



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHEATHARLACH

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

in conjunction with



Safe Routes to School Scheme

**St. Brigid's National School,
Grange, Tullow, Co. Carlow.**

**Proposal Summary to Accompany
Public Consultation**

May 2026

Carlow County Council,
County Buildings,
Athy Road,
Carlow,
R93 E7R7.

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1. Description of the Proposed Development

Carlow County Council are proposing to carry out a Safe Routes to School scheme at St. Brigid's National School, Grange, Tullow, Co. Carlow.

The proposed development will consist of 'front of school' interventions in the form of Schools Zones to increase road users' awareness of the presence of vulnerable road users. The School Zones will create safe protected areas outside the school gates where vehicular drop off is discouraged. The School Zones will use identifiable design features to highlight the presence of the school and encourage traffic to slow down, prevent parking on pavements and encourage drivers to make legal and safe drop-offs outside of the School Zone area.

This development is being funded under the National Transport Authority's Active Travel Investment Programme. It is being carried out under the regulatory provisions of Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act, 1994, as amended. The School Zones will include the following features:

- Renewal of existing road markings and overall road signage.
- Provision of new road markings and road signage.
- Junction tightening at priority junctions.
- Upgrades to the existing car park area at the Church, including resurfacing works.
- Provision of uncontrolled pedestrian crossing at the junction with The Granary development.
- Upgrades to the existing zebra crossing serving the car park and the Church.
- Construction of a new footpath connecting the car park to the front of school.
- Provision of a new zebra crossing at the front of school.
- Provision of SRTS design elements such as coloured circles painted on the road surface, pencil bollards,
- and gateway signage to demarcate the school zone

The upgrade of pedestrian facilities is in line with the scheme's objectives, such as promoting the use of park and stride from the existing car park area at the Church, providing a new pedestrian crossing to the school, and making the existing priority junctions along the scheme safer by promoting slower vehicular speeds and a better environment for pedestrians. The Figure below illustrates the site location.



2. Consistency with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the County Development Plan

The development of this project will be in line with the most relevant local and national policy documents for the area as outlined below:

1. Carlow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028
2. Cycle Design Manual (2023)
3. Active Travel Advice Note: Rapid Build Active Travel Facilities – 2023
4. Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) – 2019
5. Project Ireland 2040
6. Climate Action Plan – 2023
7. Safe Routes to School Design Guide 2022

Carlow County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

The proposed development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. In particular the following policies and objectives, which are set out in the following sections of those plans:

Chapter 1: Introduction and Context:

It is a strategic objective of the Council to:

- S. O11: Promote the provision and maintenance of high quality infrastructure and infrastructural networks and environmental services which seek to complement the overall economic and settlement strategy and contribute to the sustainable development of the area.
- S. O12: Ensure the proper integration of transportation and land use planning through the increased use of sustainable transport modes and the minimisation of travel demand to achieve a sustainable, integrated and low carbon transport system.

Chapter 2: Core Strategy and Settlement Strategy:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- CS. O11: Promote the integration of spatial planning and transport policy, ensure the maintenance of the strategic function of the national roads' network in the County, and promote sustainable public transport including a public bus service for Carlow town and active travel alternatives throughout the County.
- CS O13: Promote County Carlow in its transition to a low-carbon and climate resilient County through the promotion of sustainable energy, sustainable settlement patterns, and reduced travel demand in accordance with the RSES, NPF and Climate Action Plan

Chapter 5: Sustainable Travel and Transportation:

It is the policy of the Council to:

- MS. P1: Seek investment in sustainable transport solutions, improved walking and cycling connectivity routes, the provision of a public bus service in Carlow Town and the expansion of rural transport initiatives throughout the county.

It is an objective of the Council to:

MS. O1: Support modal shift at a County level from private vehicles to sustainable modes (walking, cycling Bus or Train) to access work, school, college from 23% in 2016 (Ref: Table 5.1) to 28% in 2028.

It is the policy of the Council to:

WC. P1: Prioritise and promote more sustainable and convenient modes of travel by the development of high quality walking and cycling infrastructure including greenways within a safe environment.

WC. P2: Work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, relevant Government Departments, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling

WC. P3: Ensure that connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is maximised in new communities and improved within existing areas particularly towns and villages throughout the county including associated infrastructure, to maximise access to local shops, educational facilities, public transport services, employment locations and other amenities.

WC. P4: Provide for safer routes to schools within the County and promote walking and cycling as suitable modes of transport as part of the Green Schools Programme and other local traffic management improvements.

It is the objective of the Council to:

WC. O2: Ensure that all streets and street networks seek to facilitate permeability, are designed in accordance with best practice standards including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the National Cycle Manual which seek to prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists within a safe and comfortable environment for a wide range of ages, abilities and journey types.

WC. O4: Prioritise where required the upgrade and maintenance of footpaths, cycleways, public lighting, traffic management and public realm works and supporting signage on public roads / paths.

