Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

July 2025

Balrothery
Active Travel Plan

In collaboration with

RAMBØLL

Bright ideas.
Sustainable change.

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

Project name **Balrothery Active Travel Plan**

Project no.

Recipient **Fingal County Council**

Document type **Report**

Version **Version 3**

Date **26/01/2026**

Prepared by **Ben Richards / Sean Cleary**

Checked by **Bruce Walton (Director)**

Approved by **Bruce Walton (Director)**

Ramboll

Spaces 1st Floor, Building Two
The Green Dublin Airport
Central
Dublin Airport Swords Co.
Dublin K67 E2H3
Ireland

T +44 20 7631 5291
https://uk.ramboll.com

Ramboll UK Limited

Registered in England & Wales

Company No: 03659970

Registered office:

240 Blackfriars Road

London

SE1 8NW

Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

Contents

01

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

INTRODUCTION

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Active travel means travelling with a purpose using your own energy. It includes walking, scooting, running, wheeling and cycling. It includes all journeys, with an emphasis on distances under 5km, including trips to work, education, shopping, visiting friends and for recreation.

Active travel can deliver many benefits, from improving individual health and wellbeing to helping reduce traffic congestion and carbon emissions. Improving access by active travel can help to reduce travel costs and make education and employment opportunities more accessible.

Fingal County Council has set a bold ambition to increase active travel journeys by 50% across the County between 2023 and 2030. This means more people choosing to walk and cycle for everyday journeys and as part of longer journeys by public transport. Achieving this will require a combination of investment in infrastructure and other supporting initiatives to make active travel an attractive and realistic choice for more people.

1.2 The Balrothery Active Travel Plan

The Active Travel team at Fingal County Council has been working with the international engineering firm Ramboll to develop an Active Travel Plan for the historic village of Balrothery which lies approximately 2.5km to the south of Balbriggan. The Plan identifies measures in the Balrothery area that will:

- Encourage people to use active travel modes (such as walking, wheeling and cycling) for short distance journeys;
- Enable access to public transport for medium distance journeys; and
- Encourage multi-modal travel which uses sustainable forms of transport.

The Plan explores how travel is currently undertaken in the area and the existing infrastructure for active travel. It examines how this infrastructure can be better utilised and enhanced to promote travel by active modes and provide safe and accessible connections between residential areas, educational facilities, key attractions and commercial activities within Balrothery and beyond. It also considers the complementary (non-infrastructure) measures needed alongside this infrastructure to help make active travel an easier and more attractive choice (including education events, training or community-led initiatives).

Lastly, the Plan identifies how space within the village could be enhanced or repurposed to encourage active travel and increase footfall. This includes identifying new meeting points, spaces for people of all ages and abilities to enjoy and new opportunities for pop-up commercial activity.

This Plan has been shaped and informed by consultation with the village residents and local businesses and organisations.

1.3 The Plan area

The Plan covers the village of Balrothery and its immediate surroundings, covering an area within an approximate 800m radius from the village centre. The extent of the plan area is shown in Figure 1-1 overleaf.

Balrothery is an important local centre and home to key local amenities which attract people from the surrounding area. The Plan area incorporates the village centre (which includes local shops, the local pub, heritage centre and pharmacy) and the wider residential area which includes over 600 homes and the local primary school. The Plan area also includes key amenities on the periphery of the village, including the Balbriggan Rugby Club, the village gateways to the south and north on the R132 and Wavin fishing lake.

1.4 Structure of the Plan

The Plan sets out the proposed measures for Balrothery and how and why these have been identified. Following this introductory section, the Plan is structured as follows:

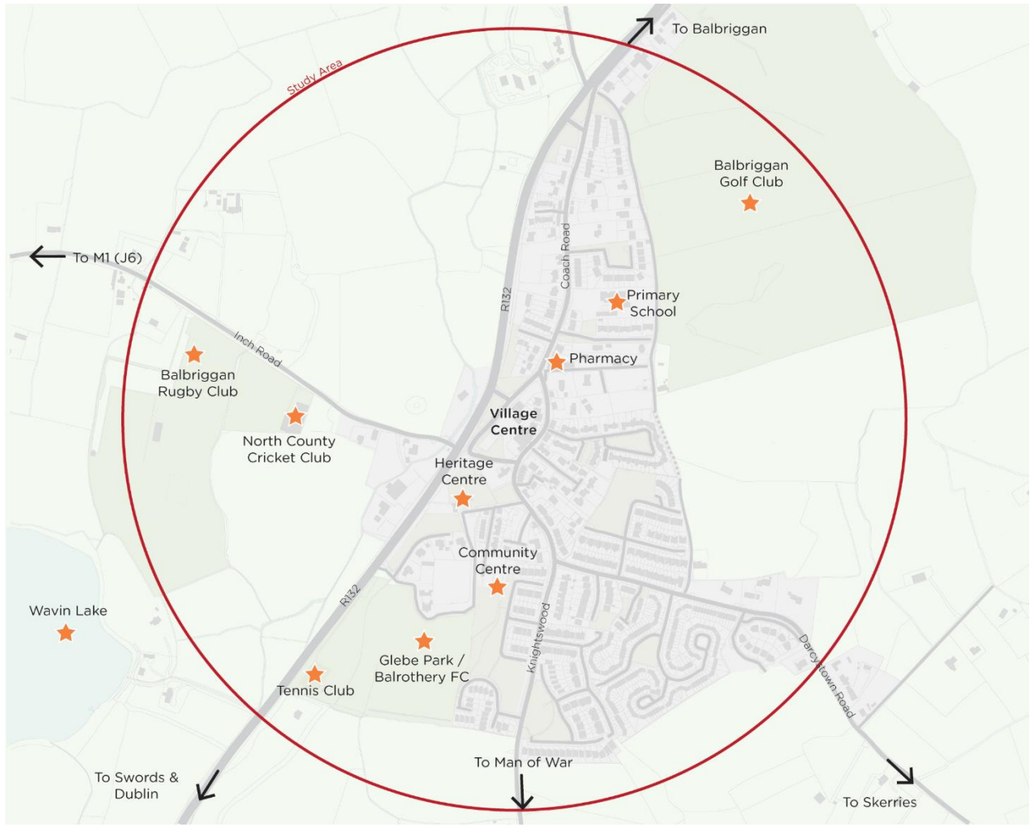
- **Part 2: Policy context** summarises the key policies at an international, national, regional and local level that inform this Plan and the approach it sets out:
- **Part 3: Existing situation** provides an overview of the demographics of Balrothery, the current transport provision (including existing active travel infrastructure) and the opportunities and threats to increasing active travel journeys;
- **Part 4: Vision and Key Principles** sets the long-term vision for the village and the key principles for the development of the Active Travel Plan;

- **Part 5: Strategic Options for Balrothery** presents the alternative approaches that have been considered to providing infrastructure to promote active travel in the village and the pros and cons of each option;
- **Part 6: Proposed solutions** sets out the proposed set of measures to be delivered through the plan, providing detail on what is to be delivered at key locations across the village and surrounding area; and
- **Part 7: Implementation Plan** sets out the planned phasing for the delivery of the measures identified in Part 6, along with detail on how the Plan will be funded, the impacts of measures monitored, and key risks managed.

An additional set of accompanying appendices include:

- Detail on the evidence that has been gathered in support of the plan (including the analysis of key active travel routes) (**Appendix A: Analysis of Key Active Travel Routes in the Village**);
- An overview of the options considered and the findings from the options appraisal (**Appendix B: Options Longlist and Analysis Summary**);
- A summary of the feedback and outputs from the public consultation already undertaken on the issues for the village and emerging recommendations and how these are incorporated in the Plan **(Appendix C: Consultation Summary)**; and
- A summary of the findings and recommendations from the Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Appropriate Assessment Screening undertaken for the Plan (**Appendix D: Assessment Screening**).

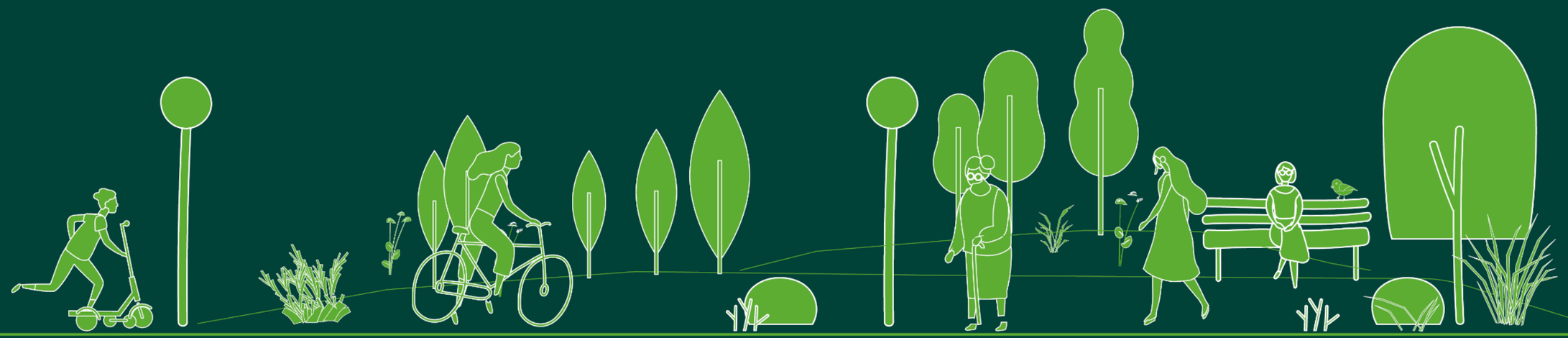
Figure 1-1: Project study area boundary



02

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

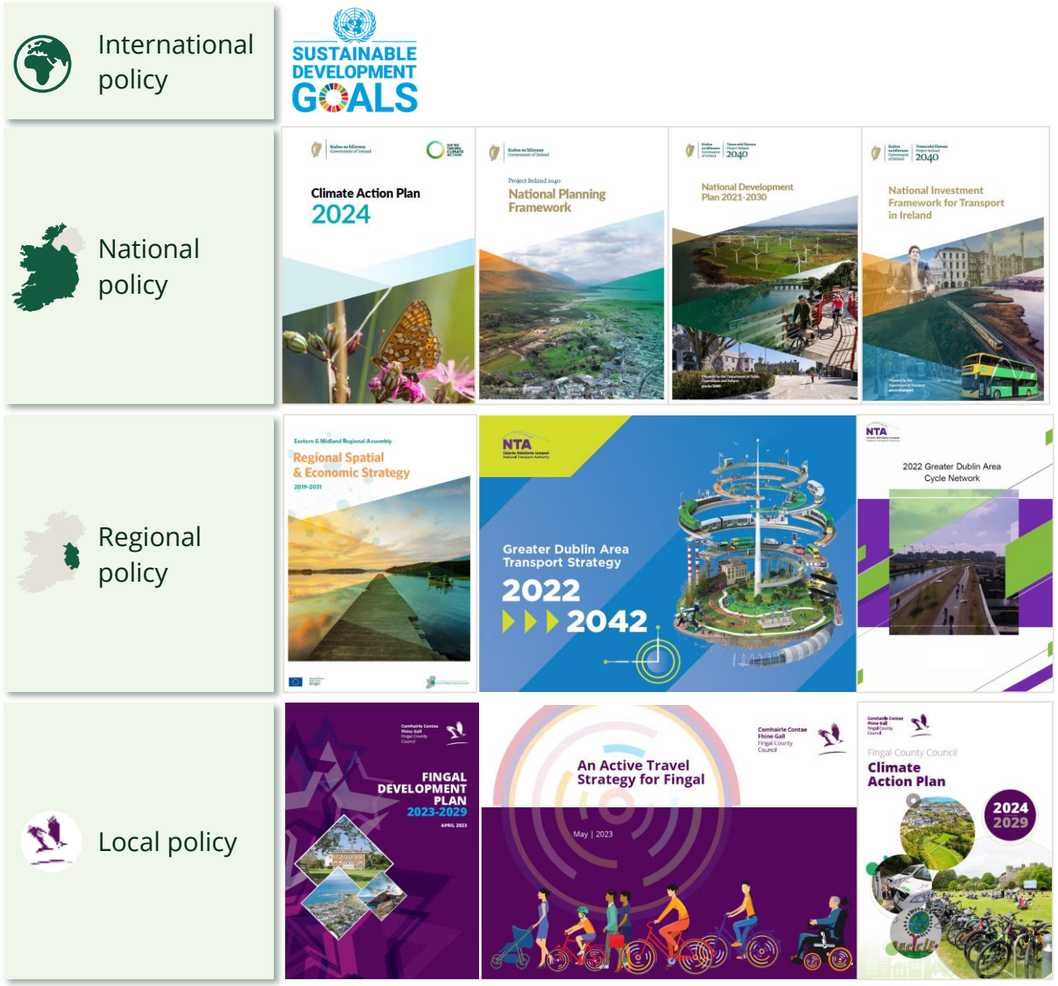
POLICY CONTEXT



2. Policy context

The Balrothery Active Travel Plan responds to key policy drivers at an international, national, regional and local level aimed at increasing levels of active travel and promoting more sustainable travel modes and behaviours (Figure 2-1). The following discussion summarises the key policies and how they relate to this Plan.

Figure 2-1: Key policy documents for the Active Travel Plan



2.1 International policy context

The **Sustainable Development Goals** (SDGs) are a set of 17 global objectives adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They aim to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all by 2030. The Government of Ireland is committed to achieving all 17 SDGs.

The SDGs promote global well-being, with measures to promote active travel directly supporting several of them. Active travel improves health (SDG 3), reduces carbon emissions (SDG 13), and fosters sustainable cities (SDG 11) by decreasing traffic and pollution. It can also help to promote equity (SDG 10) and supports economic growth (SDG 8) through improved access to jobs. Additionally, it contributes to cleaner air, increased public space, and reduced reliance on fossil fuels, making it a vital component of inclusive, climate-resilient urban planning.

2.2 National policy context

The overarching emphasis of Government transport policy is to promote and encourage travel by sustainable modes while reducing unnecessary car trips. There are several key policy documents that this Plan will help to deliver.

The **National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030** (which is part of the wider **Project Ireland 2040** framework) sets out national public investment priorities, including major transport infrastructure. This includes at least €360 million funding each year for active travel programmes, including funding for routes to improve access to schools, workplaces and public transport, as well as specific funding for Safe Routes to School measures to improve safety for children walking and cycling.

Promoting active travel is also central to the Government's **Climate Action Plan (CAP) 2024** which aims to halve greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and reach net zero emissions by 2050. For transport there are three main action themes:

1. Reducing travel demand;
2. Increasing use of public transport, walking and cycling; and
3. Reduction in trips by car; and improving the energy efficiency of vehicles.

The Climate Action Plan is supported by the **National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)** which aims to make it easier for peoples to walk, cycle and use public transport daily and reduce dependence on fossil fuelled cars for travel. The Policy is based around overarching principles:

1. Safe and Green Mobility
2. People Focused Mobility; and
3. Better Integrated Mobility.

The Policy is accompanied by an Action Plan which sets out a series of actions aimed at expanding mobility across the country by providing safe, green, accessible and efficient alternatives to car journeys. This includes the development of a new **National Cycle Network** to enable greater levels of cycling and walking for leisure users, tourists and commuters.

The **National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI)** helps to guide national investment decisions to ensure these are aligned to the NDP and the CAP. The NIFTI addresses four investment priorities: decarbonisation; protection and renewal; mobility of people and goods in urban areas; and enhanced regional and rural connectivity.

Alongside transport policy, planning policy also supports active mobility. The key policy is **Ireland 2040 Our Plan: National Planning Framework** which represents the overarching national planning policy, focusing on compact growth, enhanced regional accessibility, sustainable mobility and the transition to a low carbon and climate resilient society.

Other relevant national policy that promotes active travel as a means of improving physical and mental health includes:

- Town Centre First
- Get Ireland Walking
- Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019-2025
- Healthy Ireland: National Physical Activity Plan
- Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021-2024

Further relevant policy includes the **Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030** which aims to reduce the number of traffic related casualties, improve training for all road users and address common safety concerns such as excessive vehicle speed and poor driver behaviour. The strategy includes a vision to eradicate all road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2050. National design guidance has been published to support delivery of the policy objectives outlined above.

2.3 Regional policy context

The focus on sustainable and active travel is reflected in transport policy for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).

The **Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042**, published by the National Transport Authority (NTA), aims to contribute to the economic, social, and cultural progress by providing efficient, effective, and sustainable movement of people and goods. It prioritises reducing car-based journeys and promoting public transport, walking, and cycling to achieve net zero emissions. The strategy aims for a sustainable, accessible, and effective transport system supporting urban and rural communities.

The strategy includes measures to provide a safe, coherent, direct, attractive, and comfortable walking network. For cycling, measures include investment in providing safe, quality infrastructure for short journeys. This is supported by the **GDA Cycle Network Plan** (NTA, December 2022), which aims to improve cycling access and connectivity within Dublin and the GDA towns and cycling links between them, focusing on cycling trips under 10km.

The GDA Network Plan identifies two key routes which will improve connectivity for Balrothery: an inter-urban route along the R132 and a secondary route through the village connecting Balbriggan and the Greenway route along the coast (R127). There is also a feeder route at Balrothery Gardens/R132 junction. Proposed works should align with and enhance these routes.

Other relevant regional policies include:

- The Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region 2019-2031 (RSES), which provides a framework for managing spatial planning and economic development, promoting sustainable and active travel modes, and creating attractive environments for pedestrians and cyclists.
- The Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) recommended by the NPF for Dublin, focusing on strategic development issues, including land use and multi-modal transport integration.
- The Dublin Region Air Quality Plan 2021, which aims to improve air quality by reducing high-polluting vehicles and encouraging alternatives to motorised transport.

These policies collectively aim to facilitate active travel and contribute to the region's pathway to net zero emissions.

2.4 Local policy context

At a local level, the **Fingal Development Plan (2023-2029)** sets out the direction for development within the County for the next plan period. The Plan notes that Fingal's population is projected to increase by approximately 73,000 by 2031 (from 296,000 people). The Plan seeks to put healthy placemaking at its heart – working towards a more sustainable County with the creation of a more socially integrated and resilient Fingal. The Plan outlines a number of Strategic Objectives (SO) including:

- SO1: Transition to an environmentally sustainable carbon neutral economy;
- SO2: Continue the development of a network of well-serviced, well connected, sustainable neighbourhoods;
- SO9: Reduce car dependency and promote and facilitate sustainable modes of transport. Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, while supporting an efficient and effective transport system.

An **Active Travel Strategy for Fingal** was published by Fingal County Council in May 2023. The strategy states that:

"The Council wishes to build active travel into everyday life as part of normal daily routines and is working to meet this goal by providing sustainable travel infrastructure and engaging with local communities through development of Active Travel initiatives and promotional activities."

There are six pillars within the Active Travel Strategy:

- *Protected Cycleways* – providing new cycle infrastructure to physically separate cyclists from traffic along fast or busy roads;
- *Towns and Villages* – identifying infrastructure and initiatives to promote active travel, help reduce car dependence in more rural settings and increase the sense of place;
- *Connectivity* – delivering small-scale changes at a neighbourhood level to make it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to move through an area;
- *Road Safety* – improving the quality of infrastructure and delivering interventions to reduce the perception of danger and promote safer travel behaviour
- *Mobility* – using technical innovations, data and fiscal incentives to encourage and enable active travel and promote behaviour change (including measures to improve access to bikes and e-scooters and integration with public transport);
- *Strategic Planning* – ensuring new developments include active travel routes, green spaces and cycle parking and delivering a joined-up policy approach (to health, education and transport planning and operations) to support and promote active travel.

Other relevant policy that supports active travel is the **Fingal Tourism Strategy** which highlights the importance of walking and cycling for leisure and for sport. Some €1.2m was set aside in 2021 to assist the recovery and development of the tourism sector in Fingal. Also, the Fingal Age Friendly Strategy 2018-2023 includes actions to promote active travel amongst older residents.

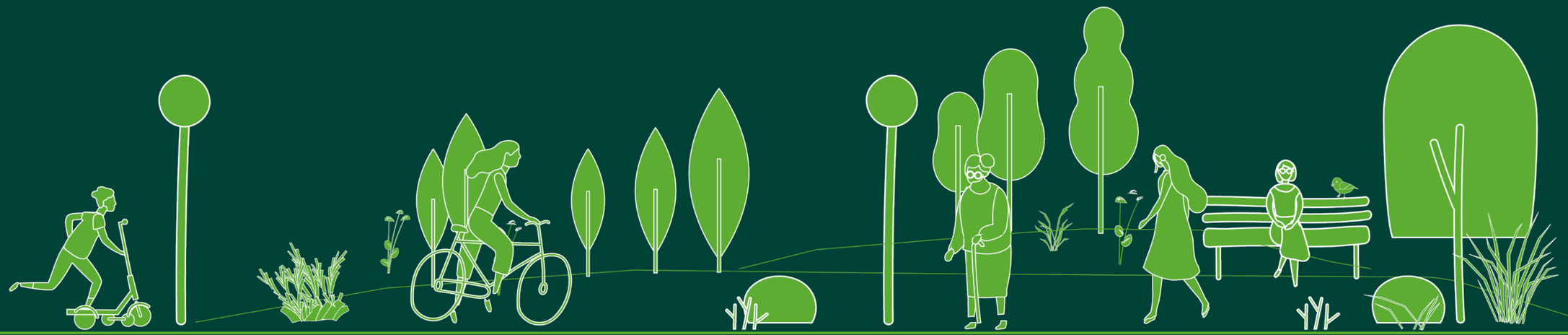
The **Fingal County Council Climate Action Plan 2024-2029** sets out a series of mitigation and adaptation measures to creates a low carbon and climate resilient Count. The Plan is aligned to the Government's overall National Climate Objective, which seeks to pursue and achieve, by no later than the end of 2050, the transition to a climate resilient, biodiversity rich, environmentally sustainable and climate neutral economy.

Transportation is a critical part of the plan, with the sector making up the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions in Fingal (45% of all emissions). The implementation of the Active Travel Strategy is key to reducing the climate impacts of travel.

03

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

EXISTING SITUATION



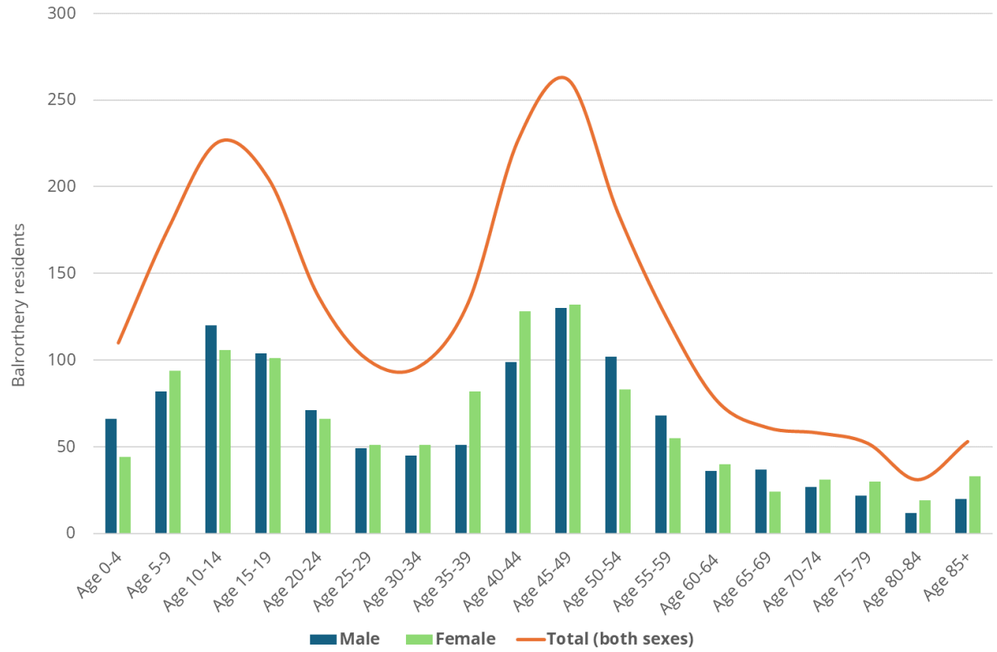
3. Existing situation

3.1 Local demographics

Balrothery is a growing village with a strong, vibrant local community. The village includes a primary school, public house, shops, salon and a heritage centre which is used to host community events. Several sports clubs are also based in and nearby the village and use facilities at Glebe Park and the local rugby and cricket club grounds.

At the last Census (in 2022), Balrothery had a total population of 2,282 people with female residents making up 51% of the population. Over 80% of the village population is of school or working age, with over 30% under the age of 19 (Figure 3-1).

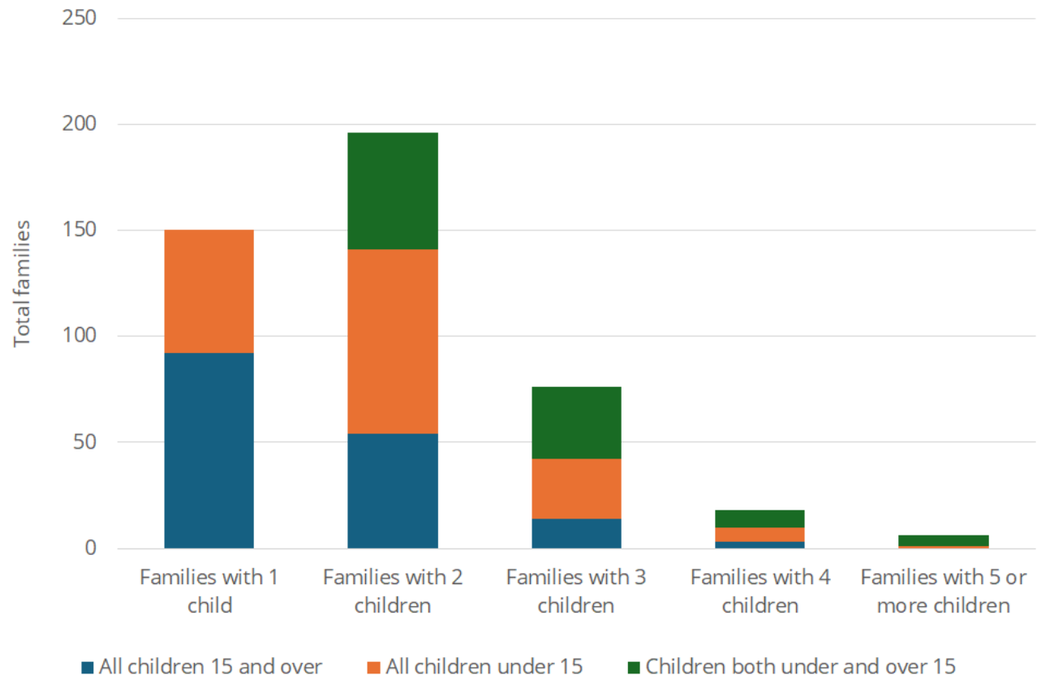
Figure 3-1: Balrothery population by sex and age



Source: 2022 Census

Most households (around two-thirds of private households) are family homes, with working age parents and children living at home. There were over 440 families with children living at home in Balrothery as of 2022, with the largest share of these being families with 2 children. Over 280 of this families included children under the age of 15 (Figure 3-2)

Figure 3-2: Number of families with children by size



Source: 2022 Census

Unemployment levels are low in Balrothery, with most people at work, retired or in education (1,500 people, 85% of the village population). Around 120 people stated that they look after home / family and 69 people are unable to work due to permanent sickness or disability.

Of those who are working, the largest share of jobs are managerial or technical roles (634 people), non-manual roles (405 people) or skilled manual roles (338 people). Most people in work commute to jobs based outside of the village. Over 93% of households have at least one car with 55% of households with two more cars.

Most people in Balrothery describe their general health as 'very good' or 'good' with only a few (23 people) stating 'bad' or 'very bad'. However, it should also be noted that 423 people recorded that they had a disability with slightly more women than men (230 vs 193).

Opportunities to increase active travel	Challenges for increasing active travel
• Large number of families with young children at school living within the village • Good range of amenities within the village and within cycling • High proportion of local residents within school or working age and in good health	• High levels of car ownership • Most residents travelling away from the village for daily work • Significant proportion of residents with a disability

3.2 Current travel behaviour

Reflecting the rural location of Balrothery and the high proportion of trips that are made for work or study outside the village, there is a strong reliance on cars for travel for many residents. Most people currently drive to work (600 people) whilst most people travelling to school/college are a passenger in someone else's car (355 people). This suggests that a significant number of those driving to work combine this with a school drop-off of their children. There are, however, a significant number of residents (207) who currently walk or cycle to school (Figure 3-3).

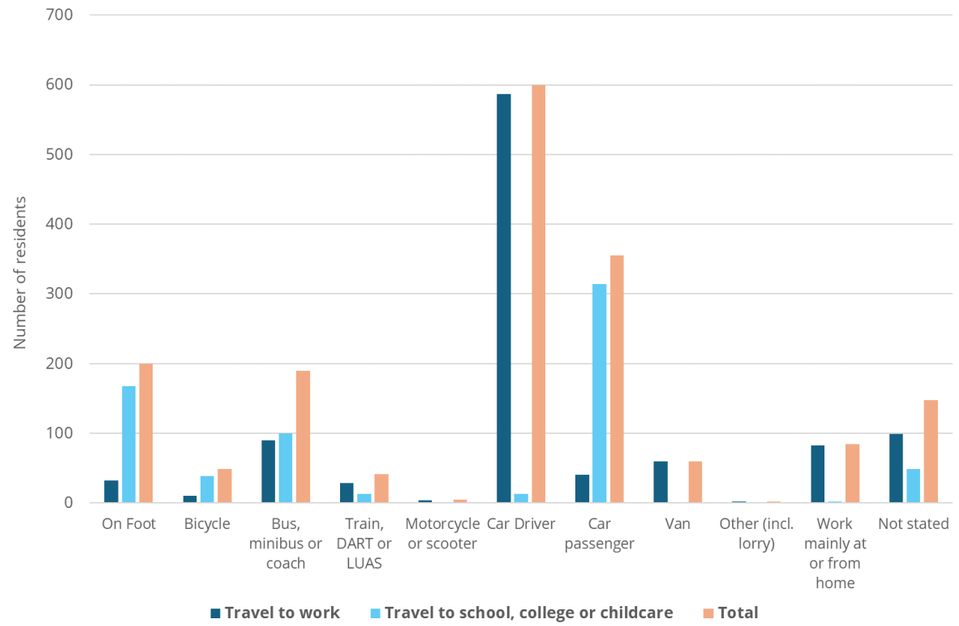
Most commuting journeys to work or school/study by residents (75% of trips) are under an hour in length, with the largest share of these between 15 and 45 minutes (2022 Census). Over one third of journeys (33.5%) are under 15 minutes which shows great potential for improving active travel participation as this journey length is within the bounds of what people would consider for walking and cycling.

The dependence on cars for commuting is reflected in widespread car use for other journeys. A survey of residents undertaken to inform the Plan development suggested that for most types of trip (including shopping, daytime leisure trips and evening leisure trips), the car is the most commonly used mode of travel (See Appendix C: Consultation Summary for more details). Respondents stated they were most likely to walk or cycle when accompanying children to school (with over half of those making these trips doing saying they do so by walking or cycling). Over 40% of respondents also reported they typically walk or cycle to visit local friends or family.

Active travel rates are generally highest for local trips – 89% of respondents said they regularly walk around the village and 26% cycle. However, 90% of respondents also either currently drive (60%) or are driven (30%) for trips in the village.

Cycling currently represents a modest share of all journeys (1% of trips to work and 6% for trips to school according to 2022 Census data). The highest share is for leisure trips and for travel to work / school. Most survey respondents reported having access to a bike (65%), but most also cycle once a month or less or do not cycle at all.

