Another member engaged in Citizen Science Traffic Monitoring Projects such as WeCount recommends:

*“Projects such as WeCount engaged citizens and empowered us to monitor traffic in our own communities using Telraam traffic sensors. We developed a really clear picture of how our community in Castleknock was gridlocked with School Run traffic and through traffic. Such projects, when combined with local knowledge and Local Authority engineering expertise could have a transformative effect. It would allow the communities to co design solutions to our broken transport system.”* More information on this project is in Appendix 2.

## Leadership, Governance and Partnership

Chapter 7 presents a concern regarding outsourcing the strategy to developers. Dublin Cycling Campaign brought a high court case against a proposed development (Connolly Quarter) about increasing car parking spaces that wasn’t part of the original design. A number of planning (& public) consultations submitted to by our group have highlighted serious shortcomings in designs by developers (& consultants).

Major private developments such as the Blanchardstown shopping centre have enormous impacts on traffic. Traffic is congested all around the centre on most days and most trips are made by car. Stronger conditions are needed for planning applications to make clear what is expected of developers. Failing stronger conditions, new developments should be evaluated more thoroughly on their adherence to the design requirements in Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) and the National Cycling Manual (NCM).

Furthermore, consultancies employed to deliver projects should be given clearer guidance and held to a higher standard when fulfilling design requirements of DMURS and NCM. Our



reviews frequently highlight shortcomings (See Appendix 1 for small sample of shortcomings across many projects) where the design contravenes best practice as detailed in DMURS & NCM. These submissions include:

- BusConnects
- Brackenstown Swords
- Corballis East SHD
- Kellystown Rd
- Snugborough Rd Interchange
- Sutton-Malahide Greenway

There is only so much initiatives such as Cycling Without Age or Cycle Busses can achieve without putting in place physical infrastructure. These are all worthy initiatives and well meaning but when it comes down to implementing and building cycle lanes infrastructure is the key. The newly published Sustrans “Walking and Cycling Index 2021: Dublin Metropolitan Area” states that 22% of all Dublin residents would like to cycle but do not. Delivering on long promised infrastructure which fulfils design requirements in DMURS & NCM is essential for the transport modal shift called for in *The Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy*.


## Strategy Outcomes

Whilst we think a modal share of 11.9% for cycling trips would be fantastic, aiming for this by 2042 does not reflect the urgency of change necessary in a climate crisis.

## Conclusion

We very much welcome the document as a whole but we would like to see more concrete targets for delivering Protected Cycleways over the lifetime of the plan. Therefore we would like to see the “*Active Travel Delivery plan*” and its associated “*Monitoring & Evaluation Framework*” published. We are always available & willing to discuss feedback on active travel infrastructure delivered across Fingal. It is a shared goal to see Protected Cycleways delivered & actually empower locals to walk and cycle in their communities.

Yours sincerely,

  
Fingal Active Travel Group

Dublin Cycling Campaign

  
Dublin 8.

# APPENDIX 1 Design Shortcomings

Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Proposal 2021

Baldoyle & Howth



Figure 2 Illustration of Proposed Cycle Network for Baldoyle and Howth

A local Cllr noted:

The link between northern end of S2S and Sutton Station has been removed despite Fingal having commenced discussions with the landowners to provide it. Furthermore, in the intervening period NTA funded Fingal to work on routes in the Kinsealy area (to Portmarnock, to Malahide Demesne, to Kettle's Lane and to Balgriffin) and Fingal is currently taking the first two of those forward, none of these are on the plan.

## Blanchardstown & Castleknock

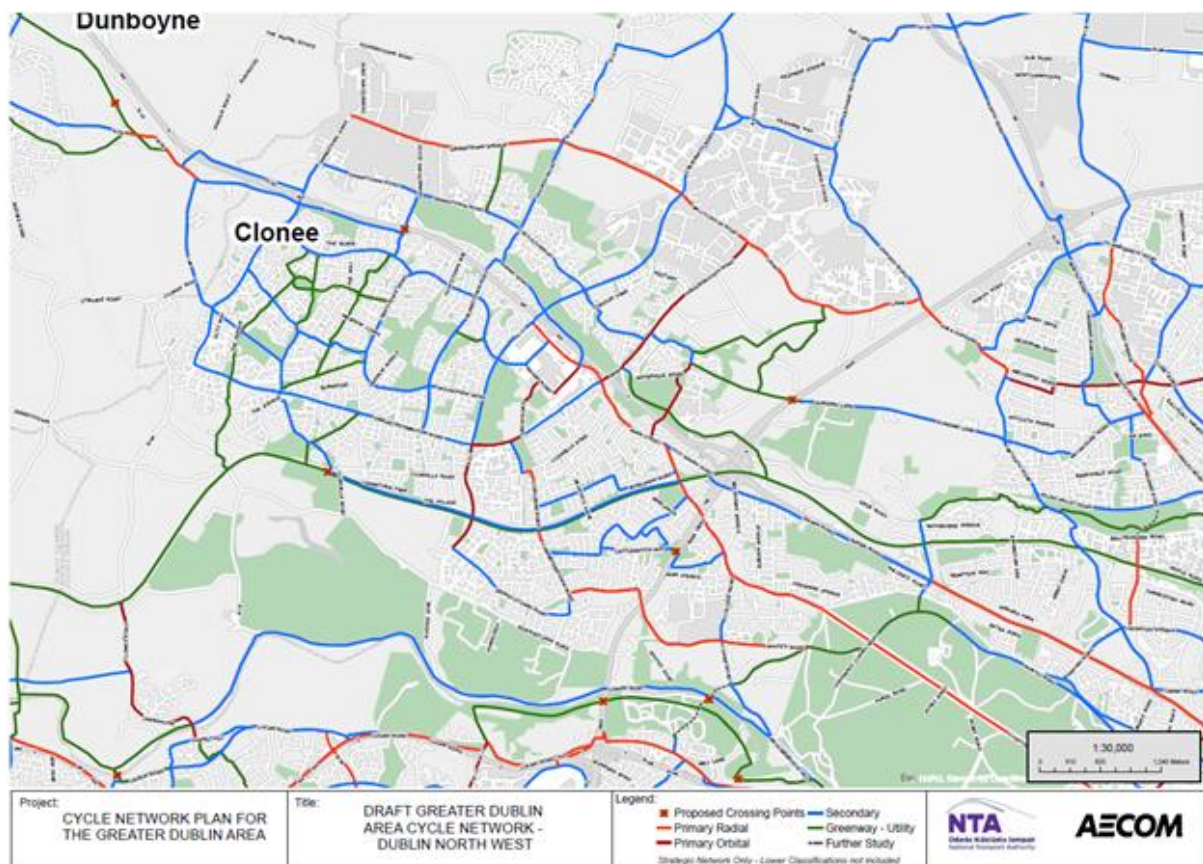


Figure 3 Illustration of Proposed Cycle Network for Greater Blanchardstown Area

There are several concerning issues in the Dublin 15 area not addressed in the GDACN. Major cycling interchanges still clearly prioritise cars contravening Section 2.2.2 User Priorities in the Design Manual of Urban Roads (DMURS):

“To encourage more sustainable travel patterns and safer streets, designers must place pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy [...] Designing for cyclists must also be given a high priority [...] the needs of the car should no longer take priority over the needs of other users or the value of place.”

There is no detail on segregated cycling facilities from Auburn Avenue to Snugborough road (nearly 20% of Route CBC05), Ashtown roundabout, outlined in the BusConnects section, is a further example of no integration, the Snugborough interchange is another (Figure 4).



Figure 4 Schematic Detailing Lack of Direct Access to N3 Cycling Underpass, No segregated cycle lane to National Sports Campus.

Cyclists wishing to cycle from Blanchardstown Shopping Centre to Blanchardstown Village are forced to cycle away from their destination. They then must negotiate shared space with pedestrians to connect to the cycling underpass. There are no clear indications to direct cyclists travelling from Blanchardstown Shopping centre to the village to the underpass. The journey from the Ebay Offices southbound through Snugborough Interchange to the junction of Clonsilla Rd and R806 takes approximately two minutes. The proposed alternative route will triple the journey time.

Providing cycle lanes across slip lanes is not recommended by the NTA's National Cycle Manual (section 4.4.4). These slip lanes should be removed (DMURS 4.4.3) or converted into pocket turns where complete slip lane removal isn't possible. Furthermore, these slip lanes increase crossing movements for pedestrians and significantly increase the risk of injury to cyclists. The slip lane on Waterville Rd (Figure 4) unnecessarily prioritises vehicles over cyclists. The slip lane onto the N3 from the Snugborough Rd doubles the crossing movements for pedestrians and directs vehicles travelling at significant speed across the path of cyclists. These cycle lanes across slip lanes are known as "Murder Strips." This can easily be resolved by removing these dangerous and outdated slip lanes.

Snugborough Rd provides the only connection to the National Sports Campus (NSC). The scheme does not provide a dedicated cycling route north in the direction of our National Sports Campus. This is despite the fact that Snugborough Rd is the location of Route NO5

of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network (3.4.1 Dublin North West - Proposed Cycle Route Network, Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network).

A dedicated eastbound cycle lane, to appropriately design for the GDACN Route, could easily be implemented in this junction however a dedicated right hand turn lane, in addition to the two vehicles lane, is provided in its place. These two general vehicle lanes will then abruptly merge into a single car lane immediately after the junction.



Figure 5 Schematic illustrating Upgraded Cycling Network of Phoenix Park without Route 5a  
The Phoenix Park Mobility Report states:

- The proposed cycling network aligns with existing and planned routes external to the Park within the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan.

Despite this, the network fails to align with Route 5a (Figure 5) branch from Phoenix Park via White's Road and Carpenterstown to Blanchardstown from Coolmine. Route 5a will provide a vital connection for the thousands living in West Fingal with a vital cycling route into the city centre. This oversight should be addressed before implementation of the upgraded network.

## BusConnects

### Swords CBC02

There is only 640m of Primary Route 2A that is not being provided as part of this Core Bus Corridor. This section would connect cyclists directly into Swords village. Delivering a coherent network that allows cyclists to safely travel into their local village is an essential

factor to increase uptake and support the Modal Shift desired by Fingal County Council and NTA. Presently, the proposed cycling route leaves cyclists just over 0.5km outside the town at the Pinnock Hill junction. It is vitally important that the cycling route, particularly primary routes, connect our suburban villages to the city centre, not near outside them. We would implore NTA to add section to this scheme in order to complete this missing link.

Blanchardstown CBC05

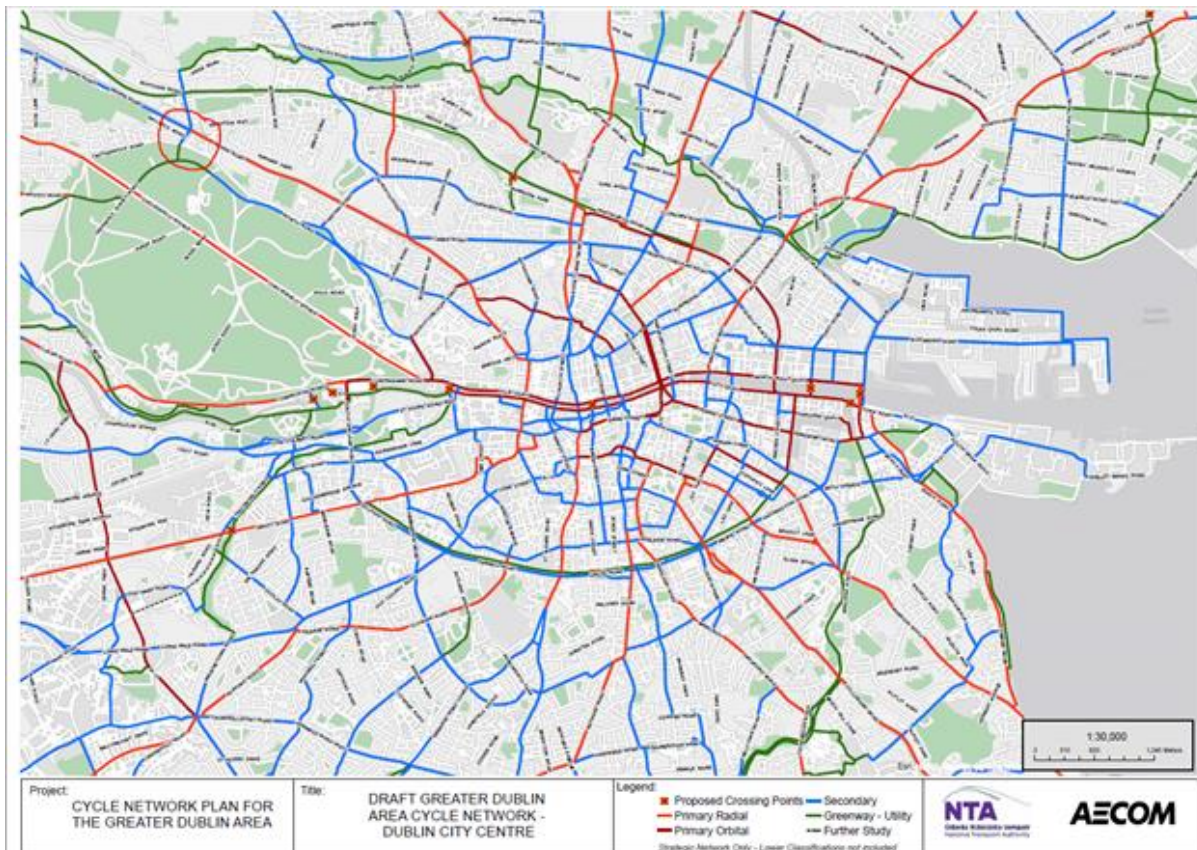


Figure 6 Illustration of Proposed BusConnects Cycle Network at Ashtown (CBC05 'B Spine')

The highlighted area in the top left area illustrates the Ashtown Roundabout as a major intersection in the GDACN. Yet the most updated BusConnects plans (Rd3 consultation Figure 7) makes no attempt to integrate Ashtown roundabout will be a major cycling interchange for Dublin West. It will link the Tolka Greenway, The Royal Canal Greenway, GDACN Primary Radial Route 4A and GDACN Orbital Route 6. Despite this, there are no dedicated cycling crossings nor are the aforementioned routes designed for at this junction. Some easily identifiable issues include:

- Cyclists are forced into shared areas with pedestrians (use not recommended in NCM section 1.9.3).
- The road crossings are shared crossings.
- Cyclists going eastbound into the city centre will be forced to cross two roads to get back onto the appropriate cycle track.
- Lack of coherence in the proposed junction.
- Prioritising cars (e.g. dedicated right hand turn lane) over active travel.
- The two-way cycle track is merely 75cm wider than the one way cycle track continuing into the city centre.
- The cycle tracks stop abruptly when they are most essential.

