Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

Galway County Council Transport Support Programme

Our Reference No: 300876

Appendix A
GALWAY TRANSPORT MODELLING ASSESSMENT, WALKING AND CYCLING STRATEGY AND LOCAL TRANSPORT PLANS

IDENTIFICATION TABLE	
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Project	Galway Transport Modelling Assessment, Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Transport Plans
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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 SYSTRA Ltd has been engaged by Galway County Council (GCC) to provide a range of Transport Support for the County. These include the following Workstreams:

1) County Level Transport Modelling Assessment.

2) County Galway Walking & Cycling Strategy.

3) Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for four settlements: Athenry; Gort; Loughrea; and Oranmore/Garraun.

4) Community Transport Studies (CTSs) for six settlements: Clifden; Headford; Kinvara; Oughterard; Portumna; and Maigh Cuilinn.

5) Cycling and Walking Sub-Plans for:

- The four LTPs and six CTSs settlements listed above in items 3 and 4.
- Twelve additional settlements:
  - Small Growth Settlements x six: An Spidéal; An Cheathrú Rua; Ballygar; Dunmore; Glenamaddy; and Moylough.
  - Rural Settlements x six: Carna; Clarinbridge; Clonbur; Craughwell; Miltown; and Mountbellow.

1.1.2 These Studies (known as the Galway Transport Support Programme) will guide future transport investment, setting out the County's Walking & Cycling Strategy as well as each settlement's transport strategy for the period to 2028, but also looking beyond to 2040.

1.2 Technical Note Contents

1.2.1 This Technical Note sets out a review of international, national, regional, and county level policies and plans relevant to the Studies outlined above. The development of the Galway Transport Modelling Assessment, Walking and Cycling Strategy and Local Transport Plans / Community Transport Plans will be shaped by and reflect these policies, along with relevant national guidance and current consultations.

1.2.2 This Technical Note summarises the review of policy and plans relevant to the Galway Transport Support Programme as follows:

- International level
- National level
- Regional level
- County level

1.2.3 This Technical Note will be supplemented by a review of Local Plans and Policies for each of the 22 settlements listed above. These Local Plan and Policy reviews will form part of the Local Transport Plan / Community Transport Plan / Cycling & Walking Sub-Plan reports developed for each of the settlements.

2. POLICY & PLAN REVIEW

2.1 International

Table 1. Policy & Plan Review – International

POLICY & PLANS	INTERNATIONAL
European Union Green Deal (European Commission, 2020) and **Fit For 55 Package** (European Commission, 2021)	The **European Union Green Deal** calls for a 90% reduction in transport greenhouse gas emissions in order for the EU to become a climate-neutral economy by 2050. In 2021, the European Commission published its **Fit for 55 Package** to enable the EU to meet the Paris Agreement carbon targets and achieve net zero by 2050. The Fit for 55 Package encompasses a suite of legislative initiatives across various sectors including energy, transport and buildings. It is intended to fundamentally overhaul the EU's climate policy framework and put the EU on track to deliver on its **climate targets of a 55% reduction in carbon emissions by 2030 and net-zero emissions by 2050**. **Sustainable transport** is one of the underscored ways to achieve this target through providing users with more affordable, accessible, healthier and cleaner mobility alternatives.
UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (2019)	In March 2019, Ireland ratified the **UN Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities**. Article 9 of the 'UNCRPD' includes the **right to transport and creating an accessible end to end journey**. Its focus is: *"To enable persons with disabilities to live independently and **participate fully in all aspects of life**, States Parties shall take **appropriate measures to ensure to persons with disabilities access, on an equal basis with others, to the physical environment, to transportation**, to information and communications, including information and communications technologies and systems, and to other facilities and services open or provided to the public, both in urban and in rural areas. These measures, which shall include the identification and elimination of obstacles and barriers to accessibility, shall apply to, inter alia:* *Buildings, **roads, transportation** and other indoor and outdoor facilities, including schools, housing, medical facilities and workplaces.* *Information, communications and other services, including electronic services and emergency services."* Article 9 for the first time enshrines the right to transport within Irish legislation. The focus on **Usability and Accessibility** has implications and opportunities across transport planning and provision.

2.2 National Policies & Plans, Guidance & Consultations

Table 2. Policy & Plan Review – National

POLICY & PLANS	NATIONAL
Project Ireland 2040 • **National Planning Framework** (NPF) • **National Development Plan 2021-2030** (NDP)	**Project Ireland 2040** sets out a framework for future national development and investment. It encompasses the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF) and the National Development Plan (NDP) 2021-2030. The NPF sets out Ireland's planning policy up to 2040. The NPF sets the vision and strategy for shaping the future growth and development up to 2040 and is underpinned by **National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs).** • **Compact Growth** • Enhanced Regional Accessibility • Strengthened Rural Economies and Communities • **Sustainable Mobility** • **A strong Economy** supported by Enterprise, Innovation and Skills • High-Quality International Connectivity • **Enhanced Amenity and Heritage** • **Transition to a Low Carbon and Climate Resilient Society** • Sustainable Management of Water, Waste and other Environmental Resources • **Access to Quality Childcare, Education and Health Services** The NDP sets out the enabling investment to implement the strategy set out in the NPF. The NPF combines with the National Development Plan to form Project Ireland 2040. Projects of relevance for Galway city and county include: • Galway – Dublin Greenway; scheduled for completion in 2026 • N6 Galway City Ring-Road • Feasibility study of a Galway City LRT (2022) • Upgrade works to Galway train stations • Continuing to replace diesel buses with hybrid-electric models
Project Ireland 2040 • **National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland 2021** (NIFTI)	The Department of Transport issued the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) in 2021. It sets out the **prioritisation for future investment in the land transport network** to support the delivery of the NPF and the NSOs. A key objective of NIFTI is to protect and renew our existing transport assets to safeguard the value of our past investment and ensure that the **network is resilient to the impacts of climate change** and adaptable to future transport behaviours. NIFTI sets out two hierarchies – travel modes and transport intervention – to enable the delivery of investments that address four investment priorities: • **Decarbonisation** • Protection and Renewal • **Mobility of People and Goods in Urban Areas**

- **Enhanced Regional and Rural Connectivity.**

The NIFTI Modal Hierarchy outlines which modes are to be accommodated and encouraged when investments and other interventions are made.

Climate Action Plan 2023 (CAP)

In December 2022, the Government released **Climate Action Plan 2023** (CAP23), which is the second annual update to Ireland's Climate Action 2019. This plan is the first to be prepared under the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and follows the introduction in 2022, of economy-wide carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings. The plan sets out a roadmap of action to halve emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050.

Decarbonising transport is a key tenet of the Plan, with a target of a 50% reduction in emissions by 2030. CAP23 outlines policies to reduce transport emissions by improving our towns, cities and rural planning and by adopting the Avoid-Shift-Improve approach (reducing or avoiding the need for travel, shifting to public transport, walking and cycling and improving the energy efficiency of vehicles). Targeted actions include:

- Changing the way we use our road space.
- Reducing the total distance driven across all car journeys by 20%
- Walking, cycling and public transport to account for 50% of all journeys
- Nearly 1 in 3 private cars will be an Electric Vehicle
- Increasing walking and cycling networks
- 70% of people in rural Ireland will have buses that provide at least 3 trips to the nearby town daily by 2030.

National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)

The new **National Sustainable Mobility Policy** sets out a strategic framework to 2030 for active travel (walking and cycling) and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligations. It is accompanied by an Action Plan to 2025 which contains actions to improve and expand sustainable mobility options across the country by providing **safe, green, accessible and efficient alternatives to car journeys**. It also includes demand management and behavioural change measures to manage daily travel demand more efficiently and to reduce journeys taken by car.

	In line with the Climate Action Plan 2021, the policy targets 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in vehicle kilometres by fossil fuelled cars by 2030. The policy aims to make it easier for people to choose walking, cycling and use public transport daily instead of having to use a petrol or diesel car under the following key themes: **Safe and Green mobility** • Expanding walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure across the country • Moving the public transport fleet to low and zero emission vehicles • Improving the safety of walking, cycling and public transport networks **People focused mobility** • Making walking, cycling and public transport more accessible for all users – including those with reduced mobility, disabilities and the elderly • Introducing a more attractive fare structure • Reallocating road space to prioritise walking, cycling and public transport **Better integrated mobility** • Adopting a transport-orientated approach to housing development to place new housing close to public transport • Making it easier to switch between walking, bike, bus and rail
Our Journey Towards Vision Zero: Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030	This Road Safety Strategy, published in December 2021, has a new ambition at its core of a Vision Zero approach to Road Safety (delivered by the Safe System approach), which is a long-term goal aimed **at eradicating road traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2050**. This is international best practice and has been adopted by the European Commission in its Road Safety Strategy. Some of the key interventions include **significant investment in the provision of safe, segregated infrastructure to protect those walking and cycling**, along with **initiatives to promote modal shift** from motor vehicle travel to support environmental, safety and health objectives. There are seven Safe System priority intervention areas aims. • **Safe roads and roadsides**. To improve the **protective quality of our roads** and infrastructure. • **Safe speeds. To reduce speeds to safe, appropriate levels for the roads being used, and the road users using them.** • Safe vehicles. To enhance the safety features and roadworthiness of vehicles on our roads. • **Safe road use. To improve road user standards and behaviours** in line with traffic legislation, supported by enforcement.

	• Post-crash response. To improve the treatment and rehabilitation of collision casualties. • **Safe and healthy modes of travel. To promote and protect road users engaging in public or active transport.** • Safe work-related road use. To improve safety management of work-related journeys.
Five Cities' Demand Management Study (2021)	This Study, commissioned by the Climate Change Unit of the Dept of Transport as part of the 2019 Climate Action Plan (Action 81) to "Develop a regulatory framework on low emission zones and parking pricing policies, and provide local authorities with the power to restrict access to certain parts of a city or a town to zero emission vehicles only. Examine the **role of demand management measures in Irish cities**, including low emission zones and parking pricing policies." The Study had four key objectives: • **Reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from road traffic** • **Address air quality issues due to vehicular traffic emissions** • **Manage vehicular traffic congestion** • **Improve the quality of the urban environment** While the study focused on the five cities, a number of the recommended Transport Demand Management measures are applicable across Galway County such as 1st = **15 Minute Neighbourhoods** and 2nd = **National Planning Framework Delivery Management** along with a range of Transport Demand Management (TDM) measures outlined in the Study's City Toolkit.
National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2021	The National Disability Inclusion Strategy is a whole of Government approach to improving the lives of people with disabilities. The action plan contains a "Transport and Accessible Places" theme which includes a number of actions relevant to transport in Galway County: • Action 100: Improve the **accessibility and availability of public transport** • Action 107: Develop **access to outdoor recreation facilities**, in particular footpaths and trails • Action 108: Implement the programme of **dishing of footpaths in urban area**s, in line with guidance from the National Disability Authority's publication: *Building for Everyone* • Action 109: Ensure further roll-out of **accessible inter-city coaches and accessible regional / rural coach and bus stops**
Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022	The Rural Transport Programme provides both Scheduled Fixed Transport and Demand Responsive Transport services. The Strategic Plan aims to strengthen the Rural Transport Programme under the *Local Link* branding to fulfil local transport needs with sustainable and accessible transport services. The plan identifies nine Strategic Priorities for the plan period, including the **expansion of fixed routes that**

	provide linkages between rural towns and villages and to other public transport services.
Transport – Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan (2019)	A Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan was prepared for the Transport sector under the National Adaptation Framework. The plan seeks to ensure that the transport sector can continue to fulfil its objectives as the country reckons with ever increasing extreme weather events and rising sea levels due to climate change. The plan lays out a number of "soft" actions aimed at: • Improving understanding of climate change on transport infrastructure • Assisting stakeholders in identifying and prioritising climate risks to existing and planned infrastructural assets and enabling them to implement adaptation measures accordingly • Ensuring that resilience to weather extremes and longer-term adaptation needs are considered in investment programmes for planned future transport infrastructure.
Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)	Guidelines for Spatial Planning affecting National Roads were developed to deliver on the National Spatial Strategy. The guidelines make it clear that **government policy no longer support unsustainable urban sprawl or dispersed and car dependent forms of development**, both of which have been accelerated by the location of employment and retail centres near national road junctions. Moving major inter-urban and inter-regional traffic (i.e. strategic traffic) is the primary purpose of the national road network. Therefore, local authorities must limit development which promotes short trip making on the national road network. There are a number of key messages in the plan regarding development planning and roads: • Development plans must include **measurable objectives for securing more compact development** that reduces overall demand for transport and encourages modal shift towards sustainable travel modes. • Development plans must include policies which seek to **maintain and protect the safety, capacity and efficiency of national roads and associated junctions**, avoiding the creation of new accesses and the intensification of existing accesses to national roads where a speed limit greater than 50 kph applies. New accesses to these roads are prohibited bar very exceptional circumstances. • Planning authorities and the NRA (now TII) must work together during the early stages of plan preparation to identify any areas where a less restrictive approach may apply. • Development plans must include **clear policies and objectives with regard to planning and reservation of new routes and/or upgrades**. • Planning authorities should consult at a very early stage with transport infrastructure providers (including the NRA) and, in the Greater Dublin area, with the National Transport Authority.

POLICY & PLANS	NATIONAL
Irish Rail Strategy 2027 (2021)	Galway will see improvements to its rail services and infrastructure, as set out in Iarnrod Eireann's 2027 Rail Strategy. These include improvements to both regional services and intercity services including: • Service frequency improvements to/from Dublin • An upgrade of Ceannt Station in Galway City • Infrastructure upgrades at Oranmore. This includes a 1KM passing railway loop at the existing Oranmore Train Station, including additional platform and associated infrastructure. • Double tracking of the Athenry – Oranmore – Galway Line. • Additional platform at Woodlawn Station on the Galway Line.
Travelling in a Woman's Shoes (2020)	Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII) Travelling in a Woman's Shoes 2020 study identifies that historically, transport has not been designed with the needs of women in mind. **Identifying and supporting the travel needs of women will help Ireland transition to a carbon-neutral transport system**. The Study explores the drivers of car dependency for women, including transport infrastructure, significant caregiving responsibilities, safety concerns and equality of access to quality services. The study identifies a range of policy opportunities to address this car dependency and encourage the wider adoption of sustainable transport, including active travel.
Get Ireland Walking	Get Ireland Walking is an initiative by Sport Ireland. The core aim of the initiative is to **unify and enable the efforts of all agencies interested in promoting walking**. It is a nationwide initiative to deliver programmes in conjunction with All Sports Partnerships. The programme hopes to create a vibrant culture of walking throughout Ireland. The initiative highlights how places need to be conducive to walking and that walking needs to be integrated into policies and plans at all scales. It highlights how, **in order to increase the numbers of people walking, infrastructure needs to be safe, attractive to walk in and it must cater for all users** including those in strollers, wheelchairs and the elderly.
Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019 – 2025 (2019)	A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019-2025's is a national framework to improve health and wellbeing in Ireland. Its vision is for a healthier Ireland, where everyone can enjoy physical and mental health and wellbeing to their full potential, where wellbeing is valued and supported at every level of society and is everyone's responsibility. The Framework identifies a number of broad intersectoral actions, one of which commits to the **development of a plan to promote increased physical activity levels**.