Figure 3-3: Main method of travel for commuting and education or childcare



Source: 2022 Census

Opportunities to increase active travel	Challenges for increasing active travel
• Majority of residents have access to a bike • Most commuting journeys within distance where active travel or active travel with public transport is viable • Significant share of children already cycling or walking to school	• High level of car dependence for commuting and other trips • Low levels of cycling for daily travel

3.3 Current transport connections to and from Balrothery

3.3.1 Regional travel connectivity

The key regional destinations for residents of Balrothery are to the north in Balbriggan and to the south-east in Skerries, both on the coast. Balbriggan, in particular serves as an important centre for shopping and healthcare for Balrothery residents. It is also the main school location for secondary school students living in the village.

Balrothery is well connected by road, with the R132 providing a key connection south to Dublin and to the north to Balbriggan and nearby M1 motorway supporting longer distance journeys. East-west connections link the village to Skerries and other nearby coastal towns (see Figure 3-4).

Balrothery is served directly by three bus routes the 191, 101 and 101x with four bus stops in the project area. All services operate along the route of the R132 and link Balrothery to Balbriggan and Drogheda to the North and Swords and Dublin to the south. There are no existing bus routes directly connecting Balrothery to Skerries (Figure 3-5).

The closest railway stations are Balbriggan and Skerries. These stations run trains to Belfast to the north and Dublin City Centre to the south, with connections onwards from Dublin to the west and further south. Those looking to travel by train from Balrothery without driving will most likely use Balbriggan station which is accessible by bus. The station is also within a reasonable cycling distance from the village.

The strong north-to-south focus of the existing public transport services is reflected in the locations which can be reached within a 30-minute journey from the centre of the village (shown in Figure 3-7).). These include Balbriggan, Swords and Dublin Airport.

Skerries and other locations to the east and west of the village are not reachable by public transport within this time.

By contrast, the range of locations that can be reached by car from the centre of the village within 30 minutes is substantially wider (Figure 3-6). This area includes all nearby towns and villages and extends to the northern edge of Dublin to the south and Drogheda to the north. Car travel therefore currently offers a much more convenient and quicker option for most regional trips.

Opportunities to increase active travel	Challenges for increasing active travel
• Good range of regional and local destinations and amenities • Nearby frequent public transport connections within walking or cycling distance	• Limited accessibility of locations and amenities to the east and west by public transport • Relative convenience of car travel compared to other travel options for most local and regional trips

Figure 3-4: Regional destinations and road connectivity

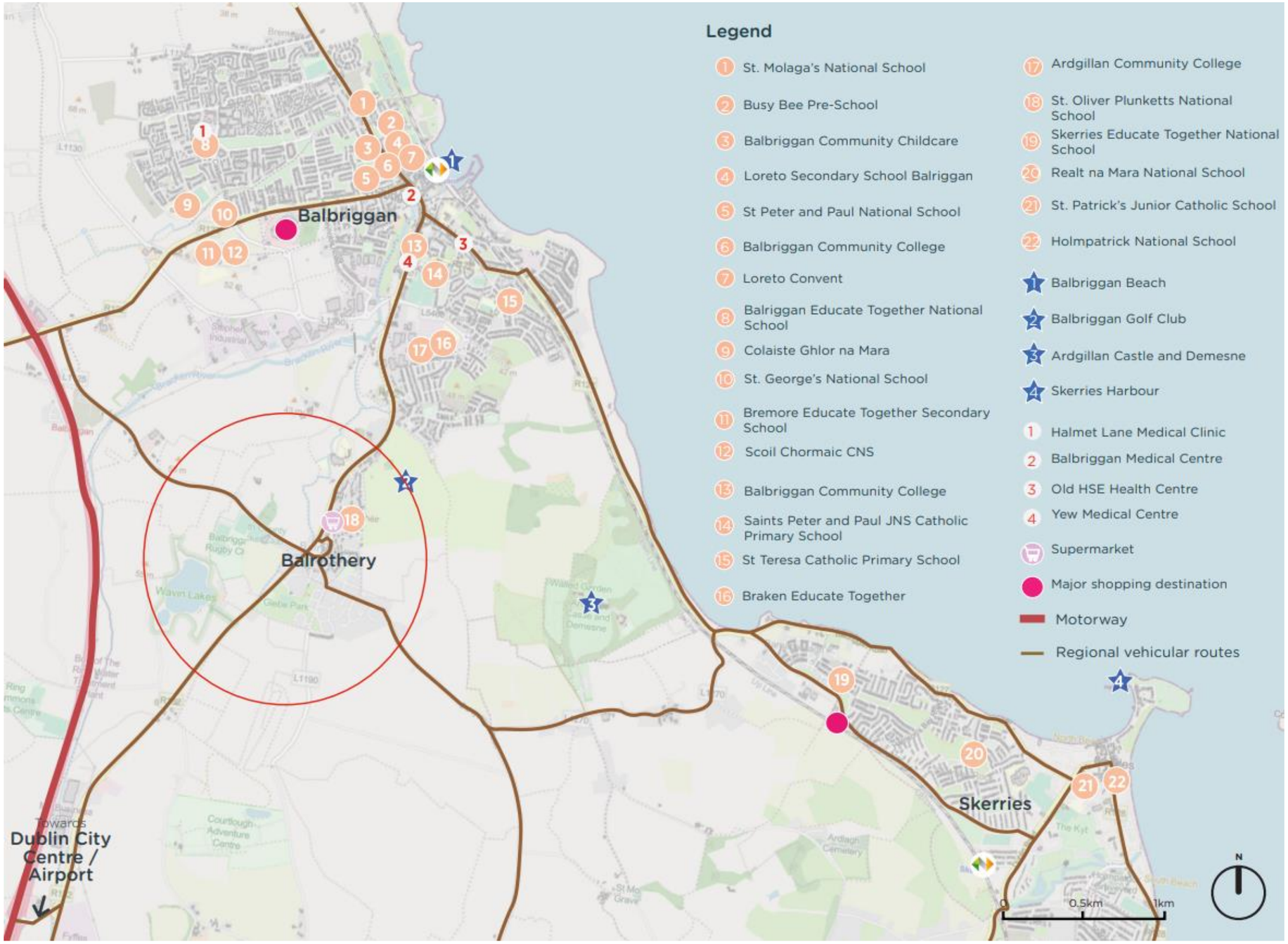


Figure 3-5: Public transport connections to Balrothery and the surrounding area

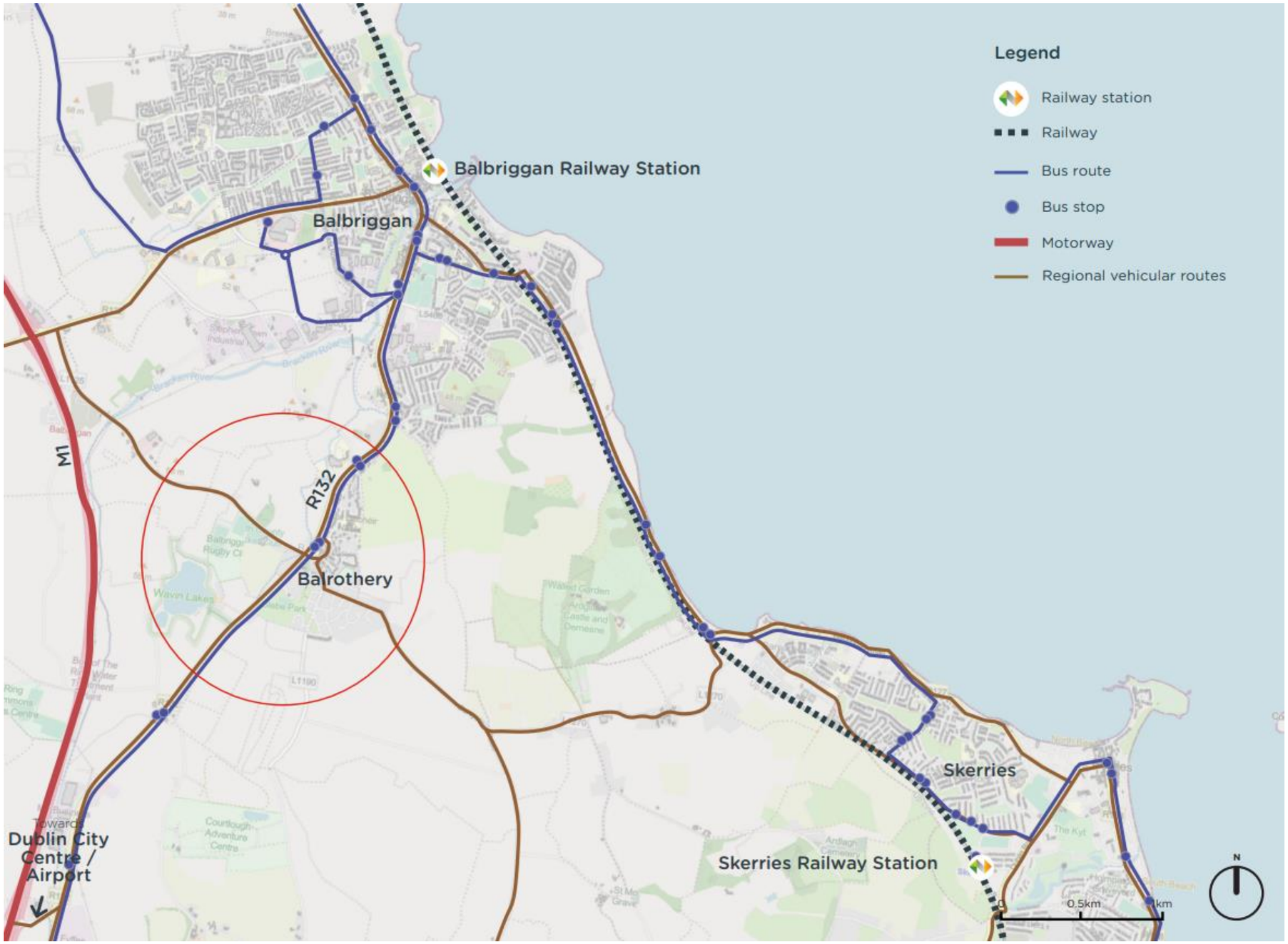
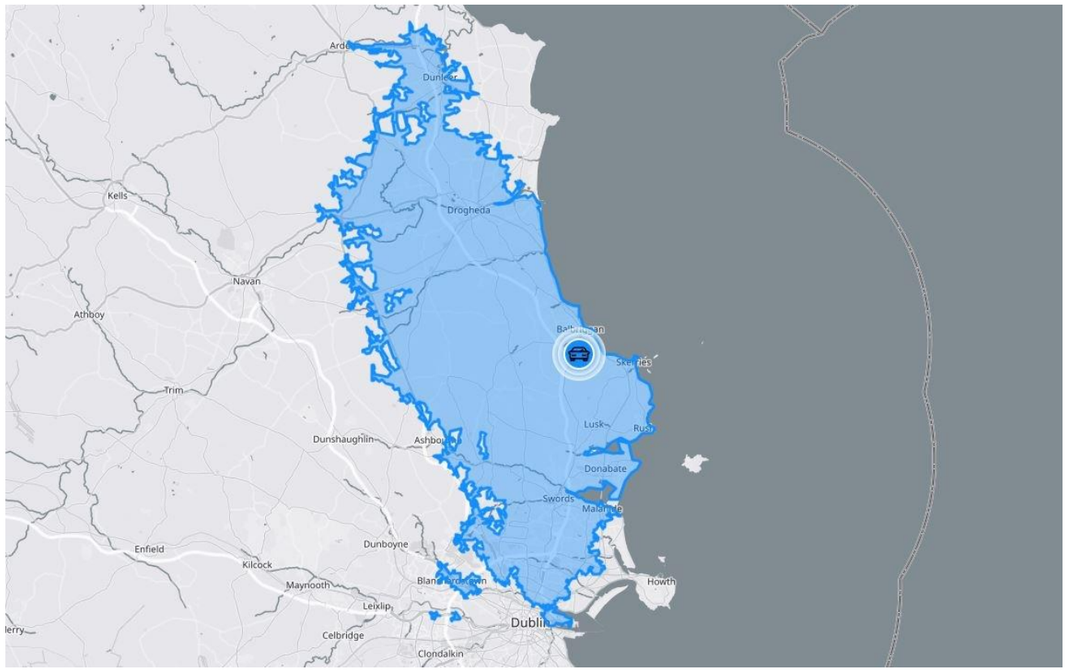


Figure 3-6: Locations within a 30-minute drive of Balrothery



Source: TravelTime app

Figure 3-7: Locations within a 30-minute public transport journey of Balrothery

Source: TravelTime app

3.3.2 Regional active travel connectivity

There is currently limited active travel infrastructure linking the village with surrounding areas. There is some partially segregated cycle provision along the R132 which extends from the north of the village and connects to the outskirts of Balbriggan.

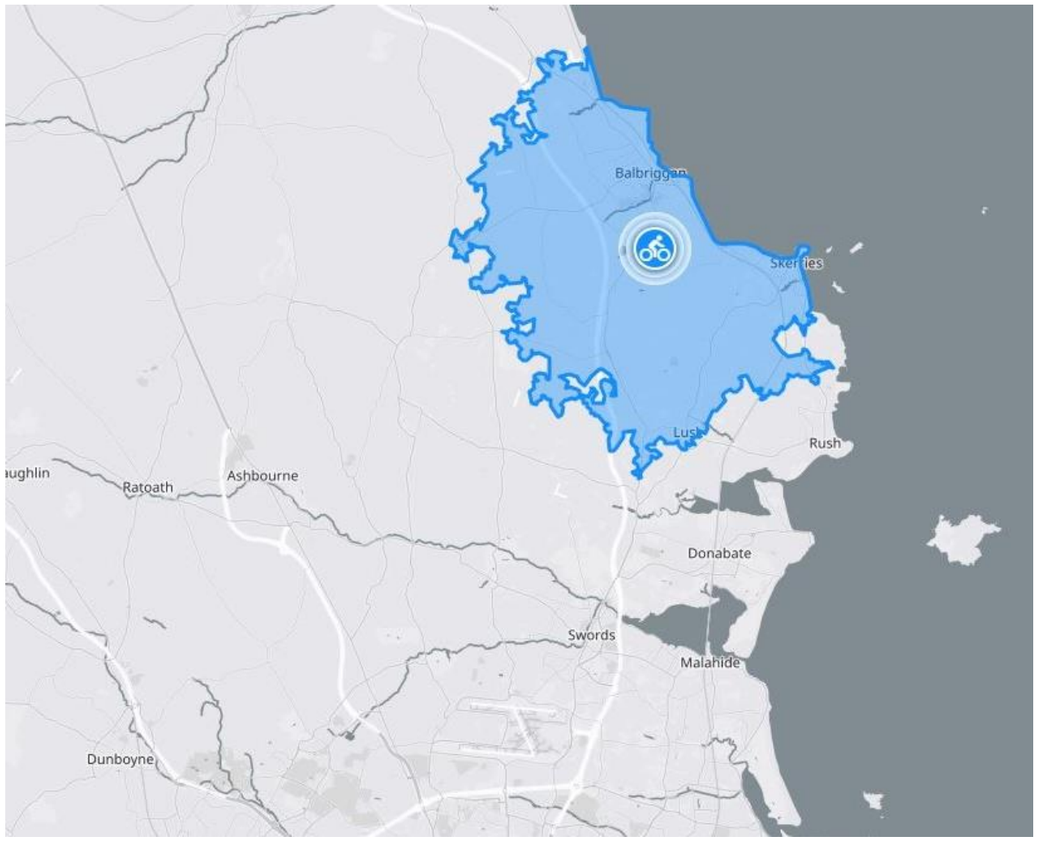
Substantial improvements to cycle infrastructure are to be implemented across the wider area that will serve Balrothery (Figure 3-9). This includes the development of the Greater Dublin Area Cyle Network that will connect Balrothery to the south to Dublin City Centre and to the east to Balbriggan and Skerries on the coast. There are also significant upgrades to cycle infrastructure planned in Balbriggan and Skerries.

Both Balbriggan and Skerries are within reasonable cycling distance from Balrothery (Figure 3-8) along with many of the key amenities which surround the village. When considered alongside the area that that is accessible by public transport (see Figure 3-7), this suggests that most local and regional destinations and amenities could be reached within 30 minutes without the need to drive.

This therefore suggests there is significant potential for increasing the active travel mode share for a number of regional journeys if cycling can be made more comfortable and convenient and integration with public transport improved.

Opportunities to increase active travel	Challenges for increasing active travel
• Good range of regional and local destinations and amenities within reasonable cycling distance • Growing cycle network across the region providing high quality links to key destinations	• Limited existing cycle infrastructure – particularly linking the village to the areas to the east and west • Roads linking the village to Skerries and the coast are narrow and may not feel safe for many cyclists

Figure 3-8 Destinations within 30-minute cycle journey of Balrothery



Source: TravelTime app

Figure 3-9 Existing and planned active travel routes

Source: GDA Cycle Network Plan

3.4 Existing active travel infrastructure in Balrothery and key walking routes

Engagement with residents and an analysis of the major destinations and key people movements within the village has identified the village centre and five key walking and cycling routes which are shown overleaf in Figure 3-11.

These represent the paths, streets and roads which are likely to have the highest footfall and therefore can be considered as the routes which could bring the most positive change to the most people when looking to make improvements to the local walking network.

An in-depth analysis of each of these routes has been undertaken, with further detail on the findings for each presented in Appendix A: Analysis of Key Active Travel Routes in the Village.

The analysis identifies a number of key issues and opportunities for improvement. Among the key findings are that:

- Many of the existing footpaths on these routes are discontinuous and often narrow;
- Facilities to encourage active travel are often limited – including seating and resting areas or things to do;
- There significant concerns around the safety of crossing the road at key locations within the village; and
- Road user behaviour is creating a barrier to active travel – particularly with parked cars creating an obstruction and inconsiderate driving (including speeding) making active travel feel unsafe.

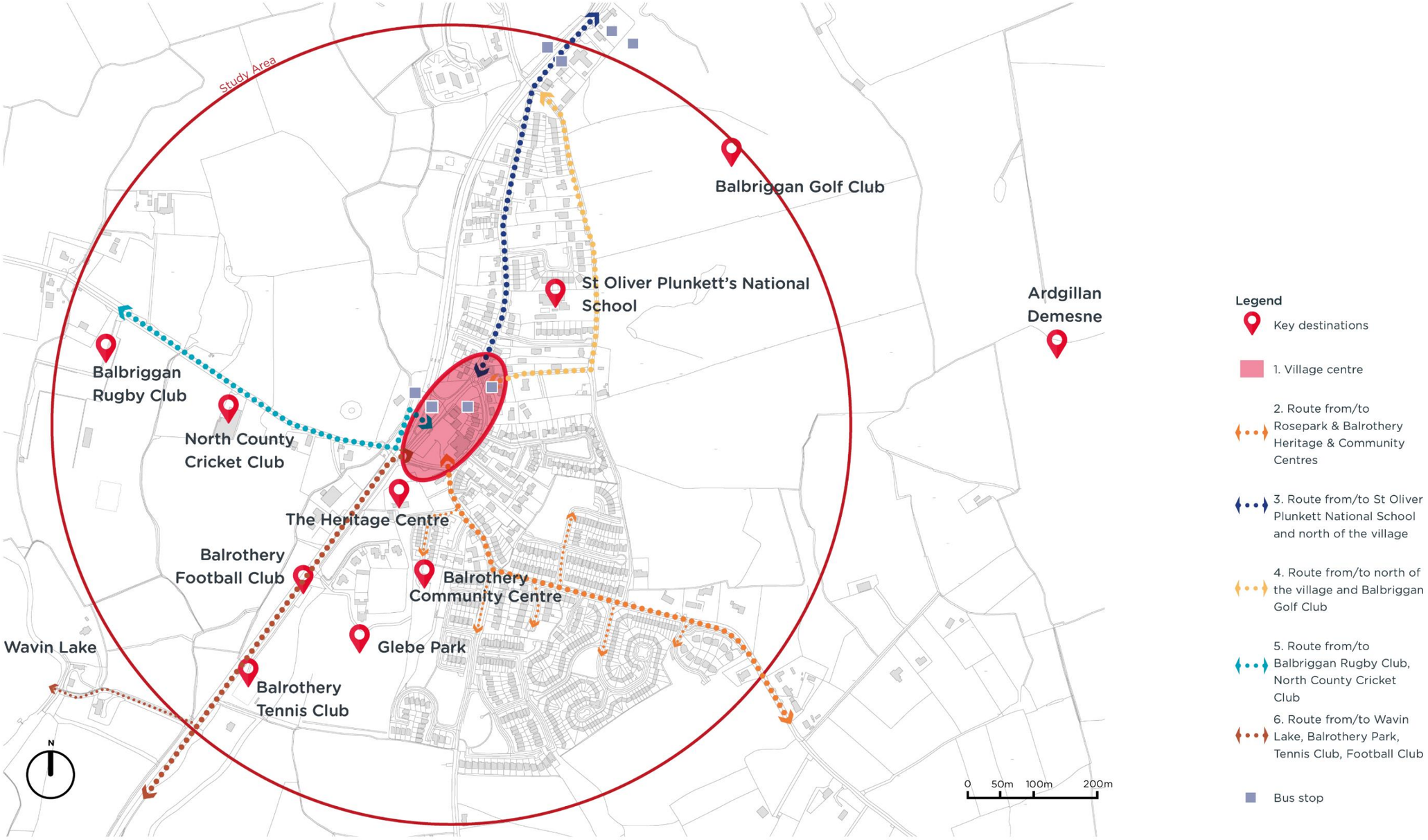
Following from this analysis, a series of traffic counts and speed surveys were undertaken across the village. These show that a high proportion of vehicles are travelling above posted speed limits when entering and leaving the village and when travelling on the 60km/h section of the R132 (

Figure 3-10).

Figure 3-10 Identified locations with high prevalence of speeding traffic

Site	Speed limit	% of vehicles travelling above posted speed limit	
		Northbound	Southbound
1. R132	60km/h	71.6%	72.6%
2. R132	60 km/h	70.6%	72.6%
3. R132	60 km/h	70.4%	77.2%
4. Knightswood	50 km/h	51.8%	50.4%
5. Darcystown Road	50 km/h	62.8%	59.2%

Figure 3-11 Key existing walking and cycling routes within the village



3.5 Key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats

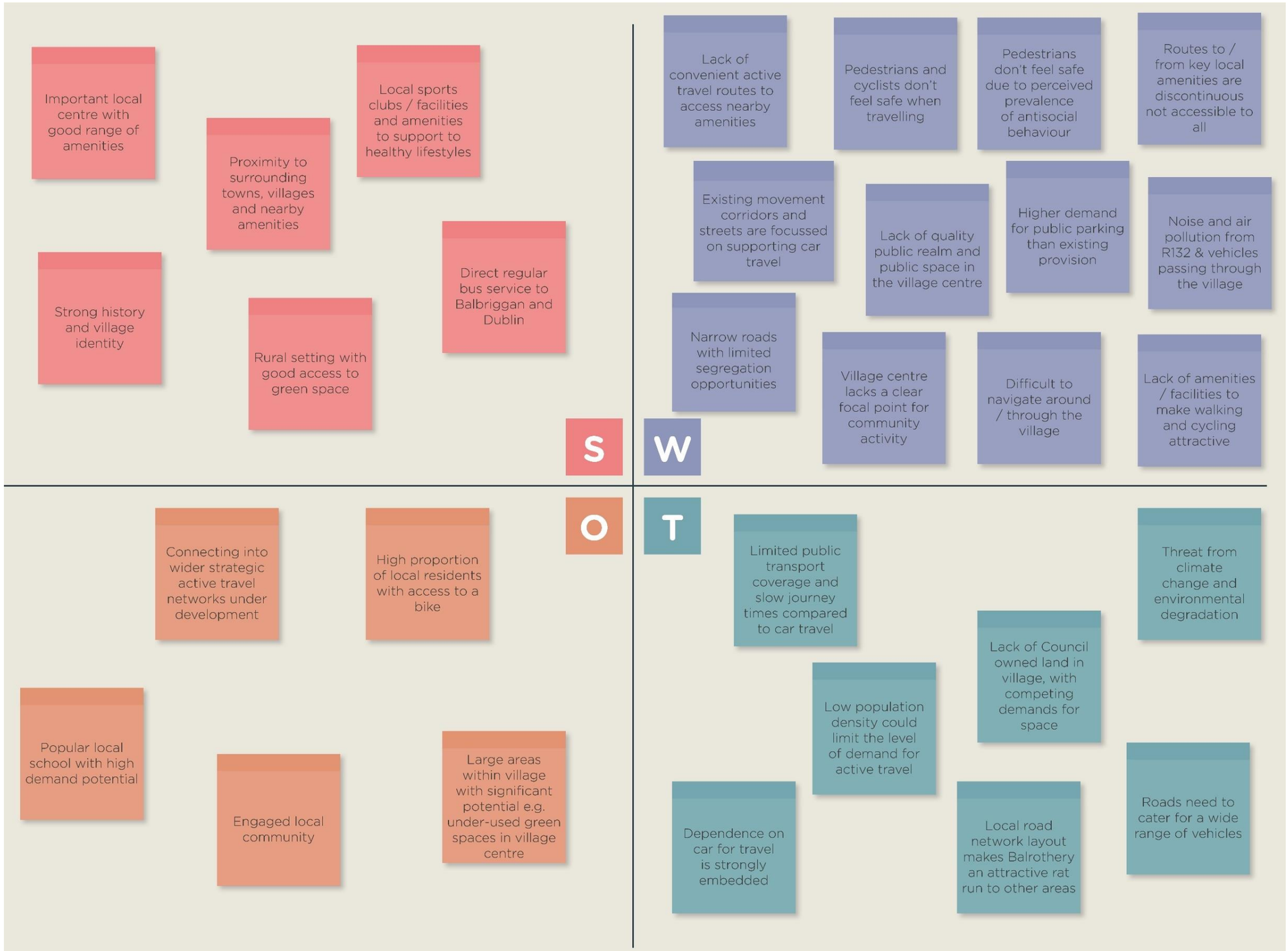
The findings from the assessment of the existing situation and issues raised during community engagement (See Appendix C: Consultation Summary) have been used to develop a summary of the key strengths and weaknesses of current active travel infrastructure and provision for active travel in the village, the key opportunities to build on active travel participation and the main threats to delivering this. These are summarised in Figure 3-12 overleaf.

Balrothery has many strengths, including an engaged local community who are supportive of change. As an historic village, Balrothery has many unique heritage assets and a special character which can be leveraged in the plan. There is also a good foundation of local businesses, amenities and community assets which act as key destinations in the village, things that people are willing to walk and cycle to if the conditions are right.

Like other rural villages, Balrothery has significant challenges that present as weaknesses and threats to the growth of active travel. The plan will need to recognise these and attempt to resolve them. Some can be addressed relatively quickly and easily but others may need longer-term planning to overcome them.

Overall, there are many opportunities identified which have the potential to support active travel, so that it will improve the lives of residents and visitors, help the local economy, and contribute towards more sustainable living.

Figure 3-12 Summary of key strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats



04 VISION AND KEY PRINCIPLES

4. Vision and Key Principles

4.1 Vision

The vision for Balrothery is for:

"A unique and vibrant village, focussed on community and connectivity."

This vision provides the over-arching framework for the development of the plan and the outcomes it is seeking to deliver.

4.2 Key Principles

The plan is underpinned by twelve 'Key Principles' for active travel in Balrothery (Figure 4-1). These provide the guidelines for the proposed measures for the village which are set out Chapter 6 and help ensure the plan delivers a balanced approach to promoting active travel.

Figure 4-1: The Key Principles

Feels Safe - Improve road safety to protect pedestrians and cyclists and reduce barriers to active travel

Thriving Natural Environment - Enhance Balrothery's natural environment through protecting existing habitats and creating new opportunities for greening the village

Quality Public Realm - Create places for people which enhance village-life and support the delivery of recreational, community, social, youth and educational facilities

Healthier Lifestyles - Encourage regular physical activity through walking and cycling to improve public health

Unique Heritage and Character - Celebrate Balrothery's unique heritage and support the development of a place that is full of vibrancy and character

Linking to Surrounding Areas - Create a cohesive network of cycle paths and walking routes within Balrothery and linked to a wider network

Well-connected Local Destinations - Provide pleasant and comfortable routes for active travel that link local destinations (e.g. school, village centre, Glebe Park) together and to residential areas

Comfort and Convenience - Provide amenities, facilities and places to rest to support active travel by making it an easy and convenient choice of travel

Enables Local Business - Boost the local economy by facilitating active tourism, and increasing the number of visits to local businesses

Accessibility for All - To make Active Travel in Balrothery easy and accessible for all abilities and ages

Integration with Other Travel Modes - Help to facilitate longer trips by connecting walking and cycling routes efficiently with the public transport network as well as other shared mobility services

Clean, Quiet and Low Carbon - Reduce air pollution and noise by encouraging local trips being made using active travel, reducing car travel and minimising road congestion.

05 STRATEGIC OPTIONS FOR BALROTHERY

5. Strategic Options for Balrothery

In its introduction, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS)[1] recognises that the design of a street should acknowledge its context (i.e. type of place) as well as the needs of users (all users, not just vehicles). It also recognises that best practice in active travel design is shifting towards more sustainable approaches to street design with a greater focus on placemaking, integration, social aspects and holistic design of the network.

Figure 5-1: Conventional vs sustainable approach to street design (extract from DMURS)

Designing to promote active travel can be done in a variety of ways, from providing segregated routes for cycling and walking to creating shared spaces which give more priority to pedestrians and cyclists. In developing the Plan for Balrothery, three strategic options have been identified based on three alternative design approaches. These set different approaches to delivery of walking and cycling infrastructure and the design of streets within the village, with each directed by the Key Principles set out in the previous chapter.

The pros and cons of each approach for different routes and areas of the village have then been assessed to inform the proposed Plan which is set out in Chapter 6. This reflects how well they will support the Key Principles, deliver value for money and provide a practical solution. Each approach has been informed by stakeholder feedback and community engagement.

5.1 Approach 1: Infrastructure-led

In this approach, the focus is on improving existing active travel infrastructure and reallocating road space to create a safer and more accessible environment for walking, wheeling, cycling and scooting. The emphasis is on the use of existing, new or reallocated physical infrastructure to help calm traffic, reduce speeds and (where possible) provide dedicated cycling infrastructure along key movement corridors.

5.1.1 Key areas of focus

The approach delivers improvements across the Plan area, but focuses on the key movement routes identified Chapter 3, including Coach Rd, Ringfort View / Darcystown Road, and the R132.

5.1.2 Public realm & placemaking

The approach includes public realm improvements, though has greater focus on delivering infrastructure upgrades which provide safer and accessible routes. For example, by prioritising measures which will ensure that footpaths are free of obstacles and have adequate surface conditions and by adding new footpaths where they don't currently exist or are discontinuous.

5.1.3 Pedestrian & cycling movement and connectivity

The focus for pedestrian and cycling networks on "plugging gaps" in the existing key movement corridors and to provide infrastructure to improve cycling safety / accessibility along these. Engagement with the local community raised a lack of cycle lanes and safety as being two of the biggest barriers to cycling, so this approach aims provide segregated or partially segregated cycle lanes where feasible and includes new road crossing points and side-street junction improvements. Dedicated cycle

[1] The design manual is available at: https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-transport/publications/design-manual-for-urban-roads-and-streets/

infrastructure is known to help improve the perception of safety, particularly with vulnerable cyclists such as children.

Enhanced cycle parking is provided at key locations throughout the village, including the village centre and outside the primary school and at Glebe Park.

5.1.4 Traffic movement and management

This approach aims to have the lowest impact of all the alternatives considered on the existing vehicle movement in the village. There is less emphasis on restricting vehicles movements and routing (e.g. creation of one-way streets) and instead use of infrastructure, road markings and lower speed limits to slow down traffic and encourage more considerate driving. This aims to discourage the use of the village as a through route and reduce vehicle speeds to create a more comfortable and safer feeling active travel environment.

5.1.5 Parking

To manage parking demand this approach includes physical infrastructure measures such as bollards to prohibit parking and the removal of parking where it creates a barrier along key walking or cycling routes. Parking will be embedded into infrastructure designs where possible (to enable vehicles to park without obstructing pedestrians and cyclists), with alternative locations identified for some short-term public parking within the village centre and/or a larger parking facility close to the village to be explored.