- The cycle tracks do not follow NTA guidelines by designing cycle tracks that are as direct as possible.

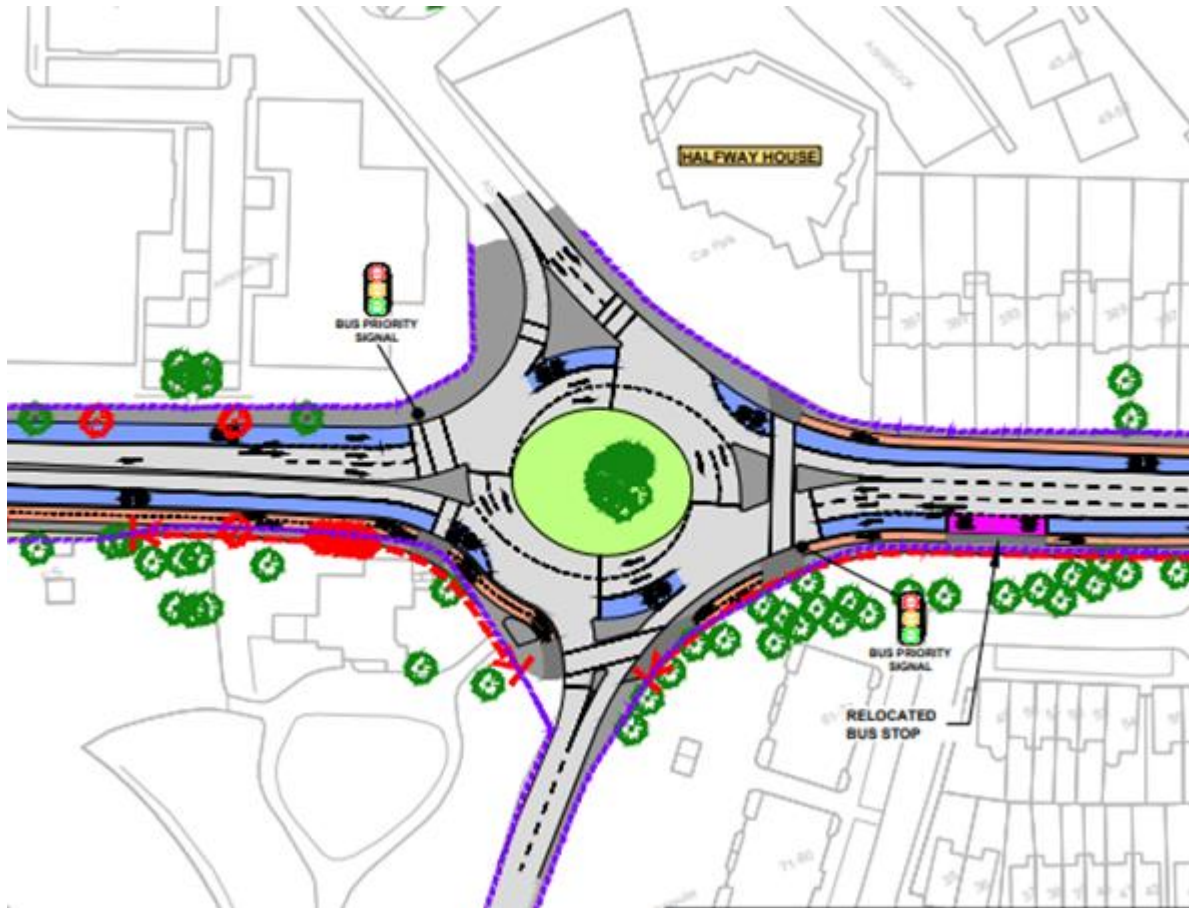


Figure 7 Schematic of Ashtown Roundabout from BusConnects Rd 3.

## Swords, Portmarnock & Malahide

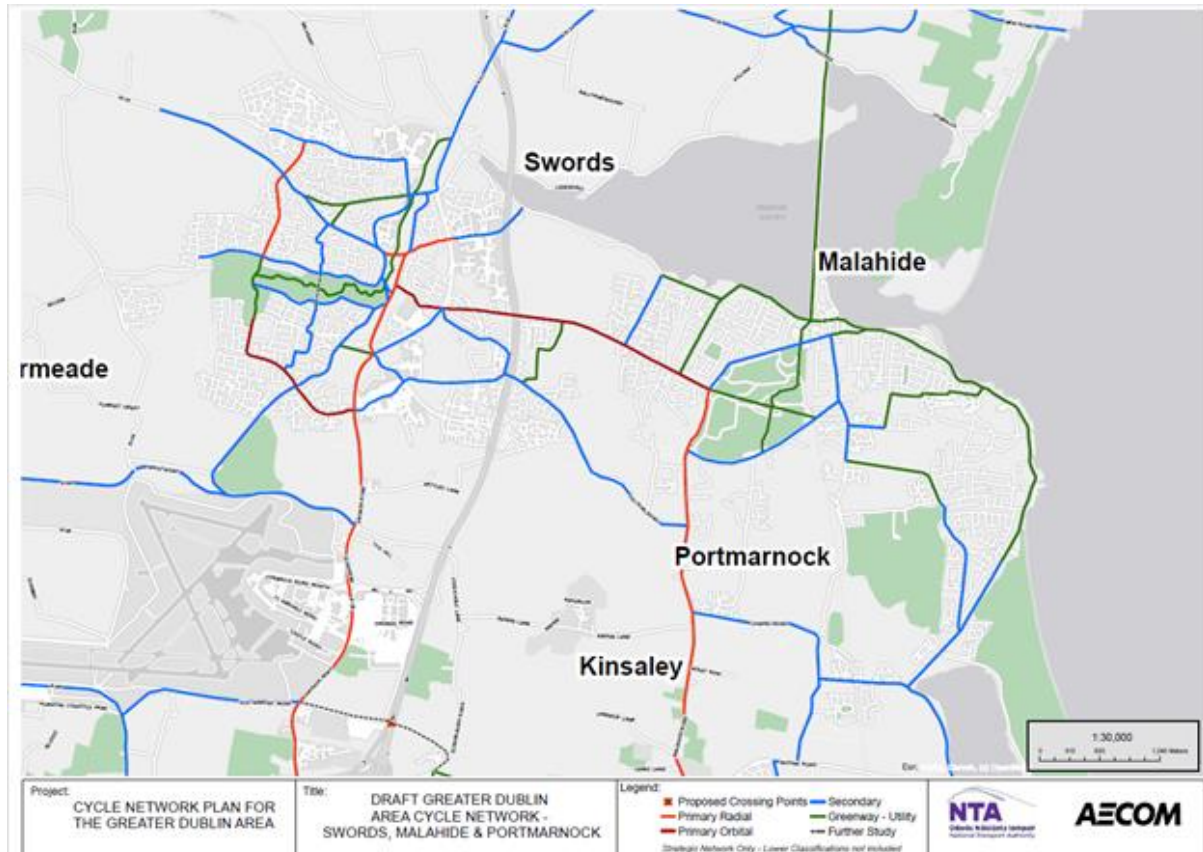


Figure 8 Illustration of Proposed Cycle Network for Swords and Portmarnock Area

Section 6.4 Major Projects Integration states:

MetroLink is a proposed Metro line from Swords to Charlemont in Dublin City. Integrated cycling facilities will have the potential to increase the catchment of MetroLink stations.

A local Swords Cllr noted:

That the proposed R132 upgrade (a joint project between Fingal CC and NTA) to provide active travel accessibility to Metrolink train stations is not mentioned in the proposed plan.

Another Swords resident noted:

Swords is missing the proposed Broadmeadow Greenway along the river. It also misses some actual cycle lanes that have been built already in Swords West. A great bike lane out to Swords Community College is missing. Part of the segregated bike lane out past Swords educate together on Castlevue extension is missing. Segregated Bike lane down to Thornleigh Educate Together school is missing. And the new painted bike lane on the Swords Distributor Road in Millers Glen is missing.

A Malahide resident noted:

The Malahide Community Forum report & the Sustans report (Figure 9 & Figure 10) from 2009 both stressed the benefit of building a bridge to the MCS, this would take 100s of kids off a dangerous road. This has not been included in the plan. Reports below.

malahide-safe-routes-to-school-malahide-community-forum-presentation.pptx (live.com)  
untitled (skerriesca.com)