POLICY & PLANS	NATIONAL
Healthy Ireland: National Physical Activity Plan (2019)	The National Physical Activity Plan (NPAP) recognises that physical inactivity is a demonstrated clear risk to health and wellbeing in Ireland, and aims to increase physical activity levels across the whole population. It aims to create a society which **facilitates people to lead an active way of life, setting targets to increase physical activity by 1% across all ages and decrease inactivity by 0.5%.** Action Area Four of the NPAP focuses on the use of the natural and built environment as a way to build in daily physical activity. **It recognises that promoting active transport is the most practical and sustainable way to increase physical activity as part of people's everyday routine.** It specifically identifies the role of walking or cycling for utility transport as a means to increase people's physical activity levels.
Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021 – 2014 (2021)	This plan is the national framework with ideas and initiatives to increase physical activity in Ireland. It aims to increase physical activity levels across the whole population and to create a society which facilitates people to lead an active way of life, setting targets to increase physical activity by 1% across all ages and decrease inactivity by 0.5%. Action Area Four of the NPAP focuses on the use of the natural and built environment as a way to build in daily physical activity. It recognises that **promoting active transport is the most practical and sustainable way to increase physical activity as part of people's everyday routine**. It specifically identifies the role of walking or cycling for utility transport as a means to increase people's physical activity levels.
Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)	Housing for All is the new housing plan for Ireland aims to improve the accessibility to affordable and high standard housing for everyone who wishes to purchase or rent a home. The Plan references Urban Development Zones which includes transport-led development, and the promotion of compact, sustainable and liveable settlements. The document states that a well-functioning and sustainable housing system requires **strong integration between housing developments and the surrounding transport infrastructure**.

Table 3. Policy & Plan Review – National Guidance Documents

NATIONAL GUIDANCE	
Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)	DMURS sets out the manner in which roads and streets in **urban areas should be designed to prioritise the needs of sustainable travel users in Ireland and reduce the dominance of the private car**. The focus of the guidance is the **balance between the**

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

	different modes of transport to ensure that the urban realm is pleasant and safe for all users. Similar to the NIFTI, the guidelines emphasise that **sustainable modes of transport should be prioritized in street designs**. Active travel is to be considered first, then public transport, and then cars. The guidance also **supports a network-based approach to designing streets**. The **connectivity of the active travel routes and permeability of neighbourhoods** are highlighted as important components of the design of Irish streets.
Permeability Best Practice Guide (2015)	The Permeability Best Practice Guide provides **recommendations on how best to facilitate demand for walking and cycling in existing built-up areas**. Recommendations include the **retention and creation of linkages within the urban environment** for people to walk and cycle from their homes to shops, schools, local services, places of work and public transport stops and stations. The Guide also includes recommended **metrics for measuring pedestrian and cycle link Quality of Service**. These key performance indicators (KPIs) include pedestrian route directness (PRD) and the width of the facility.
Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool for Roads and Streets	The Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool is used to capture existing conditions of walking routes in relation to its walkability. The Audit Tool supports the Government's policy of transition to more sustainable forms of transport, with increased levels of walking contributing to a wide range of societal and health benefits including improved levels of fitness, cleaner air, safer environments and better social inclusion. The aims of the audit tool are to **assess if neighbourhoods and streets are places where people of all ages and abilities can walk safely, conveniently and independently**.
National Cycle Manual	The National Cycle Manual provides **guidance on the design of cycling networks** and **on engineering design of cycling infrastructure**. The guidance is based on the Five Needs of a Cyclist: • Safety • Coherence • Directness • Attractiveness • Comfort The manual is currently being updated by the National Transport Authority (NTA).

NATIONAL GUIDANCE

Traffic Management Guidelines Manual (2019)	Prepared in line with current national transport strategy guidelines that promote sustainability and accessibility through improvement to and better management of the transport system, the purpose of the Traffic Management Guidelines Manual is to provide guidance on a variety of issues. These include traffic planning, traffic calming and management, incorporation of speed restraint measures in new residential designs and the provision of suitably designed facilities for public transport users and for vulnerable road users such as cyclists, motorcyclists and pedestrians (including those with mobility/ sensory impairments). It also focuses on how these issues must be examined and implemented in the context of overall transportation and land use policies.
Greenways Guidelines **Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenways)**	There are a number of documents which provide **specifications and guidelines for the construction of greenways and cycle routes**. These documents focus mainly on the primary route infrastructure such as the path itself, it's design characteristics such as the width, the gradient, the surface finish etc. One of these documents is the "Greenways and Cycle Routes Ancillary Infrastructure Guidelines" (2018) which provides suggestions and best practise examples for the construction of new greenways. TII also provides two documents with relevance to the construction of rural cycleways. These are "Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenways)" (2022) and "Rural Road Link Design" (2017). The cycleway manual provides specifications for: • Planning for Rural Cycleways • Design considerations • Road / Cycleway Junctions & Crossings • Ancillary Infrastructure • Pavement & Foundation Construction Details • Monitoring and Evaluation The road manual instructs Local Authorities as to how they can implement and integrate cycling infrastructure into the rural road network. Some of the major points in the document include: • Designing for Speed • Stopping Sight Distance • Horizontal Alignment • Edge Treatment • Drainage
TII/NTA Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes (2018)	The intention of the ABTA process is to **ensure that sustainable transport is considered and planned for at the earliest stage**, at every level in the hierarchy of plans and investment programmes, and ultimately in the assessment of the

NATIONAL GUIDANCE	
AND **ABTA How to Guide, Pilot Methodology (2021)**	developments' transport requirements and impacts at the local level. The key aims of the ABTA approach are as follows: • Maximise the opportunities for the integration of land use and transport planning by including the ABTA process as integral to the preparation of the Plan. • Assess the existing traffic, transport and movement conditions within the Plan area and in its wider context. • Plan for the efficient movement of people, goods and services within, to and from the Plan area. • Identify the extent to which estimated transport demand associated with the emerging local development objectives can be supported and managed on the basis of existing transport assets. • Identify the transport interventions required within the Plan area and in the wider context, to effectively accommodate the anticipated increase in demand. • Inform Site Specific Transport Assessments for development management applications.
Safe to School: An Ideas Document for Safe Access to School (2020)	The Safe to School: An Ideas Document for Safe Access to School presents research conducted in the context of social distancing requirements since the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond. It is designed to present ideas for school principals, boards of management, teachers, parents and students to consider implementing **to address front of school vehicle congestion and enable more journeys by active travel**. Eight measures are suggested, including widening footpaths, park 'n' stride, preventing illegal parking, informal car-free zone, school streets, visual interventions, cycle bus and separate access.
NTA Safe Routes to School Design Guide (2022)	The Safe Routes to School programme aims to **increase active travel choices to schools and to improve safety and access** for students and their parents and carers on their journeys to/from school. The NTA Design Guide comprises key design principles to create safer, calmer, more attractive routes to school and improve front of school environments.

Table 4. National Consultations

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS	
Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan	The **Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan** is a major national public initiative developed by NTA, with the aim of increasing connectivity around the country, particularly for people living outside major cities and towns. The plan aims to **improve**

	mobility in rural areas by providing better connections between villages and towns by linking these areas with an enhanced regional bus network connecting cities and regional centres nationwide. Connecting Ireland seeks to make public transport for rural communities more useful for more people, and it will do this by: • Improving existing services • Adding new services • Enhancing the current Demand Responsive Transport (DRT) network which meets the transport needs of people who live in remote locations. Proposals for Galway include: • Enhanced interurban bus services between Galway City and Ennis, Limerick and Cork • Enhanced interurban bus services between Galway City and Castlebar, Ballina and Sligo, and with Westport, Roscommon and Longford • Improved interurban bus services from Tuam, Gort, Clifden, Ballinasloe and Loughrea to Galway • Improved local bus services from Galway to Portumna to Nenagh and from Ballinasloe via Portumna to Ennis • New local bus routes from Ballygar to Athlone and from Glenamaddy, Mountbellow and Ahascragh to Ballinasloe, coordinated with rail services at Ballinasloe to points east to Dublin • New and enhanced connections along the west coast of the county, including between Carraroe and Maam Cross, between Roundstone and Clifden and between Clifden and Westport Consultation took place in 2022 on the proposals, with more information here (including mapping and routes): https://www.nationaltransport.ie/connecting-ireland
TII National Cycle Network	In May 2022, TII launched a consultation on their proposed National Cycle Network, which is a planned **core cycle network of 3,500km that will criss-cross the country, connecting more than 200 villages, towns and cities**. The network will include cycling links to transport hubs, education centres, employment centres, leisure and tourist destinations, and support "last mile" bicycle deliveries. The network will make it easier and safer for more people to cycle for commuting, leisure, and tourism, reducing reliance on the car. The NCN map incorporates many existing and planned Greenways as well as a range of proposed new cycle routes, as part of its proposed national cycle corridors. The NCN will also complement and integrate local cycling development projects and Greenways. It will enable people to easily cycle to the centre of villages, towns and cities being developed by the NTA's Active Travel programme. It is envisaged the most of the NCN will be delivered by local authorities over the coming years. Further information can be found here: https://ncn.consultation.ai/

NATIONAL CONSULTATIONS

TII National Roads Strategy

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) is currently seeking views on its **long term strategy for planning, operating, and maintaining the National Roads network**. NR2040 has been developed to support National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs), with the Strategy's investment priorities developed to align closely to the four NIFTI investment priorities:

- Decarbonisation
- Enhanced regional and rural connectivity
- Protection and renewal
- Mobility of people & goods in urban areas.

TII's vision is for the National Roads to be "*An evolving sustainable transport system focused on safety, innovation, accessibility and mobility of people, goods and services*."

Listed roles for TII includes the delivery of "*active travel infrastructure which contributes to compact growth, sustainable mobility, enhanced regional accessibility and the transition to a low-carbon future";* and *"encouraging modal shift from car transport to public and active travel modes."*

The draft Strategy states that:

> ***"Where national roads are too dangerous for walkers or cyclists, meaningful alternatives must be provided through collaboration with relevant stakeholders and partner agencies…. TII is committed to delivering more on active travel modes in all its projects, such as improving the safety of National Roads for active travel users and reducing the severance caused by some National Roads in urban areas.***
>
> ***TII will collaborate with other stakeholders to implement the National Cycle Network plan to cater for more active trips and expand the Greenway network nationwide, on behalf of the Department of Transport. Provision of safe, high quality and active travel infrastructure will encourage modal shift and result in reductions in carbon emissions." (5.1.3 Active Travel)***
>
> **And where there is urban congestion, "*TII will support the provision of segregated or offline active travel infrastructure adjacent to national roads*."**

The strategy also defines TII investment portfolios for coming years and provides guidance to Sponsoring Agencies and Local Authorities. TII, through NR2040, will align with the NIFTI Intervention hierarchy and seek to address transport challenges through the use of existing infrastructure before considering the provision of new

infrastructure. When developing a project on National Roads, the relevant Local Authority, third party and / or TII department will need to show that the proposed investment aligns with NIFTI and address how potential negative impacts, against one of more of the NIFTI Investment Priorities, will be mitigated.

> ***"NR2040 is a policy led strategy, not a 'predict and provide' (demand-led) strategy."***

More information on the consultation can be found here, which is open until 7th October 2022: https://nr2040.consultation.ai/

2.3 Regional Policies & Plans

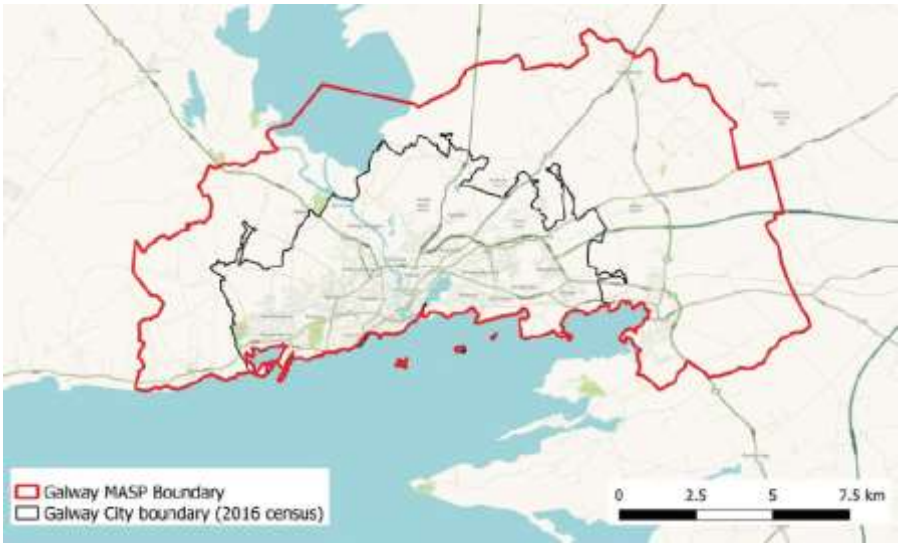
Table 5. Policy & Plan Review – Regional

POLICY & PLANS	REGIONAL
Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 (2020) AND **Galway Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (GMASP)**	At a regional level, the NPF 2040 recommends the development of Regional Spatial & Economic Strategies (RSESs) to ensure better co-ordination in planning and development across local authority boundaries, providing a link between the NPF, City and County Development Plans and Local Economic and Community Plans. Galway falls under the North and Western RSES, which was issued by the Regional Assembly in 2020. The RSES Vision is '*To play a leading role in the transformation of this region into a vibrant, connected, natural, inclusive and smart place to work and live'.* The RSES's strategic outcomes reflect those of the NPF, including a focus on Compact Growth, Sustainable Mobility, and a Low Carbon, Climate Resilient and Sustainable Society. The region is highly dependent on private car use, with 2016 Census data confirming 70% of commuter trips are made by private car. In response, whilst there are limited opportunities for use of sustainable transport modes in parts of the region, the RSES identifies four high-level transport principles: • Improving **strategic and local connectivity**. • Improving **access to public transport facilities**. • **Catering for the role of the car** within the region. • **Ensuring sustainable development** to cater for long-term growth through reducing levels of traffic congestion. The priority Core Transport Outcomes to be delivered across the region include the following: • Supporting the achievement of **compact, smart growth** through the achievement of 'mutual consistency' between land use and transport planning/investment/service provision. • Promotion of **higher development densities in appropriate locations** with an associated consideration being given to reduced constraints on building heights. • Strengthening **inter-regional connectivity** through the improvement of inter-urban road and rail connectivity. • Strengthening **public transport connectivity** between the Assembly Area's city and large towns, and between the large towns, with improved services and reliable journey times. • Providing **public transport infrastructure and services to meet the needs of smaller towns, villages and rural areas**.

