



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHEATHARLACH

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

in conjunction with



**Road Safety Scheme for Safe Routes to School,
St. Brigid's National School,
Station Road, Bagenalstown.**

**Proposal Summary to Accompany
Public Consultation**

October 2023

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

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1. Description of the Proposed Development

The proposed development will consist of the provision of a high-quality pedestrian access to St Brigid's National School and Bagenalstown Train Station along Station Road from Kilree Street to Fenagh Road, which will provide improved and safer walking and cycling facilities by narrowing the existing road through the construction of buildouts and the revision of lining along the edge of road. This development is being carried out under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994.

The scheme will include the following elements:

- Removal of existing Buildouts and Relocation of the Pedestrian Crossing
- Rapid Build infill to provide additional public realm space outside of St. Brigid's National School
- Engineered reduction in width of Station Road through Kerbing and Lining to achieve a reduction in speed in the vicinity of the school
- Installation of associated signage and road markings to designate the area as a School Zone



Figure 1 - Site Location

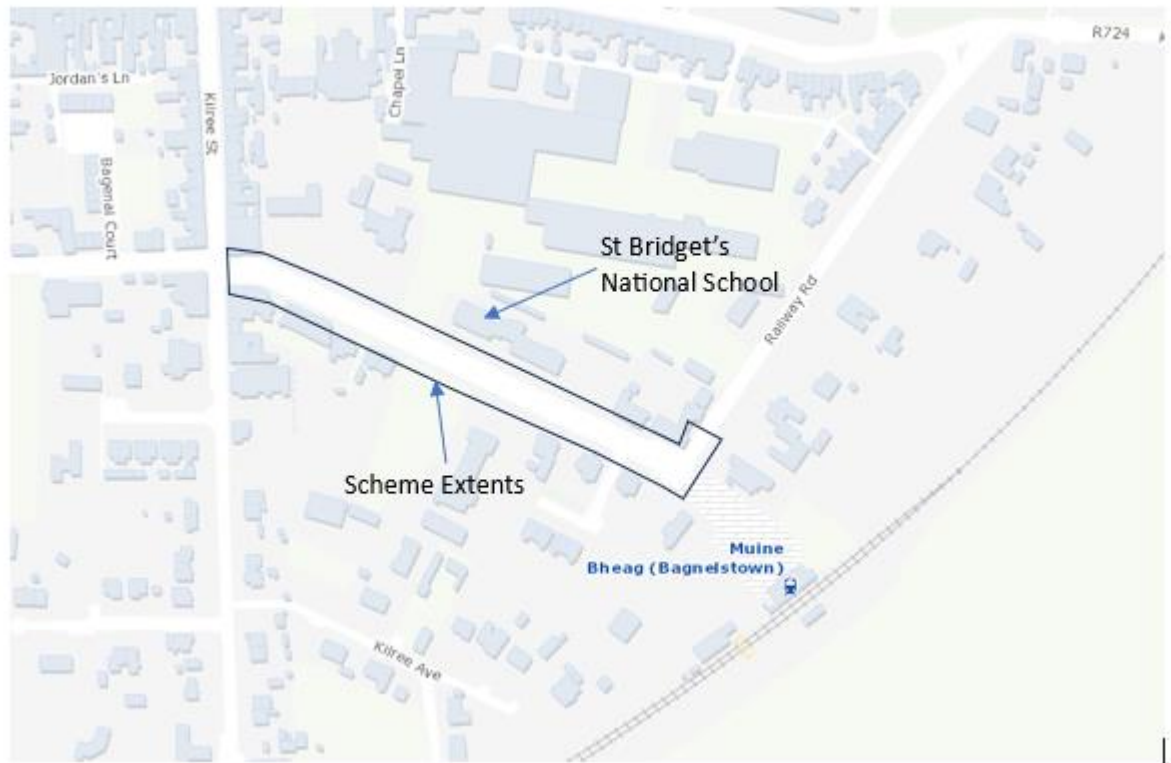


Figure 2 - Scheme Extents

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

Bagenalstown is a District Town of County Carlow. It is an inland town sited on low-lying land, is located in the south of the County and is an important urban centre, which services a large agricultural hinterland. The town provides a range of residential, community, educational, commercial and employment functions.

The Town is located approximately 20km from Carlow town and approximately 23km from Kilkenny on the R705 Leighlinbridge / Carlow to Borris / New Ross regional road. The town is also located on the R724 regional road to Kildavin and Bunclody. It is also served by a railway station and is strategically located proximate to the R448 and the M9 Dublin to Waterford motorway

The recently adopted Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 identifies Bagenalstown as a District Town in the Settlement Hierarchy. This tier corresponds to “Well-developed serviced settlements with a moderate level of jobs supporting services and community facilities with good transport links and capacity for continued commensurate growth to become more self-sustaining.”

The proposed development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Muine Bheag/ Royal Oak Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023. In particular the following policies and objectives, which are set out in the following sections of those plans:

Draft Carlow County Development Plan, Ch.5: Sustainable Travel & Transportation

5.3 Sustainable Mobility / Modal Shift

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 a modal shift from private vehicles to access work / school / college from circa 23% (2016) to 28% (2028).