## Proposed pedestrian / cycle routes to MCS and P/M ET PS



Figure 9 Proposed Linkage from Sustrans Report 2009

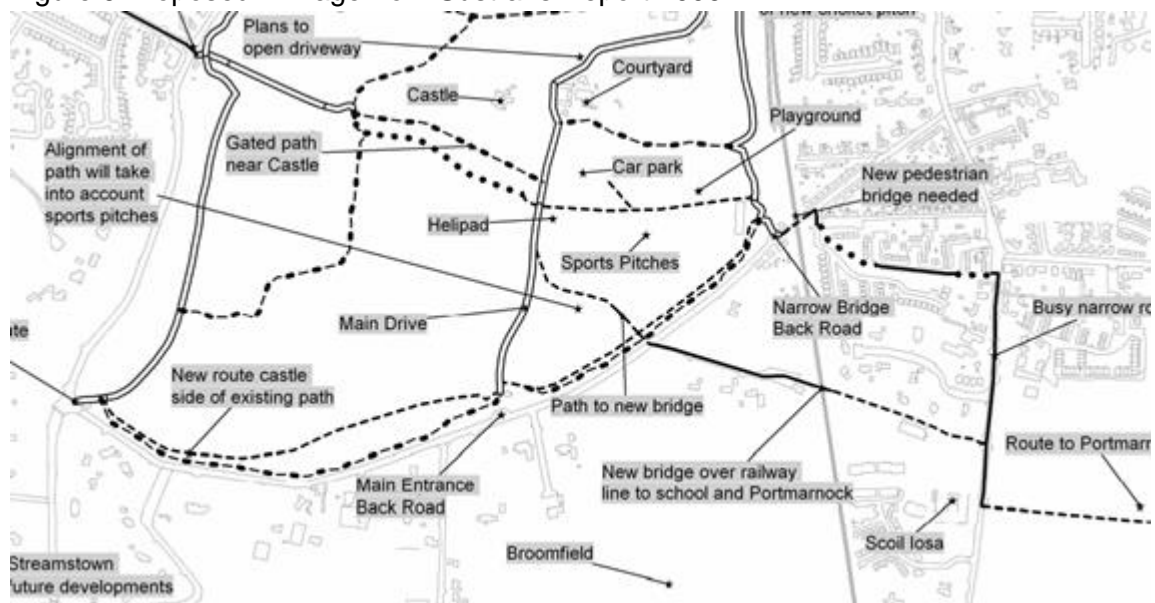


Figure 10 Diagram for proposed MCS crossing from 2009 Sustrans Reports

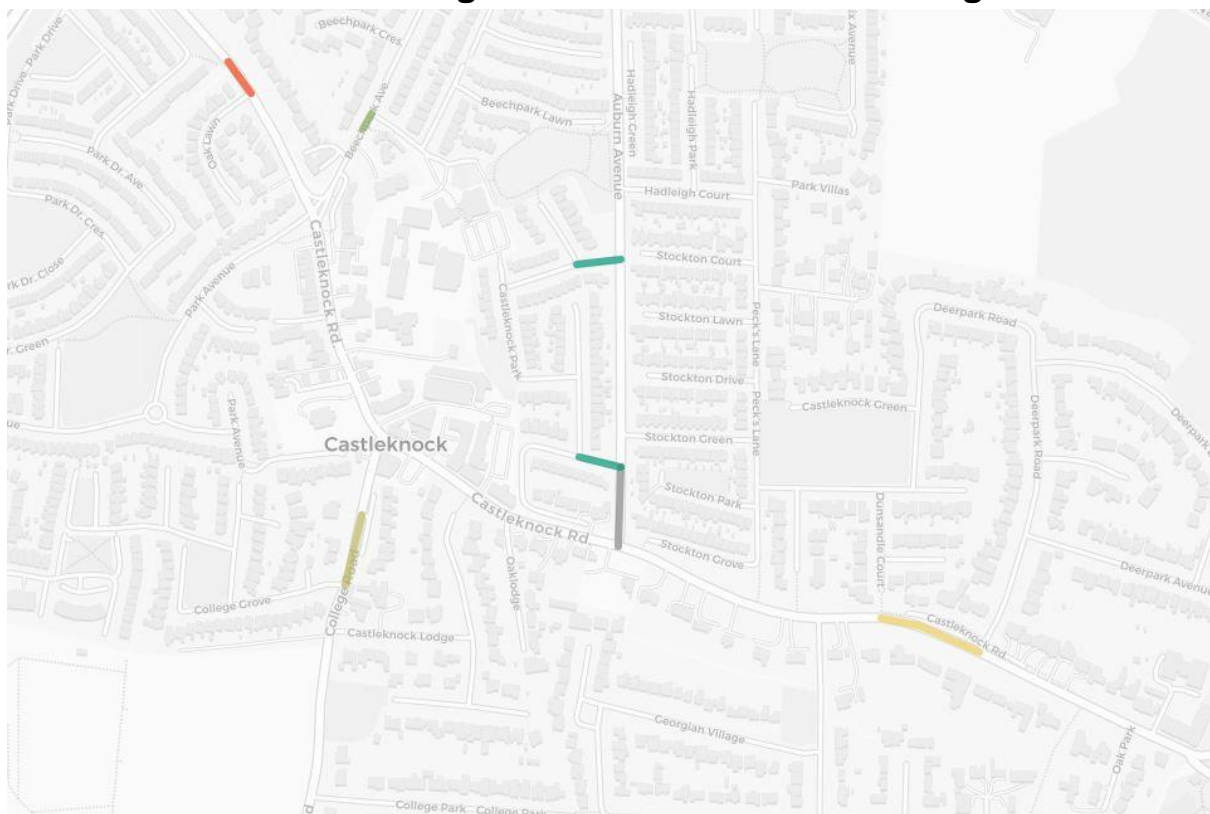
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/904146/gear-change-a-bold-vision-for-cycling-and-walking.pdf)

# APPENDIX 2 Citizen Science Traffic Monitoring Castleknock

(<https://telraam.net/#9/53.3338/-6.2488>)

- Use professional engineering skills to design & implement transport monitoring experiment.
- Setup experiment involving 12 sensors around Castleknock area to capture impact of through traffic and school traffic.
- Data generated by sensors validated against datasets generated by SCAT traffic counters. N.B. Cycling and Pedestrian Numbers are indicative.
- Supported Bayside Community Association monitoring traffic & currently supporting a project in Cabra, Stoneybatter & Phibsboro with Connecting Cabra.

## Sensor Locations “Through Traffic” Castleknock Village



## Learnings:

### Through Roads Castleknock (Gridlocked with Through Traffic)

Castleknock Rdx2 (Rat Run to avoid Congested Navan Rd/N3)

Auburn Avenue (Local Link Rd used as Rat Run)

College Rd (Rat Run to Avoid M50 Toll Bridge)

### Local Roads (Gridlocked with School Traffic)

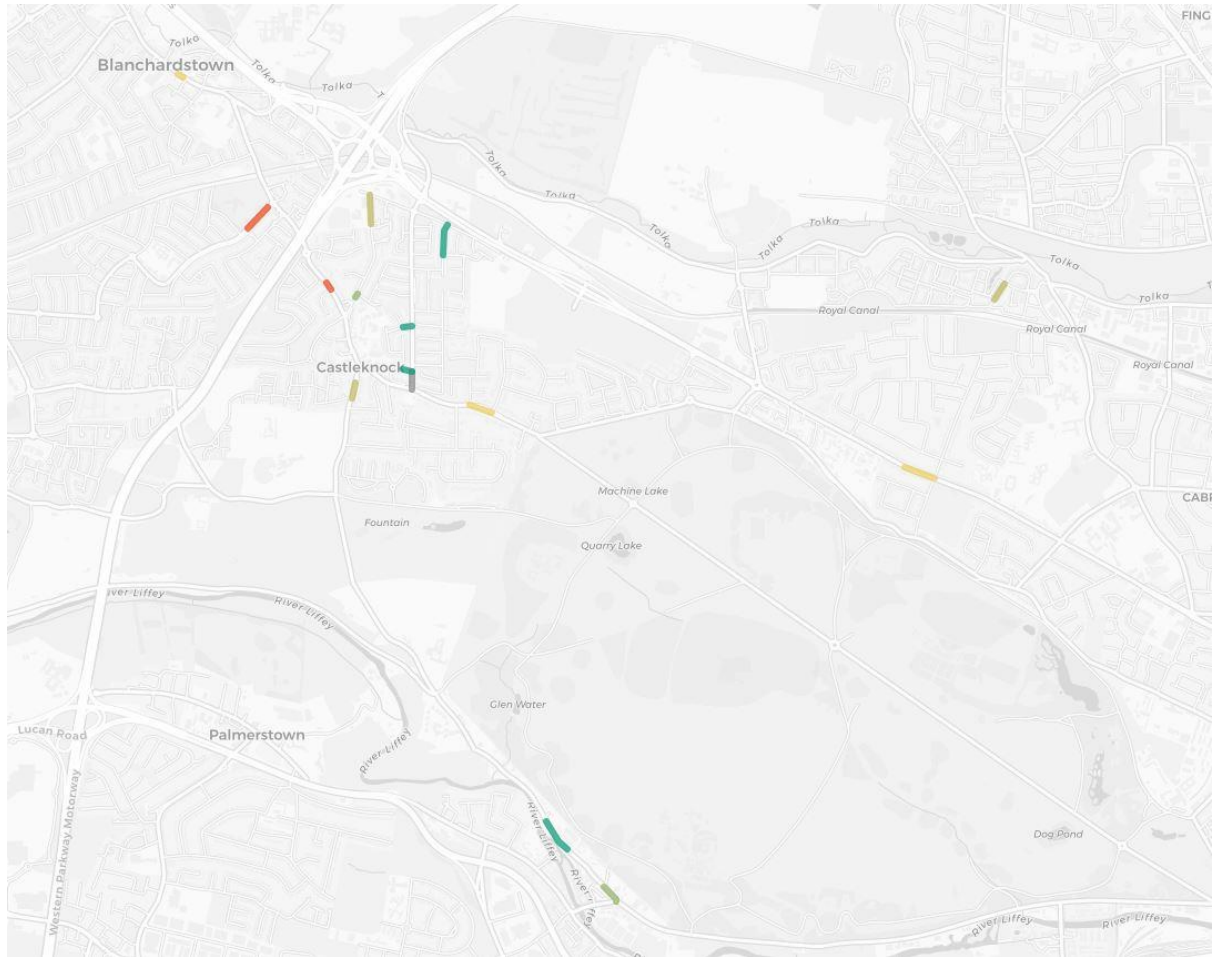
Beechpark Avenue (CETNS & St Brigids)

Castleknock Park (St Brigids NS)

Castleknock Rd (All 3 Primary Schools)

- Castleknock (like many in Dublin) is gridlocked with (now quantified) through traffic.
- Castleknock used as a short cut.
- For example outbound traffic on Auburn Avenue accounts for at least twice as much traffic as inbound into Castleknock.
- Morning times busiest (AM rush hour with School Run).
- Castleknock Rd and Auburn Avenue both had their busiest periods of the day in the morning. 1060 vehicles & 876 vehicles.
- Phoenix Park to Castleknock Rd & Auburn Avenue to skip Navan Rd/N3.
- Castleknock Rd would regularly be busier than Navan Rd at Cabra Garda Station.
- Motorists use Chapelizod Main St & College Rd to skip M50 Toll.
- Closure of Castleknock Gate led to **1292 Less daily vehicle journeys. It gave Castleknock Rd, weekend traffic.**

# Sensor Locations Local System View



## The Data

<b>Main Roads</b>	<b>Max Daily Traffic (Date)</b>	<b>Max Hourly Traffic (Date)</b>
<b>Castleknock Rd (West)</b>	<b>13445 (21<sup>st</sup> May 21)</b>	<b>1109 (4pm Dec 14<sup>th</sup> 2021)</b>
<b>Castleknock Rd (East)</b>	<b>11239 (8<sup>th</sup> June 21)</b>	<b>1060 (8am Apr 20<sup>th</sup> 2021)</b>
<b>Laurel Lodge Rd</b>	<b>10516 (25<sup>th</sup> June 21)</b>	<b>692 (8am Jun 19<sup>th</sup> 2021)</b>
<b>Blanchardstown Main St</b>	<b>8765 (5<sup>th</sup> May 21)</b>	<b>640 (6pm Jun 10<sup>th</sup> 2021)</b>

**Navan Rd**

**13240 (17<sup>th</sup> July 21)**

**1068 (4pm Aug 15<sup>th</sup> 2021)**

**Auburn Avenue**

**9387 (14<sup>th</sup> May 21)**

**876 (8am Dec 14<sup>th</sup> 2021)**

## The Data

<b>Main Roads</b>	<b>Avg Hourly Traffic (Date)</b>
<b>Castleknock Rd (West)</b>	<b>800 (Jan-Mar 22)</b>
<b>Castleknock Rd (East)</b>	<b>541 (Jun 21)</b>
<b>Laurel Lodge Rd</b>	<b>535 (Jun 21)</b>
<b>Blanchardstown Main St</b>	<b>451 (Jun 21)</b>
<b>Navan Rd</b>	<b>628 (Jun 21)</b>
<b>Auburn Avenue</b>	<b>607 (Jan-Mar 22)</b>

### **Submission on the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal**

As stated in my recent submission on the Draft Fingal Strategic Development Plan 2023 – 2029 [Unique Reference Number: FIN-C453-1145] there is an opportunity for the Council to target complimentary, cohesive, integrated strategies that deliver real value and positive impact for the people who live and work in, and who visit Fingal.

An effective Active Travel Strategy would serve as a central and unifying pillar.

Car-dependent development has characterized much of the historic growth within Fingal, with the associated negative impact on health, the environment, accessibility and social inclusiveness.

Extending and linking existing Green infrastructure would help mitigate the consequences of this historic bias, opening up resources to more people and enabling end-to-end active travel.

More specifically, targeted connections, feasible to complete in a limited timeframe, for a modest expenditure, would deliver real and immediate value, including:

1. Complete and connect the Royal Canal and Grand Canal Greenways;
  - the Royal Canal is located ~1.5km from Lucan village with a Greenway fully operational from Maynooth to Longford;
  - it is regrettable that the section that would deliver the greatest utility, opening up a valuable amenity to high population communities and providing an alternative to the congested road network for commuters into the city centre (with the associated health, cost, environmental and time benefits), is the last component that will be completed;
  - recognizing the need for an appropriate assessment and governance framework and - in particular - engagement and consultation with those that will be impacted, I encourage Fingal County Council, and others, to complete the design and selection phases and expedite execution.
2. in conjunction with South Dublin County Council, establish a Liffey Valley Park from the Kildare border to the city centre with the joining up of St Catherine's Park, Waterstown Park, and the Phoenix Park;
  - many of the stakeholders from whom cooperation would be required would be both receptive to and flexible in accommodating
  - completing would be transformative for the Western suburbs, and greater Dublin region, and establish a linear park of regional and European-wide significance
3. enable access to and through Shackleton's Mills and Gardens, and over Farmleigh Bridge
  - the linear park described above could also provide access to / from Shackleton's Mills and Farmleigh Bridge
  - targeted route selection could deliver additional benefits, for example, encouraging parents and children to walk or bike to and from school in Lucan, from Lucan north (on



the north side of the Liffey) rather than driving, and would reduce the school-run time traffic congestion in Lucan village with consequent improvements to air quality.