- Developing a **comprehensive network of safe cycling routes** in the three Regional Growth Centres and providing similar facilities in other towns and villages, where appropriate.

The RSES advises the **preparation of Local Transport Plans (LTP) for identified key towns to support compact growth and sustainable mobility**. LTPs should identify and prioritise objectives in relation to sustainable travel infrastructure and plan for the efficient movement of people within and outside of the area served by the LTP, which should **deliver appropriate measures to promote walking, cycling and public transport** use to create accessible spaces (RPO 6.29).

As part of the RSES, a **Metropolitan Area Strategic Plan (MASP)** has been prepared for Galway, providing an implementation strategy for development outcomes in the Galway Metropolitan Area, which encompasses Galway City and surrounding parts of the county.



The population of the Metropolitan Area is projected to grow by 27,500 to 2026 and by a further 14,500 to 2031, with the population of the city and suburbs accommodating 23,000 to 2026 and a further 12,000 to 2031. Within Galway County, residential growth areas are identified in Bearna to the west, Oranmore to the east and Baile Chláir to the northeast, with industrial / technology growth identified in Oranmore and around the former Galway Airport.

The MASP reaffirms projects developed under the Galway Transport Strategy, including the Galway City Ring Road, the Tuam Bus Corridor, the Dublin Road Bus Corridor and a high frequency cross-city bus network as well as provision of active travel infrastructure, Park and Ride sites and the double tracking of the rail line from Ceannt station to Athlone.

POLICY & PLANS	REGIONAL

Galway Transport Strategy (2017)

The Galway Transport Strategy was developed by Galway City Council, in partnership with Galway County Council and the National Transport Authority, to address current and future identified transport issues and opportunities within Galway City and the surrounding metropolitan area.

In terms of impacts on the wider county, the suite of measures in the strategy includes the construction of the N6 Galway City Ring Road and a revamp of the city and commuter bus networks.

The strategy proposes upgrade of the existing main bus corridors to provide high frequency routes. The Brown bus route would extend to Bearna to the west and Oranmore to the east, both located within Galway County. The strategy aspires for these routes to operate at a frequency of at least once every 15 minutes, with high frequency to be maintained across the daily period as opposed to just within peak hours.

To complement these services, Park and Ride sites along National Roads are proposed to cater for trips to Galway City originating outside of the metropolitan area.

N6 Galway City Ring Road Project

The N6 Galway City Ring Road (GCRR) is a key measure within the Galway Transport Strategy which realises Galway City and County Council's vision of all elements of transport working together to achieve an integrated sustainable transport solution. Galway City currently experiences significant transport issues such as:

- Peak hour congestion and journey time unreliability
- Over reliance on private cars
- Lack of alternative transport modes
- Lack of road space for the development of Smarter Mobility and Public Transport

	The ring-road forms a vital part of the councils strategy to minimise these issues and free up the city centre of freight and private car traffic, as illustrated in the figure below. 
Western Rail Corridor Financial and Economic Appraisal (2020)	A Financial and Economic Appraisal of the Western Rail Corridor was undertaken on foot of a commitment in the National Development Plan 2018 – 2027. The aim of this report is to assess whether the investment which would be required to reactivate these two phases can be justified in delivering value for money for the Irish Exchequer. As part of the appraisal a public survey was undertaken which received over 6,000 responses. The survey showed overwhelming public preference for the alignment to be used as a railway rather than a greenway. The outcome of the Economic Appraisal was a Benefit to Cost Ratio of 0.21, based on estimated construction costs of €264m excl. VAT. Despite the strong economic benefits that the line delivers, they were not found to be sufficient to justify the large capital costs which would be required to reactivate the line.
JASPERS Project Screening Note: Western Rail Corridor Phase 2/3 (2020)	In 2020, JASPERS undertook an independent review of the proposed investment for reconstruction of the Western Rail Corridor phases 2 and 3. The review examined all material available for the project, with specific reference to the Financial and Economic Appraisal prepared by EY. The review concluded that the findings of the Financial and Economic Appraisal were not unreasonable, and that the project in its current form is likely to present a very weak justification for investment. Additionally, JASPERS found that to gain EU financing

	through the European Investment Bank or inclusion in the TEN-T networks would require a strong demonstration of the strategic need for the corridor which is not currently available.

2.4 County Policies & Plans

Table 6. Policy & Plan Review – County

POLICY AND PLANS	COUNTY
Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028	The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CPD) sets out the strategy and methods through which future planning and sustainable development of the county will be achieved for the period to 2028. Preparation of the CDP commenced in June 2020, and was adopted by the elected members of the Council in May 2022, coming into effect in June 2022. Chapter 6 (Transport& Movement) sets out the ways in which appropriate provision for the safeguarding and upgrading of existing transport infrastructure will be ensured. It seeks to build on the existing strengths within the county while also addressing deficiencies in a sustainable manner, including through taking account of climate change and creating more sustainable communities. The CDP looks to: '***Encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport'.*** A number of strategic aims and associated policy objectives are identified to help achieve this, which are outlined below in more detail.
Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) (2021)	The Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) sits alongside and supports the Galway County Development Plan (2022-2028). The strategy supports the councils transport aims '*To encourage investment and improvements across all sectors of transport that will support targeted population, economic growth and more sustainable modes of travel including, walking, cycling and public transport*'. The development process for the GCTPS followed a thorough baseline establishment as well as identification of planned new development in the County Development Plan. The findings of that process were used in an option development process for defined movement corridors across the county. A longlist of options by mode was considered against key objectives for each corridor in order to develop preferred options by corridor. These preferred options were then combined to form county wide mode based strategies to meet relevant mode based policy objectives in the Development Plan. The GCTPS proposes a range of measures, including transport infrastructure upgrades, support for transport service enhancements, and supporting activities, which will collectively deliver enhancements and changes in travel behaviour within the County

	which are consistent with the policy objectives defined within Chapter 6 of the County Development Plan (CDP). In summary, the GCTPS supports the CDP objectives relating to Transport as follows: • **Integrated Transport Planning**: Support for transition toward active, sustainable and low-carbon modes of transportation, and preparation of Local Transport Plans for the towns of Ballinasloe and Tuam. • **Walking & Cycling**: Provision of a modern walking and cycling network which gives such infrastructure high priority within street hierarchies, adheres to the design principles and requirements set out in the National Cycle Manual and DMURS, and which provides safe and secure cycle parking as part of new developments and public space regeneration projects. • **Electric Vehicles**: Support for the roll-out of charging infrastructure and other facilities to encourage the uptake of electric vehicles. • **Public Transport**: Support for enhanced public transport services, including provision of new and improved public transport infrastructure; advocacy for improvements to public transport services; engagement with the NTA, TII and others with regard to provision for Park and Ride services, and support for the Galway to Athlone rail link and Western Rail Corridor schemes. • **National Roads**: Protection of the safe and efficient operation of the national road network, support for planned major upgrade schemes, and use of Traffic and Transport Assessments (TTAs) and Road Safety Audits (RSAs) to assess the impacts of proposed development upon the national road network. • **Non-National Roads**: Safeguarding of capacity on restricted and non-restricted regional roads within the regional and local road networks; management of through-traffic within town and local centres. • **Supporting Measures**; use of School Travel Plans and Mobility Management Plans to drive and encourage increased use of sustainable modes of travel to education and other significant development sites; and application of car parking standards and associated requirements as set out in Chapter 15 of the CDP.
Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy (2013)	The 2013 Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy examines and deals with primary walking and cycling aspects of commuting, tourism and community exercise and activities in Galway County. Tuam, Ballinasloe, Oranmore and Clifden are designated as major study towns.

	The cycling network in 2013 is described as variable, with the better-quality cycling facilities usually provided as a result of road improvement schemes. The Strategy identifies the Council's goals for walking and cycling as to: • Encourage **modal shift** for students and workers from cars to walking and cycling. • **Boost tourism** within the County through the creation of walking and cycling attractions and facilities. • Develop local walking and cycling facilities to **encourage uptake in local sporting and physical exercise**. • Raise **public awareness of the benefits** of walking and cycling. The following targets are set out as part of the Strategy: • Increase the proportion of people who walk to work within the County from 5% to 20%. • Increase the mode share for cycling for journeys to work from 1% to 8%. • Increase the number of children between ages five and twelve who walk to and from school from 13% to 21%. • Increase the number of children between five and twelve years old who cycle to and from school from 1% to 6%. • Increase the proportion of students aged 13 to 18 who walk to school / college to match the national average as a minimum. • Increase the number of students between 13 and 18 years old who cycle to school / college from 1% to 8%. A new County Wide Cycling and Walking Strategy is currently being prepared.
County Galway Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024 (2019)	As part of the National Climate Change Action Plan 2019, County Galway produced and adopted its first Climate Adaptation Strategy in August 2019. The plan takes stock of the policy context, the profile of the city and county area and the impact of climate change observed to date and projected into the future, first at a global level and then focussing on Ireland. A baseline assessment of climate risks for the county analysed a series of past extreme weather events and their effects on the county. Arising from this work, a Climate Risk & Opportunity Register was compiled. The strategy has four goals towards developing a 'Climate Ready Galway':

Based on these goals, the strategy contains an action plan with four main headings: Infrastructure, Nature and Culture, Water and Flooding and Community Services. Under infrastructure, there is an action to undertake a risk assessment of critical public road infrastructure to identify relevant hazards arising from climate change and extreme weather events.

Galway City and County Age Friendly Programme 2014 – 2019	The strategy aims to make Galway a great place for older people to live, where they can continue to enjoy living within their communities with dignity and respect. Strategic goals are centred on 8 strategic priorities. Strategic Priority 2 is to ensure that "older people can get to where they need to go, when they need to do so".
Galway County Integration & Diversity Strategy 2013-2017	The strategy was prepared to address "the significant demographic changes that have taken place throughout the County over the past decade or more". The plan preparation involved detailed collaboration with stakeholders which resulted in the finding of many positives and challenges to be addressed. Based on these findings, the strategy includes an action plan based on four key areas: • Education and Training • Employment and Work • Health and Public Services • Community Participation.

Local Transport Plan
(Galway County Council Transport Support Programme)

24/01/2023

Reference number 300876

Appendix B
BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

NTA
Údarás Náisiúnta Iomp
National Transport Autho

SYSTRA

LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN

(GALWAY COUNTY COUNCIL TRANSPORT SUPPORT PROGRAMME)

BASELINE ASSESSMENT REPORT

IDENTIFICATION TABLE	
Client/Project owner	Galway County Council
Project	Local Transport Plan (Galway County Council Transport Support Programme)
Town	Athenry
Study	Baseline Assessment Report
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Reference number	300876
Number of pages	77

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Version	**Name**		**Position**	**Date**	**Modifications**
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	Approved by			DD/MM/YY	

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1.1.1 Galway Transport Support Programme

SYSTRA Ltd has been engaged by Galway County Council (GCC) to provide a range of Transport Support for the County. These include the following Workstreams:

1) County Level Transport Modelling Assessment.

2) County Galway Walking & Cycling Strategy.

3) Local Transport Plans (LTPs) for four settlements: Athenry; Gort; Loughrea; and Oranmore/Garraun. As part of a separate contract with SYSTRA Ltd. an LTP has also been prepared for Tuam.

4) Community Transport Studies (CTSs) for six settlements: Clifden; Headford; Kinvara; Oughterard; Portumna; and Maigh Cuilinn.

5) Cycling and Walking Sub-Plans for:

   - The four LTPs and six CTSs settlements listed above in items 3 and 4.
   - Twelve additional settlements:

     - Small Growth Settlements x six: An Spidéal; An Cheathrú Rua; Ballygar; Dunmore; Glenamaddy; and Moylough.
     - Rural Settlements x six: Carna; Clarinbridge; Clonbur; Craughwell; Miltown; and Mountbellow.

These Studies (known as the Galway Transport Support Programme) will guide future transport investment, setting out the County's Walking & Cycling Strategy as well as each settlement's transport strategy for the period to 2028, but also looking beyond to 2040.

1.1.2 Athenry Local Transport Plan

As part of the Galway County Support Programme, SYSTRA Ltd are developing a Local Transport Plan (LTP) for Athenry and its immediate environs. The key purpose of the LTP is to guide the future transport and mobility needs of Athenry, taking into account the transport demand arising from existing and projected development both within the study area and the wider area of influence.

It is one of a number of complementary assessment processes which will be used in the development of the upcoming Athenry LAP that is currently being prepared by the council. This will help integrate local land use with transport policy with the goal of enhancing quality of life while improving the local environment and supporting sustainable development. The aim of the LTP is to provide a long-term

vision for sustainable mobility in Athenry, creating an integrated transport system across all modes that is accessible to all.

1.2 Study Methodology

Based on the guidelines set out in TII/NTA's 'Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes – December 2018'[1], the following tasks will be undertaken as part of the Athenry LTP:

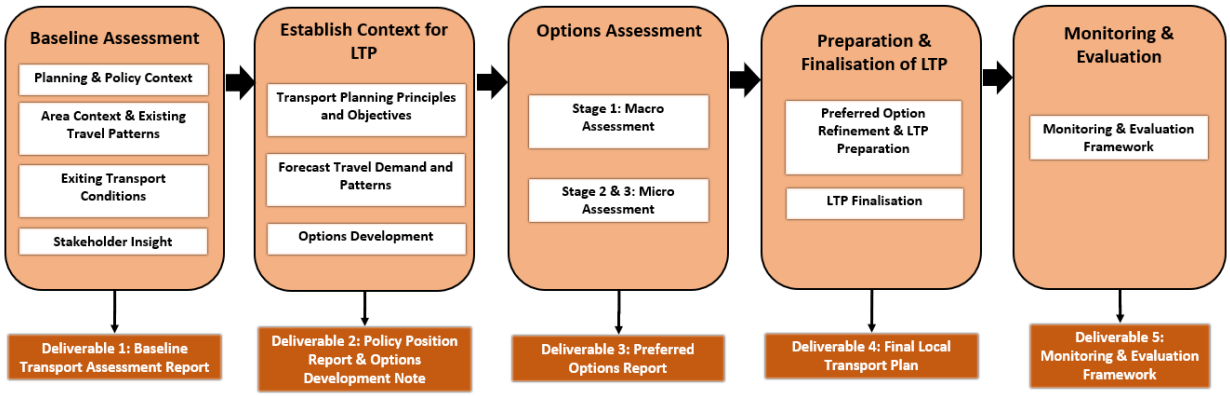

Figure 1-1: Athenry LTP Methodology

This Baseline Assessment report forms Part 1 of the LTP, with the aim to gain a clear understanding of the existing spatial characteristics, land uses, transport conditions and constraints relating to the Plan area.

1.3 Report Structure

Chapter 2 – Policy Context:

Chapter Two provides an overview of existing local polices, plans and guidelines that are relevant to the study area. Background international, national, regional and county policies, plans and guidance can be found in Appendix A: Galway Policy Context Report.