5.1.6 Examples of interventions

An illustration of how this approach would apply in practice in Balrothery is shown in Figure 5-2. The types of measure included within this approach include:

- New segregated cycle track
- New zebra crossings
- Footway widening to narrow the carriageway and reduce traffic speeds
- Speed bumps, chicanes, rumble strips
- Vehicle-activated signs and new road markings
- Village speed limit reductions
- Parking prevention and controls (including bollards, disabled parking bays, yellow lines, parking restrictions)
- Junction upgrades and improvements

Further detail on how this approach would apply across the village is provided in Figure 5-3.

5.1.7 Key pros and cons of the approach

This approach several key benefits, particularly around improving the feeling of safety for active travel in the village, but also some key challenges around how to create more space for active travel without losing important space for other uses. The key pros and cons are summarised below.

Pros	Cons
• Well known technical solutions which have been commonly used elsewhere • Physical separation improves perception of safety • Clear and visible statement to drivers that active travel is a priority in the village	• Could have negative effects on the quality of public realm e.g. removal of existing green space to provide space for infrastructure, • Parking management requires ongoing monitoring and enforcement

Figure 5-2: Example of streetscape taking infrastructure-led approach (based on Darcystown Rd / Ringfort View)

Figure 5-3: Illustrative framework for Approach 1 - Infrastructure-led

5.2 Approach 2: New Connectivity

With this approach, the emphasis on the creation of more routes for people to move around the village away from the movement corridors with heavier traffic. The aim is to create a more comprehensive network of routes for active travel by improving existing routes on quieter streets, public spaces that are under-utilised or creating new routes.

5.2.1 Key areas of focus

Unlike Approach 1 which concentrates on the main corridors, this approach provides a more widely distributed set of measures, which include smaller residential streets and routes.

5.2.2 Public realm & placemaking

The approach will create new public realm and upgrade existing side streets. The creation of new routes and connections will also look to link together and facilitate existing green spaces across the village. This will help to improve connectivity and create new and better local amenities for residents.

Public realm and placemaking opportunities will also be provided through reallocating road space from cars to people along primary movement corridors, with urban greening opportunities also explored.

5.2.3 Pedestrian & cycling movement and connectivity

The focus of approach is to enhance pedestrian and cycling connectivity by increasing route choices and removing of physical barriers. This includes the delivery of 'quietways' and 'greenways' across the village.

Quietways are a network of cycle and walking routes that link key destinations through less heavily trafficked streets. The quietways will be direct and easy to follow and designed for and aimed at less confident cyclists and pedestrians who want a safe, unthreatening experience when cycling and aimed at those who want to travel at a gentler pace.

Greenways are traffic-free pathways that will connect Balrothery to other towns and villages. Greenways provide sustainable and healthy travel routes to schools, workplaces, shops and local amenities, whilst offering tranquil green routes out of town to the local countryside.

5.2.4 Traffic movement and management

This measures within this approach will have some impact on vehicular movement, with alterations to traffic routing making journeys by car less convenient and prioritising connectivity for walking and cycling. The approach would, though, ensure that vehicular access is not prohibited for those who need it (including local businesses).

This would result in some physical re-organisation of vehicular routing to rebalance active travel needs. For example, the approach includes the proposal to make the northern junction to the R132 exit-only to help manage movement and control access to the school and to reorganise traffic to allow a better connection between the shops/pub and the heritage centre and the greenspaces adjacent to the R132.

5.2.5 Parking

Car parking within the village is more carefully managed by introducing restrictions such as double-yellow lines, waiting/loading restrictions, or temporary parking restrictions at certain times of day. These are to better control parking behaviour and ensure it is not detrimental to walking and cycling connectivity. Parking can also be restricted at crucial times of day, such as the introduction of a 'School Street' during drop-off and pick-up hours. Some parking bay removal may also be required to make traffic management measures such as one-way streets workable.

5.2.6 Examples of interventions

An illustration of how this approach would apply in practice in Balrothery is shown in Figure 5-4). The types of measure included within this approach include

- Mandatory cycle lanes and stepped cycle tracks
- New signed footpaths / cycle routes to key amenities
- Road centreline removal and colourful road markings around school area
- Road carriageway width reductions / wider footpaths
- Removal and better management of parking
- Enhancements to existing green spaces
- Improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists (benches, cycle parking, etc.)
- Better enforcement of existing restrictions (e.g. weight limits, parking restrictions)
- Urban greening initiatives e.g. planters
- Driver feedback signs, periodic speed limit sign

Further detail on how this approach would apply across the village is provided in Figure 5-5.

5.2.7 Key pros and cons of the approach

This approach has a number of key benefits, particularly by offering a generally lower cost solution than the more infrastructure-heavy approach of Approach 1 and in ensuring improvements are more dispersed across the village. However, this also risks spreading investment thinly and reducing the impact of measures, while also making the changes less visible. The key pros and cons are summarised below.

Pros	Cons
• Simple, low-cost technical solutions • Easy and quick to deliver with potential for some solutions to be implemented on a temporary basis • Improved perception of safety due to physical separation • Improvements well distributed across the village and study area • Visible interventions that will be acknowledged by the public • Majority of interventions within public ownership and easier to secure funding and to deliver through planning	• Less visible as a set of interventions which might lead to negative public perception • Requires land outside of public ownership to deliver full network • Enhanced need for SEA (and other) screening

Figure 5-4: Example of streetscape taking new connectivity approach (based on Coach Rd)

Figure 5-5: Illustrative framework for Approach 2 - New connectivity

5.3 Approach 3: Placemaking Priority

This approach envisages completely reimagining the village as a place for people rather than vehicles, created through a fundamental re-shaping of key roads and public spaces in Balrothery. The overall aim is to develop a vibrant village centre where priority is given to active travel and traffic is removed or significantly reduced.

5.3.1 Key areas of focus

The focus of measures is primarily on the village centre and connections north to the school and south to the residential areas of the village.

5.3.2 Public realm & placemaking

This approach creates new public spaces with greater priority for pedestrians and active travel within the village centre and along key routes. This will help to enhance the local sense of place and strengthen the village centre as a destination and heart of the community. New opportunities will be found by reallocating space away from vehicles to create pedestrian priority places, with measures including increased street trees, greening, sustainable drainage, new public spaces, pocket parks and more.

5.3.3 Pedestrian & cycling movement and connectivity

Enhanced active travel movement is supported by a focus on key trip origins and destinations within the village such as the village centre shops, school and residential areas. The approach will be to use an enhanced public realm, and the reallocation of road space to create an environment which will reduce speeds of vehicular traffic through psychological and visual cues.

Figure 5-8). The types of measure included within this approach include

- Mixed traffic spaces and shared surface roads
- Road space reallocation to provide space for wider footpaths, green infrastructure, sustainable drainage and new amenities
- Introduction of sheltered parking bays
- Side-crossing improvements
- New paving materials e.g. imprinted asphalt, stone setts, bound pebble surfaces
- Village ‘gateway’ designs for transition awareness
- Cycle parking, street seating and furniture
- Play-on-the-way
- Rain gardens, tree planting, permeable paving and soakaways

Enhanced amenities (such as cycle parking provision, water fountains and resting places) will be provided in the village centre and along key routes to help encourage walking and cycling.

5.3.4 Traffic movement and management

This approach will have the biggest impact on traffic movement in the village to allow space to be reclaimed for public realm upgrades. This would include new one-way restrictions for the village centre and on Coach Road between the village centre and the primary school.

The ethos of this approach will be to make the car feel like a ‘visitor’ in key spaces to slow traffic speeds, pedestrians and cyclists will be prioritised and will result in more shared space interventions (see Figure 3-6 and Figure 3-7).

5.3.5 Parking

This scenario will include removing marked parking bays (except for designated spaces for disabled people) and the ‘street clutter’ associated with parking restriction markings and signage. Instead, space previously occupied by parking spaces can be occupied by public realm interventions such as seating, planting, pocket parks, play space and more. This will not only discourage and prevent parking but contribute to a healthier and more vibrant public realm. Displaced parking demand could be accommodated in alternative provision outside the village centre, including parking along the R132.

5.3.6 Examples of interventions

An illustration of how this approach would apply in practice in Balrothery is shown in (

- Colour themed signage, public art and installations

Further detail on how this approach would apply across the village is provided in Figure 5-9.

Figure 5-6: Use of shared surface roads and mixed materials in Roscoff, France

Figure 5-7: Shared use of road space in Monheim, Germany

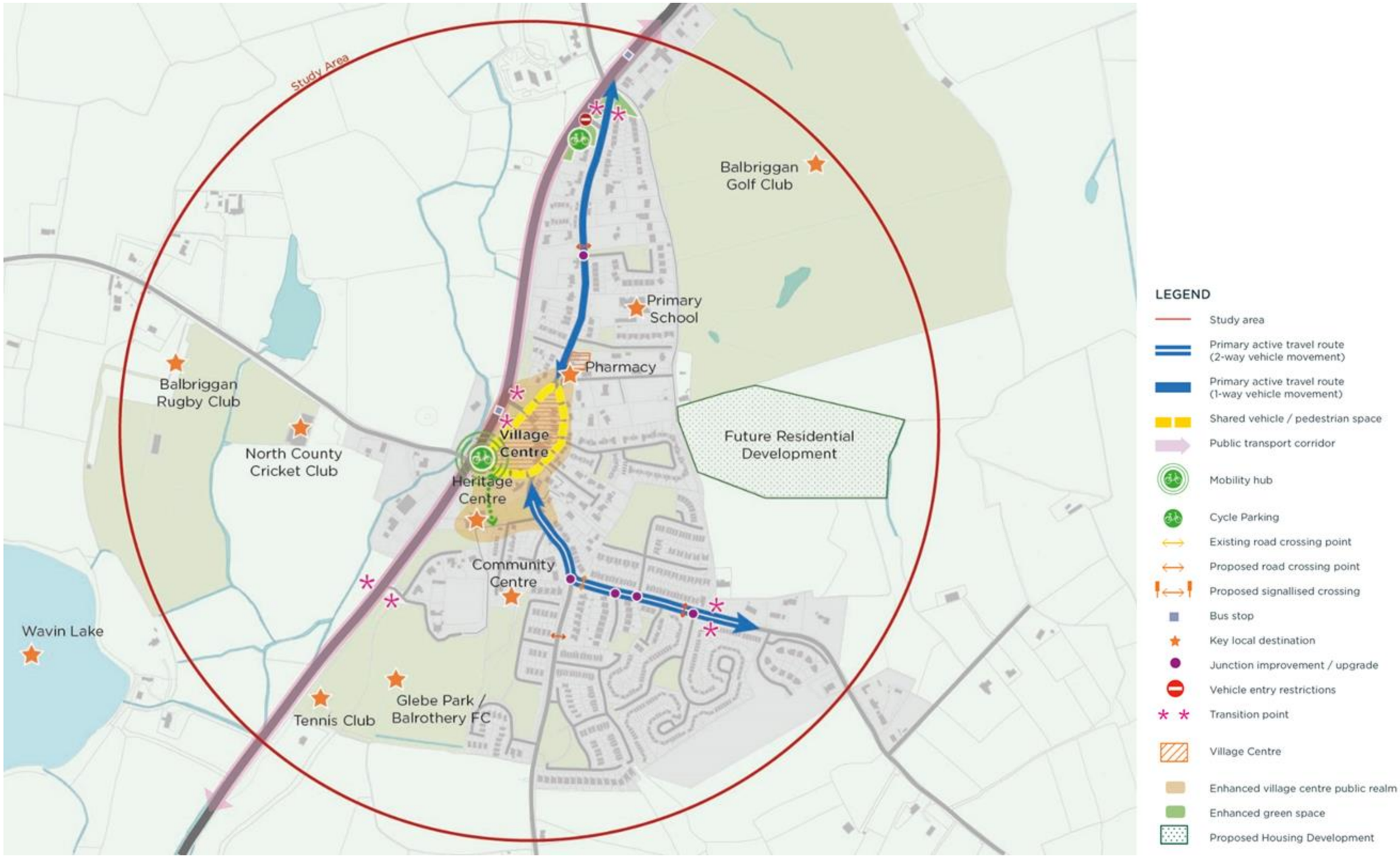
5.3.7 Key pros and cons

The approach presents a more progressive approach to active travel than that within the other approaches with the potential to benefit the village in wider ways. The higher cost of the types of measures within this approach will require more concentrated investment in fewer areas, while the changes to the use of streets will also likely require significant readjustment for those currently driving through the village.

Pros	Cons
• A more progressive approach to active travel design which has many co-benefits related to placemaking • Creates the most attractive and healthy environment • Enhanced biodiversity and water management • Improvements well distributed across the village and study area • Majority of interventions within public ownership which will make them less complicated to deliver	• May create ambiguity and uncertainty which can lead to safety issues in early stages of implementation • Likely to be most expensive scenario which may restrict the number or spread of interventions to specific areas • Likely to be the most controversial approach, particularly with road users • May create some issues for those with mobility impairments who rely on their car to get around. • Enhanced maintenance requirements for sustainable drainage and new planting • Some interventions may be seen as public realm projects rather than active travel improvements which can lead to issues securing funding and planning

Figure 5-8: Example of streetscape taking placemaking priority approach (based on Darcystown Rd / Ringfort View)

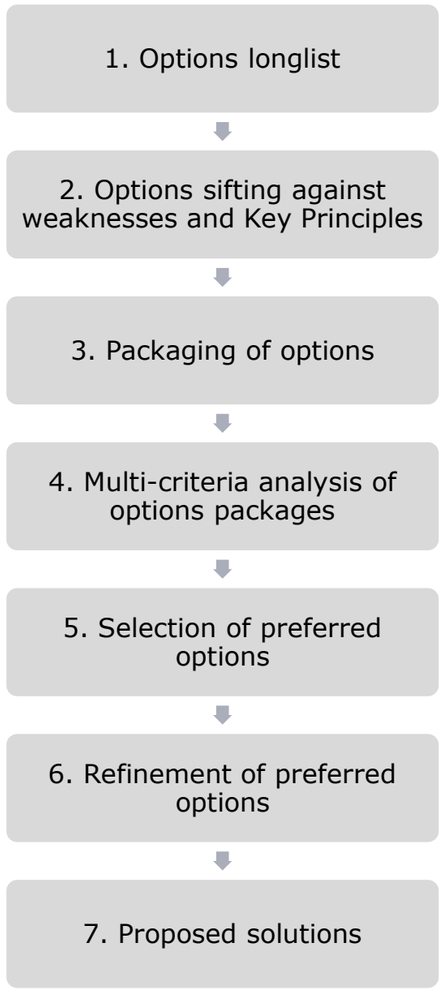
Figure 5-9: Illustrative framework for Approach 3 - Placemaking Priority



5.4 Appraisal of the alternative approaches

To go from the alternative strategic options to the proposed solution for the village we have followed a seven stage process based on the guidelines for Area Based Transport Assessment provided by the National Transport Authority (NTA). The key steps are illustrated in Figure 5-10 below.

Figure 5-10 Scenario appraisal process



The process begins with the identification of scheme options. These include the opportunities identified during site visits and analysis and ideas presented by residents and businesses at the first engagement session. These options have then been assessed against whether they address one of key weaknesses identified in the village and whether they along to the Key Principles set out in Chapter 4.

The options to make it through this process have been packaged within the strategic options presented in this chapter. A multi-criteria analysis has then been used to assess how well each of these strategic performs against the delivery of the Key Principles and the key weaknesses and opportunities outlined in Chapter 3. The analysis also then considers:

- The engineering feasibility;
- Acceptability;
- Funding potential; and
- Value for money.

A 'Preferred Solution' has then been identified which forms the basis of the proposed solution that was presented at the second community engagement event. This has been refined based on the feedback received during and after that session and through wider engagement with key stakeholders to define the proposed solutions presented in the next chapter.

Further detail on the options longlist and the outputs from each stage of this analysis can be found in Appendix B: Options Longlist and Analysis Summary.

In addition to the assessment of individual options, the Plan has also been subject to Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening and Appropriate Assessment Screening. The results of this are presented within Appendix D: Assessment Screening

06

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

6. Proposed solutions

6.1 General overview

The proposed end state of the village following the full implementation of the plan is set out in the map in Figure 6-1 overleaf. This sets out the key interventions to be delivered by location.

To enable the delivery of these interventions and to promote a safer environment for active travel, a series of accompanying measures to reduce traffic speeds and potential conflict between vehicles and people. These are shown in Figure 6-2.

The following discussion provides more detail on how the plan will be delivered across the different areas of the village.

6.2 Village centre

The village centre in Balrothery offers the greatest opportunity for transformational change to firmly establish it as the beating heart of the local community and its local centre. To ensure this is the case it will need to be safe and inclusive for all, fully connected and integrated with the surrounding residential areas and integrate efficiently with public transport routes for journeys further afield. A reconfiguration and change of street character in the village centre will support safer cycling in a mixed mode environment and provide a link between the proposals for the School Zone and Eastern Gateway improvements to create a secondary cycle route through the village as part of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network plan (2022).

Proposed measures include:

- Reversal and extension of the current one-way system to create a ‘one-way loop’ around the village
- With the reduced number of lanes, additional space and new/widened footpaths will be created for pedestrians on Coach Road (between the hair salon and pub) to resolve safety issues with discontinuous footpaths
- Undergrounding of ESB pole adjacent to the pub and reconfiguration of the junction to remove triangle of grass. Junction improvement will also provide a new courtesy crossing
- Reconfiguration of junction outside of Pharmacy with new zebra crossing
- Dedicated short-term / disabled parking bay outside of the pharmacy
- Enhancements to the green spaces adjacent to Spar to include additional cycle parking, street furniture, screening from the road and potential for a future rural mobility hub

An illustration of how the village centre could look on completion is presented in Figure 6-3 and Figure 6-4.

Figure 6-1 Balrothery Active Travel Plan – Active Travel Network

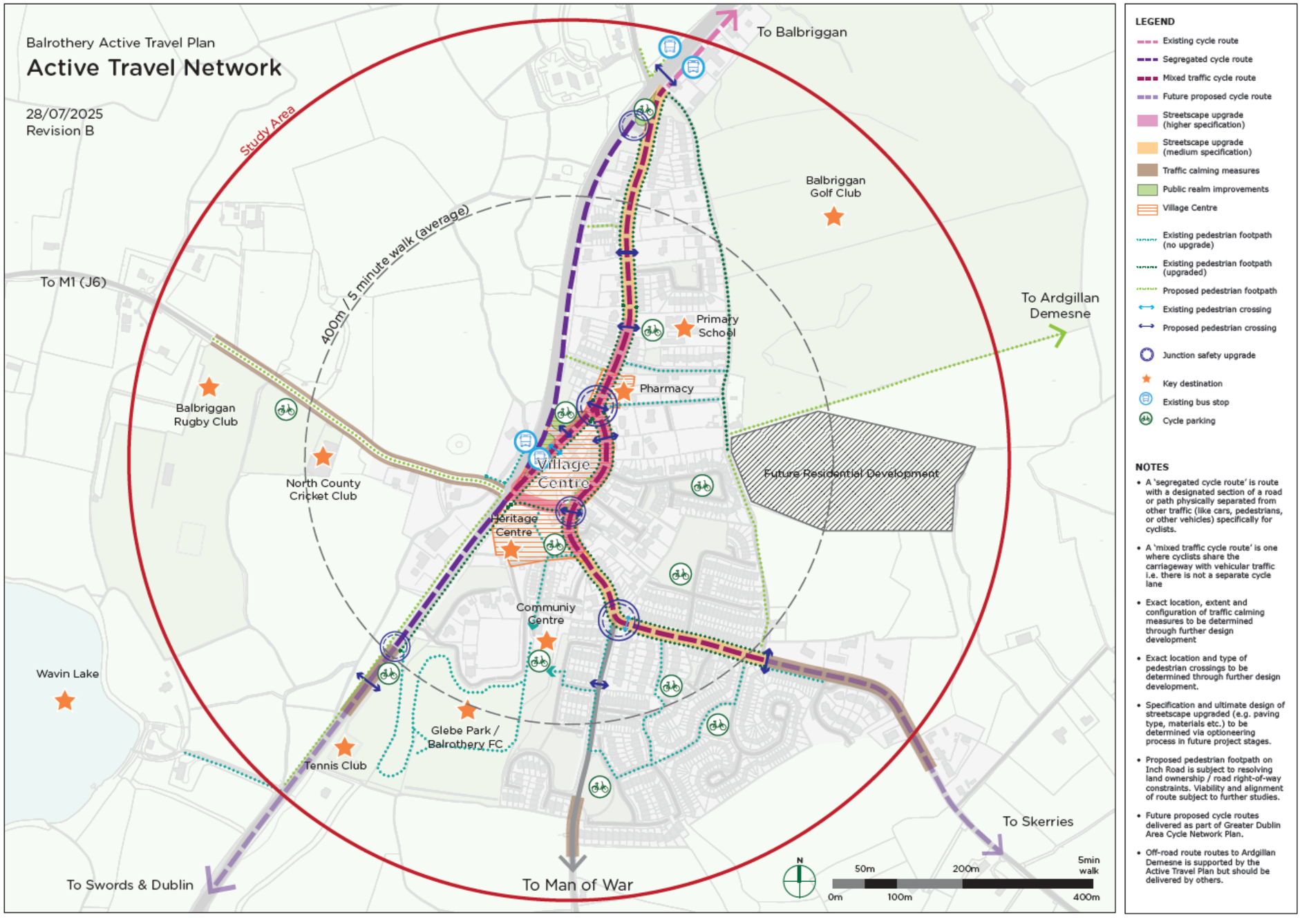


Figure 6-2: Proposed speed management and traffic movement

Figure 6-3: Artist's impression of proposed improvements to the village centre (approaching from the south on Coach Road)

Figure 6-4: Artist's impression of proposed improvements to the village centre (approaching from the north on Coach Road / outside pharmacy)

6.3 School Route

The School Route will connect St Oliver Plunkett Primary School to the Village Centre as well as improve the walking route for those arriving from the north. By converting the northern end of the street to 'exit only' onto the R132, through traffic from the R132 from the north is re-routed to use the main junction at the village centre. A reduction in traffic and accessibility by car will have positive impacts to vehicle volumes, speeds and the reorganisation of traffic flows effectively makes the street one-way but allows 2-way access for residents at the northern area of Balrothery.

Proposed measures include:

- A new entrance space outside the primary school, with a new zebra crossing, public realm enhancements (including cycle parking and greenery), traffic calming and vehicle management measures
- Narrowing of the existing carriageway and widening of footpaths to meet the DMURS recommended standards
- Resurfacing of the road between Village Centre and the primary school to create an enhanced public realm and finish
- Upgrading side street junctions (Tudor Hamlet, Balrothery Court, Coach Rd Manor) to give greater pedestrian priority (including tactile paving and raised tables)
- Courtesy crossing between Coach Rd Manor and The Coachyard
- Additional traffic calming measures (e.g. vertical deflection – if required)

Figure 6-5 provides an illustration of how the area around the school entrance would appear.

6.4 Eastern Gateway

Overall, the intention for the Eastern Gateway is to address excessive vehicle speeds entering the village from Ardgillan / Skerries (from the east on Darcystown Road) and Man of War (from the south on Knightswood). This is to allow the creation of a streetscape character that is more conducive to walking and cycling due to slower vehicle speeds and heightened awareness of entering an urbanised area with pedestrians and cyclists. The proposals will help form a secondary cycle route through the village as part of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network plan (2022). The long-term aspiration is to extend this along Darcystown Road to Ardgillan and connect to the Skerries greenway / coastal route.

Proposed measures will include:

- Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) on approach to Balrothery from Ardgillan / Skerries and Man of War
- Enhanced signage and gateway features at edges of urbanised area of village (on Knightswood and Darcystown Road)
- Review and upgrade of Knightswood/Coach Road/Rosepark junction to make this feel safer for pedestrians
- Upgrade of side street junctions (Ringfort Avenue, Rosepark, Knightswood Park) for pedestrian priority (e.g. minimise radii, tactile paving etc.)
- Carriageway narrowing on Ringfort View / Rosepark and down the hill into the village centre. The space created will be used to widen footpaths (particularly on the eastbound carriageway)
- Public realm street upgrades with the introduction of sustainable drainage, green infrastructure and amenities (e.g. street furniture)
- Courtesy crossing east of Ringfort Avenue
- Zebra crossing close to entrance to Balruddery Fields to improve access to Glebe Park
- Cycle parking facilities within communal greenspaces for local residents
- Creation of active travel greenway to connect Darcystown Road with School Land / Old Coach Road to provide alternative off-road walking and cycling route to the primary school

An illustration of the completed state of these measures is provided in Figure 6-6.

Figure 6-5 - Artist's impression of Coach Road / school entrance

Figure 6-6 Artist's impression of Ringfort View / Darcystown Road improvements

6.5 South of the village

South of the Village measures are primarily about enhancing connectivity to Glebe Park and onwards to other local destinations such as Wavin Lake. Measures can be seen as the starting point for the longer-term objective of creating an inter-urban cycle route on the R132 as outlined in the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network plan (2022).

Proposed measures will include:

- Speed limit reduction on R132 on the southern approach to Balrothery (50km/h) with associated signage and road markings
- Carriageway narrowing on R132 with a new segregated cycleway to connect the village centre to Glebe Park
- Upgrade of Glebe Park junction to improve segregation of pedestrians/cyclists from vehicles and address safety concerns
- New footpath on the northbound carriageway of the R132 between Wavin Lake and Inch Road
- Signalised crossing on R132 near the Glebe Park entrance

An illustration of these measures is provided in Figure 6-7.

6.6 Northern Gateway

The northern gateway improvements look at how to create better connectivity to the existing cycle route (to Balbriggan) as well as improving inter-modal connectivity with bus services and accessibility to Balrothery from the north of Balrothery.

Proposed measures include:

- Signalised crossing on R132 close to bus stops to the north of the village
- New footpath on R132 northbound carriageway from bus stop to Stephenstown junction (and potentially onwards to Hamilton Care Home)
- A new section of cycleway along the R132 between the main entrance to the village and Northern Gateway creating a continuous cycle route north to south
- New on-street parking along the side of the R132 to deliver a better option for those parking to use bus services
- Re-configuration of northern R132 junction to convert to ‘exit only’ from R132 and address visibility issues
- Upgrades to municipal greenspaces at northern end of village to include cycle parking provision

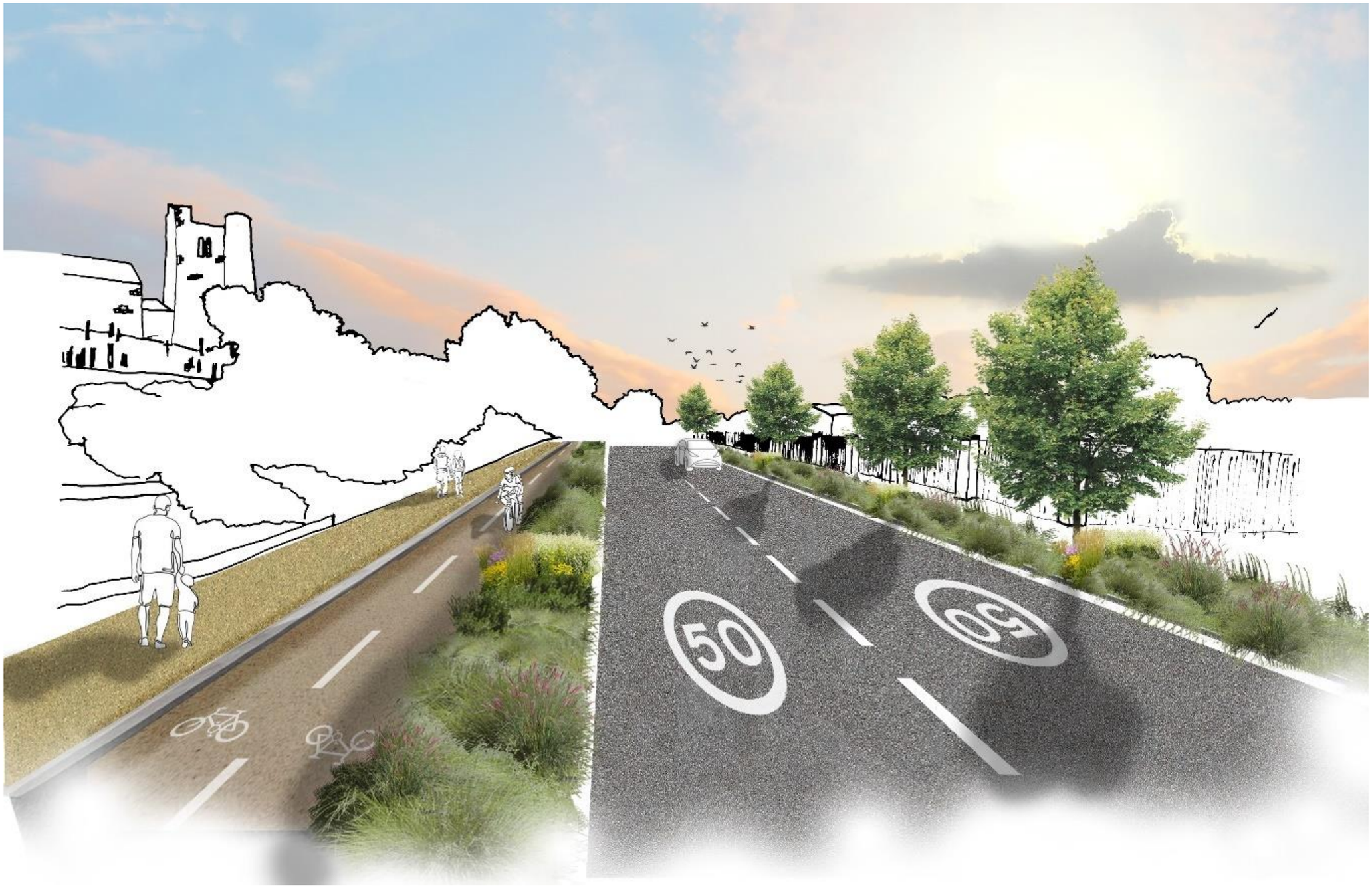
6.7 Inch Road

Inch Road provides the main route to connect Balrothery village centre to North County Cricket Club and Balbriggan Rugby Club. Proposals for Inch Road are focused on creating a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists within a road environment that is narrow, lacking footpaths and highly constrained.

Proposed measures include:

- Reduced speed limit (30km/h) between junction of Inch Road / R132 to Balbriggan Rugby Club.
- Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) west of Balbriggan Rugby club and at R132 / Inch Road junction.
- Enhanced signage and gateway features on approach to Balbriggan Rugby Club.
- Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection)
- Extension of footpath from R132 bus stop to Balbriggan Rugby Club (single-sided).

Figure 6-7 Artist's impression of R132 improvements



07

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

7. Implementation Plan

7.1 Introduction

This section of the plan sets out how the proposed solutions set out in the previous chapter will be delivered, leading to the completed plan for the village which is shown in Figure 7-1. It provides detail on the key stages for the delivery of the plan, the specific projects by stage, funding sources, key risks and how they will be managed and how the plan will be monitored and evaluated.

7.2 Plan phasing

The implementation of the Active Travel Plan has been split into quick-win and short-term, medium-term and longer-term measures which are summarised in Table 7-1. The plan has been developed to be deliverable within approximately five years.

Table 7-1 – Overview of plan stages

Stage	Overview
Quick wins / short-term	Measures to address priority concerns and create an environment where active travel feels safe and easy
Medium-term	Expansion of road-space reallocation to deliver more space people
Long-term	Completion of missing active travel routes and expansion of active travel facilities across the village

The focus of the initial stage is on creating an environment within the village where active travel feels safe and accessible for everyone and improving the ease and comfort of walking, cycling and wheeling for everyday trips. This means addressing a number of issues with existing infrastructure raised by the village ("quick wins") and enhancing local provision to create a safe and coherent network for active travel within and through the village.

This stage will provide an important first step in helping to reduce car dependence for local travel and increasing space for people. It will also present an opportunity to trial some of the more substantial changes proposed as part of the plan to reallocate space away from cars (including the full one-way loop around the village centre). These trials will help determine whether permanent changes are viable and desirable.