An Active Travel framework must also take account of the real-world travel needs of the communities it is designed to serve; consequently integrating the Active Travel network with selective traditional infrastructure will compound the benefit and allow for complimentary usage; these include

1. a new railway station serving Lucan-north on the Dart+ West (Maynooth) line and
2. a new road river crossing to
  - a. alleviate the chronic road congestion in Lucan village, and
  - b. provide a viable emergency alternative to the M50, in the context of no such alternative currently existing as identified in the *enhancing Motorway Operations Services M50 Resilience between M50 J6 and J7 Scoping Study* from May 2019, produced by Roughan & O'Donovan – AECOM Alliance Consulting Engineers in conjunction with Transport Infrastructure Ireland [Document # 17.118 TO1722]

Such a cohesive, holistic approach would be consistent with National, Regional and Local Planning Frameworks and support several strategic targets and multi-purpose themes (including compact growth, high quality public realms, well designed neighbourhoods, community health and wellbeing, attractive walking and cycling environments, village regeneration and underpinning local businesses) in an environmentally sustainable, low carbon and resilient manner, whilst increasing public access and complimentary uses along the River Liffey corridor.

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To whom it may  
concern,  
SUBMISSION FOR THE DRAFT ACTIVE STRATEGY FOR FINGAL.

22/5/2022

Submission Title  
Cycle lanes and walkways for Naul and surrounding areas

Locations  
Naul and surrounding areas

Theme/Active travel

Comment

I would like to see safe cycle lanes and walkways from the outskirts of Naul village eg Cabin Hill, West Curragh, and Renyoldstown to the village of Naul. Currently, there is no safe passage from these areas to the village of Naul. The passage from Cabin Hill to the village is very broken and not very safe with a dangerous bend. From Renyoldstown to the village you have to cycle or walk on the road with the traffic traveling at 80km an hour with no safe area to walk on. From Three Gates West Curragh, you have to cycle or walk on the road with the traffic traveling at 80km an hour with no safe area to walk on. If we had safe passage like cycle lanes and walkways it would be a great benefit to the community, it would reduce isolation, bring good health benefits and it would reduce emissions. Most people living in these areas would love to be able to walk or cycle to the village but the roads are far too dangerous. Many people living in the village and outside the village of Naul do not have access to a car daily, therefore, they suffer as a result of the dangerous roads we have to cycle and walk on. They are confined to their homes which is not good for their mental health.

Another observation

Theme/Active travel

Comment

I would like to see blepper bikes being installed in Naul village. It would bring great benefit to the community as not everyone has access to a bike. The youth of the area would benefit greatly from blepper bikes being installed as it would bring great health benefits.

Another observation

Theme/Active travel

Comment

It would be a great benefit to the Naul community if a mobility hub could be set up in the area to facilitate the elderly and disabled in the area. It could facilitate taking them to their doctor/hospital appointments/post office or bank. A lot of elderly and disabled people in the area do not have access to a car and they do not like having to rely on other people to take them to their appointments or needs.

Another observation

Theme/Active travel

Comment

A lot of people in Naul and the surrounding areas depend on the local link but unfortunately, they cannot use it as the timetable does not facilitate most. I would like to see more regular trips being added.

Name:





**Irish Heart**  
Foundation

**Submission to Fingal County  
council active travel strategy**

**May 2022**



# Irish Heart Foundation submission to Fingal County council active travel strategy

## Introduction

How we travel everyday impacts not only on our environment but also on our individual and collective health. Hostile conditions for people walking and cycling arising from poor planning, an under-resourced and fragmented public transport system, and over-investment in motorways, have created a car culture responsible for some of the worst traffic congestion in Europe<sup>i</sup>.

This has resulted in an increasingly unhealthy, sedentary lifestyle coupled with rising transport greenhouse gas emissions polluting our air. Our inactive car commuter culture has contributed to the growing levels of physical inactivity in Ireland, with just 31% of male adults and 34% of female adults (18+ years) reaching the recommended physical activity levels set by the WHO<sup>ii</sup>. For children (10-12 years) and adolescents (12-18), just 19% and 12% in Ireland meet the sufficient physical activity levels<sup>iii</sup>.

Our built environment has created a toxic culture that prioritises private vehicles over any form of active travel, thereby restricting physical activity and resulting in unhealthy lifestyles. According to the WHO, this can have serious consequences for our health as physical inactivity has been identified as the fourth leading risk factor for global mortality<sup>iv</sup>.

Meanwhile, as over 98% of our vehicle fleet is still powered by fossil fuels, the transport sector acts as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and toxic levels of air pollution<sup>v vi</sup>. This has major health ramifications as the WHO has described air pollution as the 'single biggest environmental health risk' and even more worrying, air pollution is the fourth-highest mortality risk factor, responsible for 1,410 premature deaths a year in Ireland.

Between 1990 and 2017, transport emissions have grown by 133% resulting in the sector being the second-largest emitter behind agriculture, at 19.8% of total national emissions<sup>vii</sup>. Moreover, private car use accounted for 52% of national transport CO2 emissions in 2017, further illustrating the skewed nature of our transport sector and its detrimental impact on the environment.

Evidently, our current mobility structure is wholly unsustainable and requires a radical overhaul to reverse such trends. In line with the Climate Action Plan, Ireland has committed to an ambitious target of halving its transport sector emissions by 2030 and becoming net-zero by 2050. Meeting these levels will require a complete societal transformation as we move away from an over-reliance on private fossil-fuel vehicle use and towards a more sustainable form of transport.

**As such, *active travel such as walking, wheeling, and cycling represents the best, most cost-effective, and suitable means of travel that we should structure our transport system around.***

Significantly increasing active travel in favour of private vehicle use will result in a multitude of benefits for both human and planetary health.

As Ireland's national heart and stroke charity, we strive to empower and care for the nation's cardiovascular health by defending against the commercial, environmental, and societal threats to heart health such as air pollution or physical inactivity. We campaign for greater national and local government action encouraging physical activity and better support for active travel including cycle lanes, safe routes to school, and traffic-free zones close to schools.

We welcome Fingal County Council's invitation to provide feedback on its Active Travel Strategy. As stated in the draft consultation, we urgently need to reassess the priority that we have traditionally given to the private motor car and promote active travel as part of the normal daily routine. In this submission, we will set out our recommendations on how Fingal County Council can best prioritise active travel to benefit all users and residents.

### **Health benefits**

Promoting walking and cycling in favour of unsustainable forms of transport such as private vehicle use brings a multitude of health, environmental health, and economic benefits<sup>viii</sup>. Evidence shows that these forms of active mobility are significantly associated with improved cardiovascular health and lower body weight<sup>ix</sup>, while communities with higher levels of walking and cycling have lower levels of obesity<sup>x</sup>.

Active travel can prevent non-communicable diseases (NCDs), including heart disease, stroke, diabetes and cancer, and their risk factors such as hypertension and obesity, with regular cycling, such as commuting to work, can reduce the total risk of mortality by about 10%<sup>xi</sup>.

A 2013 systematic review of the relationship between active transport and health outcomes found that active transport was significantly associated with improved cardiovascular health and lower body weight<sup>xii</sup>. However, our current sedentary habits, coupled with the high prevalence of obesity in Ireland, will contribute significantly to increased rates of chronic disease in the future.

These active forms of mobility are much more environmentally sustainable, helping to reduce air pollution, meaning lower greenhouse gas emissions and cleaner air for everyone to breathe. For example, if a car trip is replaced by a bicycle trip, then one saves, on average, approximately 150 grams per kilometre. When one replaces 2000km of car trips with bicycle trips, then one saves 300 kg of CO<sub>2</sub>.

As 98% of our vehicle fleet is powered by fossil fuels, the transport sector acts as a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions and toxic levels of air pollution<sup>xiii</sup>. Whilst this causes untold damage to our environment, the consequences on health are just as extreme and often overlooked

Diesel-powered motorised vehicles produce large amounts of Nitrogen Dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) which is significantly harmful to respiratory health, particularly to those most vulnerable such as children, pregnant women, and the elderly. Reducing our dependence on cars in favour of walking and cycling would radically improve our air quality and overall collective health.

Moreover, air pollution and physical inactivity can have major implications for our mental health as recent evidence suggests an association between air pollution exposure and increased rates of mental health conditions such as depression and anxiety<sup>xiv</sup>, while participating in active modes of travel is linked with improved mental wellbeing<sup>xv</sup>.



As 51% of Fingal residents commute to work or college by car and only 18% walk or cycle, it is wholly unsustainable in the long-term meaning radical action is required to prioritise active forms of transport for the benefit of human and planetary health. In line with the government's Climate Action Plan to add a half-million daily journeys by walking, cycling, and public transport, by 2030, it is the position of the Irish Heart Foundation that the Fingal Active Travel Strategy must be ambitious and aim for 50% of daily commutes to be taken by these active travel modes by 2030.

### Hierarchy of road user models

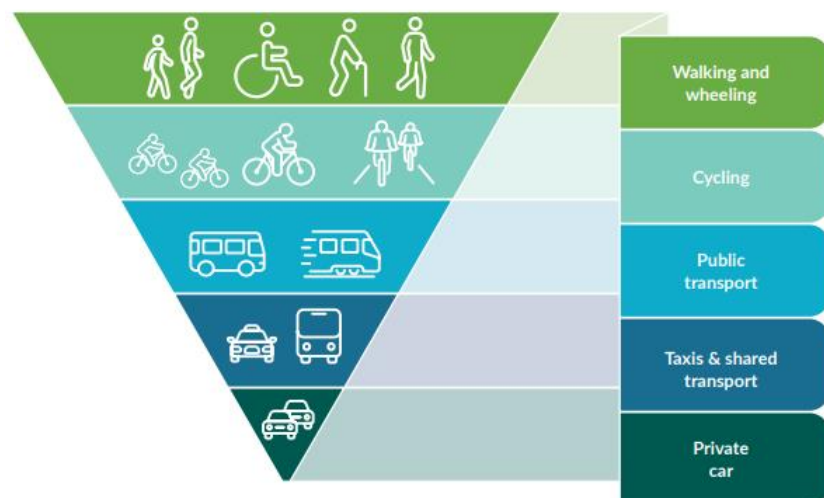
For too long, Ireland's transport infrastructure was centred on prioritising the need of private car users to the detriment of public health. The government recently published its National Sustainable Mobility Policy and within it, it set out the Hierarchy of Road Users model, which can be seen below. It recognised that by prioritising design for pedestrians first, the number of short journeys taken by car can be reduced and public transport more accessible<sup>xvi</sup>.

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) seeks to put well-designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities. It advocates for this internationally recognised 'pedestrian first' hierarchy of road users as a means to encourage and facilitate more sustainable travel patterns. It provides four practical measures that Fingal County council can follow to active travel users in favour of private car use:

- Highly connected streets which allow people to walk and cycle to key destinations in a direct and easy-to-find manner
- A safe and comfortable street environment for pedestrians and cyclists of all ages
- Streets that contribute to the creation of attractive and lively communities
- Streets that calm traffic via a range of design measures that make drivers more aware of their environment

The prioritisation of wheeling, along with walking, in this hierarchy, is welcome as too often disabled users are omitted from healthy sustainable forms of active transport. If we focus on the needs of our most vulnerable users, we can improve sustainable mobility options for everyone. The active travel strategy must be updated to incorporate the hierarchy so that all infrastructure planning, design, and construction taken by the county council adheres to this model.

Figure 8: Hierarchy of Road Users model



## Safety

To increase active travel participation among new users and make it the default priority option of travel, it must be made **safe, accessible, and easy to use for all user groups and demographics**. As noted earlier, only 18% of Fingal residents walk or cycle to work/college.

In Ireland, lack of safety for active travel, particularly cycling, is cited as the main barrier. For example, in a survey of parents of primary school children, 23% said they drove their children to school because walking was too dangerous, whilst the corresponding figure for cycling was 43%<sup>xvii</sup>. Figures from the National Transport Authority starkly highlight this as in 1986, 24% of primary school students were driven to school but by 2016 this had risen to nearly 60%. Meanwhile, the percentage of walking and cycling to school fell dramatically from just under 50% in 1986 to only 24.8% in 2018. This trend is also sadly seen among secondary school students as 23.3% either walked or cycled in 2016 compared to 47.2% in 1986.

For girls cycling to school, the reduction is even more acute and shocking. Research from the Green schools' campaign revealed that only one girl in every 250 pupils cycle to school<sup>xviii</sup> compared to 19,000 back in 1986<sup>xix</sup>. Unsurprisingly, among the reasons cited for this alarmingly low figure is that female student see it as a safety issue with risks to them in traffic.

A 2020 Transport for Ireland report on women's view of our current transport system found that while women view cycling as good for health, it is negated by the perception that it is the least safe way to travel<sup>xx</sup>. It concluded that to compete with the car, walking and cycling, as well as public transport infrastructure had to deliver on the breadth of women's needs in delivering the functional needs of being reliable, safe, accessible, and convenient, and additionally meeting experiential needs of providing comfort, inclusion, joy, community, and belonging.