Chapter 3 – Local Area Characteristics:

Chapter Three outlines the study area including an analysis of existing land uses and demographics along with physical attributes.

Chapter 4 – Existing Travel Patterns:

Chapter Four gives an overview of the current trip distribution profile, average trip lengths and mode shares for the Athenry LTP study area using 2016 Census data.

Chapter 5 – Access to Employment and Education:

Chapter Five assesses current walking and cycling accessibility to schools, employment opportunities and public transport.

[1] Source: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Area_Based_Transport_Assessment_LTP.pdf

Chapter 6 – Existing Transport Infrastructure and Services:

Chapter Six reviews the existing walking and cycling infrastructure, public transport capacity and services, road network conditions and parking supply within the study area.

Chapter 7 – Conclusion and Next Steps:

Chapter Seven summarises the key points raised in the Baseline Assessment tasks above. Based on this, a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) assessment is undertaken to inform the next steps in the LTP process.

2. POLICY CONTEXT

2.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides an overview of relevant local polices and plans, along with relevant international and national policies, plans and guidance relevant to the Athenry Local Transport Plan. The development of the LTP will be shaped by and reflect these policies

2.2 Policy Report

A technical note comprising a policy review of international, national, regional, and county level policies and plans relevant to the studies in the Galway Transport Support Programme has been compiled. This note will be used as a reference for the LTP development. An overview of the policies, plans and guidance documents reviewed for this note is presented in the table below. More detail can be found in Appendix A: Galway Policy Context Report.

Table 2-1: Background Planning and Policy Documents

International Policy
• European Union Green Deal (European Commission, 2020) and Fit For 55 Package (European Commission, 2021) • UN Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities (2019)
National Policy

• Project Ireland 2040
  ○ National Planning Framework (NPF)
  ○ National Development Plan 2021-2030 (NDP)
• National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland 2021 (NIFTI)
• Climate Action Plan 2023 (2022)
• National Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022)
• Our Journey Towards Vision Zero: Road Safety Strategy 2021 – 2030
• Five Cities Demand Management Study (2021)
• National Disability Inclusion Strategy (NDIS) 2017-2021
• Local Link Rural Transport Programme Strategic Plan 2018 to 2022
• Transport – Climate Change Sectoral Adaption Plan (2019)
• Spatial Planning and National Roads - Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)
• Irish Rail Strategy 2027 (2021)
• Travelling in a Woman's Shoes (2020)
• Get Ireland Walking
• Healthy Ireland: A Framework for Improved Health and Wellbeing 2019 – 2025 (2019)
• Healthy Ireland: National Physical Activity Plan (2019)
• Sport Ireland Participation Plan 2021 – 2024 (2021)
• Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland (2021)

National Guidance
• Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) (2019)

- Permeability Best Practice Guide (2015)
- Universal Design Walkability Audit Tool for Roads and Streets
- National Cycle Manual
- Traffic Management Guidelines Manual (2019)
- Greenways Guidelines & Rural Cycleway Design (Offline and Greenways)
- TII/NTA Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes (2018) & ABTA How to Guide, Pilot Methodology (2021)
- Safe to School: An Ideas Document for Safe Access to School (2020)
- NTA Safe Routes to School Design Guide (2022)

National Consultations

- Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan
- TII National Cycle Network
- TII National Roads Strategy

Regional Policy

- Northern & Western Regional Assembly, Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) 2020-2032 (2020)
- Galway Transport Strategy (2017)
- N6 Galway City Ring Road Project
- Western Rail Corridor Financial and Economic Appraisal (2020)
- JASPERS Project Screening Note: Western Rail Corridor Phase 2/3 (2020)

County Policy and Plans

- Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028
- Galway County Transport and Planning Study (GCTPS) (2021)
- Galway County Walking & Cycling Strategy (2013)
- County Galway Climate Change Adaptation Strategy 2019 – 2024 (2019)
- Galway City and County Age Friendly Programme 2014 – 2019
- Galway County Integration & Diversity Strategy 2013- 2017

2.3 Local Policy and Plans for Athenry

2.3.1 Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028

Athenry is classified a town with strategic potential in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (CDP). The development plan allocates population growth of 1,350 to Athenry over the lifetime of the plan, resulting in a target population of 5,795. This is an increase of 23% from the 2016 population stated in the CDP of 4,445.

Specific infrastructural and other objectives for Athenry in the CDP are:

- To promote the upgrade of the capacity of the Athlone – Athenry – Galway rail line including the provision of a dual track and increased service stops between Galway and Athlone;
- To support the opening of the Western Rail Corridor route from Athenry to Collooney serving Tuam and Claremorris;

- Supporting active modes of travel and the implementation of infrastructure that will assist in the creation of a low carbon economy;
- Safeguarding the function of the strategic road network, ensuring the capacities are not overloaded and to include future capacities in all national road network developments; and
- In line with the Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas Guidelines (2009), with consideration given to pre-existing settlements, to promote in towns and villages the development of serviced lands.

2.3.2 Draft Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029

The draft Athenry Local Area Plan 2023 – 2029 (LAP) states its vision as:

> **"Athenry, a strategic potential town, which will continue to grow as a sustainable, dynamic, and inclusive community while retaining its distinct medieval character. Continued investment will enhance Athenry's potential to become an innovative growth hub within the Strategic Economic Corridor, while also providing a skilled workforce for the county. The town's growth will sustainably take place, using the sequential approach, to ensure high levels of connectivity and permeability throughout Athenry, which will, in turn, facilitate the creation of a healthy, safe, and age-friendly community"**

The draft LAP document lists a number of strategic aims relevant to the Local Transport Plan, including:

- To achieve compact growth resulting in a critical mass within the Plan Area;
- To support investment in regeneration and other town centre improvement works to maintain Athenry as an attractive place to live, work and visit; and
- To encourage the promotion of sustainable mobility, including walking and cycling, under the aspirations of the LTP and support the continued provision of investment in public transport.

Among the key consideration in developing the LAP was that of the transport network: "limited availability of public transport services to date has resulted in traffic congestion in the town centre, therefore addressing deficiencies in the existing pedestrian/cycling network, promoting walk/cycling and broader Smart Travel initiatives, along with reducing car dependency, are other key considerations in the LAP process". A specific reference to Universal Access in the design of future transport infrastructure is included in the LAP document.

In reference to the town centre, Galway County Council has a vision for:

> **"The plan will support a vibrant town centre that is a pleasant place for people to live, work and visit. It must be accessible to all, including those with impaired mobility. Sustainable modes of transport will be prioritised in the town centre, with good connectivity to the nearby residential and employment locations"**

Specifically in relation to transport and the role of the LTP, the draft LAP highlights the GCTPS prepared as part of the GCDP 2022-2028 before outlining the vision for Athenry's transport system. The document outlines the need to balance space allocation and the need for "greater emphasis placed on

infrastructure in relation to walking, using buggies, wheelchairs or cycling". The rebalancing of the transport system is to take place in tandem with land use planning, through the development within the existing town footprint.

An updated draft Local Area Plan is currently being prepared by Galway County Council. The proposals within this emerging Local Area Plan will be integrated into the Options Development phase of the Athenry LTP, ensuring that transport options are aligned to any future changes in land use. The current Land Use Zoning Map from the LAP is presented below.

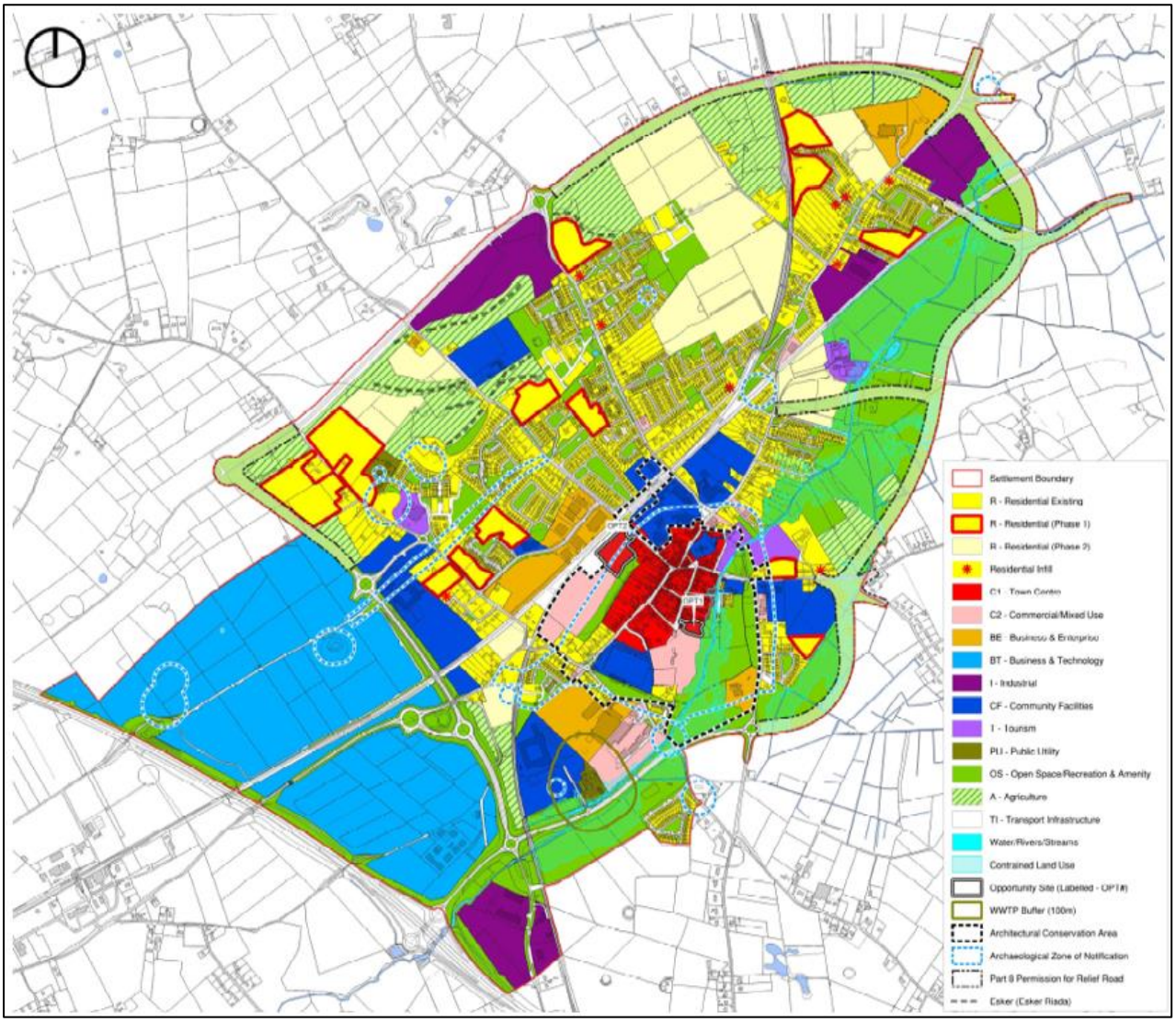

Figure 2-1: LAP 2023-2029 Land Use Zoning Map

2.3.3 Other Relevant Local Studies

2.3.3.1 Regenerating Athenry

Regenerating Athenry is a strategy developed by Galway County Council, which aims to position Athenry as a food innovation town as well as creating liveable streets, a connected and inclusive community and maximising the town's tourism offering.

It includes a list of projects to achieve these aims. The major project is the Bia Innovator Campus being built outside Athenry, just west of the M6, including co-working kitchens and a range of other food business related resources. To support the campus there are a number of smaller projects including an all-weather canopy in the town park for food events or markets.

A number of public realm projects are proposed, including for Market Square and Cross Street, active travel projects, and multiple projects to develop and promote Athenry's heritage offering. In addition, there are projects to repurpose existing town centre buildings and small, community building projects.

2.3.3.2 Reimagine Athenry

Reimagine Athenry is a community led vision for Athenry's town and its environs commissioned by Athenry Community Council and funded through a LEADER grant. It was undertaken by Dutch firm DMAU. The project sets out a future framework for the town based on the ambitions of the community, developed during public consultations and an online survey – with the final report published in January 2020.

The plan states that the "key challenge for Athenry is how to maintain its accessibility while simultaneously improving the public realm for its residents and visitors." The plan includes a number of proposed projects, including public realm works to pedestrianise the immediate Market Square areas, a linear park/walk along the Clarin River, a Town Wall walk and a housing development on Brady's Field.

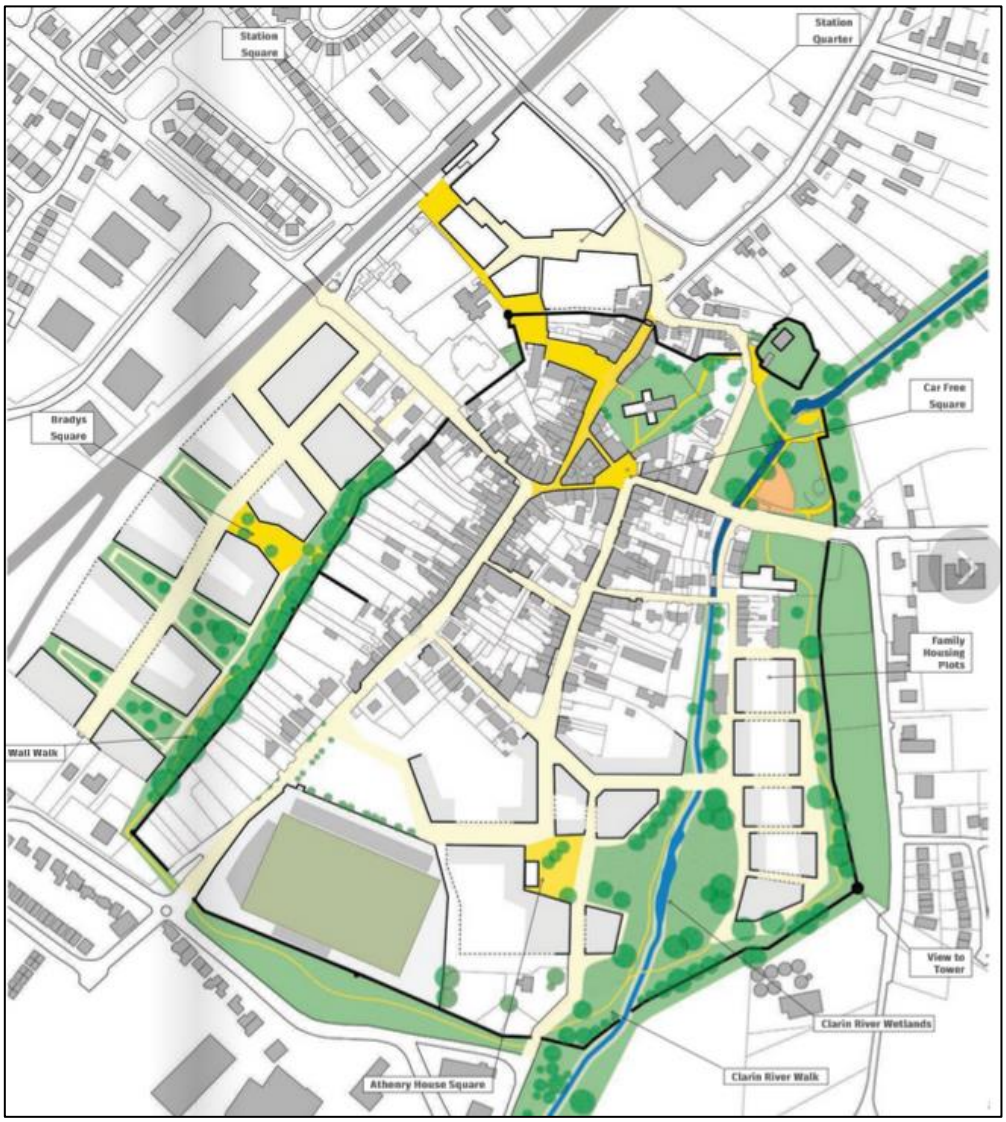

Figure 2-2: Reimagine Athenry Town Centre Vision

Further information on Reimagine Athenry can be found in the published document here: https://www.studiodmau.com/reimagine-athenry

2.3.3.3 Market Square Public Realm Enhancement Project

Galway County Council has embarked on a project to upgrade the public realm of Market Square, the focal point of Athenry town.