The second plan stage will follow and expand on this approach, by reallocating space away from cars on the major routes within the village, creating more opportunities for people to enjoy public spaces and make active travel enjoyable and convenient. Depending on the outputs of the one-way trial, this will be when the more permanent changes are delivered to the village centre. The impact of through traffic will be reduced with a village centre that encourages slower movement and a more sustainable balance of space for cars and space for people.

Over the longer-term, the Plan aims to complete the missing active travel links in the village and to nearby amenities. Key projects include creating a safe walking route between the village and the rugby and cricket clubs and to Wavin Lake. Also planned here is the creation of a new 'mobility hub' providing easy access to shared bikes, local information and bike repair and maintenance facilities.

7.3 Interventions by stage

A breakdown of the key interventions grouped by stage is provided in the tables over the following pages. Supporting plans are provided following each table to illustrate the location and extent of each measure. The phasing of the interventions is based in part on the priority of the issues to active travel growth and the need to trial and incrementally develop interventions.

Funding for first two stages of the Plan is expected to be mainly provided by the National Transport Authority (NTA). **The initial funding application will be for the first two stages of Plan implementation** only (quick wins / short-term and medium-term measures). Longer-term measures will require more detailed planning and will likely also require sources of funding from other sources. Options will be explored as the initial stages are implemented.

Many of the interventions would be delivered through the powers set out in Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act (1994) which empowers road authorities to implement traffic calming measures on public roads (subject to consultation). Section 38 also permits the use of 'temporary' or trial traffic calming and traffic management measures.

Figure 7-1 Completed plan for the village

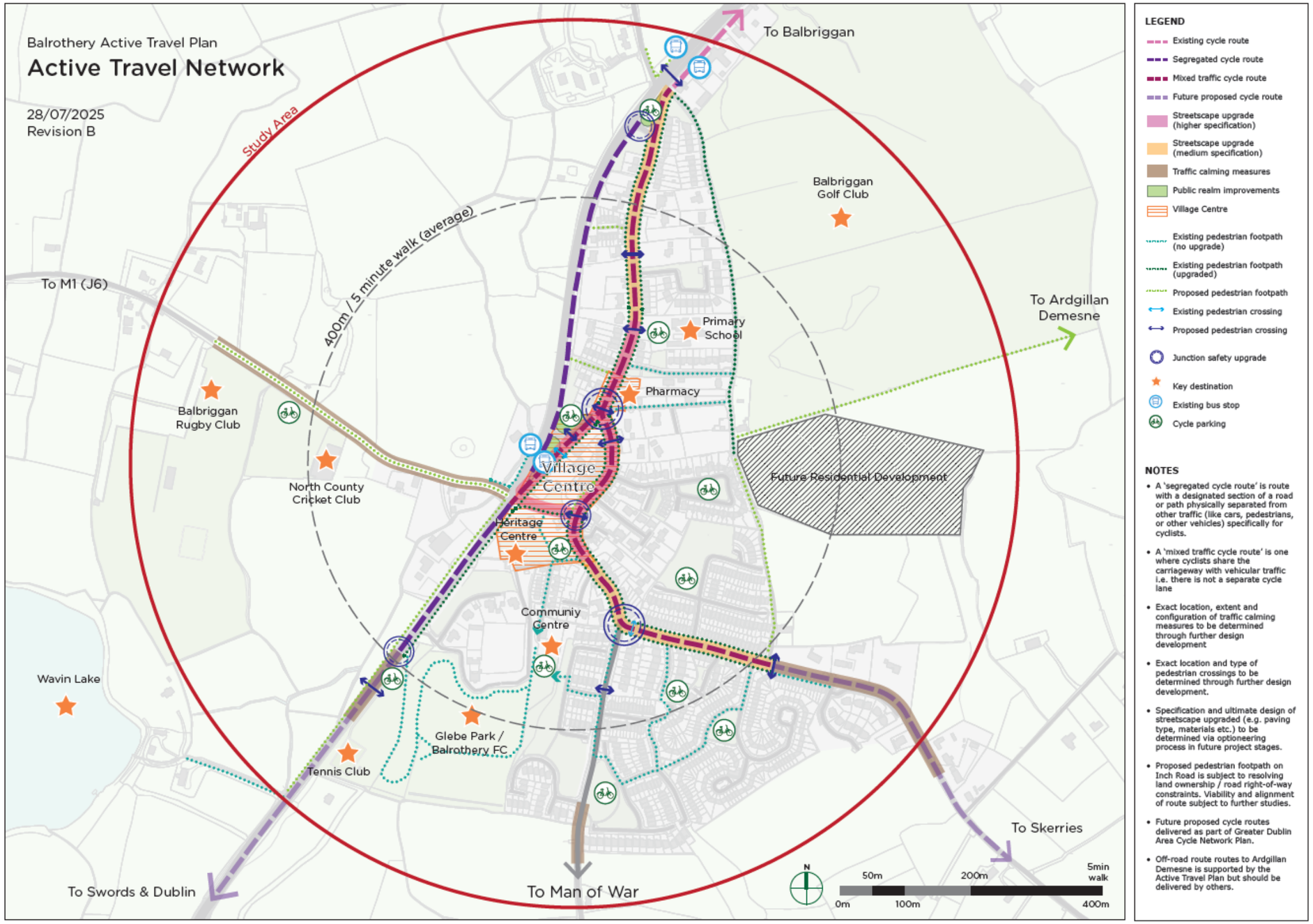


Table 7-2 Quick win and short-term measures by location

ID	Location	Intervention	Key components	Expected funding source
EG01	Eastern Gateway	Traffic calming on Darcystown Road and Knightswood at village gateways	To include driver feedback sign, chicane / width restrictions, speed tables / vertical traffic calming and stone setts rumble strip	NTA (Full)
EG02	Eastern Gateway	Rosepark / Knightswood / Coach Road junction improvements	Redesign of junction to reduce radius and make this DMURS compliant	NTA (Full)
IR01	Inch Road	Traffic calming at: (i) R132 junction and (ii) west of Rugby Club	To include enhanced signage, driver feedback sign, chicane / width restrictions, additional speed tables / vertical traffic calming measures and stone setts rumble strip	NTA (Full)
IR02	Inch Road	Speed limit reduction to 50 km/h (R132 junction to west of Rugby Club)	To include new signage and markings	NTA (Full)
NG01	Northern Gateway	Signalised crossing on R132 to bus stop	To include 100m of new footpath	NTA (Full)
NG02	Northern Gateway	R132 exit only from Coach Road	To include updated road signage and junction update (e.g. narrowing entrance)	NTA (Full)
NGO3	Northern Gateway	Speed limit reduction to 50km/h on R132 section within village boundary	To include new signage and markings	NTA (Full)
SZ01	School Zone	School entrance enhancements	To include zebra crossing, speed table, public realm improvements, seating and cycle parking	NTA (Majority) Other (Partial)

ID	Location	Intervention	Key components	Expected funding source
SZ02	School Zone	Temporary carriageway narrowing	To include painted markings and planters / bollards to separate pedestrians from road	NTA (Majority)
SV01	South of Village	Cycleway along R132 to Glebe Park	To include new 2-way cycle track on southbound carriageway from Inch Road to Glebe Park entrance and upgrade to Glebe Park entrance junction to segregate pedestrians and cyclists from cars.	NTA (Full)
SV02	South of Village	R132 speed reduction measures (north of village to Glebe Park)	New 50km/h speed limit to include signage and road markings	NTA (Full)
VC01	Village Centre	Trial of full one-way system within centre	To include temporary road markings (including marked footpath and marked cycle route), bollards and signage.	NTA (Full)
VC02	Village Centre	Village centre safety and accessibility improvements	To include reconfiguration of junction and crossing improvements near Pharmacy	NTA (Full)
AV01	All village	New 30km/h village speed limit	Reduction of speed limit within village form 50km/h to 30km/h, to include signage and road markings	NTA (Full)

Figure 7-2 Map of quick-win and short-term measures

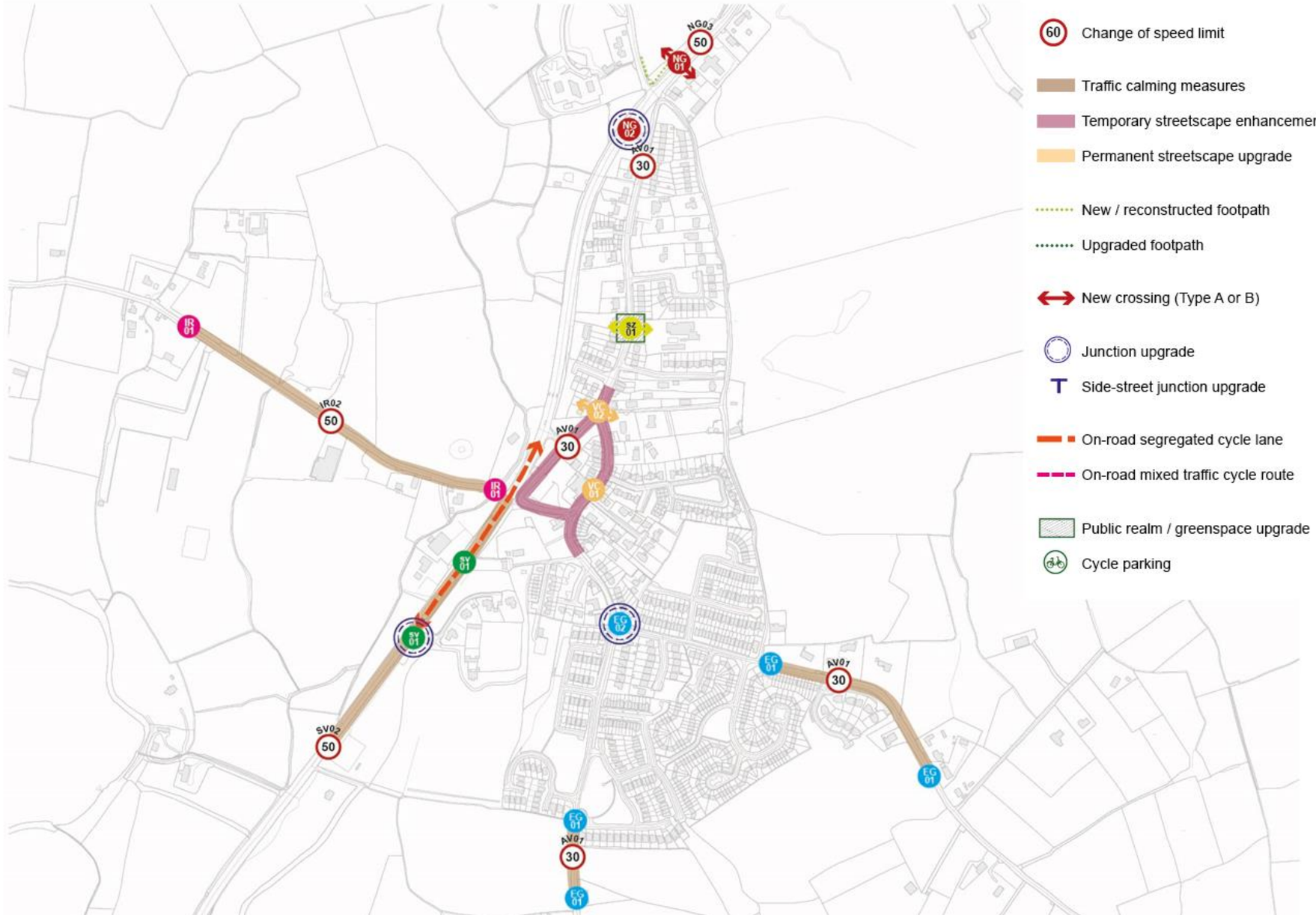


Table 7-3 Medium-term measures by location

ID	Location	Intervention	Key components	Expected funding source
EG03	Eastern Gateway	Road-space reallocation and safety improvements along Knightswood / Darcystown Road	To include footpath widening, road resurfacing, junction tightening and new uncontrolled crossings east of Ringfort Avenue and by Heritage Centre.	NTA (Full)
NG04	Northern Gateway	Road-space reallocation and cycleway extension along R132	To include on-road segregated cycleway between along R132 between Coach Road and Old Coach Road junction.	NTA (Majority) Other (Partial)
SZ03	School Zone	Road-space reallocation and safety improvements along Coach Road	To include carriageway widening, road resurfacing, speed reduction measures, road markings, junction tightening and entry treatments and uncontrolled crossings.	NTA (Full)
VC03	Village Centre	Village centre safety and accessibility improvements (second phase)	To include replacement of existing ESB pole with underground ducting and junction improvement works	NTA (Partial) ESB
VC04	Village Centre	Permanent implementation of one-way system (trial outcome dependent)	To include continuous footpath outside hair salon and full repaving with high-quality shared space material	NTA (Full)

Figure 7-3 – Map of medium-term measures

LEGEND

- 60 Change of speed limit
- Traffic calming measures
- Temporary streetscape enhancements
- Permanent streetscape upgrade
- New / reconstructed footpath
- Upgraded footpath
- New crossing (Type A or B)
- Junction upgrade
- Side-street junction upgrade
- On-road segregated cycle lane
- On-road mixed traffic cycle route
- Public realm / greenspace upgrade
- Cycle parking

Table 7-4 Long-term measures by location

ID	Location	Intervention	Key components	Expected funding source
EG04	Eastern Gateway	Resident cycle parking	New cycle stands to serve residential areas	NTA (Majority) Other (Partial)
EG05	Eastern Gateway	Streetscape upgrade on Knightswood / Darcystown Road	To include tree planting and raingardens and sustainable drainage schemes (SuDS)	NTA (Partial) Other (Partial)
EG06	Eastern Gateway	Old Coach Road active travel route	To include reinstatement of previous route to create new active travel connection to north of village	NTA (Partial) Other (Partial)
IR03	Inch Road	Safe walking route from village to Rugby Club	To include new footpath and uncontrolled crossing	NTA (Full)
NG05	Northern Gateway	Greenspace enhancements	Landscaping and improvements to green spaces plus additional cycle parking	NTA (Partial) Other (Majority)
SV04	South of Village	Accessibility along R132 to Wavin Lake	To include new footpath on R132 from Inch Road to Wavin Lake, with signalised pedestrian and cycle crossing	NTA (Full)
VC05	Village Centre	Lighting and public space enhancements	To include street lighting upgrade, enhancements to existing green spaces, new seating and play space and cycle parking.	NTA (Partial) TBC (Partial)
VC06	Village Centre	New mobility hub	To include new hub development with cycle hire, bike repair and maintenance and secure cycle parking	NTA (Partial) Other (Partial)

Figure 7-4 Map of long-term measures

7.4 Risk management

As the plan is developed and implemented, there are a number of key risks that will need to be managed to ensure unwanted and unintended outcomes are avoided. The following sets outs identified risks for the project, their expected level of impact and likelihood and how they will be managed. This table of risks and mitigation measures should be reviewed as the plan progresses.

Table 7-5 Key implementation risks and mitigation measures

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation measures
1. Funding shortfalls	High	Medium	Range of funding sources to be identified for the measures, with funding to be pooled from various sources where practical.
2. Community acceptability	Medium	High	Public consultation and key stakeholder and Member engagement to be undertaken with actions identified to manage / remove concerns. Regular communication of progress.
3. Land needed outside of FCC ownership	Medium	High	Review undertaken of land ownership within village and projects developed to avoid sites. Early engagement on planning applications and conflicts.
4. Safety concerns	High	Medium	Safety audit for key schemes to identify major risks and mitigations. Ongoing monitoring and engagement with community.
5. Implementation delays	High	Medium	Anticipate risks and develop realistic timescales for implementation. Review later stages as projects are delivered.
6. Disruption through construction	High	Medium	Phase the implementation of projects to reduce the overall level of disruption to residents / businesses. Develop construction management Plans Regular communication to residents / businesses.
7. Environmental impact	Medium	Low	Design improvements to avoid impacts on protected habitats / sensitive areas and include mitigations where necessary. Use sustainable materials and reduce, reuse and recycle materials where possible
8. Infrastructure maintenance / damage	Medium	Medium	Ensure costing / plans for routine maintenance and repair are included in developing each stage. Monitor condition to identify issues.
9. Impact on accessibility	Medium	Medium	Early involvement of disability groups (including Disabled Persons' Organisations) in project design to identify barriers. Ensure that all measures comply with DMURs and related guidance.

Risk	Impact	Likelihood	Mitigation measures
10. Impact on heritage / character	Medium	Medium	Early identification and mapping of heritage assets in and around village. Use of context sensitive materials and designs.

7.5 Monitoring and evaluation

As the plan is implemented, it will be vital to monitor the impact of each stage on the delivery of the key plan outcomes, evaluate progress and refine implementation. A provisional set of key performance indicators is identified below (Table 7-6) together with details of how these can be measured, when and by whom. These aim to measure the key outcomes of the scheme and ensure the key Principles (set out in Chapter 4) are being met.

Table 7-6 Key performance indicators and monitoring approach

Measure	Key metrics	Key data source(s)	Monitoring Frequency	Owner
Increase in active travel participation	Frequency of walking (residents) Frequency of cycling (residents) Cycle / pedestrian counts on key routes	Resident Survey School travel survey Traffic counts	To follow each project phase	FCC (TBC)
Improvement in health outcomes	Proportion of residents undertaking at least 30 minutes physical activity per day	Resident survey	To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)
Reduction in car dependency	Proportion of trips by residents made by car	Resident Survey	To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)
Increase in safety / security	Collisions involving pedestrians / cyclists Perceptions of safety / security for active travel in village	Garda data Resident survey	Annual To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)
Increase in accessibility	Change in walking distance to amenities Proportion of residents (all ages and mobility levels) who can easily access key amenities	Walkability audit tool / Walkability App Resident survey	Annual To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)
Economic impacts	Change in recorded footfall in village Change in local business	Pedestrian / cyclist counts Business survey	To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)

Measure	Key metrics	Key data source(s)	Monitoring Frequency	Owner
Change in active travel connectivity	Change in locations within 15 / 30-minute journey by walking / cycling Change in in locations within 1 hour by walking / cycling and public transport	Isochrone analysis	To follow each project stage	FCC (TBC)
Reduction in emissions and noise	Reduction in vehicle carbon emission Reduction in pollutants from vehicles Reduction in traffic noise	Traffic counts Air quality monitoring Resident surveys	After each project stage	FCC (TBC)

Balrothery Active Travel Plan

APPENDICES

Appendix A: Analysis of Key Active Travel Routes in the Village

Introduction

The following discussion sets out the findings of a detailed analysis of the key active travel routes within the Plan, focusing on key issues and opportunities identified by the study team and through engagement with the local community.

The approach used here incorporates the key assessment criteria that are included within the NTA's Walkability Audit Tool for Roads and Streets.[1] There are seven key criteria which are shown in Figure A-1. The Audit Tool provides a framework to help determine extent to which the built environment is friendly to the presence of people walking, living, shopping, visiting, engaging or spending time in an area. The Audit is intended to incorporate the needs and perspectives of people of all ages and abilities.

Figure A-1: NTA Walkability Audit Assessment Criteria

[1] Available at: www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Universal-Design-Walkability-Audit-Tool-V1.pdf

1. Village Centre

The village centre is the heart of Balrothery and is where most shops and amenities are found, making it a key local destination which needs to have the highest levels of active travel accessibility. It also makes up the middle section of the journey when walking from the residential areas around Rosepark to the primary school. Due to the concentration of amenities, this area is the busiest part of the study area and has the most activities which brings a vibrancy to the village.

Several changes and upgrades have been made in the village area in recent years including creating a one-way system around Castlekeep as well as the replacement of the roundabout / tightening of the junction between Castlekeep and Coach Road (outside the chemist).

Despite these interventions, some significant opportunities for improvement are observed for the village centre. The junction upgrade at Coach Road / Castlekeep would benefit from a dedicated pedestrian crossing to allow access to the village centre. Currently pedestrians need to cross in a manner less than satisfactory, having to check 3 directions, and is a particular issue for those with disabilities due to the lack of dropped kerbs. Further opportunities for improvement were observed along Coach Road (which forms the main route through the village to the primary school from Rosepark) which lacks a footpath outside of the pub. To compound this issue, vehicles parking outside the hair salon (opposite) block the footpath which creates a section of the street where pedestrians have no clear route and therefore have to walk within the road carriageway.

Parking in general can be seen as an issue and at the root of several problems. The lack of parking provision in public ownership (e.g. dedicated on-street bays or public car parks) means that visitors to local businesses do not have many options and therefore resort to parking in undesirable ways such as parking on footpaths, on the zebra crossing or within restricted areas. New parking bays, a disabled bay and a loading bay have been introduced as part of the one-way system upgrade which offered improvements but there is a lack of parking control which restricts use of these bays and encourages all day parking. Most of the parking in the village centre is within private ownership with restricted access.

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Low	• Vehicles parked on footpath at critical points • Footpaths are discontinuous, sometimes single-sided and generally not wide enough for a primary route • Surface quality of footpaths is generally okay
Facilities	High	• Village centre so highest concentration of facilities, including shops, pub and community facilities • Greenspaces opposite Spar are underutilised and located near R132 traffic, but do provide benches and cycle parking
Crossing the road	Med	• Zebra crossing outside Spar to aid connections to R132 and bus stops • No dedicated pedestrian crossing at junction of Coach Road / Castlekeep (opposite pharmacy)
Road user behaviour	Low	• Car driving too fast through village centre • Cars parking on zig-zags adjacent to zebra crossing • Parking on footpaths which forces pedestrians into road (e.g. outside hair salon)
Safety	Med	• Route generally well overlooked by housing and non-residential uses • Most activity and busiest area of village • Lighting levels are low
Look and feel	Med	• General lack of green infrastructure and street trees • Some new landscaping on embankment of graveyard • Utility poles have negative impact on views to historic buildings

Table A-1: Key walkability assessment findings for village centre

At the gateway to the village from the R132 is a small green area within public ownership which has a lawn, several mature trees and provides some benches and cycle parking

facilities. This is the only area which could be considered a public space within the village centre and could be improved to provide a more complete, multi-functional space for the community.

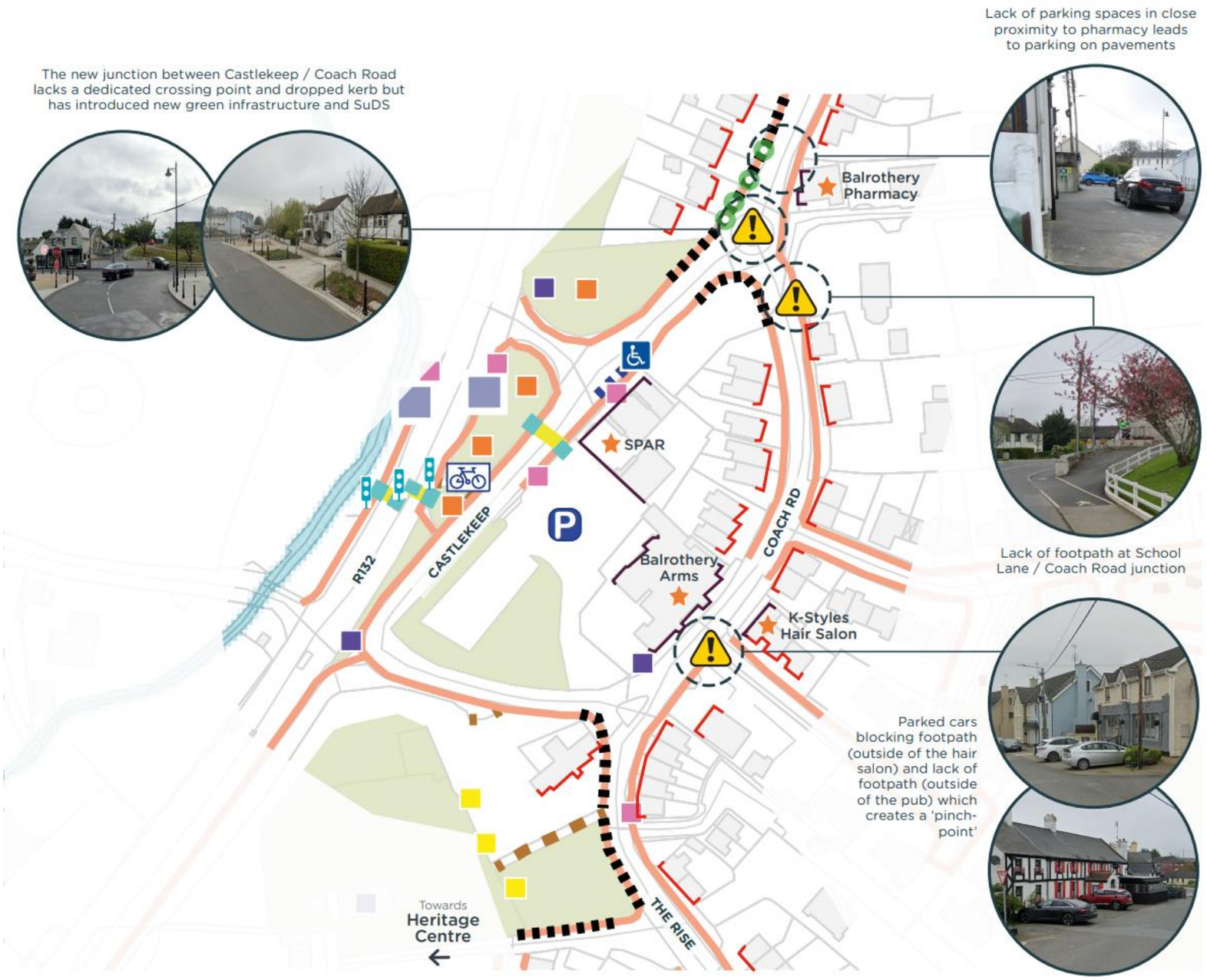
Adjacent to this is the R132 which has bus stops on either side of the road and a signalised crossing to access the bus stop for routes running north to Balbriggan. Several attendees at the Open Forum event expressed concerns that the junction with R132 road at this location caused safety issues including visibility of oncoming traffic when buses were stopped in the lay-by, excessive vehicle speeds when entering the village and the crossing point being in the wrong location. There is also a lack of pavement north of the bus stops along R132. There were observations of passengers walking on the hard shoulder of road carriageway after getting off the bus.

Other issues observed include pavement bollards around where new junction and road layout improvements have been implemented which act as visual clutter and inhibit pedestrian movement. These are needed due to excessive vehicle speeds aimed at improving pedestrian safety, however pedestrian safety should be addressed as a priority without sacrificing quality for pedestrian experience. There is also an opportunity to provide new footpaths at the junction of Coach Road / School Lane which would help improve the perception of safety at a point which already suffers high traffic volumes and vehicle speeds.

The location of the Village Centre, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-2 overleaf.

Figure A-2: Map of Village Centre area and key issues identified

Location in the village



2. Darcystown Road / Rosepark / The Rise

This key route is important to the overall movement network as it connects the most populous residential area of Balrothery to the village centre. This also means that it is a route used by many parents and school children when walking or cycling to the primary school. The route has been identified as part of the secondary cycle network within the 2022 GDA Cycle Network Plan but no dedicated cycle infrastructure currently exists.

Location in the village

As the housing along Darcystown Road / Rosepark has been built more recently, the streets are also newer and have been built to a more modern standard. The footpaths are predominantly concrete and of reasonable quality. The footpath width is wider on the southern side of the road which also includes a grass verge and street trees / small green areas at the junction with side streets. At the edges of the village, on Darcystown Road, the footpaths terminate where housing stops which means there is no pedestrian infrastructure heading east towards Ardgillan Castle.

Several issues were observed and also reported by residents along this segment of the route. The kerb radii of side streets are excessive and do not prioritise pedestrian movements due to wide crossing points. Whilst the green infrastructure is welcome, its design diverts pedestrians away from desire lines.

Several vehicles were observed parked on the footpath which blocked the route for pedestrians, further deteriorating the walking experience. Parking is primarily provided on-plot with no dedicated parking bays on the street. Multi-car families who don't have enough room on driveways would therefore park on the footpath.

The lack of cars parking on the carriageway also results in excessive vehicular speeds due to road-users needing to be less careful and observant of parked cars. At the Open Forum residents confirmed that there were issues of parking on footpaths and that previously vehicles had parked on the carriageway but had suffered damage from moving vehicles. Despite the presence of traffic calming measures such as speed 'cushions', vehicle speeds are still an issue as vehicles don't slow down when they transition from rural to built-up areas. This is a particular issue on approach to the zebra crossing which didn't feel as safe as it should. Residents reported that they felt it was too close to the junction and that some cars didn't stop when turning left or right coming from the village centre / Knightswood. Despite recent upgrades, the junction geometry isn't completely successful at slowing speeds enough for safety. Despite vehicle speeds contributing to poor perception of safety, the route is well lit and overlooked by housing which helps improve perceptions.

Table A-2: Key walkability assessment findings for Darcystown Road / Rosepark

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Med	• Vehicles parked on footpath • Footpath narrower on Rosepark side of road • Surface quality of footpaths generally okay
Facilities	Low	• Very few existing facilities (e.g. shops / services, public seating / resting areas, parks and playgrounds, public bins, designated car parking)
Crossing the road	Med	• Zebra at junction of Ringfort View / Coach Road • Site street crossings wider than needed • Tactile paving on some side street crossings
Road user behaviour	Low	• Car driving too fast entering built-up area • Cars failing to stop for pedestrians at zebra crossing • Parking on footpaths
Safety	Low	• Route well overlooked by housing • Anti-social behaviour reported at entrance to Old Coach Road • Road-user behaviour has negative effect on feeling of safety
Look and feel	Med	• Some greenery (grass verges and street trees) • No public spaces to stop and socialise • Noise intrusion from traffic • Some neglected properties and evidence of fly-tipping

As the route turns at the junction with The Rise to head down the hill into the village centre, the pavement quality changes and is of a lesser quality due to it being a more historic road. There are no formal crossing points along this stretch of road and many consultees suggested that a crossing near the Heritage Centre would be beneficial.

The location of the route, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-3 overleaf.

Figure A-3: Map of Darcystown Road / Rosepark and key issues identified

3. Coach Road

This segment of Coach Road runs north from the village centre and connects with the R132 at the northern extent of Balrothery. It is an important route as it contains St Oliver Plunkett National School (primary school) and therefore is used by many parents and school children when walking or cycling to school or when being dropped off by car. The route has been identified as part of the secondary cycle network within the 2022 GDA Cycle Network Plan but no dedicated cycle infrastructure currently exists.

Location in the village

Generally, Coach Road offers a pleasant walking experience due to several older and well-maintained houses which front the road and provide character to the public realm. Footpaths are concrete and generally in good condition and vary in width along the route. However, given the route's role in accessing the primary school, there are improvements which could be made to improve safety and encourage more parents and children to walk to school.

Currently cycling on this route is difficult due to lack of dedicated infrastructure and safety concerns caused by road-user behaviour and vehicle speeds. The route has the potential to connect Balrothery village to the partially segregated cycleway which runs alongside the R132 up to Balbriggan which currently stops just north of Balrothery on the other side of the 'kissing gates.' Just outside the northern extent of the village, on the R132, are bus stops for the 101 bus route. There is a lack of pedestrian crossing to reach the northbound bus stop meaning pedestrians must cross the road with fast moving traffic in both directions. There is also a lack of pavement on the southern side of R132. The lack of pavement forces bus stop users and residents who are staying at the Hamilton Park Care Facility to cross R132 where there isn't any official crossing. Residents therefore have poor access to Balrothery and the amenities (e.g. the pharmacy) within the village centre.