Where infrastructure is provided for active travel, or where pedestrians and particularly cyclists must share road space with motorised vehicles, legislation that is intended to protect these users is rarely enforced. Far too often, vehicles park on footpaths and cycle lanes or do not provide a safe distance when passing cyclists on the roads. Without proper enforcement of these laws to protect pedestrians and cyclists, active travel will never appeal to non-users who may wish to walk or take their bikes to school, work, and leisure.

Sadly, as well as lack of safety, girls and women are put off cycling due to the high levels of harassment and abuse they receive from drivers and young men. As a depressing reflection of wider society, everyone, but especially women, need to feel physically and socially safe if we are to see the required public shift to active travel<sup>xxi xxii</sup>.

As Fingal County council incorporates large parts of north Dublin which are sparsely populated and rural, this active travel strategy must not omit to facilitate those living in these areas to walk and cycle safely. All rural roads within Fingal County council must be provided with safe, segregated walking and cycling infrastructure, particularly the former, of high quality.

In that manner, it is welcome that the consultation draft aims to achieve this behavioural modal shift by providing best in class infrastructure, policies and amenities that prioritise walking and wheeling for the people of Fingal. It envisages that walking, cycling, and wheeling be the natural first choice for everyday journeys for people of all ages and abilities, and this will be realised by putting active travel first in all planning, design, and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives.

To facilitate greater take-up of walking, wheeling, and cycling, physically segregated pedestrian and cycling infrastructure must be widely expanded and provided. To improve safety, we recommend the following policies be implemented by Fingal County Council:

- Conduct an audit of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in all towns, villages, and busy urban areas within Fingal County council
- Conduct an audit of all footpaths to ensure that all infrastructure is of high quality and accessible to those living with disabilities
- Provide all urban areas, towns, and villages in Fingal County Council with wider and properly lit footpaths of quality materials and ensure regular maintenance to facilitate all age demographics and wheelchair users
- Provide separate, physically segregated footpaths between cycling and walking. Cyclists and walkers do not mix well, and paint is not infrastructure.
- Provide more zebra crossings to prioritize walking and introduce new regulations to reduce the waiting time to a maximum of 30 seconds for pedestrian signal times to ensure that pedestrians of all ages have adequate time to cross the road
- Expand the pedestrianisation of Fingal County council towns and villages e.g., Malahide main street
- Provide and construct safe, segregated and high-quality pedestrian pathways on all rural roads in Fingal County council
- Construct an expansive network of physically segregated, safe, and high-quality cycling paths between all urban and residential areas in Fingal County council
- Ensure that all future and existing cycling paths are physically segregated from roads and pedestrian paths, signposted, maintained to a high standard and well lit
- Carry out a road audit to identify the most dangerous junctions and roads for cyclists. Accordingly, retrofit all dangerous junctions and roads to the standards set out in the National Transport Authority's National Cycle Manual and the Department of Transport's 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets at a minimum
- Ensure that all road upgrades and new roads include provision for cycling built with Dutch-style cycling infrastructure
- Ensure all new roundabouts are built to the Dutch-style roundabout design while retrofitting existing roundabouts
- Provide safe, secure and well-lit bicycle parking in all towns of villages; DART, train, and bus stations; and all park and ride facilities

- Promote cycling using “soft interventions” such as public awareness campaigns, bike week and information targeting certain users
- Allow contra-flow cycling in one-way streets on specifically signed roads with low volumes of traffic

To ensure successful implementation, each of these recommendations must be assigned to the relevant department with the county council, along with strict timelines and KPIs.

## **Schools**

As outlined earlier, the number of schoolchildren walking and cycling to school has declined dramatically in the past few decades, particularly among girls. Often, schoolchildren want to make their own way to school by walking and cycling but are prevented from doing so due to a lack of safety. To achieve a societal shift away from our over-reliance on private vehicle use, we must instil a culture of independent active travel in the next generation so that it becomes normalised and embedded.

This can only be achieved if we make walking, wheeling, scooting, and cycling safe attractive, safe, and fun for young people to use. We recommend the following:

- Expand and resource the Safe Routes to School initiative to every school in Fingal County council
- Expand and resource the School Streets initiative to every feasible school in Fingal County Council
- Implement low-traffic neighbourhood (LTN) schemes around schools, where feasible, in Fingal County Council
- Provide safe walking and cycling routes to all educational facilities, including third-level colleges.
- Host Bike to School weeks or months
- Carry out an audit of every school and routes leading to the school from residential areas
- Provide regular cycling training and safety to every school in Fingal County council
- Implement the cycle bus initiative, which has been working with and adopted by several local county councils, nationwide. A cycle bus is a system whereby a group of parents and school children cycle to school together, the children on the inside, the parents forming a barrier all around them, protecting them from vehicles on the road<sup>xxiii</sup>.
- Expand the Green-Schools Programme, the environmental and awards initiative that promotes sustainable travel, to all schools in the state

To ensure successful implementation, each of these recommendations must be assigned to the relevant department with the county council, along with strict timelines and KPIs.

### **Economic benefits**

As well as the expansion of active travel infrastructure being favoured by the majority of the public<sup>xxiv</sup>, the economic benefits of walking and cycling such as higher retail spending and lower absentee rates, have been proven by numerous reports<sup>xxv xxvi</sup>. Moreover, when built, walking, and cycling infrastructure such as the reallocation of road space has been shown to increase active travel levels and is strongly supported by both the community and local businesses<sup>xxvii</sup>.

For example, a considerable majority of businesses, over 70%, responded in strong favour of the pedestrianisation of Blackrock Main Street citing it as a positive addition with some noting that it increased footfall and people coming to the village<sup>xxviii</sup>. Moreover, research from London on the economic benefits of investment in walking and cycling found that high-street walking, cycling and public realm improvements can increase retail sales by up to 30%<sup>xxix</sup>.

There is further evidence on an international level indicating the positive economic benefits of active travel infrastructure. A study of business in Portland found people who walked and cycled spent more in a month than drivers while research from New York showed that streets with dedicated cycle lanes in New York saw a larger rise in retail sales compared to the surrounding area<sup>xxx</sup>.

At times, local businesses can be resistant to active travel infrastructure in their area due to concerns that it will impact economic activity. The research outlined above shows otherwise as walking and cycling infrastructure can create numerous economic benefits for the individual, society, and businesses. The benefits of active travel infrastructure must be communicated and highlighted to the public and businesses as it is rolled out to ensure that there is local buy-in and support.

The economic benefit of active travel is overwhelmingly positive, with the UK Department of Transport stating that investment in walking and cycling brings benefits of £5.50 for every £1, a far higher return than for many large road and rail schemes. Businesses can greatly benefit from utilising forms of active travel such as cycling, and the infrastructure provided such as e-cargo delivery bikes.

According to a study, electric cargo bikes deliver about 60% faster than vans in city centres, had a higher average speed, and dropped off 10 parcels an hour, compared with six for vans<sup>xxxi</sup>. Moreover, the bikes cut carbon emissions by 90% compared with diesel vans, and by a third compared with electric vehicles. In that regard, it is encouraging to see within the consultation document the e-cargo bike pilot initiative which will provide 4 e-cargo bikes that will be trialled by local businesses for 12 months. This pilot should be rolled out across the county council to encourage businesses to move away from motorised delivery vans and towards more sustainable, faster, and greener forms of delivery in the form of cargo bikes.

## Climate change

The world is currently in the midst of a climate emergency and every nation must contribute to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions rapidly to halt and ultimately reverse the warming of the planet. In line with the Climate Action Plan 2021, Ireland has committed to a legally binding target of net-zero greenhouse gas emissions no later than 2050, and a reduction of 51% by 2030<sup>xxxii</sup>.

As transport accounted for 17.9% of greenhouse emissions in 2020, nearly double its 1990 level of 9.5%, evidently our transport system has been allowed to expand in a wholly environmentally unsustainable manner<sup>xxxiii</sup>. The Climate Change Advisory Council has proposed three sequential five-year period carbon budgets that provide for a reduction of 51% of emissions by 2030 relative to 2018.

These budgets will be applied to every sector, including transport. While the transition of the private motor fleet to electrification will help, it is not the silver bullet repeatedly voiced by certain industry groups. Ireland must move away from its private car-commuter culture and towards a more sustainable, clean, and shared form of transport infrastructure.

Active travel, such as walking, wheeling, cycling, and public transport represents the best, most cost-effective, and most suitable means of travel that we should structure our transport system around. The consultation briefing notes that the Fingal County council climate action plan 2019-2024 commits to increasing public bike facilities; promoting mode shift; delivering a county cycle/greenway network; promoting a cycle to work scheme with council staff and working with stakeholders along public transport routes.

While these are welcome, the active travel strategy must be much more ambitious. In June 2021, the Joint Committee on Environment and Climate Action (JCOCA) published a report on reducing emissions in the transport sector by 51% by 2030. The Irish Heart Foundation would urge the Fingal County council to include the recommendations put forward in its final active travel strategy and to implement them by 2025. The following recommendations put forward by the committee would dramatically increase levels of active travel while reducing harmful levels of emissions:

- Implement a policy of road space reallocation away from the private car and towards sustainable transport modes for cities, towns, and villages
- Examine road user charges – including targets for car mileage reductions – and reallocate any revenue from such charges to more sustainable alternatives
- Develop a national network of cycling superhighways such as those in Denmark and London for those living outside major cities
- Develop family-friendly cycling infrastructure to achieve wider and more diverse uptake of cycling
- Develop a ‘green network’ of cycling and/or pedestrian routes providing safe alternative access to towns or villages and key amenities from homes in the surrounding area.

## Recommendations

As mentioned from the outset of this report, with only 18% of Fingal residents walking or cycling in their commute to work or college, compared to 51% by car, it is simply unsustainable in the long run.

In contrast, in the Netherlands walking and cycling accounted for 18% and 27% of all trips made<sup>xxxiv</sup>, nearly half of all journeys. For the sake of the health and wellbeing of those residing in Fingal County council, this active travel strategy must be ambitious in its targets.

As 51% of Fingal residents commute to work or college by car and only 18% walk or cycle, it is wholly unsustainable in the long-term meaning radical action is required to prioritise active forms of transport for the benefit of human and planetary health. In line with the government's Climate Action Plan to add a half-million daily journeys by walking, cycling, and public transport, by 2030, it is the position of the Irish Heart Foundation that the Fingal Active Travel Strategy must be ambitious and aim for 50% of daily commutes to be taken by these active travel modes by 2030.

To meet this target of 50% however, along with the delivery of the recommendations set out throughout this document, can only be realised by setting relevant and ambitious KPIs. Moreover, each action set out above must be assigned to the relevant department within Fingal County council. The majority of which will fall to the Operations department, as well as Environment, Planning and Strategic Infrastructure, and Community and Sports.

## Conclusion

Ireland faces a host of difficult challenges in the coming decades in the form of climate change, mass congestion, and a growing and physically inactive population. Realising a sustainable mobility future through prioritizing well-resourced, planned active travel infrastructure will be critical in addressing these obstacles. Local government and county councils can play a significant role in achieving this transition and we believe the recommendations made within this submission can enhance active travel within Fingal County council.

The Irish Heart Foundation envisages a future where every citizen in Ireland has access to safe, reliable forms of sustainable active mobility. Achieving such a scenario is entirely viable with proper planning and investment and has the potential to radically improve the quality of life on this island, creating a cleaner environment while improving the health and wellbeing of our society.

## Ends

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**Submission to Current Consultation**  
**An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal (Draft).**  
**Date of Submission:- 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2022**

Dear Sir / Madam,

It is good to see the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal going on Public Display and hopefully there will be a number of submissions from the Public to help inform this Strategy, which is arguably the most important strategy to have been produced by Fingal since its establishment as a Local Authority in 1994, in that it will have the ability to bring about positive change to so many Urban Areas, improving peoples health and well-being and helping the Environment, there really are so many wins by facilitating people to use Active Travel modes.

It sounds simple but everyone should be under no illusion that to introduce 'change' to existing Towns and Villages can be a daunting task and akin to cycling uphill and into the wind as opposed to downhill with the wind at your back, but we have to keep pedalling ! Its important that the main vision as outlined on page 6 is kept front and centre when either reviewing proposals for new developments in Fingal or when endeavouring to bring improved walking and cycling infrastructure to existing Towns and Villages, and indeed when interlinking Towns and Villages.

In Ireland the car has been king for many many years and for some it will continue to be king, if the engineering methods continue to allow this to happen. An example of this is dedicated turning lanes in Urban Areas. Slip roads/turning lanes are for motorways where there are no pedestrians or cyclists present. Slip roads / turning lanes so not need to be provided in Urban areas as their purpose is to keep cars moving at the behest of pedestrians and furthermore the increased width required means the pedestrian has a wider road



surface to cross over. T-Junctions in urban areas should be single lane or double-lane, but never any more than that. Perhaps this policy can be included in the Active Travel Strategy.