The scheme objectives are to:

- Reimagine the town centre by investing in quality of life and quality of experience;
- Improve the urban environment by creating public spaces for the community and visitors;
- Link the town centre heart to key tourist sites;
- Improve safety for vulnerable road users; and
- Improve the permeability of the town centre for greater pedestrian circulation.

Funding for the design stage of the project was secured through the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund. An options assessment process resulted in five shortlisted options presented for public consultation, ranging in ambition from maintenance of the parking bays and footpaths to pedestrianisation of the entire square as well as Davis Street and Burke's Lane. Various options for levels of parking and pedestrianisation of either David Street or Burke's Lane were included.

Figure 2-3: Market Square Option 5

Option 5 was identified as the emerging preferred option and is currently at preliminary design stage and scheduled for the commencement of Part 8 planning application approvals in March 2023. Under this Option, Burke's Lane would be pedestrianised, parking on the square would be removed, bar a drop-off/pick-up point and a pedestrian plaza created on Market Square.

2.3.3.4 Cross Street Proposals

Proposals to upgrade Cross Street are also in preparation for a Part 8 application. It is planned to align the design with the Market Square proposals. The current design option involves the expansion of the northern footpath through narrowing of the vehicular carriageway and removal of some on-street parking spaces.

2.3.3.5 Athenry Urban Improvement Proposals

Cunnane Stratton Reynolds (CSR) Landscape Architects & Town Planners were appointed by Galway County Council to undertake a review of Athenry Town following an allocation of some funding received intended for small to medium scale urban realm improvement projects.

Interventions that largely maintained the existing street layout but with upgraded public realm and materials were recommended for Old Church Street, Market Square, North Gate Street, Tuam Road, Athenry Castle, Community Park, Cross Street and Swan Gate Car Park. While these projects would improve the public realm in Athenry, they would have minimal effect on the transport network. The current proposals for Market Square and Cross Street go further in reducing car parking and reallocating space to pedestrians and urban realm improvements.

2.3.3.6 Safe Routes to School Draft Delivery Plan

A draft outline delivery plan for Safe Routes to School (SRTS) interventions in Athenry was developed by the SRTS team in An Taisce during 2022, in partnership with the schools, the NTA and Galway County Council. Two schools are included in the plan: Scoil Chroí Naofa and Athenry Boys National School.

The plans contain concept designs of interventions to improve infrastructure both directly outside and on the routes to the schools, with the aim of increasing the number of children who walk, cycle or scoot to school. The proposed interventions will require further work including detailed design, and input from stakeholders such as landowners and the local community. Some interventions may require planning permission.

Proposed interventions for Scoil Chroí Naofa include an improved walkway through the school campus, front of school School Zone treatment on Court Lane and Church Street, as well as a junction upgrade on Tuam Road and the provision of new pedestrian crossings.

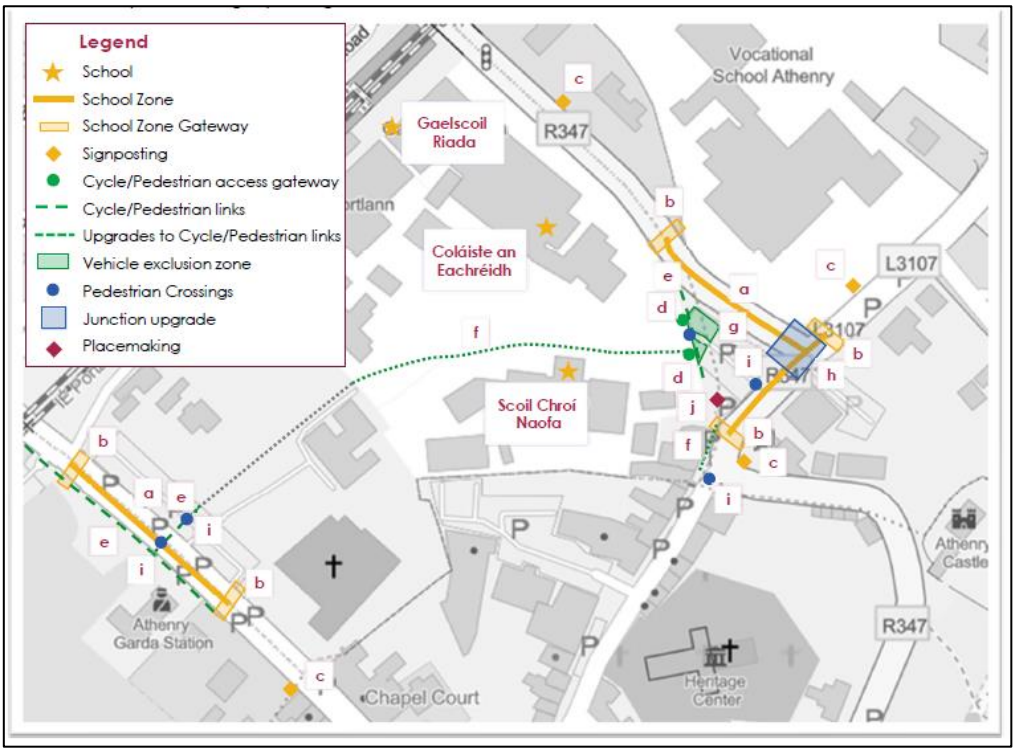

Figure 2-4: Proposed Safe Routes to School Interventions for Scoil Chroí Naofa

Proposed interventions at Athenry National School include a junction upgrade at Bridge Street, School Zone treatment and improved footpath provision outside the school.

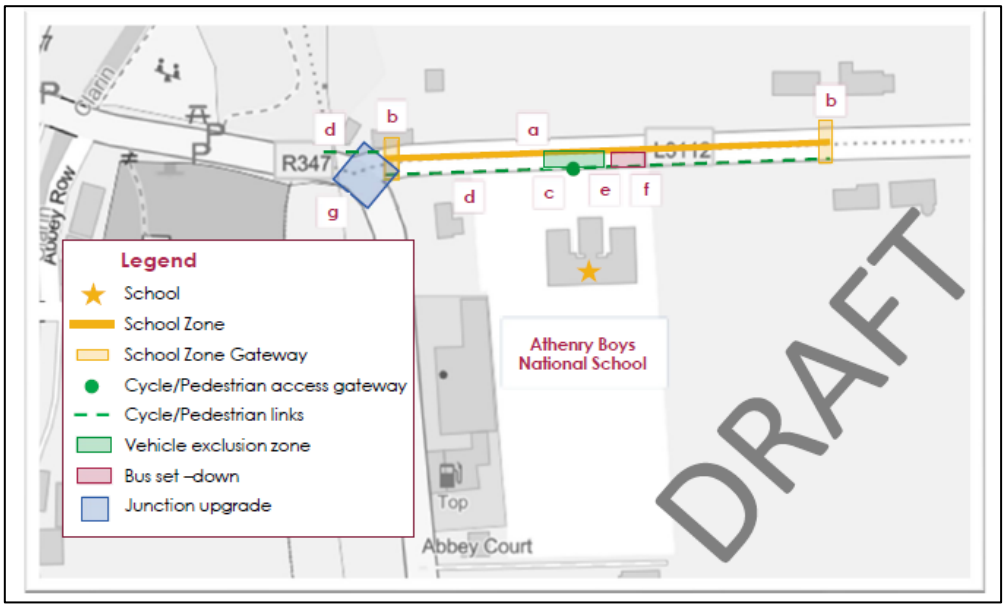

Figure 2-5: Proposed Safe Routes to School Interventions for Athenry Boys National School

There are a number of other proposed interventions across Athenry focused on providing Safe Routes to School for students in the town. These include a number of new permeability links from housing estates, a pedestrian crossing of the railway line on Church Street, the provision of "park & stride" sites for school drop-offs and making Court Lane one-way for motor traffic to provide pedestrian improvements at this pinch point.

2.4 Summary

- A technical note comprising a policy review of international, national, regional, and county level policies and plans relevant to the studies in the Galway Transport Support Programme has been compiled and is available in Appendix A.
- Athenry is classified a town with strategic potential in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, and allocated population growth of 1,350 or 23%.
- The County Development plan includes a number of specific infrastructural objectives related to the rail line through Athenry, including policy to support dual-tracking of the line between Galway and Athenry, and the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor between Athenry and Collooney linking to Tuam and Claremorris.
- The County Development Plan includes a number of specific infrastructural objectives related to transport including the completion of the Athenry Relief Road, provision of an integrated public transportation hub close to the railway station, an "amenity cycleway/pathway" along Cashla Road, a River Clarin Walkway and long stay car parking an Backlawn and Knockaunglass.

- The Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029 aims for Athenry to be a sustainable, self- sufficient, vibrant and socially inclusive key town with development progressing in a way that consolidates around the town centre.
- Both the County Development Plan and Local Area Plan include objectives to promote the use of sustainable transport in place of the private car in the town including the provision of active travel infrastructure and facilities, appropriate traffic management and compact growth.
- A number of other local plans for Athenry were also examined, including the council's Regenerating Athenry plan, the community developed Reimagine Athenry plan, plans for public realm enhancements for Market Square and Cross Street, and the draft Safe Routes to School Delivery Plans developed for Scoil Chroí Naofa and Athenry Boys National School.

3. LOCAL AREA CHARACTERISTICS

3.1 Description of Study Area

The study area boundary for the Athenry LTP has been identified in collaboration with Galway County Council. It broadly aligns with the LAP boundary, containing the established town and surrounding areas earmarked for development and buffer zones. A 'best-fit' selection of Census Small Areas (CSAs) has been identified to form the study area for the purpose of undertaking baseline analyses of census data.

Located approximately 20km to the east of Galway City, Athenry constitutes Galway's sixth largest town with a population of 5,023 persons as of 2016 (Census 2016). The previous census in 2011 put the population at 4,570, representing an increase of 9%.

Athenry hosts 1,631 jobs and is a strategically located urban centre benefitting from a well-established road network. The M6 links Athenry to Galway City westward and eastward toward Ballinasloe, Athlone and Dublin. The town is served by the regional roads R348, R347 and R346 connecting to Tuam, Craughwell, Oranmore and Ballinasloe. Athenry railway station is located on Church Street in the town centre, providing accessibility to the Dublin–Galway and Galway-Limerick lines with onward connections to Cork and Belfast.

Athenry town serves a rural hinterland as a market town and service centre. It serves a particularly large education catchment, with over 2,000 school places in Athenry. The main attraction of the town is Market Square and the commercial core of Church Street, Old Church Street, Cross Street and North Gate Street. There are several structures of historical importance including the Dominican Priory, Athenry Castle, the St Mary's Collegiate Church ruins, the market cross and the historic walls that encompass the town.

3.1.1 Trip Generators and Attractors

To present the concentration of local trip generators and attractors in Athenry, maps of the town's distribution of population and employment density by 2016 Census Small Area have been generated and are shown below in Figure 3-2 and Figure 3-3.

The analysis has been derived from Census Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) data along with 2016 Place of Work, School or College - Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR) data. The POWSCAR database includes a range of information on travel patterns for trips to work and school as recorded in the Census[2]. This data was used to identify the total number of destination work trips for each of the Census Small Areas (CSAs) within the Athenry LTP study area.

Population

Figure 3-2, below, illustrates the population density for CSAs within the Athenry study area (represented as population per square kilometre). The results indicate that the most densely populated areas of Athenry are the residential estates along the R347 and in Ballydavid to the north. There are also highly populated (but not as dense) residential areas surrounding the train station and the town centre.

[2] Further information on POWSCAR is available on the CSO website at: https://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2016reports/powscar/

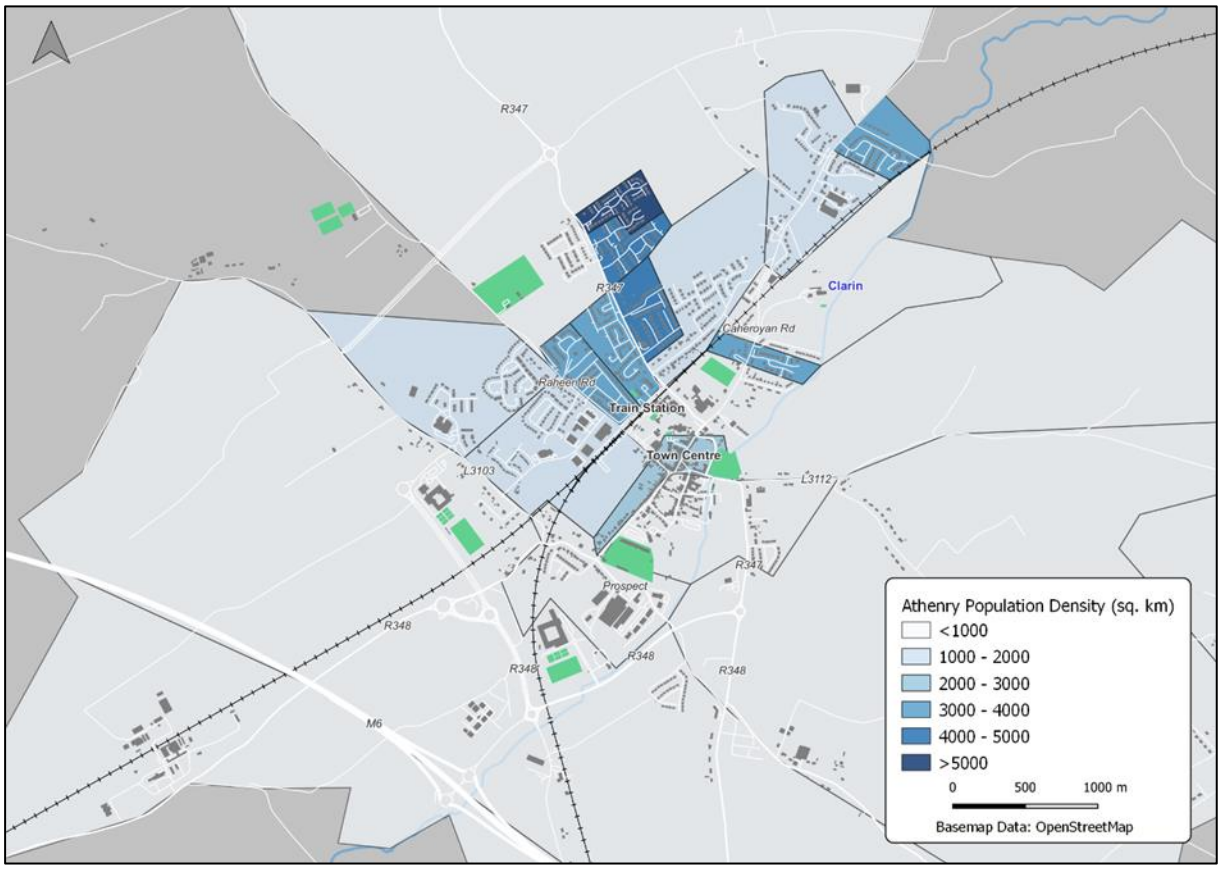

Figure 3-1: Athenry Population Density

Employment

Figure 3-3 illustrates the employment density for CSAs within the Athenry study area (represented as jobs per square kilometre). The results indicate that the town centre is the largest attractor of employment trips within the study area.