Table A-3: Key walkability assessment findings for Coach Road

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Med	• Vehicles parked on footpath • Single-sided footpath / not always continuous • Surface quality of footpaths is generally good • Footpaths not wide enough when groups of people gather at school drop-off / pick up times
Facilities	Med	• Some amenities (e.g. pharmacy) along route • No places to rest and sit close to the school • Green spaces to the north of the village provide benches, but are under-utilised • No on-street cycle parking close to school
Crossing the road	Low	• Lack of crossing points to school and at busy junctions (e.g. outside pharmacy) • Discontinuous footpaths without crossing points • Side-street junctions too wide • Lack of pedestrian access on R132 at northern end of village to access bus stops and care facility
Road user behaviour	Low	• Excessive vehicle speeds considering proximity to primary school • Some parking on pavements observed (particularly at school drop-off / pick-up times)
Safety	Med	• Well overlooked by residential properties • Busy during school drop-off / pick-up times • Some road markets and signage encouraging slower
Look and feel	Med	• Some green infrastructure (rain gardens, grass verges, street trees) at southern end of street • Older / historic properties which are well looked after

Category	Score	Key observations
Outside the school gates	Med	• No 'school street' initiative so lack of crossings, with footpath too narrow in places • Some parking control with dedicated spaces for school bus and bollards to prevent parking outside of school gates • No dedicated set-down areas or disabled parking bays

Most houses along the route have access to on-plot driveways but parking on the pavement was still observed as being an issue in some areas. There are no formalised on-street parking bays (partly due to carriageway width) so cars mount the pavement and block pedestrians. Like Darcystown Road, the lack of street parking plays a part in encouraging excessive speeds as drivers do not need to navigate parked cars.

Reducing speeds along this road is particularly important due to the volume of young children using the route. Vehicle speeds moving past the school gates were observed to be excessive despite road markings and signage.

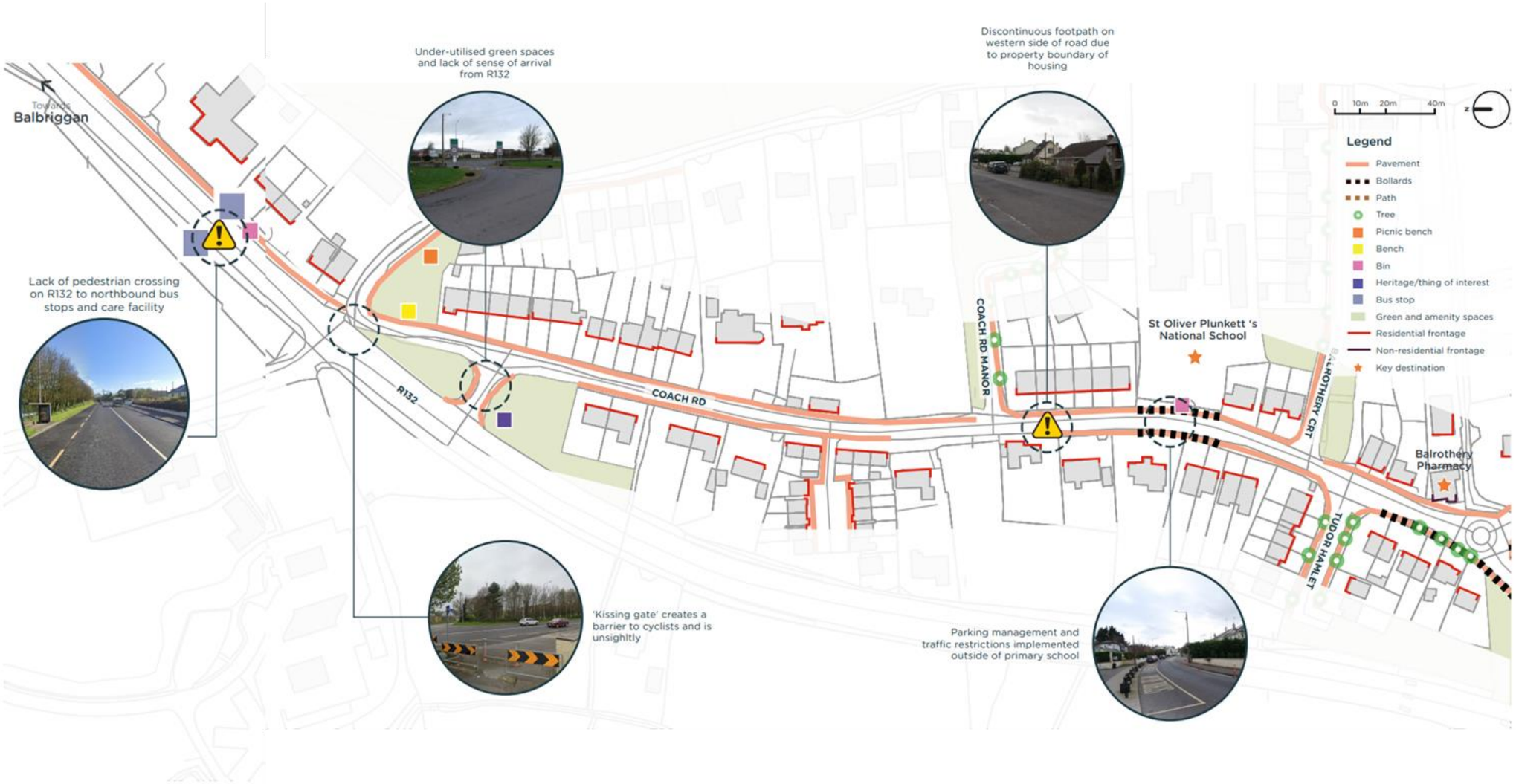
With the introduction of the updated road junction outside the pharmacy, streetscape improvements were made with the introduction of street trees, rain gardens and planting. Additional space was also created for footpaths and walking / cycling. There is the potential to extend this approach further along Coach Road to further improve the pedestrian environment and implement a 'school street'. Several other issues can potentially be addressed such as improving side street crossings and providing more mid-block crossing points, particularly where footpaths are discontinuous; this happens in several locations due to property boundaries reaching to the road carriageway.

School Street improvements to Coach Road also help to resolve issues associated with school pick-up and drop-off times where lack of traffic management creates congestion, noise, air quality issues and impacts pedestrian and cycling opportunities. Some measures are already in place to restrict parking directly outside of the school, to provide dedicated parking space for school buses and to calm traffic speeds. However, interventions could go further and provide opportunities to create an active travel corridor with improved public realm and materials, safer crossing points, benches and opportunities to rest, street trees and greenery, better parking management, speed reduction and traffic management measures, cycle infrastructure and parking and other interventions which will be explored further in the next stage.

Figure A-4: Example of a 'school street' proposal from the NTA's Safe Routes to School Design Guide

The location of the route, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-5 overleaf.

Figure A-5: Map of Coach Road and key issues identified



4. Old Coach Road / School Lane

Old Coach Road (or sometimes also referred to as Old School Lane) is a historic route which today is a narrow path which runs parallel with Coach Road, along the boundary of Balbriggan Golf Club. It performs the function of providing vehicular access to residential properties on the street and as an informal walking route.

Today it plays a relatively minor role in the movement network of the village but has been identified through discussions at the Open Forum as a route which has future potential as an additional active travel route for accessing the school which keeps children away from traffic. This is recognised by the fact it is identified as a 'feeder' connection in the 2022 GDA Cycle Network Plan.

At the northern end of the route at the junction with Coach Road is a small green space with a bench and a picnic table. Following the lane up the hill leads to a small number of houses which front onto the road. The first 10 houses are semi-detached and have a footpath outside them on one side of the road (the other side is the boundary with Balbriggan Golf Club). Past this first block of houses are several larger detached properties which still face the street but have larger driveways and therefore the footpath stops. Past these houses the carriageway width narrows, and street lighting also stops.

Users are surrounded by high walls and fences due to properties backing on to the route with a lack of street lighting which makes the route feel particularly unsafe and unwelcoming.

The route can potentially provide access to the primary school, either directly to the rear entrance of the school or via a diversion down School Lane or Balrothery Court to Coach Road and along to the main entrance. Connection to Balrothery Court isn't currently possible due to the route being blocked by a wall. Once the future role of the route has been established, options for improving permeability could be explored.

At the southern end of the currently accessible route is a dead end. Some maps show a connecting path through to Darcystown Road, but this is inaccessible due to overgrown brambles. The connection onto Darcystown Road also requires access through a private driveway which currently has bollards to deter entry. At this point there is also access via a gate to privately owned agricultural land which is identified in the FCC Development Plan (2023-2029) as a site for future housing development.

Table A-4: Key walkability assessment findings for Old Coach Road / School Lane

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Low	• Majority of the route has no footpath at all with pedestrians and cyclists sharing the carriageway with vehicles
Facilities	Low	• No amenities or facilities on the route other than the rear entrance to the primary school • Green spaces north of the village provide benches, but are under-utilised
Crossing the road	Med	• Single-sided development (other side is the golf club / agricultural land) so no need for crossings at present
Road user behaviour	Med	• Generally low traffic, mainly for access to houses only
Safety	Low	• Poorly lit for most of the route with few over-looking properties • Reports of anti-social behaviour and local concern route is being used for criminal activity
Look and feel	Med	• 'Green' in nature due to adjacent golf club and agricultural land • Away from primary roads and traffic quiet and feels rural in character • Overgrowth from hedges / creep of grass verge onto carriageway

To provide access to this plot, a new road would need to be put in place to connect to Darcystown Road which could potentially create a clear route through from the housing areas at Rosepark, directly through to the primary school. However, this route would be through greenbelt land which could be problematic.

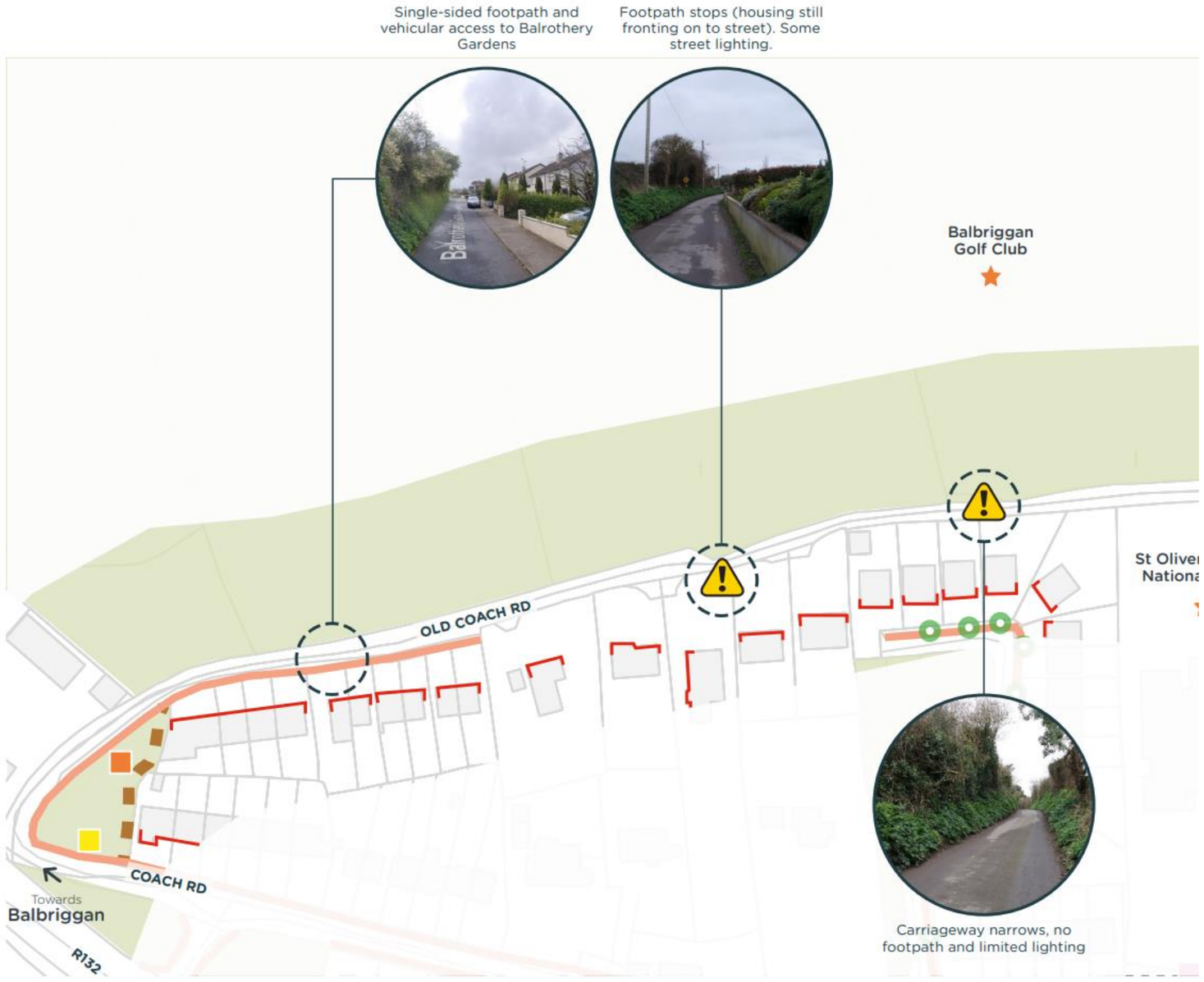
The location of the route, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-6 overleaf.

Figure A-6: Map of Old Coach Road and key issues identified

Location in the village

Legend

- Pavement
- Path
- Tree
- Picnic bench
- Bench
- Green and amenity Spaces
- Residential frontage
- Key destination




Wall blocking connection through to Balrothery Court
Path connection to Darcystown Road overgrown and inaccessible past this point
Future Housing Development
SCHOOL LANE
Plunkett School
BALROTHERY CRT
SCHOOL LANE
DARCYSTOWN RD
0 10m 20m 40m
N
School Lane connects to village centre but is a narrow path which is poorly lit and has a poor surface quality
Potential connection between School Lane / Darcystown Road requires access through private driveway which has bollards to deter entry

5. Inch Road

Inch Road links Balrothery to towns and villages to the west as well as the M1 junction 6. This means that there is a relatively high volume of traffic in comparison to its physical characteristics. The road is currently only designed to cater for motorists with no pedestrian footpaths along its entirety.

Location in the village

Despite not having any pedestrian or cycling infrastructure, the road provides access to local cricket club and rugby club which are important institutions for the local community and provide business and trade for local businesses before and after match days. Access to Inch Road from the village is via the signalised pedestrian crossing adjacent to the village centre. A footpath takes pedestrians from the crossing to the entrance of Inch Road but stops on the corner.

Whilst the catchment for the clubs means that some people will have to travel by car, it is within walking and wheeling distance for Balrothery. Many residents at the Open Forum said they would like to be able to walk or cycle to the clubs from the village but didn't always feel safe when doing so, particularly after dark as there is no street lighting.

With a speed limit of 80 kph, vehicles move very fast and therefore it doesn't feel like a safe environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Consultees also felt that it would make the village more accessible to players and families for post-match socialising if it was easier to walk to the Balrothery Inn. Currently the sports clubs do not have their own bars or social spaces.

Finally other representatives at the Open Forum event made a case that better footpaths and active travel infrastructure could help facilitate of a longer distance (5km) walking loop which could start in Balrothery village, along Inch Road and then cross-country to Folkestone Little, and then back along County Lane to the northern edge of Balrothery. The active travel route can also be used to access the Balbriggan weekend market at the end of Inch Road.

Table A-5: Key walkability assessment findings for Inch Road

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Low	• No footpaths along the road making walking feel unsafe • Footpath takes pedestrians from junction of Inch Road / R132 to crossing and northbound bus stops
Facilities	Med	• Route provides access to sports clubs and local amenities
Crossing the road	Med	• No crossing on R132 to the south • Signalised pedestrianised crossing from / to village (across R132)
Road user behaviour	Low	• Relatively high volumes of traffic moving at significant speed (has the feeling of a country road) • High levels of traffic when sports clubs are playing
Safety	Low	• Lack of footpath makes route feel very unsafe • Lack of street lighting • Road-user behaviour has negative effect on feeling of safety • County lane with limited overlooking from surrounding housing
Look and feel	Med	• 'Green country lane • Becomes noisier closer to R132

The location of the route, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-7 overleaf.

Figure A-7: Map of Inch Road and key issues identified

6. South of the Village / R132

The route along the R132 road provides access to Glebe Park when walking or cycling from the village centre. The R132 road is identified as an inter-urban route in the 2022 GDA Cycle Network Plan but the existing cycle infrastructure which is existing in the R132 terminates at the northern extent of Balrothery and doesn't go further south.

Location in the village

The route is relatively short but presents several issues. With no footpath on the northbound carriageway (other than a short stretch to link the bus stop to the crossing), residents who live to the south of Balrothery, including a health institute, must walk along the hard shoulder of the road when walking to the village centre or to access the sports clubs on Inch Road. This can feel very unsafe, particularly after dark and in inclement weather when the route is muddy. When speaking to residents who live to the south of Balrothery, they felt disconnected from the village and felt as though it prevented them from using the facilities more frequently.

On the southbound carriageway of the R132 there is a footpath which connects the village centre to the entrance of Glebe Park. Residents felt that the link was well used but that the footpath wasn't wide enough to cater for groups, people with prams/push chairs or cyclists. They also felt that the business of the road meant that it felt unsafe and that some sort of physical segregation would make the route more attractive to use.

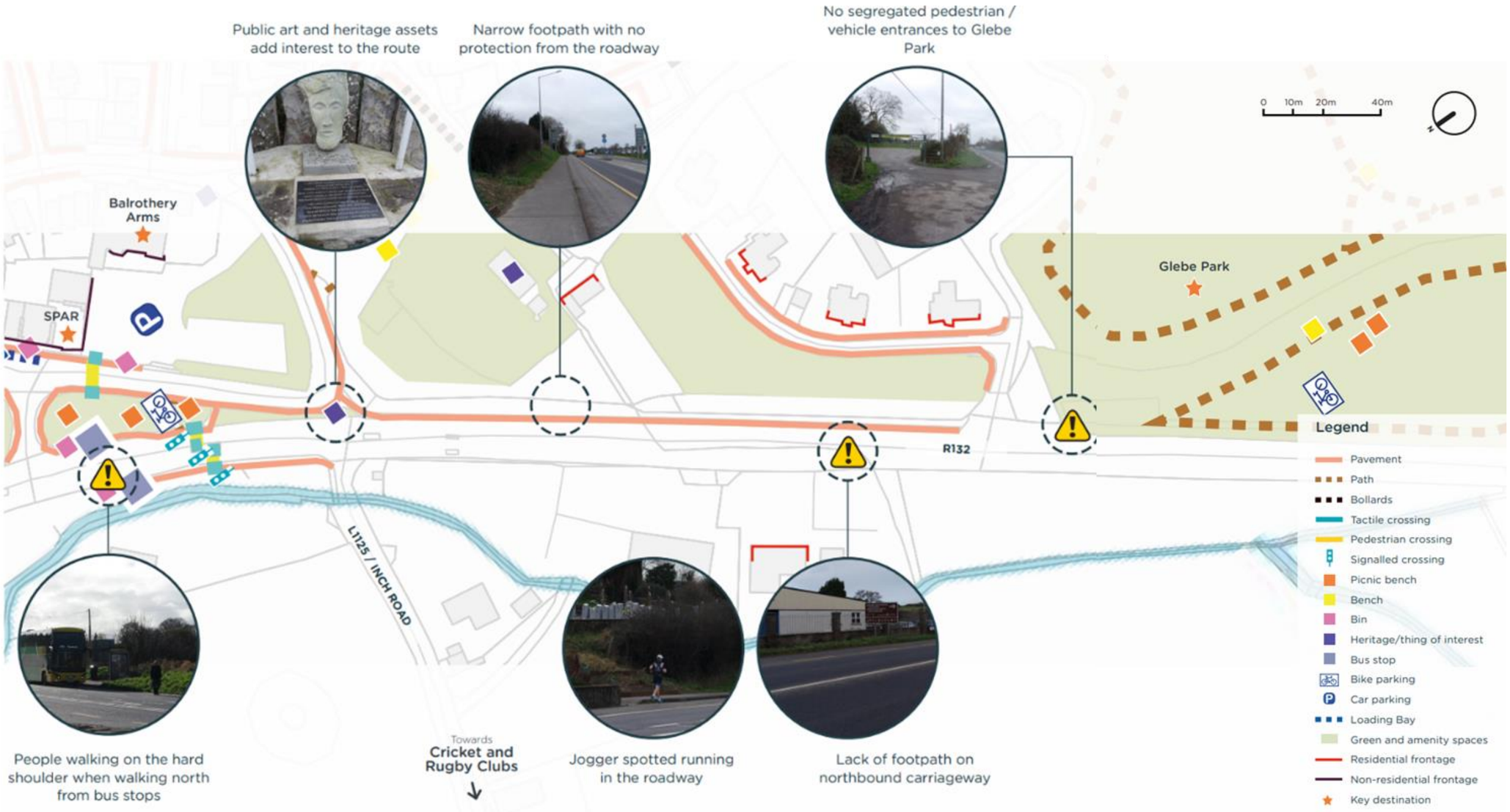
Lastly, the entrance to Glebe Park and the car park is not paved and is poorly maintained so water collects here, and puddles make access difficult. As there is no separate entrance for pedestrians and vehicles, this makes the entrance feel very unsafe and potentially could lead to accidents.

The location of the route, existing active travel infrastructure and the key issues identified are show in Figure A-8 overleaf.

Table A-6: Key walkability findings for South of the Village / R132

Category	Score	Key observations
Footpaths	Low	• No footpath on northbound carriageway past Inch Road or north of bus routes • Footpath on southbound carriageway stops at Glebe Park • Surface quality of footpath is good • Limited width of footpath means it is difficult for groups of people to pass • Footpath is not protected from traffic
Facilities	Med	• Link to Glebe Park • Some public realm and heritage features provide visual interest
Crossing the road	Med	• Signalised crossing from village centre to R132 • No crossings further south or to Glebe Park • No crossing for health institute
Road user behaviour	Low	• Fast traffic due to route being along regional road • Cars turning off R132 into Glebe Park don't observe pedestrians entering the park through the same entrance
Safety	Low	• Footpath feels too close to the road and would benefit from physical separation from carriageway • Route not overlooked • No segregated cycle infrastructure • Lack of lighting in Glebe Park
Look and feel	Med	• Some green infrastructure (embankment in the cemetery) • Feels noisy and polluted

Figure A-8 Map of South of the Village / R132 and key issues identified



Appendix B: Options Longlist and Analysis Summary

Development of the options longlist

The options presented in this chapter represent all the options that have been identified to address the current weaknesses for active travel within the village and to further promote active travel for daily trips.

The options listed include:

- Measures identified by the FCC Active Travel and Ramboll team following the audit of the key active travel routes within the Village
- Measures identified through the Stage 1 Consultation discussed in Appendix C
- Measures identified though engagement with wider stakeholders from FCC

The options are a mix of:

- **Infrastructure measures** – including enhancements to existing infrastructure or new infrastructure to support / enable active travel;
- **Policy measures** – changes in local policy to make active travel safe, more convenient, or more accessible (including changes in speed limits, parking policy, etc.); and
- **Complementary measures** – non-infrastructure measures to facilitate and promote active travel (including education and awareness raising).

The options are grouped according to each of the locations of the village identified within Chapter 3. A further list of village-wide / general options is also provided where these are not specific to a single location.

Options sifting and appraisal

The long list of options identified has been sifted and appraised using a multi-criteria analysis approach. This is to identify the package of measures that will best align to the outcomes desired, provide a practical and acceptable local solution and represent good value for money.

There are six key criteria against which the options have been assessed:

1. **Impact on weaknesses** – does the measure directly address one (or more) of the key weaknesses identified in the SWOT analysis (See Figure 3-12 on page 22)? If the measure does not, it is not considered further for this Plan.
2. **Alignment to Key Principles** – does the measure align with the Vision and Key Principles for the Plan set out in Chapter 4?
3. **Technical feasibility** – can the measure be implemented at the location where it is proposed? For example, are there specific engineering challenges or constraints that would make the option impractical?
4. **Acceptability** – is there local / wider political support for the measure? Will the option benefit some and disbenefit others and can these impacts be mitigated?
5. **Funding potential** – is there a clear funding route for the measure? Does it align with the criteria for existing sources of funding (e.g. NTA funding criteria) or will new sources of funding need to be identified?
6. **Value for money** – does the likely cost of the scheme and scale of expected benefit represent good value for money to the public? Can the same, or similar outcomes be delivered through lower cost alterative measures.

The outputs from this analysis are shown in the tables for each area of the village which follow this introduction. For simplicity, a 'red, amber, green' scoring method is presented here to summarise the findings of this analysis. In this context:

- **Green** = the option performs well against the criterion (e.g. strong alignment to key weakness, strongly supported, good value for money, etc.)
- **Amber** = the option performs well in most aspects against the criterion, with some issues likely, or uncertainty over performance (e.g. the option may only partially address a weakness or potential create some negative impacts for other road users, or may have some unknown technical challenges which could impact on feasibility)
- **Red** = the option does not perform well against the criterion or will impact negatively on the intended outcomes of the Plan (e.g. the option does not address a key weakness, the approach does not align to the Key Principles, or the option delivers poor value for money.

Following the appraisal, an overall assessment is provided for each measure. The available scores are:

- **Priority** – the option should be included within proposed package of measures for the Plan and taken forward for more detailed analysis;
- **To consider** – the option has potential to deliver significant benefits, but should be considered alongside alternative options before a decision is made on the best approach;

- **Lower priority** – the option is likely to deliver some benefits, but is likely to be deliverable over the longer-term or after other measures have been implemented;
- **Out of scope** – the option may deliver wider benefits for the village, but is outside of the scope of this Plan (for example, the measure may not be suitable for active travel funding, or should be considered primarily as part of wider plans for the village); and
- **Discounted** – the option is not considered viable or appropriate for further analysis.

Fit with strategic option

The final stage set out in this section is to identify which of the 'Strategic Options' (discussed in Chapter 5) that the measure should be included within. These Strategic Options represent different approaches to delivering the Plan outcomes within the village, with different emphasis on locations or types of active travel behaviour.

Each of the measures which are taken forward from the initial assessment are assigned to one of more of the approaches to be taken forward into a package of measures for

Eastern Gateway

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Darcystown Road crossing enhancements	To include driver feedback sign, chicane / width restrictions, speed tables / vertical traffic calming and stone setts rumble strip							Priority	1, 2 and 3
2	Traffic calming along Darcystown Road / Rosepark	Additional traffic calming measures at village gateway and along Darcystown road towards village centre to reduce traffic speeds / promote safer driving							Priority	1, 2 and 3
3	Side street crossing improvements along Darcystown Road	Upgrade of side street crossings (e.g. Rosepark, Ringfort Avenue, Darcystown Close, Knightswood Park) to improve priority for pedestrians and enhance accessibility.							Priority	1, 2 and 3
4	Streetscape upgrade for active travel along Darcystown Road corridor	Reallocation of road-space and/or upgrades to existing streetscape to provide enhanced pedestrian space and/or dedicated cycle route into village.							To consider	1, 3
5	Junction enhancements at Rosepark / Knightswood junction	Reduced kerb radius and crossing improvements at junction at Ringfort View / Knightswood.							Priority	1, 2 and 3

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
6	Extension of Old Coach Road to Darcystown Road	Reinstatement of Old Coach Road to Darcystown Road to provide new active travel link from north to south of the village.							Lower priority	2
7	New Rosepark neighbourhood park	Improvements at Rosepark green to create new neighbourhood park.							Lower priority / out of scope	3
8	New greenway connection to Ardgillan	Facilitation of / integration with greenway proposal to connect to Ardgillan Castle and Demesne.							Lower priority	2

Inch Road

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Traffic calming along Inch Road (R132 to rugby club)	Traffic calming measures near to R132 and cricket / rugby clubs and (priority chicane, speed tables / cushions etc.)							Priority	1,2 and 3

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
2	New footpath along Inch Road	New footpath on Inch Road from R132 junction as far as entrance to Balbriggan Rugby Club							Lower priority – needs further investigation	2
3	Convert Inch Road to 1-way traffic movement	Change Inch Road to entry only from R132 and create loop using Stephenstown road							Discounted	
4	Off-road route / PRoW from Glebe Park to sports clubs	Create a new off-road route from sports clubs to Glebe Park							To consider	2
5	Reduce speed limit on Inch Road	Lower speed limit on Inch Road from R132 junction to beyond sports clubs to reflect use and character.							Priority	1, 2 and 3

Northern Gateway

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Cycle access improvements at Balrothery Gardens	Replacement of 'kissing gate' with bollards to ensure route is suitable for all types of cycle. Potential to provide cycle parking facilities for commuters using the bus.							Priority	1,2 and 3

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
2	Green space enhancements	Landscape improvements to green areas at junction of R132.							To consider	3
3	Signalised north village crossing on R132	New signalised pedestrian crossing on R132 and footway on northbound side of carriageway, to connect village to opposite bus stops and Hamilton Park Care Home.							Priority	1,2 and 3
4	R132/Coach Road junction access restriction to motorised traffic	Introduce modal filter at R132/Coach Road junction to prevent motorised traffic entering/exiting to/from R132							To consider	3
5	Upgrade of Old Coach Road for active travel	Enhancement of existing carriageway and designation as walking / cycling, bollards / barriers / sign restrictions to prevent / reduce motorised traffic along Old Coach Road							To consider	3
6	Extension of cycle lane along R132	Provision of dedicated cycle infrastructure on R132 from termination of existing cycleway to Village Centre using existing hard shoulders							To consider	2
7	On-street parking along R132	Creation of new on-street parking bays along R132 close to Northern Gateway bus stops to serve as park and ride type facility							To consider	1, 2 and 3

School Zone

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	School entrance improvements	Measures to improve the environment around the school for active travel, including benches / shaded areas, trees, cycle parking / storage, public art, school entrance enhancements.							Priority	1, 2 and 3
2	Coach Road crossing improvements	Improved crossing opportunities on Coach Road - north of the school where footpath is discontinuous							Priority	1,2 and 3
3	Stricter parking restrictions around school	Further restriction to parking along Coach Road during school drop-off and pick-up period							To consider	1,2 and 3
4	1-way traffic along Coach Road (either NB or SB)	To extend from Village Centre to R132. Could be all day or limited to peak times							To consider	1 and 2
5	School Zone on Coach Road	Closure of Coach Road to motorised traffic (modal filters) during school drop-off / pick-up times							To consider	1 and 2
6	Side street crossing improvements along Coach Road	Improved side street crossings (e.g. Tudor Hamlet, Balrothery Court, Coach Road, etc.) to create more continuous walking route							Priority	1, 2 and 3

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
7	Reallocation of road-space along Coach Road to create segregated walking / cycling route	Narrowing of existing carriageway to create wider footpath, better pedestrian facilities, cycle routes, etc.							To consider	1 and 2

South of the village

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Improved pedestrian/cyclist access from R132 to Glebe Park	Segregated vehicular and pedestrian/cyclist entrances to Glebe Park from R132							Priority	1,2 and 3
2	Glebe Park enhancements	Upgrade to paths and lighting within Glebe Park and provision of amenities ensuring suitability for all users							Outside of scope	
3	Knightswood pedestrian crossing enhancements	Pedestrian crossing provision on Knightswood to aid access to Glebe Park							To consider	1, 2 and 3
4	Balruddery Wood to Glebe Park link	New gate / removal of wall to create link from Balruddery Wood cul-de-sac to Knightswood							To consider	2

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
5	R132 footpath and cycle route enhancements	Improved footpath and cycle route between village centre and Glebe Park along R132							Priority	1 and 2
6	New footpath along R132	New continual footpath from Inch Road to Wavin Lake along R132 including new crossing point							Lower priority	1 and 2
7	Park and ride facility at Glebe Park	Redevelopment of the parking at Glebe Park as a park and ride facility for those travelling by bus. To include bus stop relocation.							Outside of scope	
8	Park and stride facility at Glebe Park	Potential for enlarged car park at Glebe Park, or designation of car parking elsewhere, to create a "park and stride" facility, to replace parking in village centre							Outside of scope	

Village centre

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Coach Road / School Lane junction and crossing improvements	Adjustments to junction to improve visibility, reduce turning speeds and improve crossing to Pharmacy							Priority	1 and 2
2	One-way village centre loop	Full one-way system within the village centre to include section of Coach Road past pub and hair salon							To consider	1, 2 and 3
3	Lighting enhancements	Improvement to existing street lighting							Priority	1, 2 and 3
4	Village centre public space enhancements	Upgrade to green spaces to include new greenery, sustainable drainage seating and rest areas.							To consider	3
5	Safety and accessibility improvements	Removal of street clutter and barriers within village centre, including relocation of ESB pole							Priority	1,2 and 3
6	Reallocation of road-space on Coach Road (pub to pharmacy)	Narrowing of existing carriageway / removal of on-street parking to provide continual footpath / cycling route							To consider	1 and 2
7	Shared space within Village Centre	Creation of shared space scheme with priority for active travel over vehicle traffic							To consider	3
8	Rural mobility hub	New facility to include cycle hire scheme, repair and maintenance							Lower priority	

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
9	Reinstatement of old R132/School Lane junction	Re-instate original junction configuration with R132 to keep traffic away from village							Discounted	
10	New off-street parking facility for shops	Creation of new parking site away from village centre to be used by visitors to the village							Outside of scope	
11	Closure of existing 1 way section to through traffic	Close off route beyond car park to through traffic to enable expansion of public space by heritage centre							Discounted	

Village wide / general

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
1	Speed limit review	Introduction of 30km/h speed limit within village							Priority	1,2 and 3
2	Parking management	Introduction of more restrictive parking management measures within village, including exploration of pay and display parking							Priority, but out of scope	1, 2 and 3

ID	Intervention	Key components	Assessment against appraisal criteria (Green = performs well; Amber = generally well/minor issues; Red = poor)						Recommendation	Related approach
			1. Impact on weakness(es)	2. Alignment to Key Principles	3. Technical Feasibility	4. Acceptability	5. Funding potential	6. Value for money		
3	Cycle parking	Provisional of additional cycle park stands at convenient locations in village centre, local amenities and residential areas							Priority	1, 2 and 3
4	Enhanced signage and wayfinding	New signage / wayfinding to improve navigation through village and provide information for visitors							Priority	1 and 2
3	Driver education and awareness	Initiatives targeting reduction in driver speeds through village and improving awareness of pedestrians and cyclists							Priority	1, 2 and 3
4	Cycle training and ‘soft measures’	Including school cycle training, education, walking bus and promotional campaigns							Priority	1, 2 and 3

Appendix C: Consultation Summary

Introduction

The Active Travel Plan for Balrothery is being developed in stages. At each stage, the community will be able to feed into the developing plan. Fingal County Council feels it is important to co-develop a plan with the Balrothery community to ensure that it is appropriate to the needs of residents, business owners, and visitors in the village.