**Greenways in Fingal** :- Considering the popularity of Greenways that have been delivered in various locations around Ireland, It was somewhat disappointing not to see more of the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal dedicated to Greenways with perhaps a map showing desired locations for Greenways within Fingal and linking to neighbouring counties. The Department of Tourism, Transport and Sport produced the document titled 'Strategy for the Future Development of National and Regional Greenways in July 2018. On page 3 it states

*'...the beauty of Irelands outdoors is one of our great assets and Greenways are already playing a major role in allowing people to experience and enjoy that beauty. We look forward to the delivery of new Greenway projects over the next decade which will spread the benefits and pleasure of Greenways to more communities and more people...*

On page 23 there is a map of Ireland showing the Eurovelo 1 (The Atlantic Coast route and Eurovelo 2 (the capitals route). Eurovelo is the European cycle route network, it encompasses 15 routes all around Europe. Eurovelo routes 1 and 2 have sections within Ireland but neither route includes Fingal. This is the big picture and it is important that Fingal County Council endeavour to have a strategy to bring a Eurovelo route through Fingal and the obvious starting point would be to have a high-level meeting with Meath County Council and Louth County Council and the relevant District Councils in Northern Ireland to plan a Greenway from Dublin-Belfast, (a similar integrated approach to the Dublin-Belfast Economic corridor).

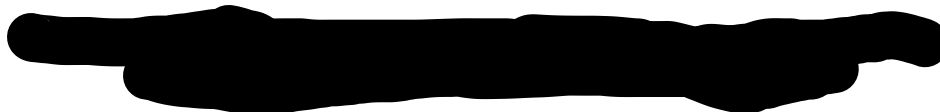




**Map showing Eurovelo Routes within Ireland**

**(Fingal County not on a Eurovelo route)**

To be part of the bigger interconnectivity plan is one thing and longer Eurovelo sections will take some time but delivery of individual greenways within your own County is also important. To give an example, in Summer of 2021 I took my family, and our bikes, to Kilmackthomas in Co. Waterford where we stayed for a week. Kilmackthomas is a town centrally located on the Waterford Greenway (23km to Waterford & 23 km to Dungarvan). It was a wonderful holiday and we saw and heard about the benefits the Greenway has brought to Kilmackthomas and other towns along the Waterford Greenway. I couldn't help but think about the Fingal Coastal Way and especially the section between Balbriggan and Skerries. It has been long touted, indeed plans were on display in Balbriggan Library in 2006 showing areas of land to go through Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) to construct the

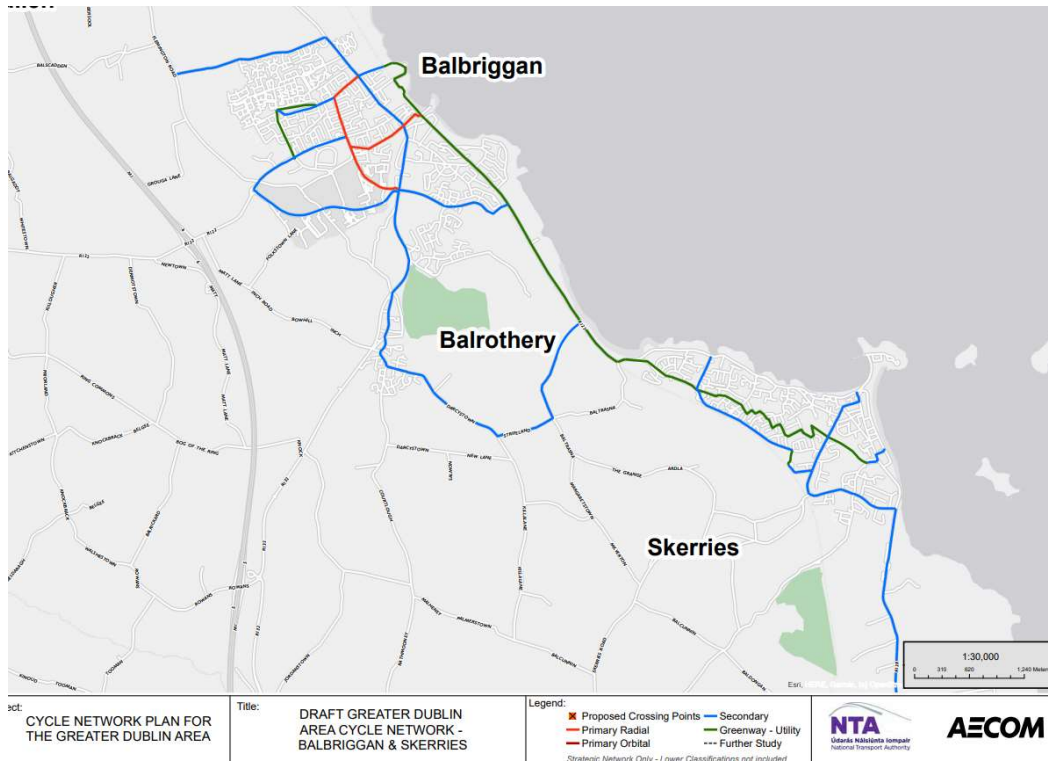


section from Balbriggan to The Ladies Stairs. Alas, 17 years later and nothing has been delivered. Furthermore, there has already been a public consultation on route selection and I read there is going to be another round of public consultation for the preferred route, in 2023 !. Are two rounds of public consultation really necessary for a Greenway ?

On page 19 of the Active Travel Strategy it refers to the Fingal Coastal Way (32km from Newbridge Demesne to Balbriggan) and reference is also made to the Sutton to Malahide Greenway and to the Broadmeadow Way which will connect Donabate with Malahide. As mentioned previously, It would be useful to include a map and to show timelines on delivery / phasing etc. of each Greenway project referred to. Perhaps this map could be included in the Finalised Active Travel Strategy It should also be an objective of the Active Travel Strategy to link inland Towns and Villages of Fingal with the Fingal Coastal Way with a suggested approach described in the next paragraph.

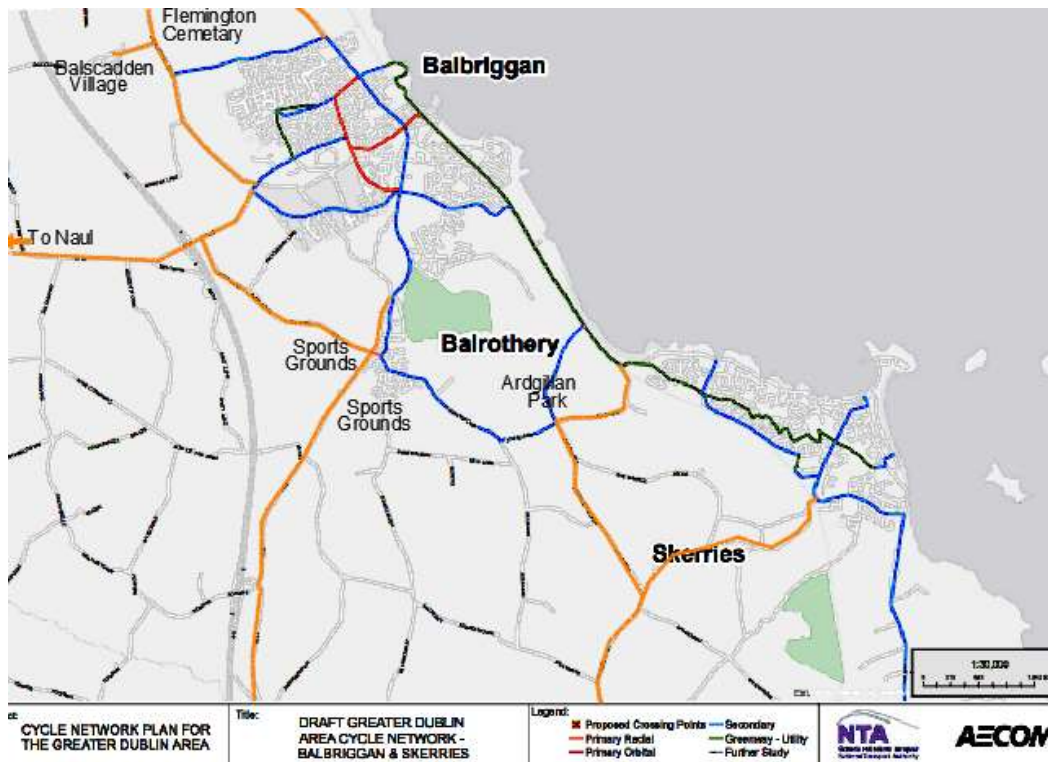
**Opportunity for more Cycling Connectivity within Fingal.**

An example of suggested increased cycle-way routes in the vicinity of Balrothery and Balbriggan is shown on the maps below.



**Existing Proposed Cycle Network – Balbriggan / Balrothery / Skerries.**





**Suggested Extended Cycle Network – Balbriggan / Balrothery / Skerries.**

**(Additional cycle-routes shown in Orange)**

The additional routes shown in orange would better connect Balbriggan, Balrothery & Skerries and for cycling and also better connect Ardglan Park to all three towns. Ardglan Park is a wonderful amenity but 99% of visitors travel by car and there needs to be a ‘modal shift ‘ to provide walking and cycling infrastructure to Ardglan Park.

To the north of Balbriggan is Flemingington cemetery and also Balbriggan Allotments, neither of these locations have a walking or cycling connection and neither is served by a bus route which means they are car-dependent locations and going forward it should be an objective of this strategy that the Active Travel Department liaise closely with the Planning & Strategic Infrastructure Department and any other Departments within Fingal who purchase land or property to deliver eg. Allotments to ensure they can be accessed by walking and cycling infrastructure, whether that be existing or scope to easily deliver the infrastructure in tandem with the amenity / service. The routes in orange would also serve Balrothery Football Club, Balrothery Tennis Club, Balbriggan Rugby Club, North County Cricket Club, Stephenstown Industrial Estate, M1 Business Park and also a number of privately operated care homes.



Another suggestion regarding improved connectivity for cycling is at a more strategic level and again involves the R132, which runs parallel to the proposed Fingal Coastal Way. It is vital that the R132 is included as a proposed cycle-way so it can give the option for a cyclist to 'loop' the North Fingal Area by cycling out along the Coastal Way and returning by the R132 or vice versa. There is also an opportunity to provide lateral connections between the R132 and the Fingal Coastal Way at Balrothery and perhaps from Blakes Cross out to Rush. Furthermore, there is the possibility of connecting the rural villages of Balscadden, Naul, Ballyboughal, Oldtown & Garristown in a Fingal Rural Village Cycling Network which can connect to the R132 and in doing so, interconnect the rural villages of Fingal to the Fingal Coastal Way. The tourism potential and associated economic benefits that the Fingal Coastal Way will bring to the North Fingal Area would therefore be shared with the Villages that are located inland / off-coast.

### **Current Trends on Road Deaths**

It is noted that the plan refers to the Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and the new ambition at its core of a vision zero approach to Road Safety, which is a long term goal aimed at eradicating road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2050.

Unfortunately, the numbers are going in the wrong direction in this regard, and Local Authorities and National bodies need to acknowledge this fact and ask why this is. They may need to double-down on measures to reduce traffic speed by active engineering measures i.e vertical deflections (raised junctions / full width traffic ramps) and /or horizontal deflections (staggered parking / chicanes) as well as passive measures such as VAS signage and radio adverts, whilst welcomed, are obviously not effective in isolation.

Just to briefly look at the numbers referred to as going in the wrong direction and this was covered in numerous media outlets in April with the headlines reading

***'Appalling start to the year – road deaths in 2022 almost double last year'***

***Gardai and RSA have said that fifty people have lost their lives on Irish roads so far in 2022 almost double the fatalities to this point last year. Ireland is potentially on course to have the most deaths on its roads in over a decade 'Sam Waide' chief executive of the RSA said.***



The Active Travel Strategy refers to the concern about safety being the most common reason given for not walking or cycling for local journeys. If road deaths are on the rise, then concerns about safety will also be on the rise and therefore it is vital that the delivery of enhanced walking and cycling infrastructure is complemented by also introducing deterrents to speeding in Urban Areas.

A case in point would be to cease the use of narrow traffic cushions (eg. installed on the Darcystown Road & Man O War road in Balrothery) which allow vehicles to 'straddle' the cushions and hence retain their speed. The cushions are completely ineffective and, if anything, actually increase the risk to pedestrians and cyclists as vehicles swerve off a straight line to ensure the wheels miss the cushion and the swerve will most often be towards the kerbline increasing risk to cyclists and pedestrians. All in all, the narrow traffic cushions should not be specified and only full width ramps should be used to reduce traffic speed.

### **Safe Routes to School**

This is a tremendous Initiative and hopefully all 42 schools in Fingal who expressed an interest in the SRTS programmes will get safer routes delivered. It is also encouraging to see a reference in the Appendix to 'Designing Streets for Kids (Global Designing Cities Initiative, 2020). Children are very vulnerable to road traffic and all persons in a position of influence must do everything in their powers to provide as safe a route to school as possible.