Galway and Roscommon Education Training Board (ETB), the railway station and Cullairbaun Community School in the northeast of the study area also attract a large number of work trips. Other key employment destinations in the town include Mullins Construction and Raheen Industrial Estate.

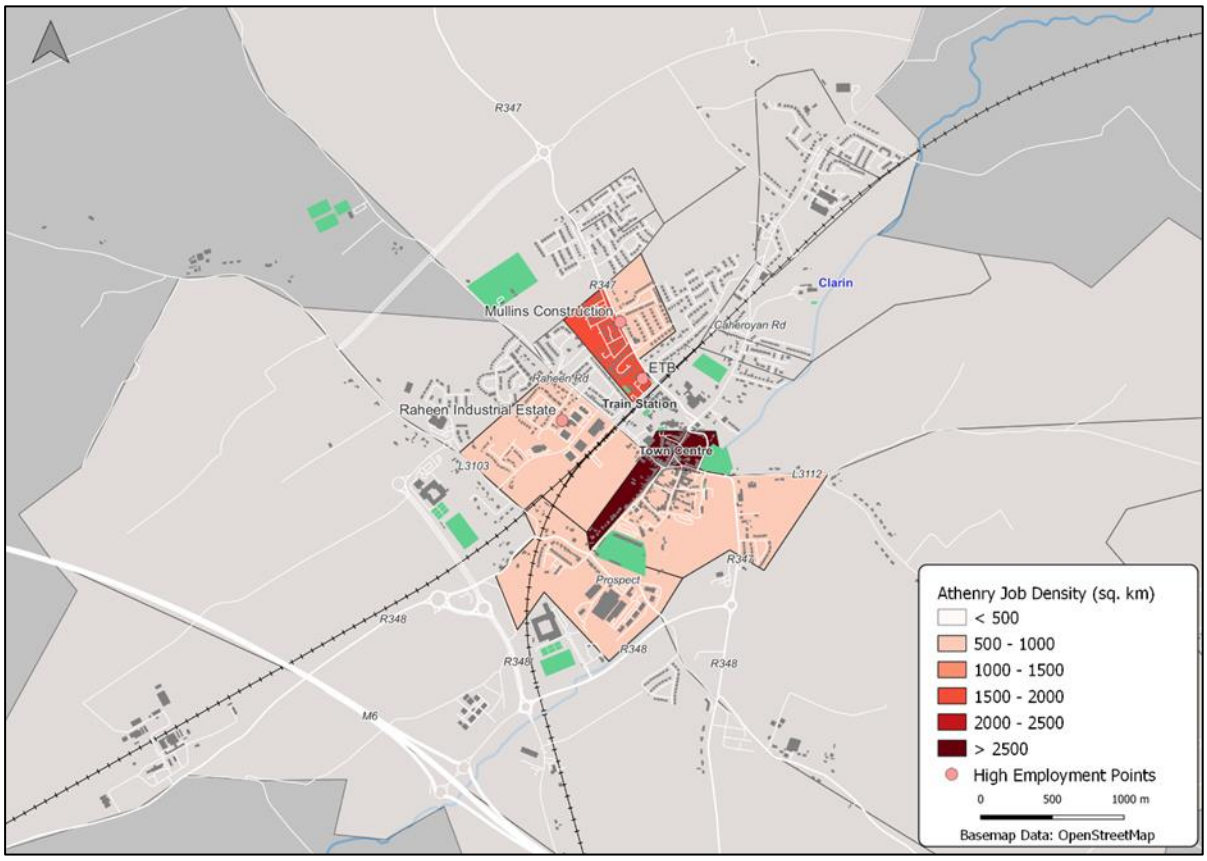

Figure 3-2: Athenry Employment Density

3.1.2 Services and Amenities

The location of key services and amenities within Athenry are presented in figure 3-4:

Within Athenry, there is a clear concentration of services within the town centre including multiple schools, the Church of the Assumption and main shopping streets.

The rail station is located on Station Road, just to the north-west of the town centre.

The main primary schools in Athenry are located in the town centre on Court Lane/Tuam Road. A third primary school, the Boys National School is located close to Community Park on the L3112. The recently developed new campuses for both Clarin College and Presentation College post-primary schools, catering for nearly 2,000 pupils between them, are located in the South-West of the study area near the M6.

Athenry Primary Care Centre is located in the centre of the study area, west of the town centre on Raheen Woods Road.

The main supermarket in Athenry is Tesco (recently Joyce's) in the Athenry Shopping Centre complex to the south of the study area, which has buildings centred on a large amount of parking. The complex

has a number of other shops and services. Other shops and services in the town are located in the town centre in the area stretching from Kenny Park to the North Gate.

The main car parks in Athenry are located around the town centre, at Backlawn, Tuam Road, North Gate Street and at the train station. Additional public parking facilities are available on-street on many streets within the town centre and in Market Square.

Figure 3-3: Athenry Services and Amenities

3.2 Demographic Profile

To better understand the profile of residents in the study area, and their travel patterns, this section presents data extracted from the 2016 Census Small Area Population Statistics (SAPS) dataset. It summarises information on the proportion of residents travelling to work and school, as well as high level information on age, gender, and car ownership.

Total Population

As shown in Table 3.1 below, the Study area has an estimated population of 5,023 according to the 2016 Census. This represents a population growth of 9% compared to the 2011 Census (4,570), which is a higher growth rate than seen nationally (3.8%). The Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 targets a population increase of 1,350 persons for Athenry during the plan period.

Table 3-1 also outlines the age profile of residents in Athenry. The results indicate that the Athenry LTP study area has a lower proportion of residents over the age of 65 than both the Galway County Area and the national average. Approximately 28.3% of the study area population are under the age of 18, a higher proportion than both the County Area and the national average.

Table 3-1: Athenry Population Structure by Age

LOCATION	POPULATION 2016	0-15	16-64	65+
Athenry	5,023	28.3%	61.6%	10.0%
Galway County	179,390	24.0%	61.4%	14.5%
National	4,761,865	22.4%	64.2%	13.4%

Employment & Education

Table 3-2 outlines the number of employed people and number of jobs within the study area. As can be seen below, the number of jobs is lower than the number of employed people, resulting in a Job Attraction/Employed ratio of 0.66.

This compares to a ratio of 1.2 for Galway City and 0.5 for the rest of Galway County, highlighting the attractiveness of the city as an employment destination. The ratio in the study area results in a net flow of employed people leaving the study area for work.

Table 3-2 also outlines the number of education attractions within Athenry. With 2,321 students commuting to schools within the study area, compared to 1,428 workers, it shows the prevalence of school trips entering the area. Athenry serves a large population catchment outside of those living within the study area, with 2,321 school places in 2016 for a population of 5,023.

Table 3-2: Athenry Employment Opportunities

LOCATION	EMPLOYED PEOPLE LIVING IN THE AREA	JOB ATTRACTION OF THE AREA	RATIO (JOB ATT/EMPLOYED)	PUPILS / STUDENTS
Athenry	2,161	1,428	0.66	2,321
Galway City	34,951	42,062	1.20	25,494
Rest of Galway County	75,116	37,325	0.50	33,068
National	2,006,641	1,468,093	0.73	982,185

Car Ownership

Based on 2016 figures, 15.6% of Irish households do not own a car, while this is the case for 10.2 % of Athenry households. While the majority of households within the study area own cars, there is still a significant number of households without access to a car which indicates the need to provide quality, accessible transport alternatives to access key services and education and employment opportunities.

Table 3-3: Car Ownership

LOCATION	% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH NO CAR	% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH 1 CAR	% OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH 2 CARS OR MORE
Athenry	10.2%	47.7%	42.1%
Galway City	22.6%	46.8%	30.6%
Galway County	9.4%	38.9%	51.7%
National	15.6%	42.3%	42.1%

3.3 Environmental Conditions & Physical Constraints

The following environmental conditions are of note within the study area:

- The town is generally quite flat, although it rises towards the relief road, while the surrounding greenfield land within the study area is generally hillier, rising again towards Monviea and Attymon. The flat nature of the town core is beneficial for active travel.
- Part of Esker Riada ('the Great Way' a strategic early route-way on a gravel esker that once stretched from Dublin to Galway) is located on the south eastern and northern fringes of the study area boundary.
- The River Clarin runs south-easterly through the town, continuing onwards before running into Galway Bay at Clarinbridge.
- According to the OPW[3], "there is a relatively low level of flood risk" in Athenry from the River Clarin, and as such there is currently no Flood Relief Scheme proposed for Athenry. There were surveys however carried out between Clarinbridge and Athenry in 2019, as well as clearing works in Grangeabbey to increase river flow, as a result of concern about flooding in the area.
- A review of the Archaeological Survey of Ireland shows that there are a large number of entries in Athenry on the Sites and Monuments Record and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage in Athenry, as would be expected given its Medieval history. A number of structures at the railway station are listed and the site of the Dominican Friary and St Mary's Church also feature heavily. Also recorded are Athenry Castle, the corn mill, market cross and a number of buildings on Cross Street and surrounding Market Square.

[3] Source: https://www.floodinfo.ie/map/floodplans/

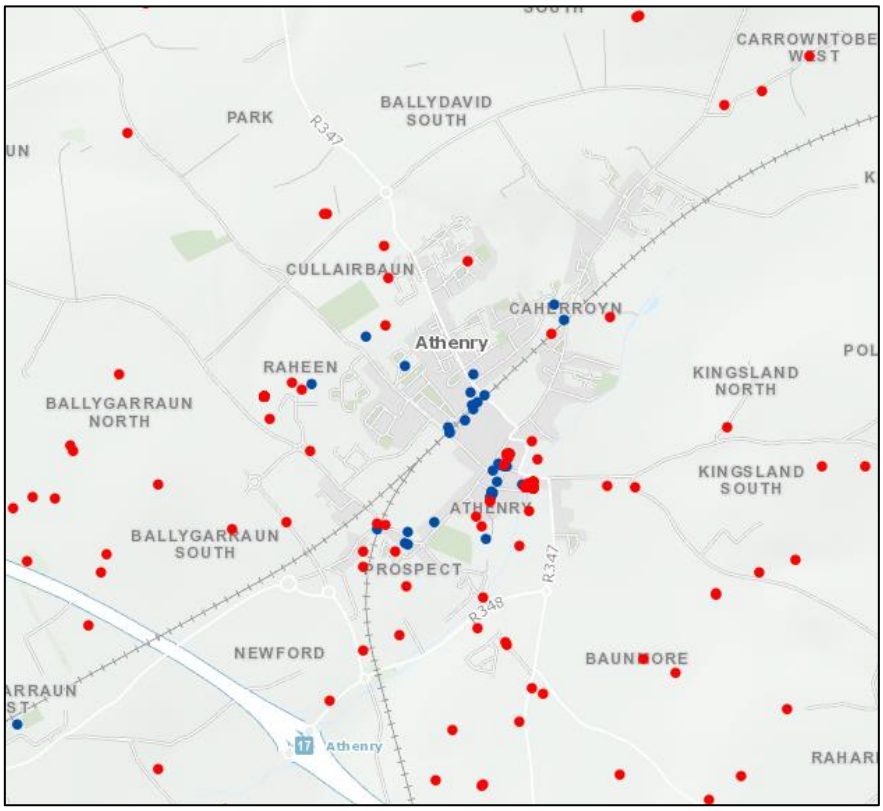

Figure 3-4: Sites in Athenry listed on the Sites and Monuments Record and the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage[4]

There are also a number of physical constraints to transport in the study area, in particular the railway line and the River Clarin.

The railway line passes through the centre of the study area, causing considerable severance. There are only two railway crossings in the centre of the town, on the Tuam Road (railway bridge) and Church Street (level crossing). There are also four additional railway crossings on the outskirts of the town traversing the Galway rail line (comprising two railway bridges and two level crossings). Given most of the residential areas in the study area are north of the railway and most attractors (schools and shops) are to the south, the railway line causes considerable barriers to movement within the town aligned to desire lines.

The River Clarin runs south-easterly through the town, to the east of the town centre. The main central river crossing is on the R347. Given the river's easterly location, it is less of barrier to movement then the railway line, with the vast majority of development in the study area located to the west of it. It does however require people travelling from or along the Caheryon Road to come through the town centre or circle around the town via the relief road in order to access Athenry Boys National School and other trip attractors located along the R347 due to the lack of river crossings north of the R347. Any future development east of the river will require consideration of this barrier.

[4] Source: https://maps.archaeology.ie/HistoricEnvironment/

3.4 Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used to define the LTP study area, along with an overview of the existing land use, demographics and environmental conditions. In summary:

- The defined study area broadly aligns with the existing LAP boundary.
- The study area has a population of 5,023 according to the 2016 Census, with growth of 9% from 2011. Approx. 28.3% of the population are under 18, with 10.0 % over the age of 65.
- 10.2% of households do not own a car and may be reliant on other means of transport including public transport, cycling, walking, taxis, etc. However, in general car ownership is quite high within the study area with 89.8 % of households owning at least one car.
- Athenry town centre is the largest attractor of employment trips (1,428 attractions) within the study area. Other key employment areas include the train station environs and Raheen Industrial Estate.
- There are a number of centrally located schools within the study area, with a mix of primary and secondary schools as well as two very large recently constructed school campuses between the M6 and the town. This results in a total of 2,321 school trips ending in Athenry every morning.
- The LTP study area is constrained by the physical barrier of the rail line which causes severance along desire lines from residential areas in the north of the study area to the town centre, education facilities and other trip attractions located in the south of the study area.