Figure C-1 below sets out the five stages for the Plan and the timing of community engagement activity. Three activities have been undertaken so far in the development of the Plan presented in this document:

1. A community engagement event held at the Heritage Centre in February 2024
2. A follow-up online engagement event to confirm the findings from the first event in Summer 2024
3. A second community engagement in November 2024 to present the emerging Plan to the public

The discussion that follows in this Appendix sets out the key points raised during each consultation activity and how these have in turn been incorporated in the proposed Plan.

Figure C-1: Balrothery Active Travel Plan stages and consultation plans

Stage 1 Public Engagement

The aim of Stage 1 (Understanding Balrothery) was to support the development of the baseline for the plan by contributing information about travel patterns, the experience of using existing infrastructure, and the barriers that different people in Balrothery experience to travelling more actively. The intelligence gathered will inform key moves and considerations for interventions in the next stage by collecting local opinion on topics like enhancing existing linkages, creating new routes and enhancing the public realm.

Feedback for Stage 1 was gathered through three activities available online and in person. An Open Forum event was held on the 27th of February 2024 at the Balrothery Heritage Centre from 3-8pm. A project web page was set up that will be updated throughout the development of the plan and the community were able to access online versions of the three activities in February.

The first stage of consultation comprised three activities:

1. **Active Travel Survey** – to determine how people travel around Balrothery and the surrounding areas.
2. **Opportunities and Challenges** – to map where participants identified the opportunities and challenges for traveling actively around the village
3. **My Perfect Active Travel Village** – a drawing exercise, particularly aimed at children, that captured participants aspirations for the village.

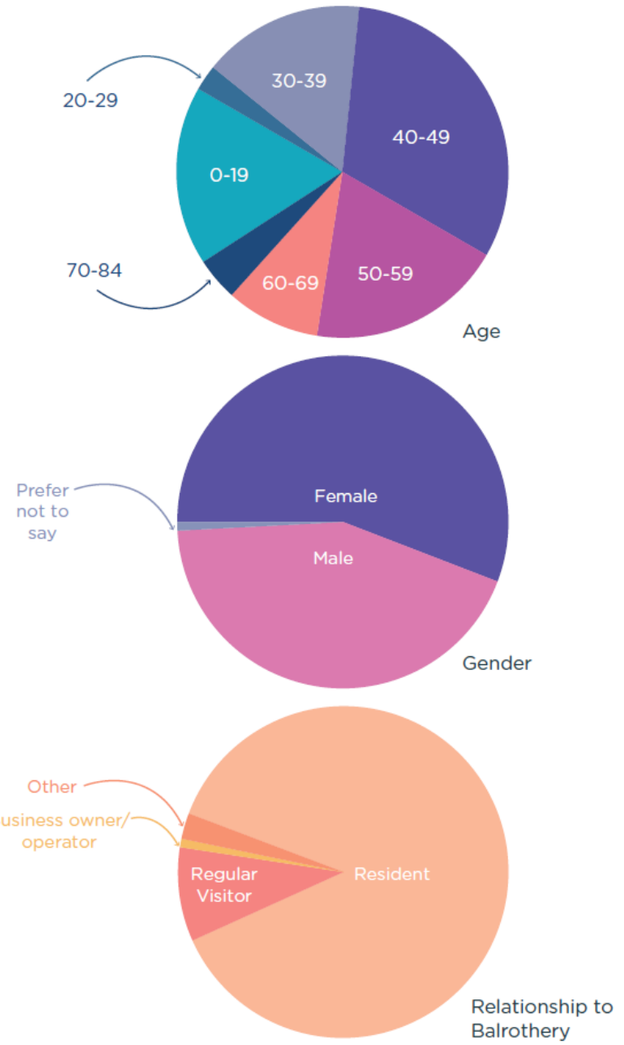
The following discussion captures the outputs from each activity.

Activity 1: Active Travel Survey

The active travel survey was used to gather insights on how people currently travel around Balrothery, the challenges they experience in active travel and the opportunities they see for the village. It was available in hard copy during the consultation and online and completed by 120 respondents.

The survey comprised seventeen questions: covering demographics, travel modes and reasons for choice, barriers to walking and wheeling, and attitudes towards cycling. A selection of the responses from the survey are shown here.

Figure C-2: Split of survey respondents by age, gender and relationship to Balrothery



The results show a good demographic spread of respondents broadly representative of the population of Balrothery. However, most respondents were residents, with a noted lack of representation from local businesses (Figure C-2).

The survey found high levels of walking around Balrothery, with lower levels of cycling. For journeys outside of Balrothery there were high levels of private vehicle use alongside the use of public transport with lower levels of walking and cycling. These journeys in the private car covered a lot of different journey types including for leisure trips and

shopping. Walking came back as a key modal share for driving different types of journeys, particularly visiting family and friends locally, going to leisure activities and for exercise. About half of the participants were walking around Balrothery every day with the other half once a month or less.

Cycling was less of the modal share for all journeys, with most participants cycling only once a month, less or never. Participants who did cycle were using it as an exercise mode rather than transportation mode. Further to this the lack of cycle infrastructure to connect to facilities came up as a key barrier to use.

A summary of key findings is shown in Figure C-3 to Figure 3-7..

Figure C-3: How do you travel around Balrothery (Question 5)

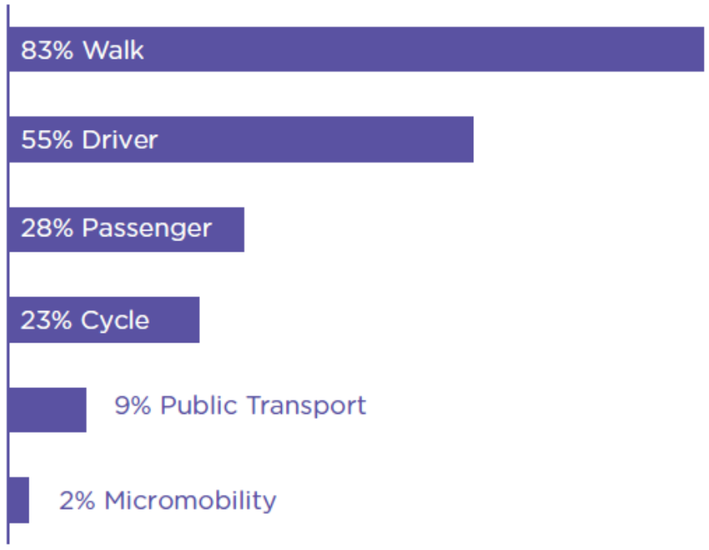


Figure C-4: What modes of travel do you use for journeys outside of Balrothery (Question 6)

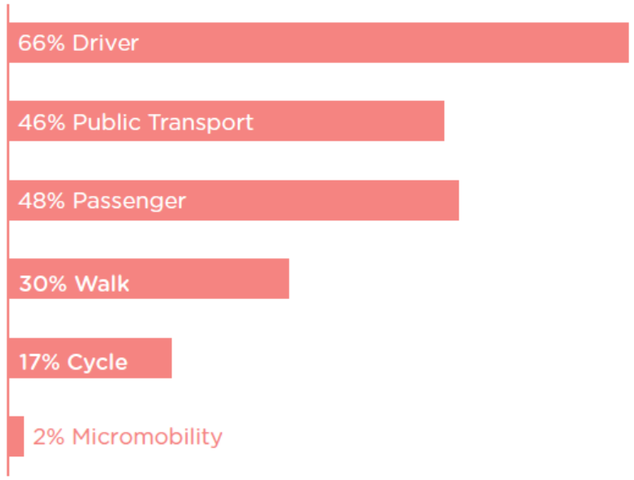


Figure C-5: How regularly do you cycle? (Question 7)

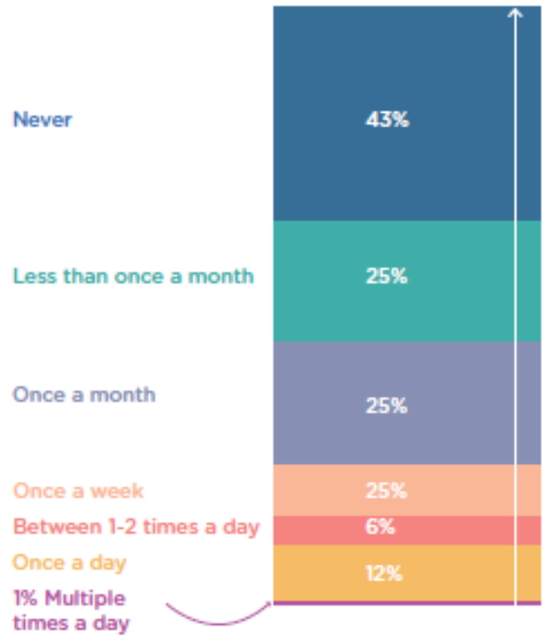
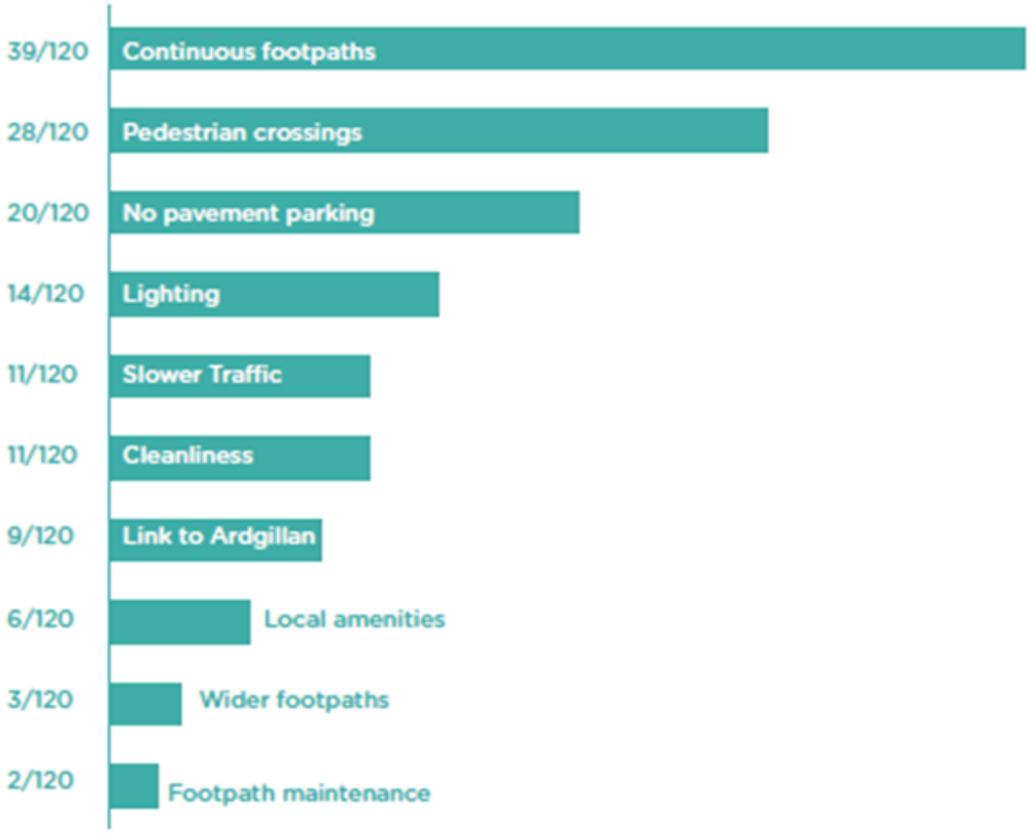


Figure C-6: What would make you walk more around Balrothery? (Question 14)



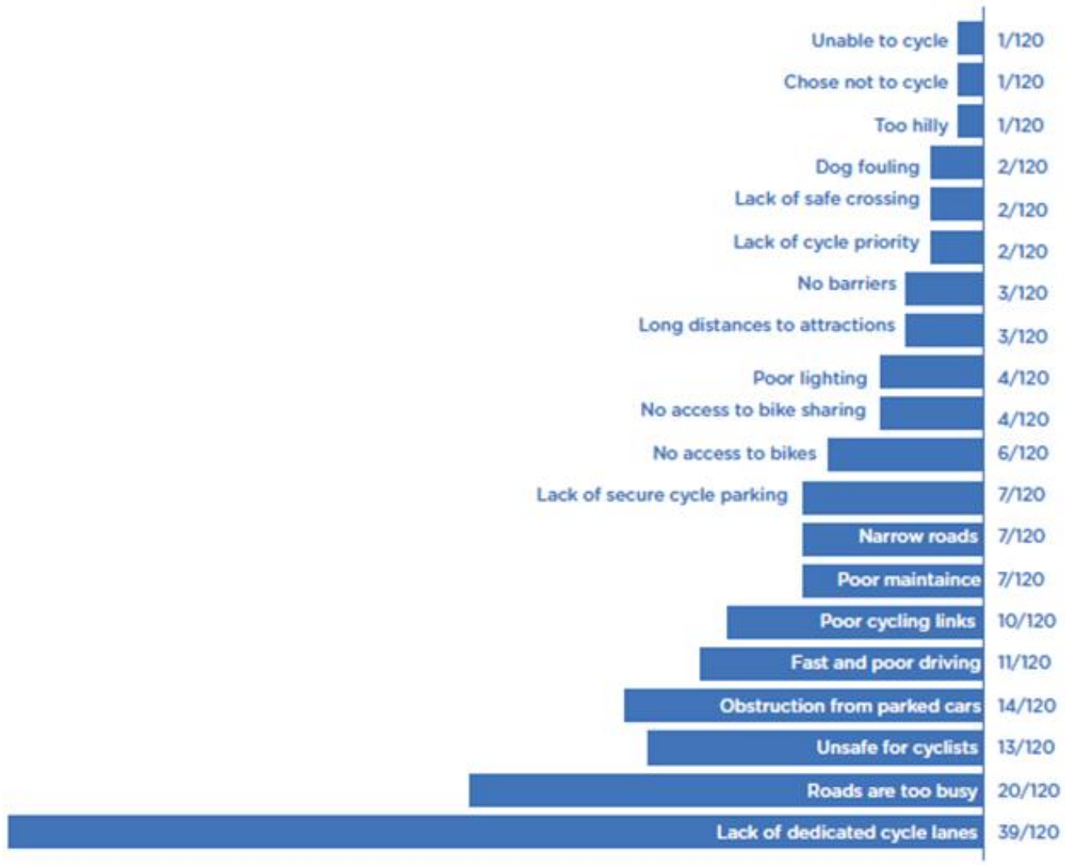


Figure C-7: What do you see as the barriers to cycling in Balrothery (Question 17)

Activity 2: Challenges and Opportunities

Activity 2 was designed to identify on a map the specific areas of concern for residents as well as to capture future aspirations for infrastructure upgrades and new amenities.

Key challenges raised include a lack of safe pedestrian crossing points and obstruction caused by parked cars with the top five (based on those most frequently cited) being:

1. Pedestrian safety at Coach Road / School Lane junction by the pharmacy;
2. Parked cars blocking the pavement – especially at the hairdressers, school and Darcystown Road;
3. Not enough safe pedestrian crossing points – especially outside the pharmacy, pub and by the Heritage Centre;
4. Lack of continual footpath along R132 and Inch Road; and
5. Cars traveling too fast through the village - especially past SPAR and Darcystown Road

Key opportunities include new crossings in the village centre and new off-street walking routes, with the top five being:

1. Add new pedestrian crossings outside Heritage Centre;
2. Reinstate Old Coach Road / School Lane as an active travel route;
3. Improve lighting in Glebe Park – especially around the playground / football pitches;
4. Create new walking / cycling link to Ardgillan Castle; and
5. Extend / re-configure the one-way system to make the village centre more pedestrian friendly.

Eight 'hotspot' locations also emerged. Each of these areas have been highlighted as those with the most barriers to active travel, but also possibilities for change.

1. **Village centre**: Improvements must balance the needs of access for vehicles with an improved environment for pedestrians to make a more pleasant hub space at the centre of Balrothery.
2. **Glebe Park**: Potential to improve access to the park for all throughout the year. Potential to improve facilities in the park for all.
3. **Outside School / Coach Road**: Potential to create a safer environment outside the school to encourage active travel and create a more welcoming environment.
4. **Old Coach Road / School Lane**: This could be reinstated as a walking route to provide better access around the village, but there are potential antisocial behaviour and access concerns.
5. **Balrothery Gardens / R132 junction**: The end of the segregated cycle lane and lack of crossing points causes issues, but both could be improved to provide a much safer environment.
6. **Ringfort View / Darcystown Road**: The speed of cars and lack of pavement create a dangerous environment for pedestrians which could be improved.
7. **Inch Road**: There is no protection from traffic for cyclists or pedestrians along what could be a good route to connect the sports clubs to the bus stop.
8. **West of R132**: The lack of pavement along the R132 and lack of crossing points disconnects those living on the west of the road from the centre of the village.

The hotspots are highlighted on the map overleaf (Figure C-8), with the specific challenges and opportunities raised in Table C-1: List of challenges and opportunities raised (ranked by total number of respondents)Table C-1

Figure C-8: Map of key opportunities and constraints

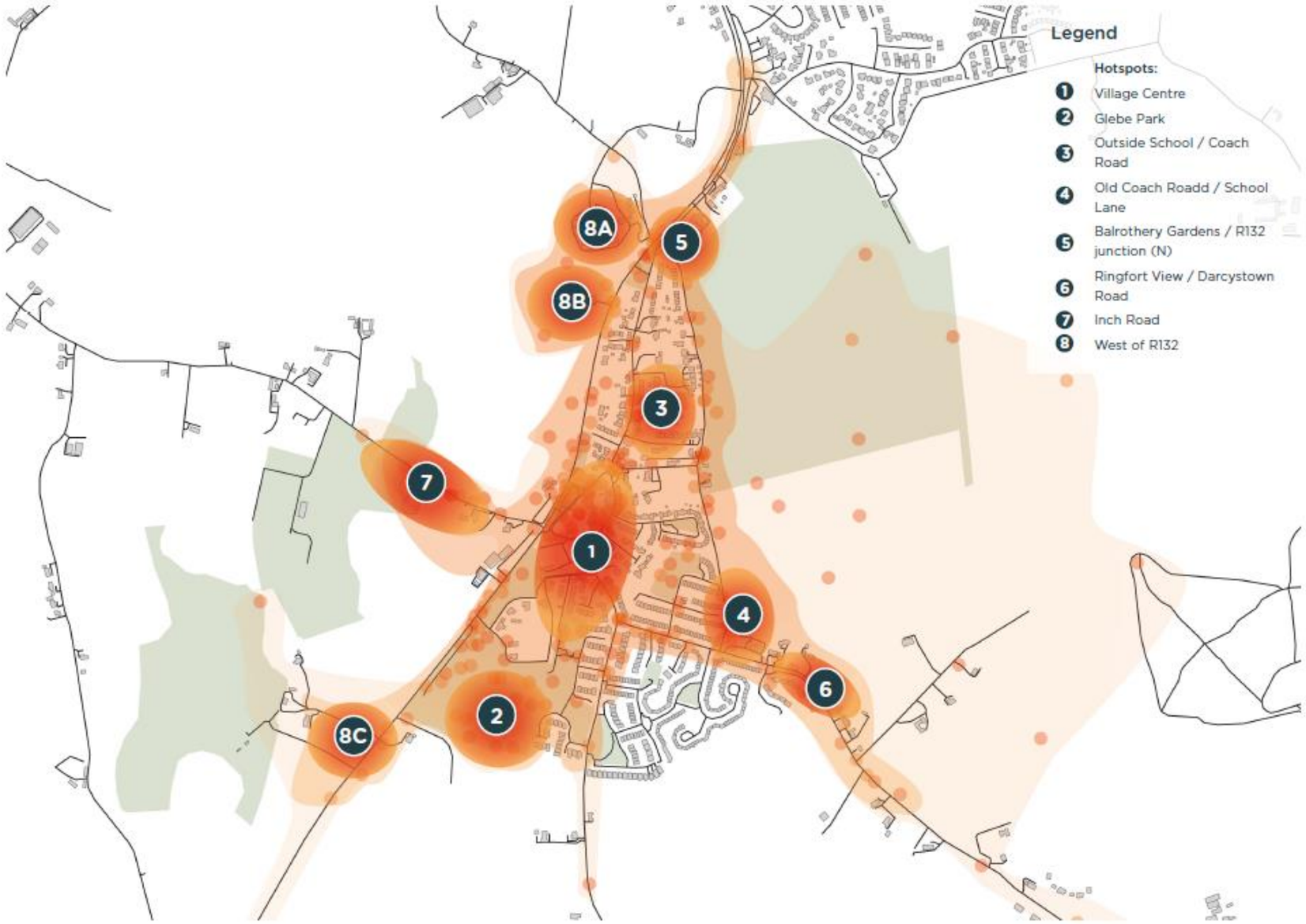


Table C-1: List of challenges and opportunities raised (ranked by total number of respondents)

Location	Challenges	Opportunities
1. Village centre	1. Parked cars blocking path outside hairdressers. [n=17] 2. Junction of Coach Road and School Lane (by Pharmacy) is dangerous for pedestrians – difficult to see traffic (lack of crossing). [n=15] 3. Crossing Coach Road by the pub exit is dangerous – especially for people coming out the pub, also no footpath at back of pub. [n=9] 4. Bus stops on R132 are cause poor visibility at junction and at crossing when buses are parked. [n=7] 5. Old ESB poles restricting views for pedestrians and restricting access in footpath (was meant to be removed following installation of new ESB poles) [n=6] 6. Cars travel too fast past the Spar and don't see pedestrians at zebra crossing. People also park on zigzags [n=5] 7. Not enough parking at village centre, particularly by pharmacy [n=5] 8. Lack of crossing on Coach Road into Heritage Centre, also a blind spot for drivers along properties opposite Heritage Centre [n=5] 9. Traffic and noise have increased since 1-way system introduced. [n=3] 10. New parking bays along one-way and R132 bus stops are used as "park and ride" [n=3] 11. Spar and Pub need lorry access. [n=2] 12. Gate to car park has been closed which forces pedestrians to walk further 13. Junction with R132 very busy, creating long wait especially on right turn – synchronised traffic lights? [n=2]	1. Extend or reconfigure one-way system to create a 'loop' around pub to create more space for pedestrians and additional parking [n=6] 2. New crossing point and mirror on Coach Road by Heritage Centre entrance. [n=6] 3. Use hard shoulder or vacant land west of R132 as Park and Ride [n=3] 4. New pedestrian crossing outside pharmacy. [n=3] 5. Use pub car park for deliveries to and parking for shop [n=3] 6. Improvements needed to junction with R132 by Spar (Dutch roundabout?). [n=3] 7. Junction of Coach Road and School Lane should be signalised [n=2] 8. Connect centre to Rosepark via Cloch Chiorneal and vacant plot of land [n=2] 9. Make junction with R132 entry only and create one-way system (out at top of village). Create green boulevard. [n=2] 10. Move the R132 crossing closer to bus stops and village centre [n=2] 11. Reduce R132 junction size [n=2]

Location	Challenges	Opportunities
1. Glebe Park	1. Park is poorly lit (only have lights by the tennis court) and intimidating when dark [n=6] 2. Conflicting and dangerous entrance for pedestrian and vehicles at park and car park entrance, no turning lane available [n=3] 3. Park has accessible benches, but no accessible path to them. [n=3] 4. Football pitches are too small, too far from club house, don't have toilets and don't have enough near-by parking. [n=2] 5. Lack of parking spaces [n=2] 6. Walk to park along R132 currently not attractive because of fast car speed and no protected grass verge [n=1] 7. Lack of crossing between Glebe Park and Balruddery Fields [n=1]	1. Add more lighting to the park – especially around the playground, on the zig zag path and on the pitches. [n=5] 2. Need new crossing on Knightswood by entrance to the park. [n=2] 3. Improve park loop route and access to housing estate. [n=2] 4. Add pedestrian railings to pavement on R132 / improve entrance to park entrance to improve safety for children. [n=2]
2. Outside School / Coach Road	1. Cars parking on pavement and blocking pedestrians [n=4] 2. Too many cars around school entrance and not enough parking space for them - blocking the path [n=3] 3. Entrance to school needs to be safer for kids [n=2] 4. Cars pass school too quickly. [n=2] 5. Pavements are too narrow to accommodate more than 2 people walking side by side [n=1] 6. Lack of cycle path outside school [n=2] 7. Pavement from school to village centre not connected [n=1]	1. Could make road one-way, even if it's just during school pick up and drop off time [n=5] 2. Pedestrian crossing for kids at school [n=14] 3. School 'bike trains' to help kids cycle to school safely. [n=1] 4. More / better organised parking [n=1] 5. Make this a green boulevard to the school [n=1] 6. Get school pupils involved in being traffic warden (e.g. Rush N.S. children traffic warden) [n=1] 7. Improve lighting [n=1] 8. Landowner next to Old Coach Road open to ideas for new path, play and recreation space. [n=1]

Location	Challenges	Opportunities
3. Old Coach Road / School Lane	1. Anti-social behaviour from older children / teenagers, sometimes causing damage to property [n=5] 2. Speed of traffic and gradient, difficult to get up hill in the winter [n=2] 3. Given current anti-social behaviour, reopening School Lane could encourage more. Needs to be lit and policed [n=1] 4. No footpaths along some parts of the path [n=1] 5. Need to maintain vehicle access for residents [n=1] 6. Increasing traffic could increase danger [n=1] 7. Lack of lighting [n=1]	1. Re-instating Old Coach Rd / School Lane as a walking and cycling route and opening entrance from Darcystown Road [n=11] 2. New connection from Rose Park to Old Coach Road. [n=1] 3. Adding more lighting can make the existing parts of School Lane more usable [n=1] 4. Re-establish vegetation taken down by School for construction along School Lane [n=1]
4. Balrothery Gardens / R132 junction (N)	1. Difficult to cross (because there is no official crossing) the R132 to the bus stop on the opposite side of the road. [n=6] 2. Hard to get through gates which makes cycling difficult [n=2] 3. 5-way junction with no crossing or signal by Balbriggan Golf Club onto the R132, also overlap with cycle path [n=1] 4. No shelter at bus stop on the east of R132 [n=1] 5. Cycle lane under use because it's not fully connected, cyclist often choose to go on road instead [n=1] 6. Pedestrians using cycle lane along R132 due to lack of pavement [n=1]	1. Make junction with R132 exit only and create one-way system (in at village centre. Create green boulevard. [n=2] 2. Extend cycling route past kissing gate into the village [n=2] 3. Opportunity for picnic bench on green space [n=1] 4. Add cycle parking at bus stop on R132. [n=1] 5. New crossing point on R132 by Hamilton 6. Park care facility. [n=1] 7. New crossing point on R132 by bus stop. [n=1]

Location	Challenges	Opportunities
5. Darcystown Road / Ringfort View	1. Cars parked on the pavement, particularly on the Rosepark side of road which blocks pedestrians with buggies and disabled access and reduces junction visibility [n=9] 2. No pavement or cycling path when heading out of village [n=5] 3. Darcystown Road goes from 80 to 60 to 50 kph by Toddle In nursery. Blind corner with no crossing point. [n=4] 4. Crossing too close to junction and cars don't always stop. Dangerous junction for both pedestrians and drivers [n=4] 5. Cars travelling too quickly along Rosepark / Ringfort View. [n=3] 6. Cars drive too fast into the village as they head down the hill [n=3] 7. Blind corners, high hedge, fast traffic including of larger vehicles [n=3] 8. Important route for agriculture vehicle, important to not restrict too much on width and access. Consider farm vehicle for traffic calming measures [n=3] 9. Intersection within Rosepark not built to current guidelines and is dangerous [n=3] 10. Only one crossing on a three-way busy junction [n=2]	1. Extend the pavement and cycling path heading East on Darcystown Road [n=7] 2. Better pedestrian / cycle access to Ardgillan – would make Balrothery more attractive for tourists [n=3] 3. For traffic calming measures to start before reaching first property [n=2] 4. Traffic calming measures (e.g. raised table junction or crossing) at intersection within Rosepark [n=2] 5. Double yellow lines along Darcystown Road and Ringfort View to stop parking. Currently dangerous with people stepping onto road to pass [n=1] 6. Speed restriction [n=1] 7. Turn three-way junction (Coach Road – Knightswood – Rosepark) back into roundabout [n=1]
6. Inch Road	1. Lack of any footpath along Inch Road particularly to cricket and rugby club. Excellent running / cycling route, but no protection from traffic. [n=8] 2. Lack of lighting [n=2] 3. Lack of visibility with high bank, a few danger spots including one wall that's been hit by cars multiple times [n=1] 4. Cars travelling too quickly along road which is poorly maintained. Particularly busy on match days and for Sunday Balbriggan Market (n=1)	1. Improved pedestrian route from Rugby / Cricket club to bus stop on R132 (e.g. better lighting). Used by lots of kids. [n=3] 2. Use road to divert traffic from village [n=1]

Location	Challenges	Opportunities
7. West of R132	1. Lack of pavement along R132, particularly for residents and institutes [n=12] 2. Lack of crossing, particularly to the institutes [n=3] 3. Where there is a pavement, it feels unsafe and close to fast moving traffic [n=1]	1. Put a grass verge between R132 and footpath on approach to Glebe Park [n=2] 2. Create wider pavement along R132 from village to park. Too narrow for 2 people, especially if people are cycling too [n=2] 3. Narrow R132 road to control traffic speeds [n=1]

Activity 3: My Perfect Active Travel Village

Activity 3 encouraged participants to be creative and to let their imaginations run wild by either sketching, writing or describing via voice their ideal active travel village. The activity was mainly completed by local children (although a few adults also picked up the colouring pens too!).

What is clear from the images is that the local children take great pride in their village and most drawings focussed on providing more things to do such as parks and sports facilities as well as shops and restaurants.