5.4 Walking and Cycling

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

WC. O6: Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to rail station locations and other public transport interchanges within the county.

5.8.5 Urban Roads and Street

It is the policy of the Council to:

UR. P1: Ensure that all urban roads and streets in our towns and villages, including residential streets in housing estates are designed in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards set out in the 'Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets' (2013/2019) and any further update to the Manual during the life of this Plan and to implement TII Publication Standard DN-GEO-03084 'The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads' as appropriate.

5.17 Accessibility

It is the policy of the Council to:

AC. P1: Support suitable access for people with disabilities, including improvements to buildings, streets and public spaces.

Muine Bheag Royal Oak Area Plan 2017 - 2023

Chapter 7 Transport and Movement – Chapter 7.4, Smarter Travel

Smarter Travel Policy

TP 1: To continue to promote a modal shift from private car use towards increased use of more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling, walking and public transport and to implement the initiatives contained in Government's "Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009-2020"

TP 2: To improve the pedestrian environment and promote the development of a network of pedestrian routes which link residential areas with recreational, educational, employment and tourist destinations to create a pedestrian environment that is safe and accessible by all.

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- TP 5 To ensure that the road and street network of Muine Bheag / Royal Oak is safe and convenient, that it has adequate capacity to accommodate motorised traffic and non motorised movements, that it has a high environmental quality with appropriate adjacent development and built form, particularly in the case of urban streets and streetscapes, and that adequate parking facilities are provided to serve the needs of the town. In this regard, the principles, approaches and standards as set out in relevant national policy shall inform future transport infrastructure and urban development. This shall include the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines 2012, the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2009 and accompanying Urban Design Manual 2009, the Traffic Management Guidelines 2003, the Traffic and Transport Assessment Guidelines 2007, the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013), the NRA Design Manual for Roads and Bridges (as appropriate to the regional road network outside areas subject to a reduced urban speed limit) and any updates or forthcoming guidelines in relation to street design and walking / cycling facilities
- TP 6 To promote road and traffic safety measures in conjunction with relevant Government Departments and other agencies through the provision of appropriate signage, minimising or removing existing traffic hazards and preventing the creation of additional or new traffic hazards.
- TP 9 To promote road and traffic safety measures in conjunction with relevant Government Departments and other agencies through the provision of appropriate signage, minimising or removing existing traffic hazards and preventing the creation of additional or new traffic hazards.

Smarter Travel Objectives

- T 01 To provide appropriate facilities for pedestrians and for people with special mobility needs in line with the aims of the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights.

Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in that:

- It will provide improved access to retail premises, recreational amenities, educational facilities, Public offices, Bagenalstown Railway Station and town centre services for pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users.
- It will facilitate modal shift away from private car use towards more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking.
- It will facilitate permeability and improved connectivity between residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists.
- It will provide pedestrians and cyclists within a safe and comfortable environment by reducing interactions with motorised traffic and through the provision of new and improved public lighting.

3 Scheme Justification

An Taisce's Infrastructure Officer for Safe Routes to School conducted a Safety Audit for St Brigid's National School, Station Road where they identified safety issues in front of the school. This audit was further expanded to a consultation process with parents whose dependants are attending the school.

On behalf of An Taisce the school issued a Safe Routes to School Parent Survey to all families of St. Brigid's National School. This parent survey had a 62% response rate. (this survey had a 6.4% Margin of Error at 95% Confidence level)

Of the responses received 56.4% of parents surveyed agreed that road safety is a problem around the school, 98.7% of parents would support works at the front of school that improve student safety, putting pedestrians and cyclists first, 96.2% of parents would support works that would improve the walking and cycling routes to school.

Parents also selected the following, when asked, what improvements would support them walking, cycling or scooting to school:-

Safer crossing points	65.4% of parents surveyed
Reduced traffic speed	56.4% of parents surveyed
New or improved cycle paths	51.3% of parents surveyed
Fewer cars at the school gate	33.3% of parents surveyed
New or improved footpaths	29.5% of parents surveyed
Cycle parking at the school	29.5% of parents surveyed

Based on the outcome of the Safety Audit and the results of the consultation undertaken for the school 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 of 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, recreational amenities, public offices, Bagenalstown train station and town centre services. 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

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- 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) –
 - 10400615 – Bagenalstown Railway Station.
- The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH)
 - 10400615 – Bagenalstown Railway Station.
- The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) –
 - Nothing recorded
- The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in Muin Bheag/ Royal Oak Plan Area, Chapter 10, Table 11 of Muine Bheag Royal Oak Area Plan 2017 - 2023
 - 10400615 – Bagenalstown Railway Station.

Bagenalstown Railway Station will not be affected during this project.

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.

5 Flood Risk Assessment

No flooding or surface water management issues have been identified for the site. The site is not indicated in a flood risk area as per the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the County Development Plan 2022-2028.