4. EXISTING TRAVEL PATTERNS

4.1 Introduction

The following chapter provides an overview of existing travel patterns for residents within the study area based on 2016 Census data, focusing on:

- **Trip Distribution Profile**: Identifying the key destinations and desire lines for travel;
- **Mode Share**: Highlights the proportion of trips undertaken by walk, cycle, public transport and car for employment and education purposes; and
- **Trip Length Distribution**: Outlining the demand for travel at various distance bands for employment trips. This also includes information on the various modes used for different journey distances.

In order to determine the travel pattern for residents, two main Census data sources were used, namely:

- **Small Area Population Statistics (SAPs):** provides information on population demographics including details on commuting patterns such as mode used, typical journey times and time of departure; and
- **Place of Work, School or College - Census of Anonymised Records (POWSCAR):** includes a range of information on travel patterns for trips to work and school as recorded in the Census.

4.2 Trip Distribution Profile

The POWSCAR database was analysed to identify the distribution of employment trips travelling to/from the study area in the AM period. Results are presented in Table 4-1, 4-2 and 4-3 below.

Table 4-1: Trip Pattern Summary

TRIP TYPE	TRIP PURPOSE	NUMBER OF TRIPS
Internal trips within the Study Area	Work	506
	School	800
	All	1,306
Inbound trips from outside towards the Study Area	Work	2,172
	School	1,639
	All	3,811
Outbound trips from the study area	Work	2,123
	School	419

TRIP TYPE	TRIP PURPOSE	NUMBER OF TRIPS
	All	2,542

The Tables below show the trip distribution for AM employment trips to and from the study area. There are 1,306 trips that both start and end within the study area, which represents 34% of all trips originating in the study area, and 26% of trips travelling to the study area.

For more detailed results of the geographic distribution of trips to/from the study area, surrounding areas have been grouped into sectors. Insofar as possible, these sectors have been designed to align with the main transport corridors to/from Athenry. For example, trips to/from the "West" sector will mainly be along either the M6 or the Galway-Dublin rail line, and trips to/from the "North" sector will mainly be via the M17. The results of the sector distribution analysis are illustrated in the figures below.

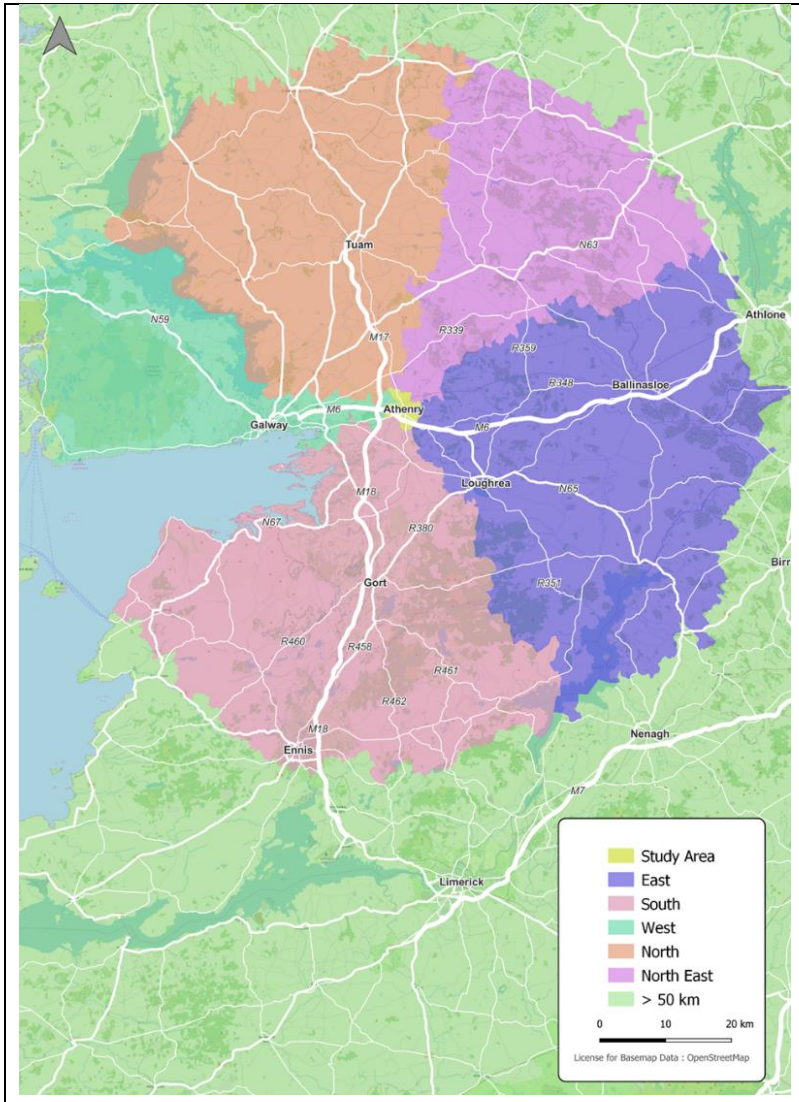

Figure 4-1: POWSCAR Sector map

Table 4-2: Destination of Athenry Origin Trips

DESTINATION	WORK	EDUCATION	TOTAL	%
Study Area	506	800	1,306	34%
East	138	37	175	5%
South	118	16	134	3%
West	1,371	262	1,633	42%
North	228	40	268	7%
North East	56	12	68	2%
> 50 km	212	52	264	7%
Total	2,629	1,219	3,848	100%

Table 4-3: Origin of Athenry Destination Trips

ORIGIN	WORK	EDUCATION	TOTAL	%
Study Area	506	800	1,306	26%
East	442	264	706	14%
South	336	476	812	16%
West	462	161	623	12%
North	424	482	906	18%
North East	298	244	542	11%
> 50 km	210	12	222	4%
Total	2,678	2,439	5,117	100%

Key findings

As can be seen in the tables above, while 34% of combined work/education trips start and end in the study area, this breaks down to 65% of education trips and only 19% of work trips.

Over 80% of work trips originating in the study area end elsewhere. The most significant external destination for trips from the study area is the western sector which encompass Galway City, with 1,633 trips. A majority of work related trips, 56%, and 42% of combined work/education trips from the study area are in the direction of Galway City.

86% of education trips either stay in the study area or head towards Galway City. Therefore, the M6 and Galway-Dublin rail line are the most important outbound routes for Athenry commuters.

The second most significant external sector for outbound trips from Athenry is the Northern sector towards Tuam along the M17, with 268 trips. These three sectors (Study Area, West and North) account for 83% of trips from the study area, the remaining trips are spread between the south, east and north east. Trips greater than 50km account for 7% of trips.

For trips travelling to the Study Area, the travel patterns are more varied. Internal trips within the Study Area represent 26% of work and school related travel to Athenry. Roughly equal numbers of trips come from the surrounding East, South, West, North and North-East sectors, between 11% and 18%.

Flows towards Galway are mainly tidal with the West sector accounting for 42% of outbound AM trips but only 12% of inbound trips. The effect of the large secondary schools in particular in Athenry is apparent in the figures, with only 33% of education trips originating within the study area. Over 1,600 education trips to Athenry begin outside the study area. Few trips greater than 50km in length are made to Athenry for work/education, at only 4% of trips.

4.3 Mode Share

As outlined previously, SAPS data provides information from the census on the typical mode of transport used for travelling to work and education. This data was used to identify the proportion of trips originating within the study area which are made by walking, cycling, public transport and car.

4.3.1 Employment Trips

The figure below illustrates the mode share for trips to work originating within the study area by walk, cycle, public transport and car (including drivers, passengers, vans and lorries), and also compares the study area mode share to the Galway County average as a whole, Galway city and nationally. Figures in Appendix B outline how the percentage of residents using each of these modes varies across the study area.

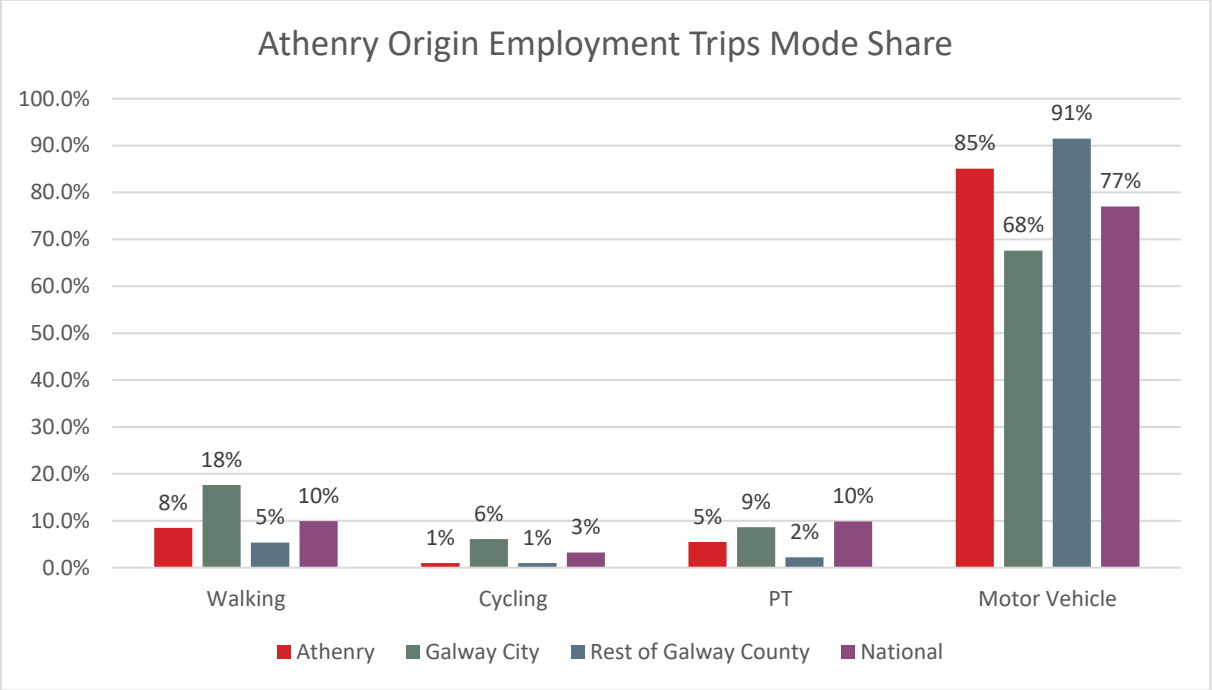

Figure 4-2: Employment Mode Share

Key findings observed from the mode share data for employment trips in the study area include:

- Approximately 9.5% of commute trips originating in the study area are undertaken by active modes. Walking trips form the majority of these and are lower than the national average. Cycling accounts for just 1%, far less than the national average but on par with the County average (with Galway City excluded).
- Public transport represents only 5.5% of commute trips, just over half of the national average, but more than twice the County average (with Galway City excluded).
- The private car is the dominant mode of transport for work trips from the study area at 85.1%, compared to the national average of 77.0%. Despite its urban form, the commute car mode share is only slightly lower than the county average of 91.5%.

4.3.2 Education Trips

Figure 4-3 below illustrates the mode share for trips to education originating within the study area.

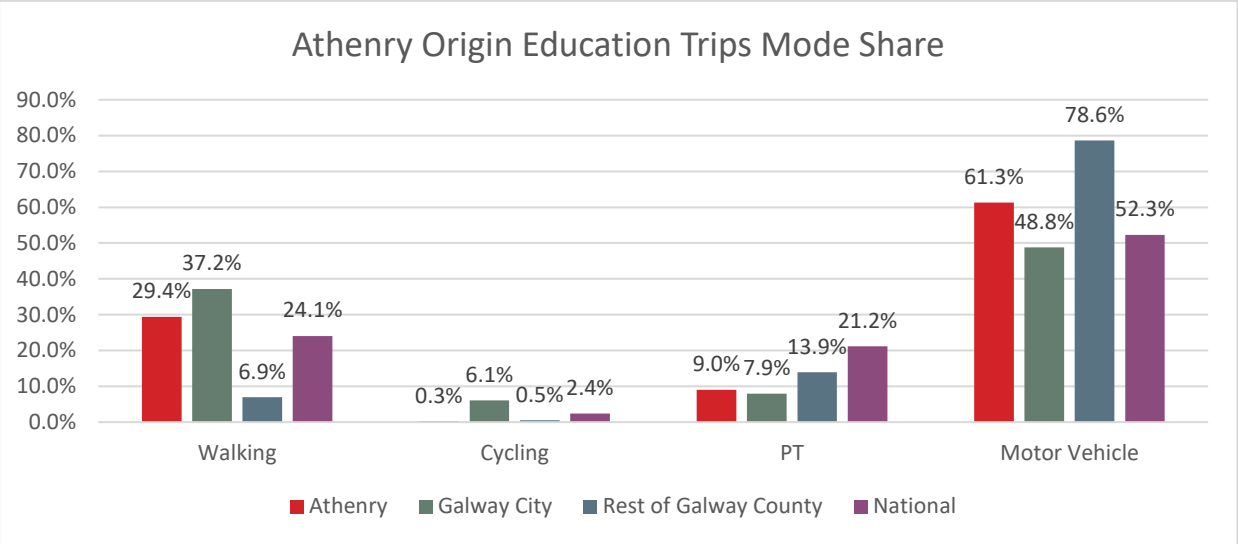

Figure 4-3: Education Mode Share

The key findings for education trips include:

- The overall mode share for active travel (walking and cycling) to education is 29.7%, slightly higher than the national average (26.5%), and significantly higher than the county average of 7.4% (excluding Galway City) showing the advantages of the study area's urban form.
- Cycling mode share is well below the national average (0.3% vs 2.4%)
- Public transport mode share is 9%, significantly below the county average of 13.9% (excluding Galway City).
- Overall, car is still the dominant mode of transport for education-related trips, accounting for 61.3% of all journeys, compared to a national average of 52.3%.
- Car trips are predominantly concentrated in areas further from Athenry schools, however, there are still a sizeable number of car trips within the study area that are within a reasonable walk or cycle.

4.3.3 Combined Employment & Education Mode Share

Figure 4-4 below illustrates the mode share for trips to both employment and education originating within the study area.