Chapter 7: Climate Action and Energy:

It is the policy of the Council to:

CA. P1: Promote and support the implementation of European, national, regional, and local objectives for climate change adaptation and mitigation as detailed in the following documents and taking into account all other provisions of the Plan (including those relating to land-use planning, sustainable travel and transport, and flood risk management and drainage);

CA. P2: Support the transition of the County to a competitive, low carbon, climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable economy by 2050, by way of reducing greenhouse gases, increasing renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency.

EC. P1: Promote and support initiatives aimed at reducing the level of energy consumption across all sectors in the County.

Chapter 8: Community Development:

It is an objective of the Council to:

- PD. O2: Ensure that all footpaths and public areas are accessible and safe for people with disabilities and/or reduced mobility.

Cycle Design Manual (CDM) 2023

- Focuses on delivering safe cycle facilities suitable for people of all ages and abilities, informed by international best practice and a decade of Irish infrastructure delivery.
- Emphasises segregating cyclists from motor traffic where speeds and volumes are high and maintaining a general presumption toward separating pedestrians from cyclists.
- Introduces new design options for Ireland, including protected junctions, Dutch-style cycle-friendly roundabouts, and parallel crossings.
- Integrates bicycles into urban design through "sustainable safety" principles to create a safe environment for all road users.

Active Travel Advice Note: Rapid Build Active Travel Facilities (2023)

- Provides options for high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure using cost-effective, rapid-build methods.
- Aims to reduce car dependency and lower carbon emissions by favouring sustainable transport modes over the private car.

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) 2019

- User Hierarchy: Establishes a mandatory priority list for street design:
 1. Pedestrians (Top priority/most sustainable).
 2. Cyclists.
 3. Public Transport.
 4. Private Motor Vehicles (Lowest priority).
- Advocates for narrower carriageways (standard 3.25m, reducible to 3m in low-speed areas) as an effective measure to calm traffic.
- Sets desirable footpath widths between 1.8m and 4m depending on activity levels.
- Focuses on creating a sustainable, place-based street network that balances movement with the creation of quality urban spaces.

Project Ireland 2040

- Supports transport infrastructure to enable regional towns to expand sustainably.
- Prioritises safe active travel options to alleviate traffic congestion and meet national climate objectives.
- Targets investment in high-quality infrastructure to create attractive living spaces with defined character.

Climate Action Plan 2025

- Identifies active travel (walking and cycling) as a vital component in transitioning to a low-carbon economy.
- Commits to the construction of new pedestrian/cycling routes and the promotion of electric bicycles.
- Emphasises the National Adaptation Framework (NAF) to ensure "just resilience" and avoid maladaptation in the face of increasing extreme weather events.
- Nototes that all 31 local authorities have adopted Climate Action Plans to integrate climate services and future projections into local infrastructure.

Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Design Guide

- Recommends physical separation of students from vehicular traffic through dedicated footpaths, cycle lanes, and specialized crossings.
- Suggests speed ramps, raised crossings, and traffic islands to lower speeds near school entrances.
- Focuses on specialised signage, pavement markings (school zone signs, yield signs), and adequate lighting for early morning/late afternoon safety.
- Combines physical infrastructure with education programs for students and parents, emphasising collaboration between schools, transport departments, and the community.

Conclusion

The proposed Safe Routes to School (SRTS) development at St. Brigid's National School, Grange is fundamentally consistent with the principles of proper planning and the sustainable development of both the immediate area and the wider County Carlow region. This consistency is evidenced by its alignment with national, regional, and local policy frameworks:

Alignment with National Strategic Policy

The proposal directly supports Project Ireland 2040 and the Climate Action Plan 2025 by prioritising "Sustainable Mobility." By providing high-quality active travel infrastructure, the project facilitates a transition away from private car dependency, directly contributing to Ireland's carbon emission reduction targets and fostering "just resilience" against climate change.

Adherence to Best-Practice Design Standards

The development adheres to the rigorous safety and design standards set out in the Cycle Design Manual (2023) and DMURS (2019).

- **Safety & Segregation:** By implementing the CDM's focus on segregating vulnerable road users from high-speed traffic, the plan ensures a "Sustainable Safety" environment suitable for all ages.
- **User Hierarchy:** The project correctly applies the DMURS hierarchy by placing pedestrians and cyclists at the top of the design priority, utilizing traffic calming measures such as narrow carriageways and raised crossings to rebalance the street environment.

Integration with County Carlow Development Goals

The plan is a localised realization of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028. It fulfils the County's mandate to:

- Enhance connectivity to educational institutions.
- Improve public health through active transportation.
- Ensure a balanced approach to land use that protects the character of the Grange area while modernizing its infrastructure.