The drawings also highlighted the importance of connection between the Rosepark area to the village centre and onwards from the village centre to the school. This route which includes Darcystown Road / Ringfort View, The Rise and Coach Road is the main 'spine' of the village and an important route (particularly for children) when moving around the village.

Examples are shown in Figure C-9.

Figure C-9: Drawings the My Perfect Village exercise

Stage 2 Public Engagement

Following the review and shortlisting process with FCC stakeholders a draft preferred plan was taken to the public for further comment and refinement. The format of the event was an open forum (i.e. a walk-in event, open to all the public) and held on the evening of Wednesday 20th November 2024 in the Heritage Centre in Balrothery. The event was structured around a public exhibition and two interactive activities. During the evening, there were 2 presentations from the project team with a Q&A session for each.

It was agreed prior to the event that the Stage 2 consultation should also have a way for people to participate online in case they were unable to attend the event in person. It also gave people who attended on the night an opportunity to provide feedback once they had had a chance to fully consider what they had seen and heard on the night. An online questionnaire was set-up to capture similar types of insight that the in-person activities were designed to provoke. The online portal stayed open throughout December 2025, including the Christmas and New Year holidays. The portal was widely publicised by FCC using their comms team and social media posts.

A summary of the outcomes from the engagement and key findings from each activity is outlined below an in the following section. A full record of the engagement is included in the appendices.

Activity 1: Inspiration from around the world

This activity was designed to elicit discussions around the type of streetscape environments that the public liked and where they felt different approaches might be more appropriate across the different key routes in Balrothery. A collection of international best practice active travel and public realm projects were grouped under the following themes:

a. Shared surface streets
b. Cycling streets
c. Cycleways
d. Walking streets
e. Traffic calming and safety
f. Fun streets

Attendees were invited to vote on which of the images resonated with them the most and to provide written feedback on what they liked/didn't about the image and where they felt it would work well in Balrothery.

Feedback from this activity included:

- *"The road at the Eastern Gateway & R132 are extremely dangerous and any traffic calming would be welcome"*
- *"I would feel much safer with my kids cycling to school with segregated cycling"*
- *"More trees and greenery throughout the village*
- *Cars are moving too fast through the village".*

Figure C-0-10: Public participation in the interactive activities

Activity 2: Be the Mayor of Balrothery

The second activity was a participatory budgeting exercise with participants given a limited number of 'Balrothery Euros' and were asked to allocate them across 6 active travel projects. The projects were presented to participants as project cards which included a sketch visualisation of the scheme, a brief description of the project, the key aims and objectives, timescales, and a simplified cost. This information was a simplified representation of the projects from the draft plan so the exercise's objective was to understand how people would prioritise their spending with a budget that wouldn't allow for everything to be delivered. Participants were also invited to provide written feedback on the projects, specifically around how they felt the projects could be improved or if any design features had been missed.

Figure C-11: 'Mayor of Balrothery' exercise allocation by project

The outcome of the activity on the evening was that the 'School Street' was the most popular project followed closely by proposals to create a better connection between the village and Glebe Park on the R132 (i.e. 'South of the Village' project).

Project exhibition, presentation and Q&A

The final component of the event was an exhibition of the Stage 2 work. The exhibition boards included information on:

- Stage 1 SWOT analysis
- Summary of Stage 1 engagement findings
- The proposed vision and project key principles
- The draft preferred active travel plan and project packages
- Proposed project phasing
- Sketch visualisations

Members of the project team were available throughout the exhibition to answer questions and to discuss project proposals with the public. A comments box was also provided so that participants could provide written feedback. Two presentations were scheduled throughout the evening so that the team could talk through the plans with public and to answer questions that they may have had.

Figure C-12: Presentation of the draft Plan to the public

Plan feedback by location

The following tables summarise the key feedback on the Plan from the consultation event and online survey for each section of the village. The key changes to the Plan between the proposals presented to the public at this stage and the proposed Plan set out in this document are also listed.

Village centre

Likes	Dislikes
• The new character of the public realm, including the use of different surface materials. • Greening, new planting, and trees • The additional footpath space • The holistic design approach and the self-regulated urban centre feel.	• Concerns about the effectiveness of speed limits and traffic calming measures. • Parking, particularly around the school. • The need for more pedestrian crossings and better enforcement of traffic regulations

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Additional roadside parking proposed near bus stops near north of village to reduce demand in centre for drivers parking all day and using buses
- Parking provision across village centre to be reviewed as part of next stage of project decision to ensure provision of essential parking (e.g., for pharmacy customers) is provided.

Eastern Gateway (Darcystown Road / Rosepark)

Likes	Dislikes
• The proposal of a new route to Ardgillan. • Traffic calming measures and speed limit changes. • The proposed link to Ardgillan and the extension of the cycleway.	• Concerns about the practicality and safety of the proposed changes. • The need for more detailed plans for cycling and walking routes. • Issues with parking and enforcement of traffic regulations.

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Phasing of proposed measures reviewed, with key focus on traffic calming and measures to make active travel feel safer within initial stage
- Next stage of plan development to include concept design for proposed Darcystown Road measures providing more detail on specific changes

School Street (Coach Road)

Likes	Dislikes
• Landscaping, planting, and greening of the street • Pencil bollards and the idea of a one-way system. • The one-way system providing more space for cycling and walking. • The proposed enhancements to the school entrance and new crossings.	• Concerns about the practicality and safety of the one-way system • The need for more detailed plans for traffic management and pedestrian safety.

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Proposals for 1-way trial along Coach Road removed

Inch Road

Likes	Dislikes
• Acknowledgment that speed needs to be reduced. • Advisory footpath and additional traffic calming measures. • The proposed reduction of speed limits and opportunity for new footpaths.	• Concerns about the effectiveness of speed limits and traffic calming measures. • The need for more detailed plans for cycling and walking routes. • Issues with parking and enforcement of traffic regulations.

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Alternative options for walking and cycling routes to be explored

South of the Village (R132 / Glebe Park)

Likes	Dislikes
• The green verges and planting creating a more welcoming feel. • The proposed cycle path and making it easier and safer to go to Glebe Park. • The proposed speed limit changes and new footpaths.	• Concerns about the effectiveness of speed limits and traffic calming measures. • The need for more detailed plans for cycling and walking routes. • Issues with parking and enforcement of traffic regulations.

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Proposals for R132 route and Glebe Park
- Next stage of plan development to include concept design for proposed measures providing more detail on specific changes

Northern Gateway

Likes	Dislikes
• The extension of the cycleway and new pedestrian and cycling crossings. • The proposed improvements to the public realm and traffic management.	• Concerns about the effectiveness of the proposed changes. • The need for more detailed plans for traffic management and pedestrian safety. • Issues with parking and enforcement of traffic regulations.

Summary of key changes made following consultation:

- Proposal for on-street parking on R132 near Northern Gateway proposed to address concerns about Village Centre parking being used for 'Park & Ride'

Appendix D: Assessment Screening

Strategic Environmental Assessment Screening

1. Introduction

Background

The Balrothery Active Travel Plan (the 'Plan') will identify projects in the Balrothery area to provide the infrastructure that will support and encourage members of the public to use active travel modes such as walking, cycling, and scooting for short-distance journeys and provide links to access to public transport for medium-distance journeys.

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a process for the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme, before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme.

To assess whether an SEA is required SEA screening of the draft Plan (March 2025 internal version) has been undertaken, and its findings are set out in this SEA Screening Report.

This SEA Screening Report represents the independent views and recommendations of the consultants conducting the analysis and may not necessarily reflect the opinions held by Fingal County Council (FCC). A formal determination will be required from FCC.

SEA Requirements and Process

The European Directive 2001/42/EC [1] ('the SEA Directive') requires that an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes, which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. The purpose of SEA, as defined in Article 1 of the SEA Directive, is "to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans (...) with a view to promoting sustainable development".

In Ireland, the SEA Directive is transposed into Irish law through:

- **Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 435 of 2004** (the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004)[2] , as amended by S.I. No. 200 of 2011 (the European Communities (Environmental Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) (Amendment) Regulations 2011)[3] – which covers plans and programmes in all the sectors listed in article 3(2) of the SEA Directive except some types of land-use planning; and

- **S.I. No. 436 of 2004** (the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004)[4], as amended by S.I. No. 201 of 2011 (the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2011)[5] – which covers the following plans and programmes for land-use planning: development plans and their variations, local area plans, regional planning guidelines and planning schemes for strategic development zones.

Article 9(1) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (as amended) requires an environmental assessment to be carried out for all plans and programmes which:

(a) Are prepared for agriculture, forestry, fisheries, energy, industry, transport, waste management, water management, telecommunications, tourism and town and country planning or land use, and which set the framework for future development consent of projects listed in Annexes I and II to the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Directive[6] , or

(b) are not directly connected with or necessary to the management of a European site but, either individually or in combination with other plans, are likely to have a significant effect on any such site.

Article 9(2) notes that a plan or programme which determines the use of a small area at local level shall require an environmental assessment only where the competent authority determines that it is likely to have significant effects on the environment and, for this purpose, the competent authority shall make any necessary determination.

[1] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu
[2] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[3] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[4] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[5] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[6] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu

The SEA process includes the following stages, depicted in Figure D-1:

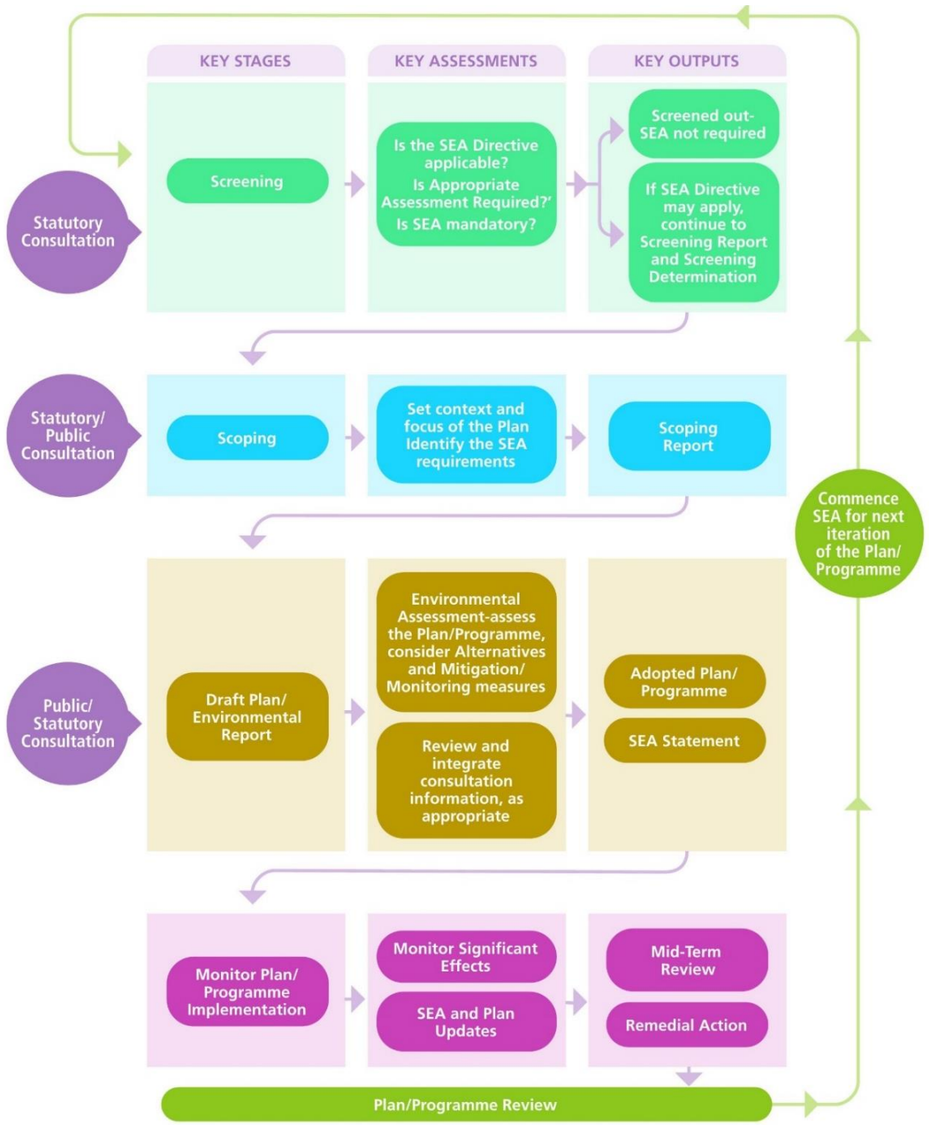
- **Screening**. If it is determined that the SEA Directive applies to a plan, then the next step is to decide if it needs to be screened. Where SEA is mandatory, screening is not required, and the SEA process can commence at scoping stage. Screening requires applying screening criteria to determine if the plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment. It should be noted that a determination on the need for Appropriate Assessment (AA) is required before SEA screening can be completed. All this information can be submitted with a notice to relevant environmental authorities (including adjacent planning authorities) for a 4-week consultation period. At the end of this period, if it is concluded that SEA is not required, then the SEA Determination, including the reasons for deciding that SEA is not required, must be published and made available to the public and the relevant environmental authorities. If it is concluded that SEA is required, the process shall continue to scoping.

- **Scoping**. As part of this stage, a Scoping Report, that sets the context and focus of the plan / programme and proposes the scope and level of detail to be included in the Environmental Report, is issued to relevant environmental authorities for a 4-week consultation period.

- **Environmental Report**. The Environmental Report and associated Non-Technical Summary present the assessment of the likely significant effects on the environment as a result of the plan / programme and proposes mitigation and monitoring measures. The Environmental Report is published for statutory and public consultation. Should draft amendments to the plan be required as a result of the consultation process, these shall be screened and assessed. Following the plan adoption, a SEA Statement is subsequently prepared and published to identify how environmental considerations and consultation responses have been integrated into the final plan / programme.

- **Monitoring**. Following plan adoption, monitoring commitments shall be implemented. Monitoring of the significant effects on the environment as a result of implementing the plan should extend throughout the lifetime of the plan and the results should inform the next plan-preparation cycle.

Figure D-1: Overview of SEA process. Source: Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (2022) Strategic Environmental Assessment. Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities



Purpose and Structure of this Document

This document presents an assessment of whether the Plan meets the criteria for potential significant effects, defined in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (as amended), and determines the need for a SEA.

This document has been prepared considering the following guidance:

- Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) (2021) Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening[7]; and
- Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (2022) Strategic Environmental Assessment. Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities[8].

This document has been structured around the following sections:

- **Section 2 - Balrothery Active Travel Plan**, provides an overview of the Plan: its background and content;
- **Section 3 – Methodology,** provides an overview of the SEA screening methodology followed;
- **Section 4 - Applicability**, determines if the Plan falls within the scope of the SEA Directive and transposing legislation;
- **Section 5 - Assessment against SEA Screening Criteria,** as set out in Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (as amended); and
- **Section 6 – Conclusions, recommendations and Next Steps**.

2. Balrothery Active Travel Plan

Plan Background

In May 2023, Fingal County Council (FCC) published An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal[9], which stated that "our vision for Fingal is to ensure that walking, cycling and wheeling will become a realistic and safe choice for everyday short journeys. We will achieve this vision by putting Active Travel first in our planning, design and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives."

Active Travel aligns with a range of plans and strategies developed at national and regional levels, as illustrated in Figure D-2.

Figure D-2: Policies relevant to Active Travel in Fingal. Source: FCC (2023) An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal.

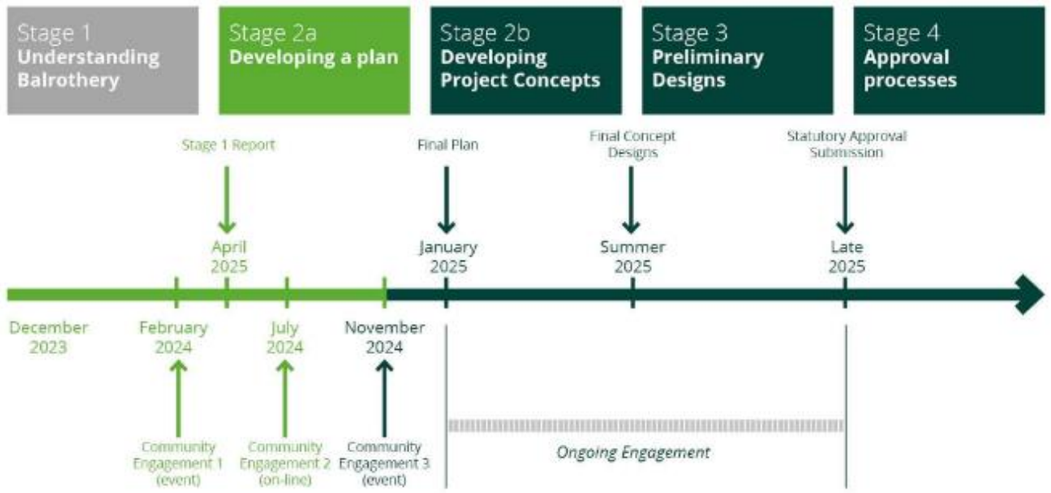
[7] Available at: https://www.epa.ie
[8] Available at: https://www.opr.ie

[9] Available at: https://www.fingal.ie

Balrothery is a village and civil parish located in Fingal, and falls under the jurisdiction of FCC, who commenced development of the Plan in December 2023, as a form of implementing the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal at local level.

The development of the Plan will follow through 4 stages, illustrated in Figure D-3. At each stage, the community will be able to feed into the developing Plan.

Figure D-3: Balrothery Active Travel Plan development stages.



The draft Plan documents reviewed to inform this SEA Screening Report include:

- Baseline Assessment Report (internal draft dated June 2024);
- Stage 2: Developing a Plan Community Engagement Event (public draft dated November 202410);
- Balrothery Active Travel Plan (internal draft dated March 2025); and
- Project shortlist (internal draft dated March 2025).

Plan Area

The Plan Area is illustrated in Figure D-4, and covers Balrothery village and immediate surroundings (within 800 m from the village centre).

[10] Available at: https://www.fingal.ie

Figure D-4: Balrothery Active Travel Plan Area

Plan Components

At this stage, the main components of the draft Plan include:

- the Vision;
- twelve Key Principles; and
- Proposed Solutions for different zones.

In addition, the Plan will include details of its proposed implementation, including phasing, financial plan, risk management and monitoring and evaluation.

Vision

The draft Plan defines the Vision of the Plan as follows: "A unique and vibrant village, focussed on community and connectivity".

Key Principles

The draft Plan is underpinned by following twelve Key Principles:

- Feels safe
- Thriving natural environment
- Quality public realm
- Healthier lifestyles
- Unique heritage and character
- Linking to surrounding areas
- Well-connected local destinations
- Comfort and convenience
- Enables local business
- Accessibility for all
- Integration with other travel modes
- Clean, quiet and low carbon

Proposed Solutions

Based on discussions with FCC stakeholders and feedback from the Open Forum engagement, three initial Alternative Approaches were developed to inform specific Proposed Solutions for different zones within the Plan area. Table D-1 provides an overview of Proposals identified at this stage.

Table D-1: Overview of Proposals

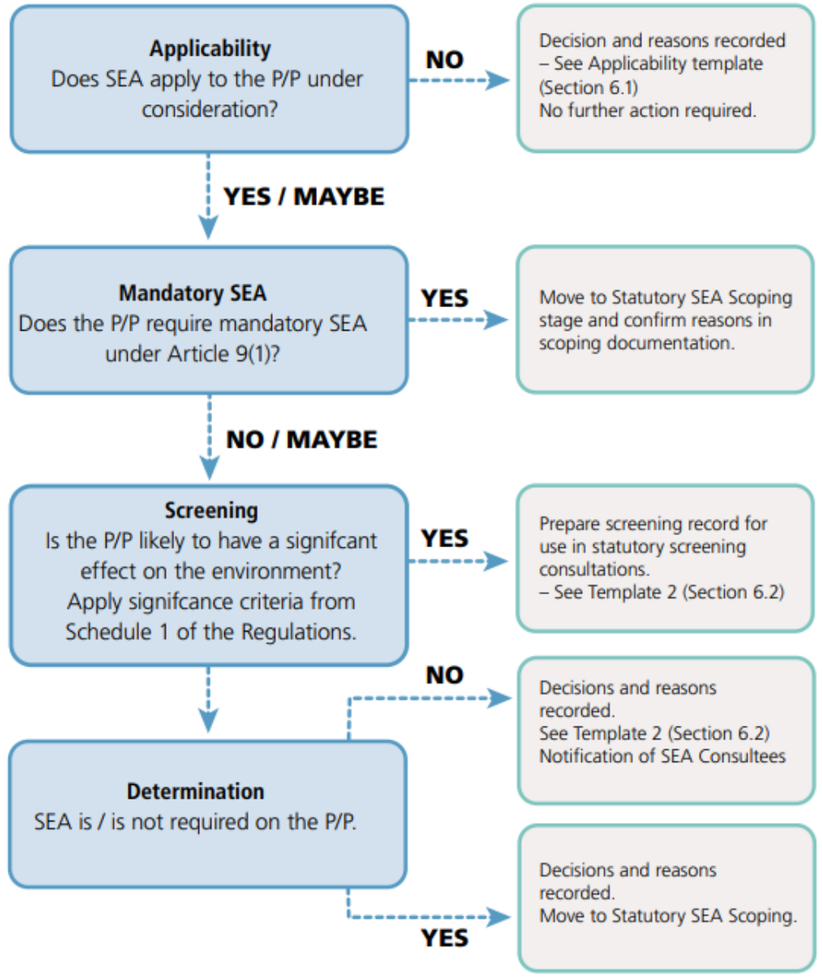
Zone	Proposed Approaches
Village Centre	• Extension of the one-way system to create a 'one-way loop' around the village. • New/widened footpaths on Coach Road, resolving safety issues. • Undergrounding of Electricity Supply Board pole and reconfiguration of the junction to remove triangle of grass and provide a new courtesy crossing. • Reconfiguration of junction outside of Pharmacy with new zebra crossing. • Dedicated short-term / disabled parking bay outside of the pharmacy. • Enhancements to the green spaces adjacent to Spar to include additional cycle parking, street furniture, screening from the road and potential for a future rural mobility hub.
School Route	• New entrance space outside of primary school with zebra crossing, public realm enhancements, traffic calming and vehicle management measures. • Carriageway narrowing and widening of footpaths. • Resurfacing of road between village centre and primary school for enhanced public realm and finish. • Upgrade of side street junctions for pedestrian priority. • Courtesy crossing between Coach Rd Manor and The Coachyard. • Additional traffic calming measures.
Eastern Gateway	• Traffic calming / speed reduction measures. • Enhanced signage and gateway features. • Review and upgrade of Knightswood/Coach Road/Rosepark junction to address safety concerns. • Upgrade of side street junctions for pedestrian priority. • Carriageway narrowing on Ringfort View / Rosepark and down the hill into the village centre, widening footpaths. • Public realm street upgrades with the introduction of sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), green infrastructure and amenities (e.g. street furniture). • New pedestrian crossings east of Ringfort Avenue and close to entrance to Balruddery Fields. • Cycle parking facilities within communal greenspaces for local residents. • Creation of active travel greenway to connect Darcystown Road with School Land / Old Coach Road to provide alternative off-road walking and cycling route to the primary school. • Colour themed signage, public art and installations.

Zone	Proposed Approaches
South of the Village	• Speed limit reduction on R132 on the southern approach to Balrothery (50km/h) with associated signage and road markings. • Carriageway narrowing on R132 with a new segregated cycleway to connect the village centre to Glebe Park. • Upgrade of Glebe Park junction to improve segregation of pedestrians/cyclists from vehicles and address safety concerns. • New footpath on the northbound carriageway of the R132 between Wavin Lake and Inch Road. • Signalised crossing on R132 in close proximity to the Glebe Park entrance.
Northern Gateway	• Signalised crossing on R132 close to bus stops to the north of the village. • New footpath on R132 northbound carriageway from bus stop to Stephenstown junction (and potentially onwards to Hamilton Care Home) • Re-configuration of northern R132 junction to convert to 'exit only' from R132 and address visibility issues • Upgrades to municipal greenspaces at northern end of village to include cycle parking provision.
Inch Road	• Reduced speed limit (30km/h) between junction of Inch Road / R132 to Balbriggan Rugby Club. • Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) west of Balbriggan Rugby club and at R132 / Inch Road junction. • Enhanced signage and gateway features on approach to Balbriggan Rugby Club. • Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) • Extension of footpath from R132 bus stop to Balbriggan Rugby Club (single-sided).

3. Methodology

The EPA guidance[11] describes the three principal steps followed in a SEA screening process – applicability, screening and determination, as illustrated in Figure D-5.

Figure D-5: SEA screening process under S.I. 435/2004 (as amended). Source: EPA (2021) Good Practice Guidance on SEA Screening



[11] Available at: https://www.epa.ie

This document has been prepared following the three principal steps:

- **Step 1: Applicability (including mandatory requirement)**: To determine if the Plan falls within the scope of the SEA Directive and transposing legislation and confirm if mandatory SEA is required; and
- **Step 2: Assessment against SEA criteria**: To examine whether the Plan is likely to have significant effects on the environment.
- **Step 3: Determination**: To determine whether SEA is required or not. A draft SEA Screening report has been prepared for statutory consultation which provides information to the FCC to support the FCC to make the determination.

Following consultation with relevant environmental authorities, a copy of the final SEA screening determination should be sent to the relevant environmental authorities and the final decision will be made available on FCC's website for public inspection.

4. Applicability

Status of the Plan Maker

The Plan will be prepared by FCC, which is the local authority of the county of Fingal, Ireland. It is one of the four local authorities in County Dublin. As a county council, FCC is governed by the Local Government Act 2001[12]. The Plan will not be adopted by any legislative provision.

Nature of the Plan

The Plan is prepared for the transport sector, which is one of the categories listed in Article 9(1)(a) of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (as amended), and it does provide a framework for the development consent for projects developed at local level. At this stage, the potential for these projects to be categorised as Annex I and II projects listed in the EIA Directive cannot be ruled out:

- Annex I
    a. 7(b) Construction of motorways and express roads (defined, in the European Agreement on Main International Traffic Arteries of 15 November 1975[13], as roads reserved for automobile traffic, accessible only from interchanges or controlled junctions and on which, in particular, stopping and parking are prohibited).
- Annex II
    b. 10(b) Urban development projects, including the construction of shopping centres and car parks.
    c. 10(e) Construction of roads, harbours and port installations, including fishing harbours (projects not included in Annex I).

A Screening Report for AA has been prepared separately[14] and, subject to final AA screening determination, it has been concluded that considered that due to the small scale and nature of Plan, and location of the Plan area in relation to European sites, it is considered very unlikely that the Plan would result in significant effects on any European site alone or in-combination with other projects/plans.

Exemptions

The Plan is not of a type exempt from SEA (i.e. with sole purpose for national defence, civil emergency or financial / budget plans and programmes).

Conclusion

The Plan may be within the remit of the SEA Directive as it relates to use of a small area at local level, it is a Plan which may set the framework for future development consent of local projects associated with the transport sector, and there is uncertainty in relation to the significance of potential environmental effects.

The Plan is accordingly assessed against SEA criteria in the next chapter.

[12] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[13] Available at: https://treaties.un.org
[14] Ramboll, 2025. Screening Report for Appropriate Assessment. Balrothery Active Travel Plan.

5. Assessment against SEA Screening Criteria

Schedule 1 of S.I. No. 435 of 2004 (as amended) sets out the assessment criteria for considering significant environmental effects. The draft Plan has been assessed against these criteria; a summary of the assessment is provided in Table D-2 below.

Table D-2: Screening of the Plan against SEA screening criteria

	Criteria for determining whether a Plan is likely to have significant effects on the Environment	Assessment
1	the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, sets a framework for projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources	The Plan specifies geographically where infrastructure / interventions that will support and encourage members of the public to use active travel modes will be provided and identifies site-specific projects (see Table D-1). The Plan also includes Key Principles that will guide these developments. However, it should be noted that all projects supported by the Plan will be implemented locally within Balrothery (within 800 m from the village centre) and therefore have a relatively limited size and scale.
	the degree to which the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, influences other plans including those in a hierarchy	The Plan is influenced by other plans and programmes that are considered higher in hierarchy, developed at national, regional and local levels, see Figure D-7. The Plan can actually be considered to implement the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal at local level and therefore is considered to have limited capacity to influence other plans, beyond those prepared at local level (e.g. Fingal City Council Development Plan), which will need to ensure compatibility / alignment.
	the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development	Key Principles listed in the draft Plan include specific reference to environmental and sustainability issues, including “thriving natural environment”, “unique heritage and character” or “clean, quiet and low carbon” among others. Accordingly, the Plan is considered to provide for the conservation and protection of the environment and will promote sustainable transport.
	environmental problems relevant to the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme	The Baseline Assessment Report (internal draft dated June 2024), identifies the following environmental problems relevant to the Plan area (village of Balrothery and surroundings): • The village is surrounded by greenbelt land. However, public / green spaces within the village are fragmented; • There has been recurring historic flooding by the stream near Knock Lake (a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) due to ecological features); • The majority of the village is residential and hosts a number of local amenities, including shops, schools and recreational amenities. However, medical services are only available in neighbouring villages / cities and some key routes lack facilities; • Transport-related issues include lack of safe pedestrian crossing points, obstruction caused by car parks, road safety, lack of public transport connections running directly east to west, limited formal provision for cycling and lack of long-distance walking routes within proximity to the village.

	Criteria for determining whether a Plan is likely to have significant effects on the Environment	Assessment
	the relevance of the plan or programme, or modification to a plan or programme, for the implementation of European Union (EU) legislation on the environment (e.g. plans and programmes linked to waste management or water protection)	The Plan is not directly relevant for the implementation of EU legislation on the environment, although any projects promoted by the Plan requiring development consent may be subject to the EIA and Habitats and Birds Directives, and associated environmental protection legislation, requiring project-level assessments. The Plan is associated with the EU Urban Mobility Framework[1], which features cycling and walking. The Plan is not linked to waste management strategy.
2	the probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects	The probability that the Plan will result in significant negative environmental effects is low. It is expected that the effects will be largely positive (i.e. contribute to increase use of sustainable transport modes, reduce emissions from transport, etc) and of a long-term nature, with the Plan-life extending to 2035. Although there is potential for negative effects associated with the development of transport infrastructure supported by the Plan, particularly during the construction phase (which would mostly be short-term), and some of these effects may not be reversible, e.g. habitat or tree loss where green spaces may be proposed to be occupied by infrastructure, environmental conservation and protection, as Key Principles of the Plan, are anticipated to guide development decisions and avoid / minimise potential adverse effects.
	the cumulative nature of the effects	There is potential for projects promoted by the Plan to overlap in time and lead to potential cumulative effects, these effects would be temporary and short term, or long-term, extending to the life of infrastructure assets, mainly affecting transport and accessibility. Given that the Plan will be governed by Key Principles of environmental conservation and protection, it is anticipated that any construction-related effects can effectively be managed at project level and are unlikely to become significant at Plan level. In addition, the Plan is anticipated to establish a phased approach to its implementation, which may limit the extent of temporal / spatial overlap and therefore for cumulative effects. Regarding operational effects, the Plan is anticipated to be informed by dedicated traffic modelling, informing design interventions needed to ensure a positive impact of these, either alone or in combination.
	the transboundary nature of the effects	The spatial scale of the Plan (i.e. village and immediate surroundings) and the nature of the Plan (i.e. which supports local infrastructure to encourage active travel) means that any potential effects will be highly localised and unlikely to extend beyond the boundaries of the village and immediate surroundings.