There was an accident in Balrothery in May 2021 which involved a schoolchild being knocked down at an uncontrolled crossing point on the Darcystown Road. Thankfully the child survived but an inspection of the uncontrolled crossing point afterwards showed that the crossing point was effectively invisible to oncoming drivers, there was no signage, no road markings and no lights. It has since been requested by Community reps (myself included) that this crossing point is upgraded to a fully automated pedestrian crossing to try and avoid any more accidents. It is unclear which Department in Fingal County Council is going to 'lead' on getting this upgrade completed and perhaps there needs to be a





restructuring within Fingal County Council that gives full powers to the Active Travel Department to carry out necessary upgrades of infrastructure that will benefit pedestrians and cyclists.

### **Balrothery Active Travel Plan**

It was announced in October 2021 that the Active Travel Department are going to engage consultants to prepare an Active Travel Plan for Balrothery Village. This is very much welcomed and hopefully the consultants will be due to commence their work shortly and gather all the data they need, carry out public consultation and then commence design work.

The improved Infrastructure that will be contained within the Active Travel Plan really cant come soon enough, because, In Balrothery today, cars, trucks & tractors dominate the roads and public areas. There are no cycleways anywhere in Balrothery so there is significant room for improvement to facilitate active travel measures within Balrothery. The R132 bisects the village and can accommodate cycleways or 'greyways' along the hard shoulders as there is currently 17m of road surface available with only 6.5m required for a two-way road in the Design Manual for Urban roads & Streets (DMURS). This leaves a surplus of 10.5m for cycleways and footpaths which provides tremendous opportunity to accommodate active travel measures on this section of the R132 as well. (See Appendix A )

Balrothery Village is predominantly located on the eastern side of the R132 and whilst the number of dwellinghouses is less on the western side, there are large sports clubs (North County Cricket Club & Balbriggan Rugby Club, businesses (Motor Factors & Car Sales), Hamilton Park Care Home located on the western side of the R132. In recent years there has also been a number of private dwellinghouses purchased by the State and operated as 'Assisted Living' for a number of people with special needs. These are also located on the west side of the R132 and the residents and their carers are regularly seen walking along the hard shoulders of the R132 to access Glebe Park and local shops in the Village. This is a dangerous scenario because this stretch of road has previously been the scene of many road traffic accidents , some have included fatalities.

The general layout and design of the R132 is very much the same as it was when it was the main Dublin-Belfast road. However, the M1 was opened in 1998 and therefore , 22 years have passed since



volumes of traffic were significantly reduced but no revised design of the R132 has ever taken place during this time. Considering the development of Balrothery and in particular the location of large Sports Clubs and Care Homes on the western side of the R132 with no footpaths to access them, a new approach is long overdue and hopefully the Active Travel Plan will include provisions to provide a safer walking and cycling environment for all users of the Sports Clubs and the Care Homes.

Balrothery Village is the route of choice for commuters from Skerries to the M1 motorway, it is also the and hence the majority of traffic in the morning and evenings is 'through traffic'. The weekends brings through traffic to nearby Ardgillan Park despite their being many other possible routes by road. Therefore, any measures that can be taken to inconvenience, prohibit through traffic in Balrothery Village would be much welcomed by pedestrians and cyclists and by everyone living here as it would improve the air quality / reduce noise emanated by traffic.

#### **Speed limits in Residential Areas.**

In late 2021, the speed limits within housing estates in Fingal were reduced to 30km/ph, however, the details of the scheme were not thought out properly and has caused confusion. For example, in Balrothery Village, parts of housing estates which front onto the Darcystown Road and Old Coach Road (where the School is located) were kept at 50km/ph and this does not stand up to scrutiny as a person living within the same housing estate is entitled to have the same speed limit on the road outside their house for safety of children playing etc. We would ask that the 30km/ph speed limit is extended to the entire Village of Balrothery as a 'slowzone'. The maps in Appendix 'B' show the existing speed limits in Balrothery and the desired reduced speed limits on roads in and around Balrothery.

In the interest of creating a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists it is suggested that the Fingal Active Travel Strategy includes an Objective to introduce a speed limit of 30km/ph in all towns and Villages in Fingal, which would mirror the approach been taken by Dublin City Council who have now made 30km/ph as the default speed limit. The statistics are quite startling when you look at the difference the speed of a vehicle can make to the odds of a pedestrian surviving an accident



## **HARD AND FAST FACTS**

**Pedestrians hit by a car...**

at **30km/h** 1 in 10 will die



at **50km/h** 5 in 10 will die



at **60km/h** 9 in 10 will die



Source: Rules of the Road, 2007

Whilst a speed limit reduction is a fundamental request and will help to reduce speed limits and potential accidents, it will not be enough in isolation and must be done in conjunction with other measures eg. cycle ways, tree planting, in order to have maximum effect and to give the driver the sense that he/she is passing through the centre of a residential area as opposed to being on a by-pass.

It is encouraging to read that you will invite Towns and Villages to participate in 30kph projects which advance the concept of '15 minute towns' where all destinations are possible with a safe 15minute walk or cycle journey and it is felt Balrothery Village would make an ideal location to be Fingals first 15minute Village.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Fingal Active Travel Plan and I hope some comments will be of benefit. The next 20-30years are arguably the most important time there has ever been for the Environment and having a transport strategy based on sustainable transport and Active Travel is a fundamental requirement, so lets all hope and trust that significant progress will be made during this time for the benefit of everyone , but particularly, for the benefit of future generations.

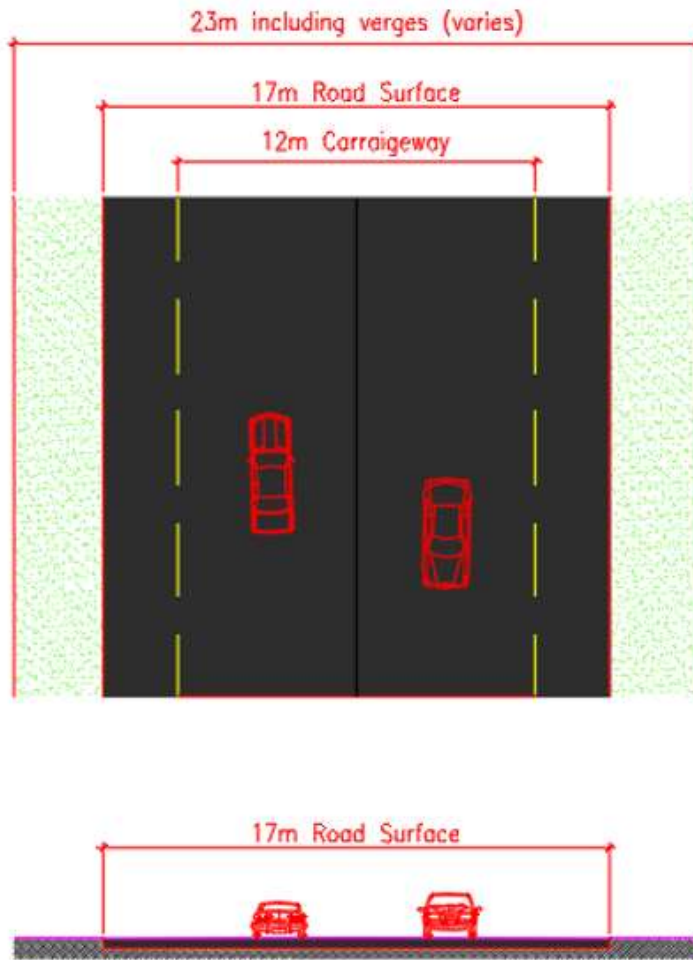
Yours Sincerely,

Signed

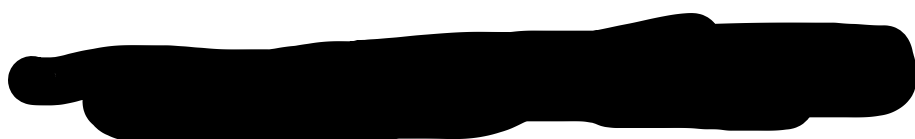
A large black rectangular redaction covering the signature and name of the sender.A large black rectangular redaction covering contact information, likely a phone number or email address.

### Appendix 'A'

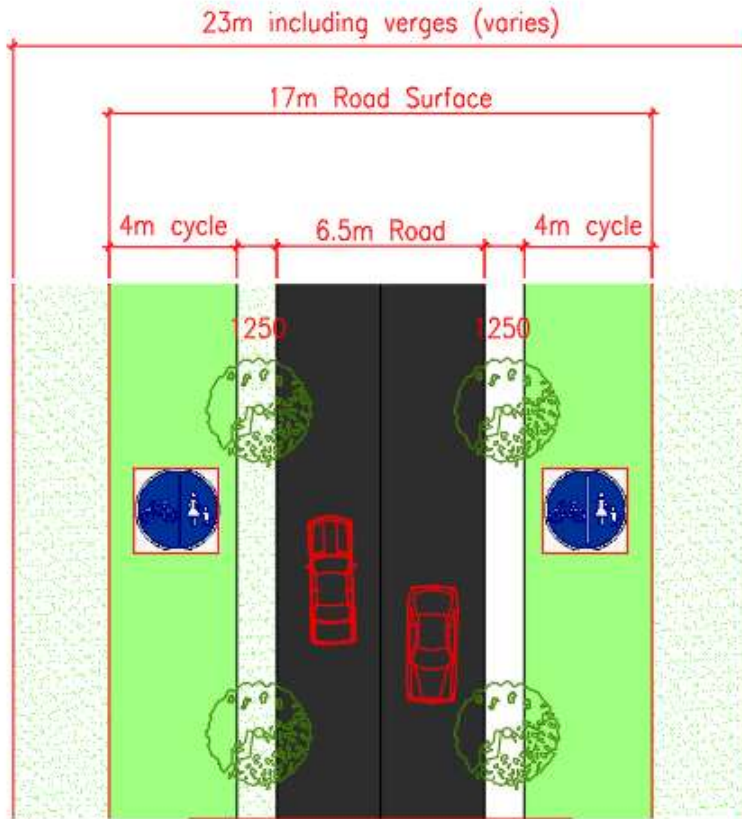
The R132 on approach to Balrothery from the South was recently resurfaced relined and has a carriageway width (between the yellow lines marking the hard shoulder) of 6.5m. The R132 then widens out as it passes through Balrothery Village and has a width of carriageway width of 12.5m with a hard shoulder of between 2m & 2.5m which gives a total available width of between 16.5m & 19m.



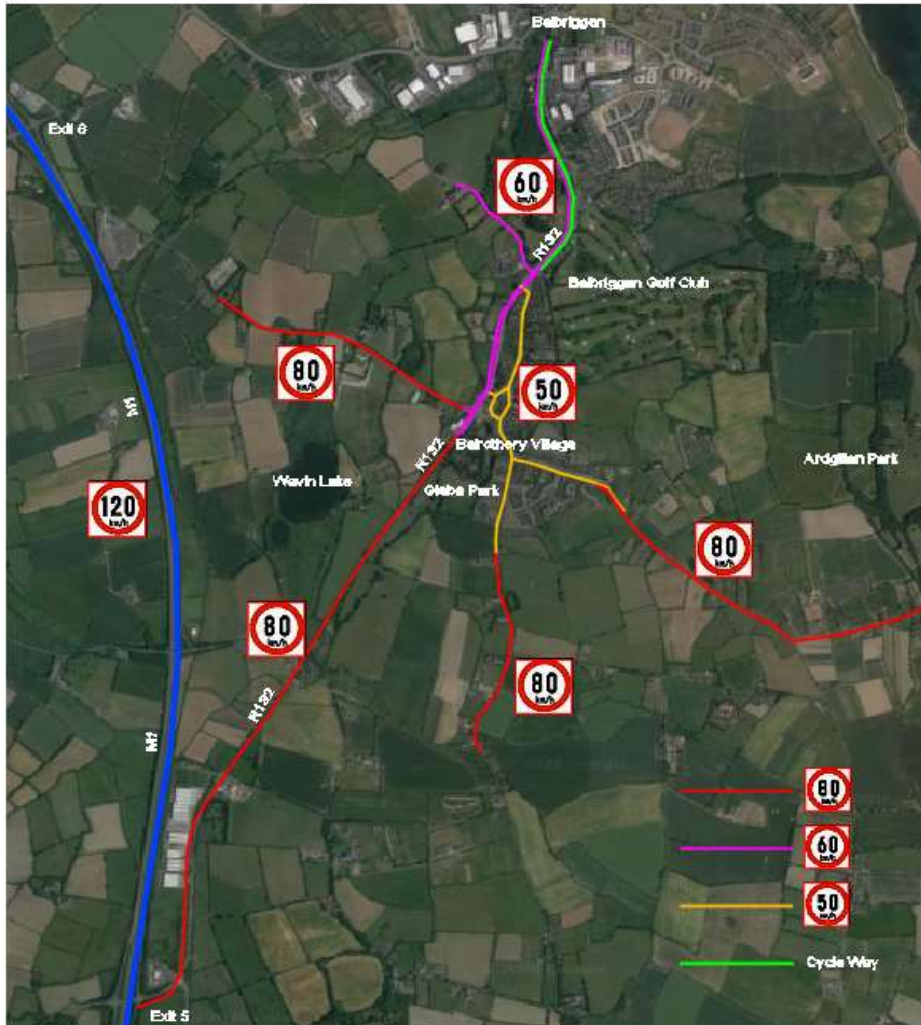
Plan & Section of Existing Road (R132)



DMURS states that between 6m & 6.5m is required for a two-way road which means there is a surplus area available of between 10m & 13m on the R132 in Balrothery. This can be used to provide a combination of new footpaths / new cycle-ways / new grass verge with trees incorporated. There are many different variations on how this road can be re-purposed and some suggested configurations are shown on below and on the following page.