Focused Educational and Community Welfare

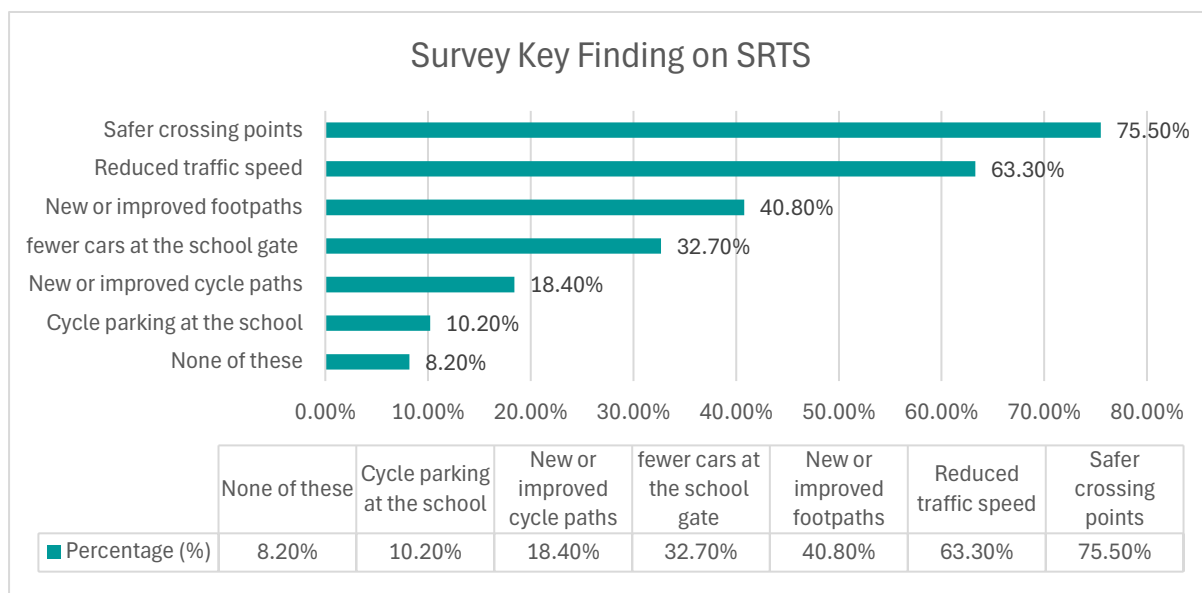
By following the Safe Routes to School Design Guide, the proposal transcends simple engineering; it creates a holistic safety "envelope" around Grange NS. The combination of physical infrastructure (protected paths, lighting, and signage) and the encouragement of behavioural change through educational initiatives ensures that the development is not only functional but socially sustainable.

3 Scheme Justification

The proposed Safe Routes to School Scheme will deliver new, safe, and high-quality pedestrian infrastructure to enhance safety for the students at St. Brigid’s National School. The St. Brigid’s National School is a primary school located in Grange, County Carlow, the school is host to 202 students and 27 staff. There are 38 onsite staff parking and additional spaces in the church car park, with 3 blue badge parking spaces. The road that links with the school is the R418 which has a fixed 30km/hr speed periodically reduced from 60km/hr.

The project includes the construction of upgraded pedestrian facilities on both extents of the R418. These works will significantly improve permeability and continuity within the active travel network, contributing to a more coherent and attractive walking environment for St. Brigid’s National School.

The scheme will provide enhanced connectivity for pedestrians travelling from the surrounding residential areas. Residents along the R418 will also benefit from improved direct access to the Church of St. John the Baptist, and the range of facilities and amenities along R418.



Based on the outcome of the key findings illustrated in the table above the Active Travel Department of Carlow County Council undertook a design to address the safety issues identified outside of the school and the findings raised during the parent survey.

4 Impact of the Proposed Scheme

Impact on traffic

It is envisaged that this scheme will have a minor impact on traffic during construction, however no long-term negative impacts are expected. The construction will allow sustainable transport in a safe environment allowing school users and residents to make journeys by walking or cycling which they previously would have made by car. This will result in fewer car journeys and result in a long-term positive impact on traffic.

Impact on pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users

The proposed works will have a significantly positive impact on pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users seeking to access educational facilities. The scheme will provide improved connectivity in a safe and comfortable environment.

Impact during construction

The following impacts during construction will be temporary:

- Site mobilisation and operations
- Temporary traffic management
- Construction traffic and materials deliveries
- Construction dust and noise
- Temporary hoarding/fencing/barriers/traffic cones
- Temporary site lighting, if deemed necessary

Impact on landscape and visual amenity

The works will take place primarily within an existing road corridor. It is envisaged that this scheme will have a minor impact on landscape and visual amenity during construction, however no long-term negative impacts are expected. New road signage, road markings and landscaping in the vicinity of the works will enhance and improve the existing streetscape at the works location.

Impact on ecology

The proposed works do not lie within or affect any existing ecologically sensitive areas.

Impact on built and cultural heritage

The following information sources were checked as part of a desktop exercise to check for possible impact on built and cultural heritage:

- **The National Monuments Service Sites and Monuments Record (SMR)**
 - *Nothing recorded*
- **The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)**
 - *Nothing recorded*
- **The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)**
 - *Nothing recorded*

It was determined that the works will not impinge on or affect any built and cultural heritage.

Conclusion

It is expected that the proposed development will have some short-term negative impacts during construction but no longer-term impacts requiring mitigation are expected to arise.

