



**Kildare County Council
via website**

Date: 17th August 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Cycle Scheme at Craddockstown Road, Naas

1.0 INTRODUCTION

County Kildare Chamber is the business organisation in Kildare, proactively working to identify and progress developments that are facilitative of economic and sustainable growth. Representing an employer base of 400 businesses and over 38,000 employees across the county, County Kildare Chamber is the largest business organisation in the mid-east region of Ireland.

Given the significant breadth and depth of our membership, and our representation on various bodies at local and national level, County Kildare Chamber constitutes the representative voice for business in Kildare.

County Kildare Chamber is committed to improving the business environment and quality of life in Kildare and the wider region, and strongly supports the vision of growth contained within the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Mid Eastern Enterprise Plan. With this in mind, County Kildare Chamber welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Craddockstown Road Cycle Scheme consultation.

As a business organisation, County Kildare Chamber believes that long term planning and development, and specific project delivery such as this within key towns and villages creates a more diverse and resilient County.



2.0 SUBMISSION

Naas is the county town of Kildare and has a population of 21,393 (figure from Census 2016), making it the second largest town in the County.

Over the last two decades the population of Naas has significantly increased by over 15%. This increased population density has also brought amplified development to the town, with business and technology campuses, education facilities and housing.

This increased population and development has naturally led to greater amounts of road usage, be it private vehicle use, public transport, pedestrian, or cycle movement. With sustainable living increasingly on the minds of the public, more people are opting for alternative methods of transport.

The currently road layout on the Ballycane Road is no longer fit for purpose, especially with the recent opening of the education campus on the Craddockstownh Road. There is currently no cycleway leading to the school campus, or on the immediate adjoining road.

An unsafe travel environment makes active travel less inviting and diminishes demand. For our Chamber traffic is a key concern, congestion carries significant costs with it, but the greatest harms are done to quality of life.

The benefits of people friendly streets that promote the utilisation of public transport in combination with active transport networks and technologies create a healthier urban environment, reduce CO2 emissions, encourages resilient local economies, and makes for a more efficient use of finite land resources –in the short-run, the reprioritisation of resources will be zero-sum.

County Kildare Chamber welcomes the decision by Kildare County Council to review and open consultation on the new preferred option for a cycle scheme on the Craddockstown Road. Public safety should always be of the utmost importance and currently there is no dedicated cyclist facilities on either the Ballycane Road or Craddockstown Road. We believe the need for this scheme is enhanced by the number of residential developments adjacent to both roads.

In March 2020, County Kildare Chamber, Chambers Ireland and ICC Ireland announced that we had signed up to a new charter supporting the UN Sustainability Goals (SDGs). One of these goals, which we have worked to advocate for is the Sustainable Cities and Communities Goal.



County Kildare Chamber strives to lead and work with our stakeholders to develop the idea of sustainable towns and economically vibrant communities in the County.

With this in mind, we believe that cities and towns need more housing, transport, and social infrastructure. While this project does elevate the safety concerns for cyclists and pedestrians and should in time promote less use of vehicular traffic within South Naas, it does not address the shortage of cycle path on the main Ballycane Road and surrounding areas, connected to Naas centre.

The Chamber understands under the County Development Plan cycleways are proposed and planned for a number of areas in Kildare. For the '10 minute settlement' concept to become a reality, active travel and pedestrian and cycle scheme will need to be significantly increased.

3.0 CONCLUSION

County Kildare Chamber welcomes the provision for cyclists, pedestrians and other vulnerable road users, and the proposals at the Ballycane/Craddockstown Road junction. This development will mean a safer way for the public, especially younger road users to travel to school and the surrounding area. We believe it will also increase the numbers using active travel and transport options, as these modes of transport are now amenable.

We trust that the contents of this submission will be taken into consideration by Kildare County Council, and we are available at all times for consultation, discussion and support. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries regarding this submission.

Yours faithfully,

Sinéad Ronan
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