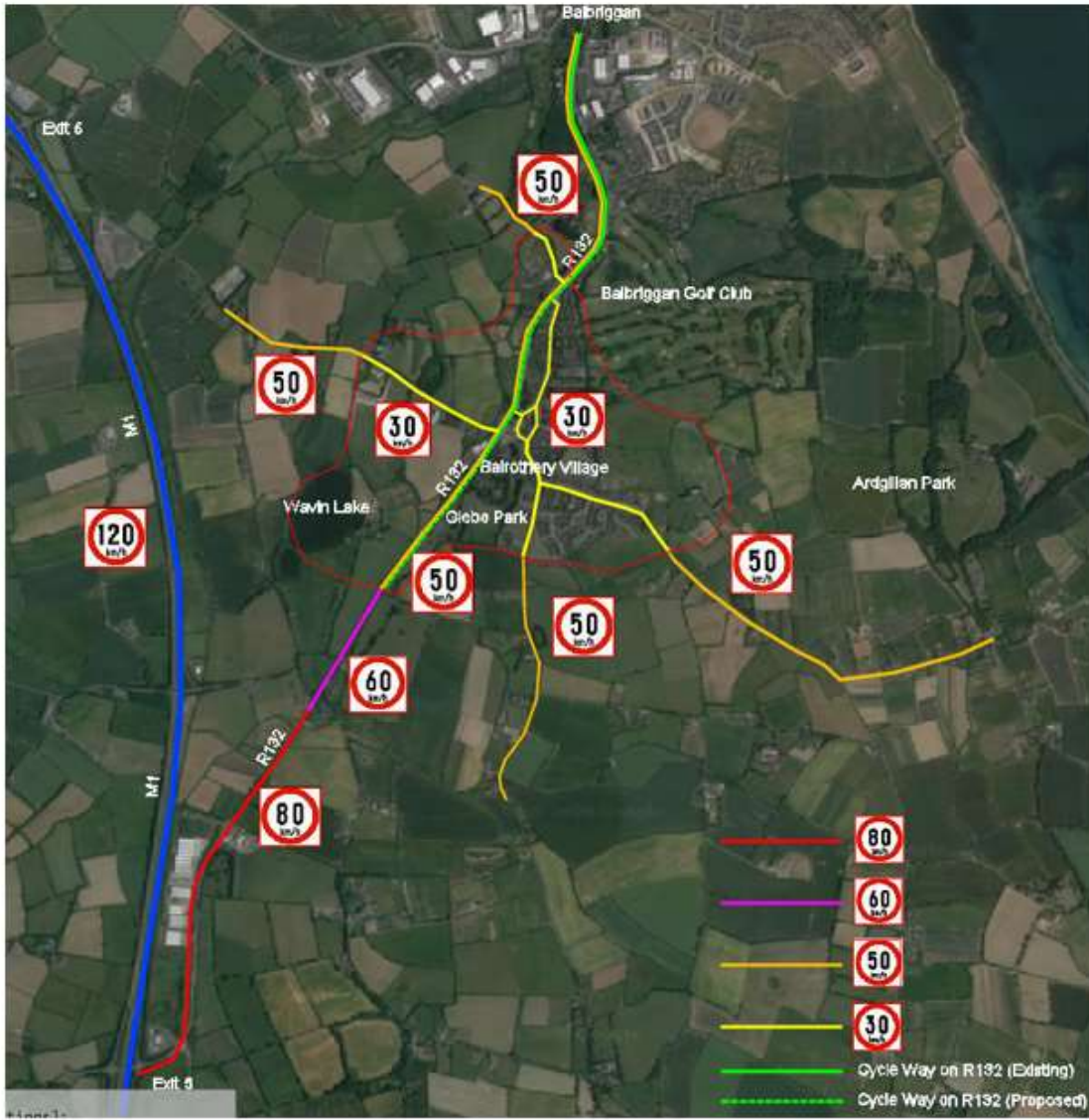


Appendix 'B'



Map Showing Existing Speed Limits on Roads within Balrotherys Catchment Area.





**Map Showing Proposed Speed Limits on Roads within Balrotherys Catchment Area.**





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20<sup>th</sup> May 2022

**Re: An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal**

Dear Sir / Madam,

The National Transport Authority (the “NTA”) has reviewed the above Strategy and, based on the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-35 (the “Transport Strategy”), which is a consideration material to the planning process in the Greater Dublin Area, make the following observations and recommendation.

**1.0 Context**

The NTA welcomes the vision in the Strategy as set out below as well as the inclusion of the transport users’ hierarchy.

*Our vision for Fingal is to ensure that walking, cycling and wheeling will be the first and natural choice for everyday journeys for people of all ages and ability to travel to schools, shops or socially to work or to the city centre. We will achieve this vision by putting active travel first in our planning, design and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives.*

The NTA welcomes the inclusion of the types of benefits which active travel schemes deliver including; sustainable economic growth; social inclusion; improved safety; reduced noise levels; fewer car journeys; improved air quality; addressing the climate emergency; improved health and wellbeing; increased access to employment; and access to leisure opportunities.

The Strategy states that the *Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* includes Objective CM07:



*Prepare an Active Travel Strategy to encourage active travel and modal shift to sustainable transport modes.*

The NTA notes the inclusion of the National Design Guidance list, the *Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042* and the updated *GDA Cycle Network Plan*. The NTA welcomes the statement that FCC will work with the NTA to deliver the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network, meeting the high quality design standards set out in the National Cycle Manual.

It is noted that the Strategy includes reference to the *Bike Life Survey*. The NTA has recently launched the *Walking & Cycling Index 2021* which includes the most up-to-date figures in relation to walking and cycling.

**Recommendation: The Strategy could be updated to include the results of the *Walking & Cycling Index 2021* produced by Sustrans on behalf of the NTA.**

## **2.0 Local Transport Plans**

The NTA has developed a suite of documents which provide detailed guidance on how to produce a Local Transport Plan, based on the Area Based Transport Assessment methodology. The documents include; *Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA)*; *Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) How to Guide: Pilot Methodology*; and the *Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Template Brief*.

The aim of Local Transport Plans (using the ABTA methodology) is to guide the delivery of integrated transport networks which ensure that walking, cycling and public transport are placed at the top of the user hierarchy in order to enable sustainable development and provide mode choice. It is noted that the *Draft Fingal Development Plan* states that an LTP will be prepared for Balbriggan. The NTA has noted in the submission to the Draft Plan that LTPs should be prepared to accompany all LAPs and Masterplans. The preparation of LTPs is a critical step in identifying active travel schemes and in the preparation of an Active Travel Delivery Plan.

**Recommendation: The Active Travel Strategy should reference the importance of Local Transport Plans as a critical step in identifying active travel schemes in the Fingal area and the preparation of an Active Travel Delivery Plan.**

## **3.0 Strategy Themes**

The NTA welcomes the strategy themes and the commitments developed under each.

The NTA welcomes the following commitment in relation to the development of towns and villages:

*We will introduce active travel interventions to reduce car dependency in communities with important regular destinations such as schools, rail stations, hospitals, sports clubs, and education campuses. Measures will include widening footpaths, walkability audits, Low Traffic Neighbourhoods, Safe Routes to School measures, one-way systems (for vehicles only) and pedestrianisation schemes built in line with the Government's Design Manual for Urban Roads & Streets (DMURS) (pp.19)*

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the above statement could include that the active travel interventions will be guided by, among other initiatives, the actions arising from Local Transport Plans for settlements in the County.**

The NTA welcomes the commitment regarding connectivity:

*We will continue to assess new development proposals with more emphasis on the promotion of active travel infrastructure through the development management and forward planning processes. In addition, we may review existing developments to assess any connectivity and permeability improvements that can be made. We will also assess any requests for improvements in this regard (pp20)*

**Recommendation: It is recommended that the vision of the Active Travel Strategy and the accompanying Active Travel Delivery Strategy informs the development management process.**

The NTA welcomes the commitment regarding road safety:

*We will seek to reduce the overall casualty rate for pedestrians and cyclists through a range of safety initiatives which will be set out in our Road Safety Plan. Each initiative will be reviewed to check that all messaging is appropriate to different age and user groups and does not achieve safety targets by discouraging walking and cycling (pp20).*

The NTA welcomes the commitment regarding mobility:

*We will work with the NTA and local providers such as Age Friendly Fingal to develop a structured network of coordinated bike share schemes, support the provision of electric bike sharing schemes, and put in place interoperability between schemes. We will work with public transport operators to deliver measures which improve information, safety and cycle parking at bus stops, DART and regional rail stations and future Luas and Metrolink stops. We will monitor emerging mobility trends and respond accordingly (for example, the use of eScooters) (pp21).*

The NTA welcomes the commitment regarding strategic planning. The NTA welcomes that the Active Travel Strategy will be included in the Development Plan. It is suggested that Chapter 14 Development Management should include reference to the Active Travel Strategy. The Fingal Development Plan should be updated to reflect that an Active Travel Strategy has been prepared and could include an objective that the Strategy should be a consideration in the development management process.

*The Active Travel Strategy will be included in the Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029. Active Travel considerations will continue to be a requirement of future planning permissions – new developments shall give appropriate space for walking and cycling, and provide connectivity and permeability to adjoining neighbourhoods. We will review all relevant Council policies to ensure they support active travel including (but not limited to) land use and transport, cycle parking standards, Safe Routes to Schools, interchange with Public Transport and our own operational procedures (pp22).*

**Recommendation: That the *Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029* should include reference to the Active Travel Strategy, in particular that the Strategy should be included in Chapter 14 Development Management.**

#### **4.0 Changing Travel Behaviour**

The NTA welcomes the commitment to develop an accompanying Active Travel Delivery Plan. The NTA requests that this is aligned with the work of the Active Travel Team, supported by the NTA and which

would align with the work emerging from Local Transport Plans developed to accompany land use plans.

**Recommendation: The NTA recommends that the Active Travel Delivery Plan should be informed by the active travel projects which would be identified as part of the Local Transport Plans and would be aligned with the work of the Active Travel Team, supported by the NTA.**

The NTA welcomes the actions under the five pillars of engagement, enablement, communication, training and advice and inspiration.

The NTA welcomes the commitment to provide appropriate training for relevant design and planning staff. This is a critical requirement in the realisation of the vision of the Strategy. All sections of the local authority, including planning, transport and parks should understand the vision of creating permeable, connected and accessible neighbourhoods and the role they play in delivering them. It is important that the Development Management section plays their role in ensuring that filtered permeability for example is designed into schemes from the outset and that the Parks Department ensure that access to all to safe and efficient routes through public parks is not undermined by the installation of kissing gates for example.

The NTA welcomes the commitment to developing a Monitoring and Evaluation Framework which will play an important role in ensuring the effective delivery and management of projects.

#### **Conclusion**

I trust that the views of the NTA will be taken into account in the preparation of the Strategy.

Yours sincerely,



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Mick MacAree  
**Head of Strategic Planning**



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Ireland

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Dublin 15,  
D15 W638.

23 May 2022

### Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal.

A chara,

Round Towers Lusk GAA Club welcomes the publication of the Draft Active Travel Strategy for Fingal.

We encourage our members to employ active travel as much as possible to travel to and from our grounds at Thomas Ashe Park and to facilities provided by Fingal County Council at Chapel Farm and Lusk Recreational Hub.

We are grateful for bicycle racks received from Fingal County Council which have been installed in our grounds and have proved to be a very welcome and busy addition to our facilities.

We believe that connectivity and the development of a safe environment for active travel within Lusk should be key elements in the future development of the town. We fully support the development of protected cycleways within the town. In terms of roads leading into and out of Lusk, they fail to encourage people to cycle or engage in other forms of active travel.

I would like to draw particular attention to the primary entrance to our grounds at Thomas Ashe Park which is located at the junction of Hand's Lane and Minister's Road. We request that the future redevelopment of this junction and these roads provide safe means of access to our grounds for people engaged in any form of active travel.

Le gach dea-ghuif



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