[1] Available at: https://ec.europa.eu

Criteria for determining whether a Plan is likely to have significant effects on the Environment	Assessment
the risks to human health or the environment (e.g. due to accidents)	The Plan is not identified as giving rise to effects that would present risks to human health, or the environment given its adoption of Key Principles for environmental conservation and protection, and the Plan's overall nature that contributes to improving safety for all road users.
the magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)	The spatial scale of the Plan (i.e. village and immediate surroundings) and the nature of the Plan (i.e. which supports local infrastructure to encourage active travel) means that any potential effects will be highly localised and unlikely to extend beyond the boundaries of the village and immediate surroundings. The population most likely to be affected are those already living with the Plan area (i.e. Balrothery village has a population of over 2,000 people (of which ~49% are residents)), and any visitors, and accordingly, the population vulnerable to the effects of the Plan can be considered to be relatively small. As previously mentioned, the Plan is anticipated to adopt Key Principles to ensure safety, quality public spaces, healthy lifestyles and environmental conservation / protection guide development decision-making (see Section 2).
the value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to: *(a)* special natural characteristics or cultural heritage *(b)* exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values *(c)* intensive land-use	The Plan will be governed by Key Principles of environmental conservation and protection, including in relation to natural characteristics and cultural heritage (see Section 2). Due to the nature of the Plan and assuming the adoption of the aforementioned Key Principles, the Plan is not anticipated to contribute to exceedances on environmental quality standards / limits or promote intensive land uses.
the effects on areas or landscapes which have a recognised national, EU or international protection status	As further described in the Baseline Assessment Report (internal draft dated June 2024), the Plan area includes a number of areas recognised for natural conservation (e.g. pNHA, protected woodlands), for built heritage and archaeology (e.g. Architectural Conservation Area (ACA), records of Protected Structures (RPS), Sites and Monuments Records (SMR), Zone of Archaeological Notification) and for landscape values (e.g. site with specific objectives to preserve views towards Ardgillan Castle). There are no areas with a recognised EU or international protection status located within the Plan area. Due to its scale, nature and the fact that the Plan will be governed by Key Principles, including the protection of the village's unique heritage and character, the Plan is not anticipated to have significant effects on areas or landscapes with national or European protective status.

6. Draft SEA Screening Determination

Based on the information available at the time of writing of this SEA Screening Report, it is considered by the Consultant that:

- The Plan does not satisfy the conditions for mandatory SEA under S.I. 435/2004 (as amended); and
- With reference to Article 9(2), 9(3) or 9(4) of S.I. 435/2004 (as amended), the Plan has not been shown to have significant effects on the environment with reference to the criteria laid out in Schedule 1 and therefore SEA is not anticipated to be required.

The principal reasons the Plan is not anticipated to require an SEA are as follows:

- The Plan is underpinned by Key Principles that provide for the conservation and protection of the environment.
- Due to the nature of the Plan, i.e. focused on promoting active travel, it is unlikely that the Plan will cause significant negative effects on the environment.
- Due to the local scale of the Plan, it is unlikely that the Plan will influence other plans beyond those prepared at local level.

FCC will need to make its own determination based on these conclusions.

Appropriate Assessment Screening

1. Introduction

Background

The Balrothery Active Travel Plan (the 'Plan') will identify projects in the Balrothery area to provide the infrastructure that will support and encourage members of the public to use active travel modes such as walking, cycling, and scooting for short-distance journeys and provide links to access to public transport for medium-distance journeys.

Appropriate Assessment (AA) encompasses all of the processes covered by Article 6(3) of the Council Directive 92/43/EEC[1] ('the Habitats Directive'), i.e. screening process, the Natura Impact Statement (NIS), the AA by the competent authority, and the record of decisions made by the competent authority at each stage of the process, that evaluate the potential effects of a plan or project on a European site(s), before a decision is made to agree to the plan or project.

Screening for AA on the draft Plan (March 2025 internal version) has been undertaken and its findings are set out in this report.

This Screening for AA Report has been prepared by Ramboll UK Limited ('Ramboll') on behalf of Fingal County Council (FCC). Ramboll is a global leading engineering, design and consultancy company that works across infrastructure, energy, mining, urban design and buildings and water sectors. We have a dedicated business focused specifically on social and environmental studies in support of major development projects. This report has been prepared by:

- Sara Méndez Roldán, an experienced environmental consultant with a BSc in Environmental Sciences and MSc in Marine and Coastal Resource Management; and
- Malcolm Robertson, an experienced ecologist and Chartered Environmentalist with a BSc in Geography and Biology.

This Screening for AA Report represents the independent views and recommendations of the consultants conducting the analysis and may not necessarily reflect the opinions held by Fingal County Council (FCC).

AA Requirements and Process

The Habitats Directive requires that Member States contribute to the creation of a coherent ecological network of sites through the identification and designation of Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), including candidate SACs (cSACs), relating to habitats and species listed in Annex I and Annex II of the Habitats Directive respectively. The Directive 2009/147/EC[2] (the 'Birds Directive') requires the protection of bird species listed in Annex I of the Birds Directive, and of regularly occurring migratory bird species and their habitats, including through the designation of Special Protection Areas (SPAs), including proposed SPAs (pSPAs).

SACs and SPAs are referred to as European sites and are collectively part of the Natura 2000 network, comprising a network of areas of highest biodiversity importance for rare and threatened habitats and species across the European Union (EU).

The habitats and species for which each European site is designated correspond to the Qualifying Interests (QIs) in the case of SACs, and Special Conservation Interests (SCIs) in the case of SPAs, collectively referred to as qualifying features. From these qualifying features, the Conservation Objectives (COs) of each European site are derived.

In Ireland, the Habitats Directive is transposed into Irish law through:

- **Part XAB of the Planning and Development 2000 Act** (as amended) **–** for the purposes of applications for planning permission; and
- **Statutory Instrument (S.I.) No. 477 of 2011** (the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011)[3], as amended – in relation to other consent regimes.

The AA process includes the following stages, further illustrated in

[1] Council Directive 92/43/EEC of 21 May 1992 on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu

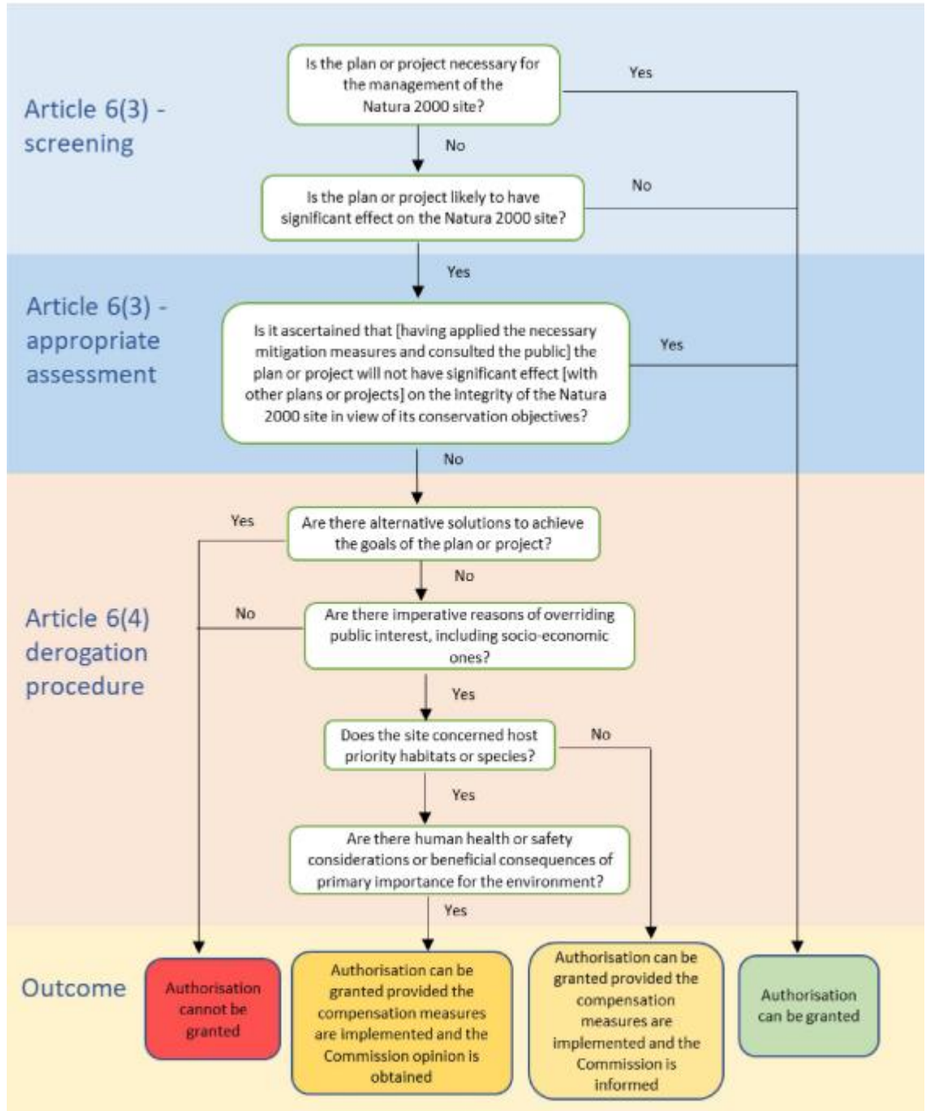
[2] Directive 2009/147/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 30 November 2009 on the conservation of wild birds. Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu

[3] Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie

Figure D-6:

- **Stage 1 - Screening**. This stage addresses and records the reasoning and conclusions on whether, firstly, the plan or project is directly connected with or necessary to the management of any given European site, and secondly, whether it is likely to have a significant effect on any given European site, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects. Where significant effects are likely, uncertain or unknown at screening stage, then the process must proceed to Stage 2 (AA). The greatest level of evidence and justification will be needed in circumstances when the process ends at screening stage on grounds of no impact.
- **Stage 2 – AA.** This stage involves considering the impact of a project or plan alone and in-combination with other projects or plans on the integrity of a given European site with respect to its COs and to its structure and function. In Ireland, data and information on the project / project and on the site and an analysis of potential effects on a given European site must be obtained and presented in a Natura Impact Statement (NIS). The NIS should provide information to enable the competent authority to carry out the AA. If the assessment is negative, i.e. adverse effects on the integrity of a site cannot be excluded, then the process must proceed to Stage 3, or the plan or project should be abandoned.
- **Stage 3 – Alternative Solutions**. This stage examines any alternative solutions or options that could enable the plan or project to proceed without adverse effects on the integrity of a European site. The process must return to Stage 2 as alternatives will require AA in order to proceed. Demonstrating that all reasonable alternatives have been considered and assessed, and that the least damaging option has been selected, is necessary to progress to Stage 4.
- **Stage 4 - Imperative Reasons of Overriding Public Interest (IROPI) / Derogation.** This stage is the main derogation process of Article 6(4) which examines whether there are IROPI for allowing a plan or project that will have adverse effects on the integrity of a European site to proceed in cases where it has been established that no less damaging alternative solution exists. The extra protection measures for Annex I priority habitats come into effect when making the IROPI case, in which case compensatory measures, required to be practical, implementable, likely to succeed, proportionate and enforceable, must be proposed and assessed, subsequently approved by the Minister and shared with the EC for information.

Figure D-6: Overview of AA process.



Source: EC, 2021. Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC Commission Notice 2021/C 437/01.

Purpose and Structure of this Document

his document seeks to assist the competent authority (FCC) under the provisions of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011, in fulfilling their obligations to conduct a Stage 1 screening for AA.

This document has been prepared considering the following guidance:

- Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government (2009) Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland. Guidance for Planning Authorities[4];
- Office of the Planning Regulator (OPR) (2021). Appropriate Assessment Screening for Development Management. OPR Practice Note PN01[5];
- European Commission (2021). Assessment of plans and projects in relation to Natura 2000 sites. Methodological guidance on the provisions of Article 6(3) and (4) of the Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC Commission Notice 2021/C 437/01[6]; and
- National Transport Authority (NTA). (2023). Guidance for EIA and AA Screening for Active Travel Projects funded by the NTA[7].

This document has been structured around the following sections:

- **Section 2 – Methodology,** provides an overview of the AA screening methodology followed;
- **Section 3 – Description of the Plan Area and Plan Components**, provides an overview of the Plan area, and the Plan background and content;
- **Section 4 – Identification of relevant European sites,** using a Source-Pathway-Receptor model;
- **Section 5 – Assessment of Likely Significant Effects,** considering the Plan alone and in-combination with other Plans; and
- **Section 6 - Draft Screening Determination**, presents the findings of the screening appraisal, concluding whether likely significant effects can be excluded alone or in-combination with the Plan.

[4] Available at: https://www.npws.ie
[5] Available at: https://www.opr.ie
[6] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu

2. Methodology

This document has been prepared following four main steps described in OPR (2021):

- **Step 1: Describe the plan and local site characteristics,** considering the nature and extent of the Plan and the characteristics of the Plan area;
- **Step 2: Identify the relevant European sites** and compile information on QIs, SCIs and COs.
  - Identify all European sites that might be affected based on the Zone of Influence (ZoI) of the Plan using the Source-Pathway-Receptor model.
  - Identify the QIs / SCIs of the site concerned and the COs.
  - Determine which of those QIs / SCIs / COs could be affected by the Plan.
- **Step 3: Assess the likely significant direct and indirect effects** on the COs of the European site(s) in relation to:
  - the Plan alone, and
  - In-combination with other plans and projects;
- **Step 4: Screening determination:** In the absence of mitigation measures, determine if the Plan alone or in-combination with other plans and projects could undermine the COs of the site(s) and give rise to likely significant effects.

It should be noted that screening has been undertaken without the inclusion of mitigation measures. This is in line with the decision made by the Court of Justice of the European Union (CJEU) in 'People Over Wind and Peter Sweetman v Coillte Teoranta' C-323/17[8], on whether, or in what circumstances, mitigation measures can be considered when carrying out screening for AA. CJEU concluded that it was not appropriate to take account of measures intended to avoid or reduce the harmful effects of a plan or project on a European site at the screening stage. It should be noted that in 'Eco Advocacy v An Bord Pleanála' C-721/21[9], the CJEU clarified that measures, such as sustainable drainage systems (SuDS), which are incorporated into a project as standard features, inherent in the project and irrespective of any effect on any European Site, can, however, be taken into account at the AA Screening stage.

[7] Available at: https://www.nationaltransport.ie
[8] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu
[9] Available at: https://eur-lex.europa.eu

3. Description of the Plan Area and Plan Components

In May 2023, FCC published An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal[10], which stated that "our vision for Fingal is to ensure that walking, cycling and wheeling will become a realistic and safe choice for everyday short journeys. We will achieve this vision by putting Active Travel first in our planning, design and delivery of infrastructure and initiatives."

Active Travel aligns with a range of plans and strategies developed at national and regional levels, as illustrated in Figure D-7.

Figure D-7: Policies relevant to Active Travel in Fingal

Source: FCC (2023) An Active Travel Strategy for Fingal

Balrothery is a village and civil parish located in Fingal, and falls under the jurisdiction of FCC, who commenced development of the Plan in December 2023, as a form of implementing the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal at local level.

The draft Plan documents reviewed to inform this Report for AA Screening include:

- Baseline Assessment Report (internal draft dated June 2024);
- Stage 2: Developing a Plan Community Engagement Event (public draft dated November 2024[11]);
- Balrothery Active Travel Plan (internal draft dated March 2025); and
- Project shortlist (internal draft dated March 2025).

Plan Area

The Plan area is illustrated in Figure D-8 covering Balrothery village and immediate surroundings (within 800 m from the village centre).

Based on Google Earth imagery reviewed in March 2025, the Plan area is considered to be characterised by the built environment of Balrothery village, which includes a number of fragmented green recreational spaces, as well as well-defined plots of arable land and improved agricultural grassland.

Fingal has a rich biodiversity supported by an Ecological Network that comprises four elements[12]: core nature conservation sites and associated buffer zones, nature development areas and ecological corridors. These are described below in relation to their relevance to the Plan area and immediate surroundings.

- **Core nature conservation sites**, including:
  - **European sites** – there are no European sites located within or adjacent to the Plan area;
  - **Natural Heritage Area (NHAs)**, designated under the Wildlife Act[13], these are areas considered important for habitats present, or which hold species of plants and animals whose habitat needs protection - the Knock Lake proposed NHA (pNHA)[14] (also referred to as Wavin Lakes) is located to the south-west of the Plan area, considered the largest freshwater lake in Fingal, home to many

[10] Available at: https://www.fingal.ie
[11] Available at: https://www.fingal.ie
[12] See Fingal Biodiversity Action Plan 2023 – 2030, available at: https://www.fingal.ie
[13] Wildlife Act 1976. Available at: https://www.irishstatutebook.ie
[14] See NPWS viewer showing distribution of NHAs and pNHAs, available at: https://storymaps.arcgis.com

water birds such as Little grebe (*Tachybaptus ruficollis*), Coot (*Rallidae spp.*) and Water rail (*Rallus aquaticus*)[12];
    - **Sites with EU priority habitats listed in Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive** – there are no sites with Annex I habitats located within the Plan area or its immediate vicinity, these are mostly found along the coast of Fingal;
    - **Marine habitat for EU marine priority species listed in Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive** – there are no marine habitats located within the Plan or its immediate vicinity; and
    - **Sites with nationally legally protected plant species under the Flora Protection Order and sites with Red Data book and other nationally rare plant species** – there are no sites within the Plan area known to host legally protected species or other nationally rare plant species.
- **Buffer zones around the core sites**, which mainly comprise farmland and amenity grassland that are used by the migratory birds around the three estuaries and NHA wetlands in Fingal during the winter – there are no buffer zones located within the Plan area or its immediate vicinity.
- **Nature development areas**, which are areas with potential for biodiversity enhancement, locations where nature can be combined with other activities, such as farming, quarrying, forestry and recreation – the Balbriggan Golf Club nature development area is located to the east of the Plan area.
- **Ecological Corridors**, which are functional passages between several nature conservation areas – the Matt Stream (tributary of Bracken River) is located within the Plan area. It flows almost parallel to the main road crossing the village, R132, and outfalls to the marine environment at Balbriggan Harbour. The Matt Stream belongs to the Nanny Delvin catchment area, which includes the area drained by the Rivers Nanny and Delvin and by all streams entering tidal water between Mornington Point and Sea Mount, Co. Dublin, draining a total area of 711km² and subdivided into six sub-catchments[15]. Under the Water Framework Directive (WFD), this water body is classified as of 'poor' ecological status or potential[16]. A significant pressure on Matt Stream is urban diffuse run-off and potentially also channelisation[17]. Japanese Knotweed (*Reynoutria japonica*), Himalayan balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) and Giant hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) alien (invasive) species are noted to be occasionally found along watercourses in Fingal[12] and could be present along the Matt Stream.

Figure D-8: Balrothery Active Travel Plan Area

Plan Components

The main components of the draft Plan assessed include:

- the Vision;
- twelve Key Principles; and
- Proposed Solutions for different zones.

In addition, the Plan will include details of its proposed implementation, including phasing, financial plan, risk management and monitoring and evaluation.

[15] See Nanny Delcing catchment area report (2024), available at: https://catchments.ie
[16] See Matt Stream water body assessment (2016 – 2021), available at: https://www.catchments.ie
[17] See Palmerstown sub-catchment assessment (2018), available at: https://catchments.ie

Vision

The draft Plan defines the Vision of the Plan as follows: "A unique and vibrant village, focussed on community and connectivity".

Key Principles

The draft Plan is underpinned by following twelve Key Principles:

- Feels safe
- Thriving natural environment
- Quality public realm
- Healthier lifestyles
- Unique heritage and character
- Linking to surrounding areas
- Well-connected local destinations
- Comfort and convenience
- Enables local business
- Accessibility for all
- Integration with other travel modes
- Clean, quiet and low carbon

Proposed Solutions

Based on discussions with FCC stakeholders and feedback from the Open Forum engagement, three initial alternative Strategic Options were developed to inform specific Proposed Solutions for different zones within the Plan area, Table D-3 provides an overview of Proposals identified at this stage.

Table D-3: Overview of Proposals

Zone	Proposed Solutions
Village Centre	• Extension of the one-way system to create a 'one-way loop' around the village. • New/widened footpaths on Coach Road, resolving safety issues • Undergrounding of Electricity Supply Board pole and reconfiguration of the junction to remove triangle of grass and provide a new courtesy crossing. • Reconfiguration of junction outside of Pharmacy with new zebra crossing. • Dedicated short-term / disabled parking bay outside of the pharmacy. • Enhancements to the green spaces adjacent to Spar to include additional cycle parking, street furniture, screening from the road and potential for a future rural mobility hub.
School Route	• New entrance space outside of primary school with zebra crossing, public realm enhancements, traffic calming and vehicle management measures. • Carriageway narrowing and widening of footpaths. • Resurfacing of road between village centre and primary school for enhanced public realm and finish. • Upgrade of side street junctions for pedestrian priority. • Courtesy crossing between Coach Rd Manor and The Coachyard. • Additional traffic calming measures.
Eastern Gateway	• Traffic calming / speed reduction measures. • Enhanced signage and gateway features. • Review and upgrade of Knightswood/Coach Road/Rosepark junction to address safety concerns. • Upgrade of side street junctions for pedestrian priority. • Carriageway narrowing on Ringfort View / Rosepark and down the hill into the village centre, widening footpaths. • Public realm street upgrades with the introduction of SuDS, green infrastructure and amenities (e.g. street furniture). • New pedestrian crossings east of Ringfort Avenue and close to entrance to Balruddery Fields. • Cycle parking facilities within communal greenspaces for local residents. • Creation of active travel greenway to connect Darcystown Road with School Land / Old Coach Road to provide alternative off-road walking and cycling route to the primary school. • Colour themed signage, public art and installations.
South of the Village	• Speed limit reduction on R132 on the southern approach to Balrothery (50km/h) with associated signage and road markings. • Carriageway narrowing on R132 with a new segregated cycleway to connect the village centre to Glebe Park. • Upgrade of Glebe Park junction to improve segregation of pedestrians/cyclists from vehicles and address safety concerns.

Zone	Proposed Solutions
	• New footpath on the northbound carriageway of the R132 between Wavin Lake and Inch Road. • Signalised crossing on R132 in close proximity to the Glebe Park entrance.
Northern Gateway	• Signalised crossing on R132 close to bus stops to the north of the village. • New footpath on R132 northbound carriageway from bus stop to Stephenstown junction (and potentially onwards to Hamilton Care Home) • Re-configuration of northern R132 junction to convert to 'exit only' from R132 and address visibility issues • Upgrades to municipal greenspaces at northern end of village to include cycle parking provision.
Inch Road	• Reduced speed limit (30km/h) between junction of Inch Road / R132 to Balbriggan Rugby Club. • Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) west of Balbriggan Rugby club and at R132 / Inch Road junction. • Enhanced signage and gateway features on approach to Balbriggan Rugby Club. • Traffic calming / speed reduction measures (vertical and horizontal deflection) • Extension of footpath from R132 bus stop to Balbriggan Rugby Club (single-sided).

4. Identification of Relevant European Sites

In line with guidance (OPR, 2021), the likely ZoI of the Plan is defined using a Source-Pathway-Receptor model, where 'source' corresponds to individual elements of the Plan that have the potential to affect a European site and associated qualifying features ('receptors') through a given 'pathway', i.e. means or route by which a source can affect receptors. Effects are created when there is a linkage between the source, pathway and receptor.

Existing guidance notes recommendations to consider a 15 km ZoI, noting that this distance should be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, avoiding the use of arbitrary distances.

The source of potential effects of the Plan is associated with the Proposed Solutions of the Plan, which are considered to be highly localised and contained within the built environment of the Plan area, i.e. within and/or immediately adjacent to the carriageway, and are considered of small size and scale, i.e. limited to small scale works on road, pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, public realm street upgrades and traffic management measures. In addition, Proposed Solutions, and the wider Plan, are underpinned by Key Principles that include environmental conservation and protection, which would guide development and avoid / minimise potential adverse effects.

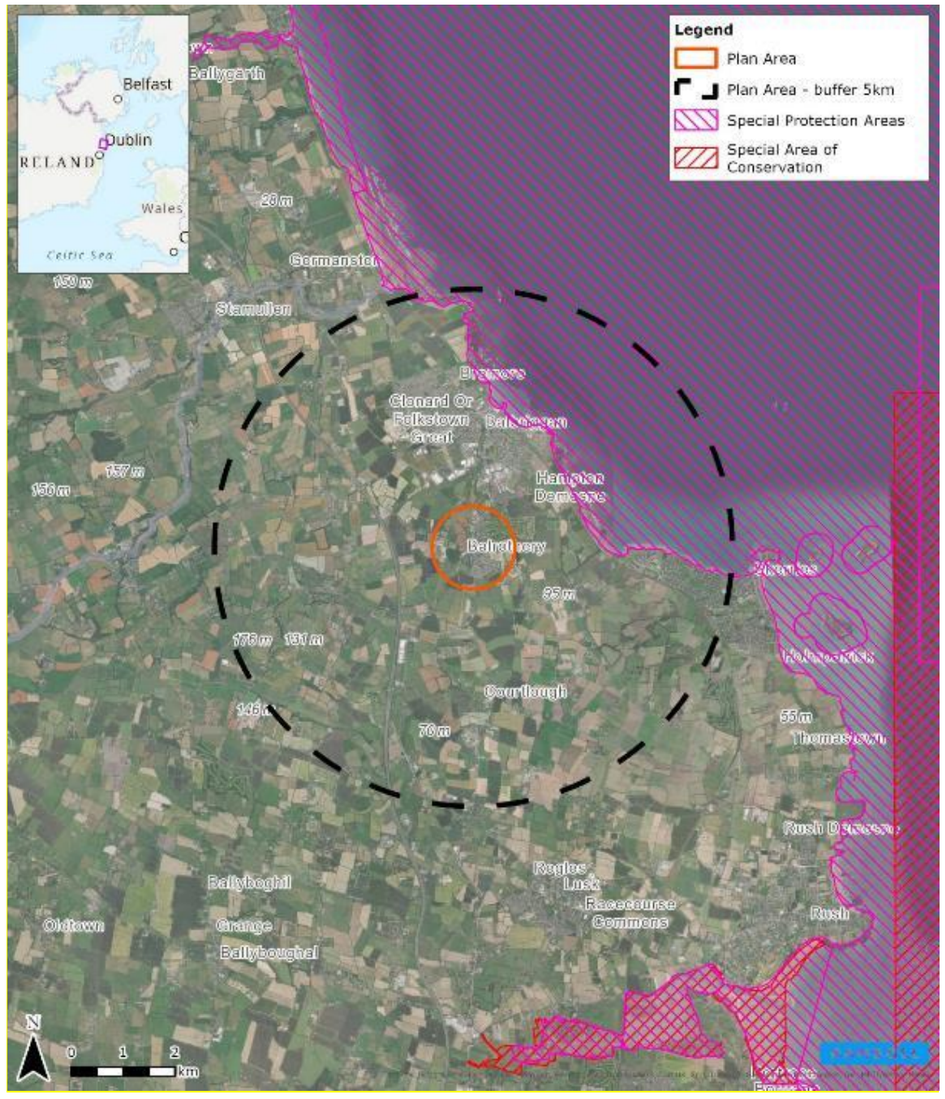
Due to the nature (i.e. which supports local infrastructure to encourage active travel) and spatial scale (i.e. village and immediate surroundings) of the Plan and Proposed Solutions, the main pathway that could link the Plan to European sites and their QIs / SCIs, would be proximity, i.e. location of European sites and/or QIs / SCIs within the Plan area. At this stage, no instream works, bankside works or significant excavation works are anticipated to be required for Proposed Solutions supported by the Plan, and no pathways for interaction beyond the boundaries of the Plan area relating to surface water (i.e. Knock Lake and Matt Stream), groundwater, land (i.e. land contamination), air (i.e. noise or air emissions) or indirect pathways associated with ecological corridors (e.g. migratory paths or water ecological corridors) are considered applicable.

Overall, it is considered that the ZoI of the Plan is limited to the boundaries of the Plan area. However, taking a conservative approach, European sites closest to the Plan area have been further considered to confirm that likely significant effects can be ruled out. These are illustrated in Figure D-9 and further described in relation associated QIs / SCIs and potential pathways for likely significant effect in Table D-4.

Table D-4: Identification of relevant European Sites

European site (code)	List of QIs/SCIs	Distance from Plan Area	Source-Pathway-Receptor
Nort-west Irish Sea SPA (004236)	• Red-throated Diver (*Gavia stellata*) • Great Northern Diver (*Gavia immer*) • Fulmar (*Fulmarus glacialis*) • Manx Shearwater (*Puffinus puffinus*) • Cormorant (*Phalacrocorax carbo*) • Shag (*Phalacrocorax aristotelis*) • Common Scoter (*Melanitta nigra*) • Little Gull (*Larus minutus*) • Black-headed Gull (*Chroicocephalus ridibundus*) • Common Gull (*Larus canus*) • Lesser Black-backed Gull (*Larus fuscus*) • Herring Gull (*Larus argentatus*) • Great Black-backed Gull (*Larus marinus*) • Kittiwake (*Rissa tridactyla*) • Roseate Tern (*Sterna dougallii*) • Common Tern (*Sterna hirundo*) • Arctic Tern (*Sterna paradisaea*) • Little Tern (*Sterna albifrons*) • Guillemot (*Uria aalge*) • Razorbill (*Alca torda*) • Puffin (*Fratercula arctica*)	2.185 km	This SPA constitutes an important resource for marine birds, providing supporting habitats (for foraging and other maintenance behaviours) for those seabirds that breed at colonies on the north-west Irish Sea's islands and coastal headlands. The Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of this SPA. The Plan is not located within or adjacent to this SPA. Therefore, Proposed Solutions supported by the Plan are not anticipated to cause direct disturbance to the SCIs of this SPA. Habitats within and adjacent to the Plan area include green recreational spaces, arable land and improved agricultural grassland. There are no records for the SCI species within the Plan area or its vicinity, and it is considered very unlikely that the SCIs rely on the Plan area as *ex situ* habitats given its location onshore. In addition, the scale and size of Proposed Solutions supported by the Plan are minor, with any potential adverse effects anticipated to be highly localised, and not identified as giving rise to adverse environmental effects on this SPA and associated SCIs.
Rockabill to Dalkey Island SAC (003000)	• Reefs • Harbour Porpoise (*Phocoena phocoena*)	8.124 km	This SAC Includes a range of dynamic inshore and coastal waters in the western Irish Sea. The Plan is not directly connected with or necessary to the conservation management of this SAC. Due to its nature, there are no pathways for interaction between the Plan components and the marine environment (and therefore this SAC and associated QIs).

Figure D-9: European sites within proximity to the Plan area



5. Assessment of Likely Significant Effects

As identified in the Section 4, there is no real viable pathway for transmission of impacts to European sites due to the small scale of the Plan (and Proposed Solutions supported), the minor impact sources and overall lack of pathways for interaction beyond the boundaries of the Plan area. It is considered highly unlikely that the Plan alone would contribute to significant effects to European sites.

OPR (2021)[5] indicates that where plans or projects are found unlikely to have significant effects on their own, their effects in-combination with other plans or projects could be significant, and requires that in-combination assessments concentrate on projects/plans that could in fact act in-combination to affect European site CO's.

The Plan is influenced by other plans and programmes that are considered higher in hierarchy, developed at national, regional and local levels. The Plan can actually be considered to implement the Active Travel Strategy for Fingal at local level and therefore is considered to have limited capacity to influence other plans, beyond those prepared at local level, which will need to ensure compatibility / alignment.

Considering the location of European sites in relation to the Plan area, small scale of the Plan (and Proposed Solutions supported), the minor impact sources and overall lack of pathways for interaction beyond the boundaries of the Plan area, it is considered highly unlikely that the Plan could act in-combination with other projects/plans to affect European sites.

5. Draft Screening Determination

This screening report for AA has been completed in compliance with EU and Irish law and the relevant European Commission and national guidelines to determine whether or not likely significant effects on any European site could be excluded as a result of the Plan.

Based on the information available at the time of writing of this Screening Report for AA, it is considered that due to the small scale and nature of Plan, and location of the Plan area in relation to European sites, it is considered very unlikely that the Plan would result in significant effects on any European site alone or in-combination with other projects/plans.

It should be noted that this is a plan-based assessment, and that any Proposed Solutions supported by the Plan considered as 'projects' under the Habitats Directive and its legal transposition in Ireland, shall be subject to separate AA screening to update and/or confirm the findings of this Screening Report for AA.

It is considered that FCC can conclude that the Plan poses no risk of significant effects on European sites, and as such requires no further assessment. FCC will need to make its own determination based on these conclusions.