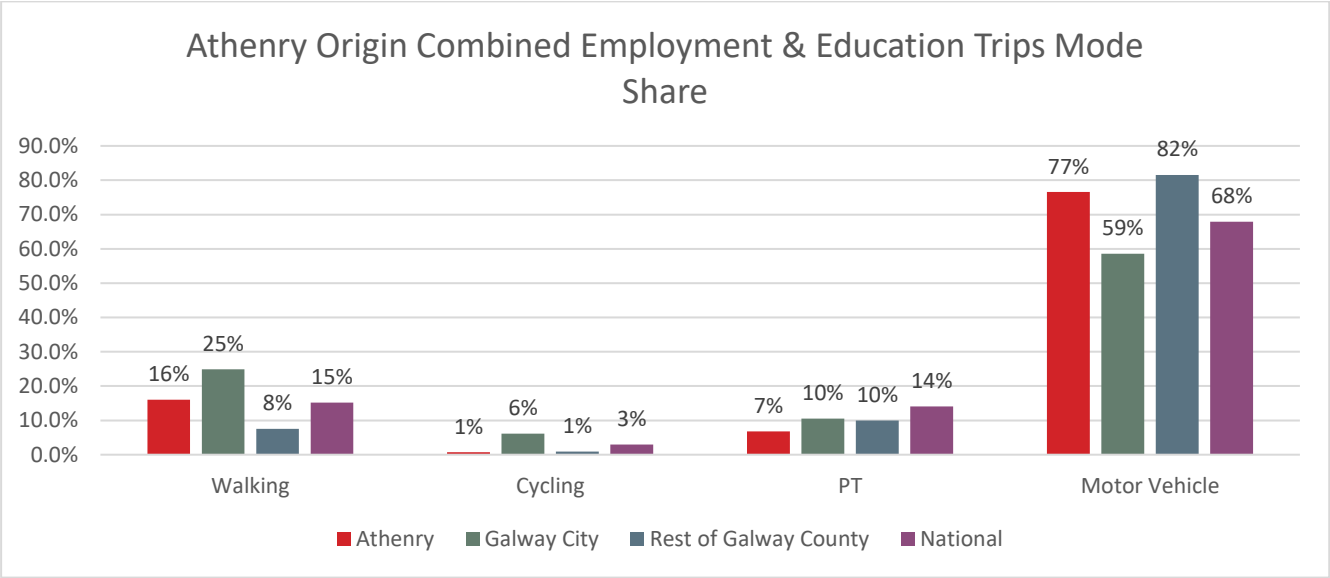

Figure 4-4: Combined Employment & Education Mode Share

The key findings for combined education and employment trips include:

- The overall mode share for active travel (walking and cycling) to education and employment is 16.7%, slightly lower than the national average (18%), and significatively higher than the County average (8.5%).
- Cycling is below the national average (0.7% vs 2.9%)
- Public transport mode share is 6.8%, falling significantly below the county average of 10% (excluding Galway City)
- Overall, car is the dominant mode of transport for travel to education and employment, accounting for 76.5% of all journeys while the national average is 67.9%.

4.4 Trip Length Distribution

Analysis was undertaken to determine the trip length distribution by mode for employment and education purposes from 2016 POWSCAR data. This was used to establish the typical trip lengths, and modes used, for journeys by residents of the study area and help identify where opportunities might exist to further support a shift away from the private car and onto sustainable modes.

Figure 4-5 below outlines the trip length distribution by mode for all employment trips generated within the study area.

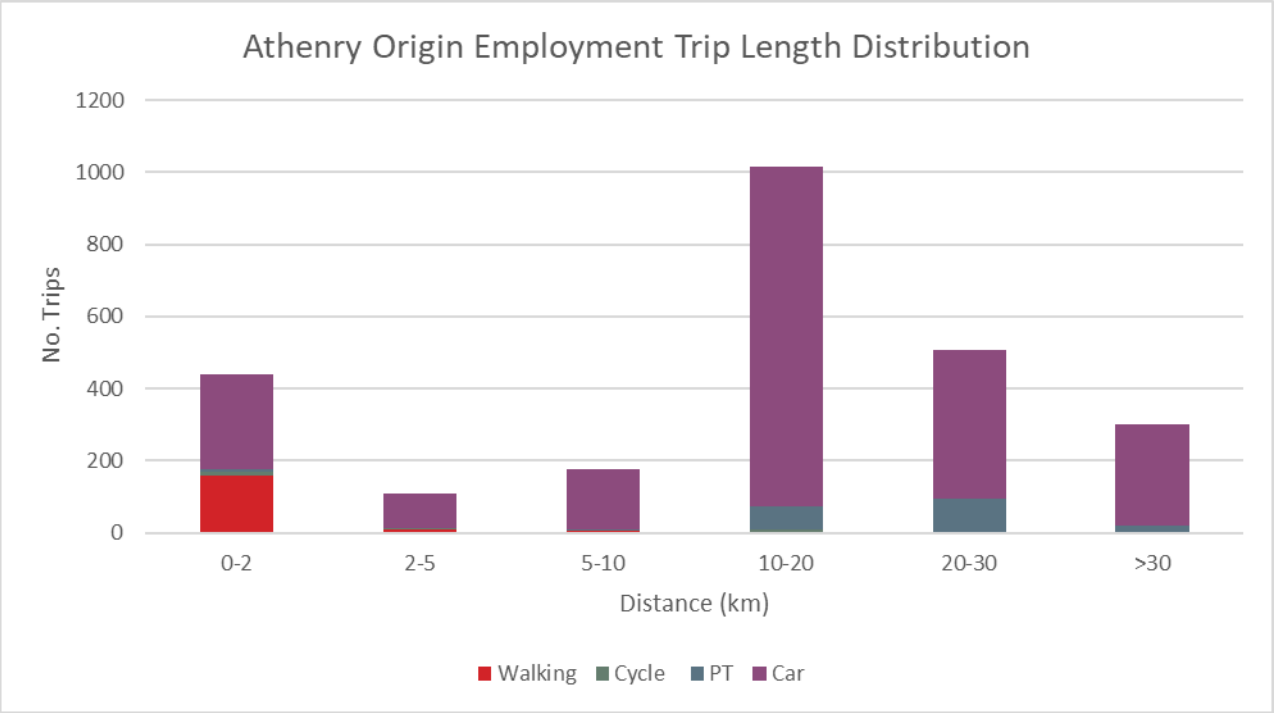

Figure 4-5: Employment Trip Length Distribution (Trips to work in Athenry), by Mode [POWSCAR, 2016]

Key findings:

- Approx. 72% of trips to work in Athenry (72%) are more than 10km long with the vast majority of these undertaken by Car. Nearly 7% of the trips are between 5 and 10km, and 22% are less than 5km in length.
- Even for short employment trips under 2km, the car mode share is very significant at 60%.
- As shown earlier in the report, Athenry functions as a commuter town with large numbers of trips travelling to Galway City. These trips are evident here in the 10-20km and 20-30km range.

Given the large number of school places in Athenry and the resulting large hinterland catchment of Athenry schools, Education trip length distribution analysis was based on trips ending rather than starting in the study area.

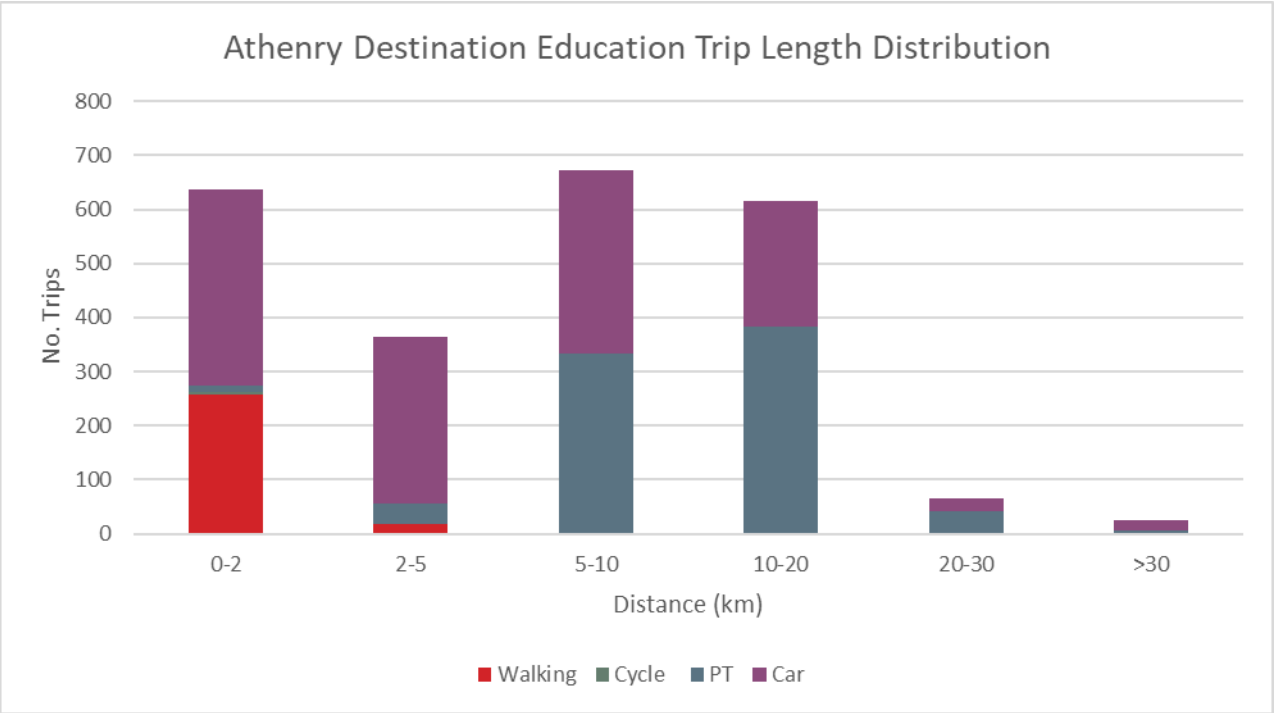

Figure 4-6: Education Trip Length Distribution (Trips to work in Athenry), by Mode [POWSCAR, 2016]

Key findings:

- A majority (55%) of longer distance (>5km) education trips are made by public transport.
- There are a significant number (707) education trips longer than 10km coming to Athenry.
- A majority of trips to school under 2km (57%) are undertaken by car.
- Trips to education in Athenry are generally shorter and therefore more suited to active travel than employment trips.

There is a general association between trip length and mode choice. For example, at shorter distances the average person may be willing to walk or cycle to access goods, services or employment. However, as trip lengths increase, these modes become less attractive.

Similarly, short distance trips by public transport may be unattractive compared to alternative modes as the wait time would be a significant proportion of overall journey time.

In terms of distance, trips can be broken down into:

- Short – generally serviceable by walking or cycling
- Medium – generally serviceable by cycling (including eBikes), public transport or car; and
- Long – generally serviceable by public transport or car.

The significant proportion of education trips in Athenry under 10km, and particularly under 5km and 2km, provides an opportunity to shift car trips to active travel given the right package of measures. For trips over 10km, public transport options may be competitive to the car for certain trips patterns. Insofar as is practicable, a public transport option should be provided for these longer trips for social equity reasons even where journey time competitiveness is challenging.

4.5 Summary

The previous sections provided an overview of existing travel patterns for the study area based on analysis of 2016 Census data. In summary:

Trip Distribution:

- Approx. one-third of commuting trips from Athenry remain within the study area, with 19% working locally, and due to the local nature of these trips, there may be an opportunity to support this demand via walking and cycling.
- 42% of trips from Athenry are heading towards Galway City and 80% of workers living in the study area work outside of the study area.
- There are a large number of school trips, over 1,600, destined for the study area originating within the surrounding rural hinterland. It will be difficult for these trips to be taken by active travel.

Mode Share:

- Approx. 9.5% of commute trips originating in the study area are undertaken by active modes – 8.5% walking and 1% cycling.
- Public transport represents just 5.5% of the mode share for commute trips versus 9.9% nationally.
- The private car is the most dominant mode of transport for work trips from the study area at 85.1%.
- The overall mode share for active travel (walking and cycling) to education is 29.7%, although there are negligible levels of cycling to education in Athenry, slightly higher than the national average of 26.5%, and County average of 7.4% (excluding Galway City).
- Overall, car is still the dominant mode of transport for education-related trips, accounting for 76.5% of all journeys.

Trip Length Distribution:

- The majority of commute trips towards Athenry (72%), are more than 10 km long, 22% are less than 5km in length.
- The car mode share for employment trips under 2km is very high, with 60% undertaken by car.
- A majority (55%) of longer distance (>5km) education trips are made by public transport.
- A majority of trips to school under 2km (57%) are undertaken by car.
- Trips to education in Athenry are generally shorter and therefore more suited to active travel than employment trips.

5. ACCESS TO EMPLOYMENT AND EDUCATION

5.1 Introduction to ATOS

Access to Opportunities and Services (ATOS) is a measure of how easy it is to access key services and employment by walking and cycling. In developing the ATOS tool, the National Transport Authority (NTA) have followed a methodology established by Transport for London and adapted it to make it more suitable for use outside of large metropolitan areas.

The ATOS tool calculates accessibility to Employment, Primary Education, Post-Primary Education, general medical practitioners (GPs), Food Shopping and Open Spaces using the following data sources:

Table 5-1: ATOS Data Sources

Service	Data Sources
Employment	Census Workplace Zones
Primary Education	Dept. Education School Lists
Post Primary Education	Dept. Education School Lists
Health (GPs)	GeoDirectory (NACE Q.86.21)
Food Shopping	GeoDirectory (NACE G.47.11)
Open Spaces	Development Plans

Prior to running the calculation, the user specifies criteria for the assessment including the number of services to look for and an acceptable walk/cycle time (primary schools within a 15 minute walk). The tool then generates a score for each location within the specified study area (based on 100m grid squares).

The score is calculated based on how travel times to the nearest relevant destinations (for the specific type of service) compared to the average travel time across all locations. This enables any significant geographical differences in accessibility to particular services to be clearly identified, so that in turn the causes of this discrepancy can be investigated.

- **Score A**: Travel times to relevant destinations are more than one standard deviation below the average
- **Score B**: Below the average, but by no more than one standard deviation
- **Score C**: Average or above, but by no more than one standard deviation
- **Score D**: Between one and two standard deviations above the average
- **Score E**: More than two standard deviations above the average.

For employment, the ATOS tool calculates the number of jobs available within a specified journey time by walking and cycling.

Using ATOS as part of the Baseline Assessment allows identification of areas that have good accessibility to key services, with a low score potentially highlighting areas of poor permeability.

5.2 Access to Employment

For employment, the ATOS tool calculates the number of jobs available within a specified journey time by walking and cycling. Using ATOS as part of the baseline toolkit allows identification of areas that have good accessibility to key services, with a low score potentially highlighting areas with poor permeability.

The ATOS tool has been run for access to employment opportunities within the study area by walking and cycling. For this analysis, the defined criteria was the number of jobs available within a 15 minute walk and 15 minute cycle. As outlined above, the scoring for each grid is then determined by how the travel time compares to the average.

It should be noted again that the score is calculated based on how travel times to the nearest relevant destinations (for the specific type of service) compared to the average travel time across all locations in the study area. The score is comparative, measuring where accessibility is higher and lower than the mean in the study area, rather than an objective score of the levels of accessibility.

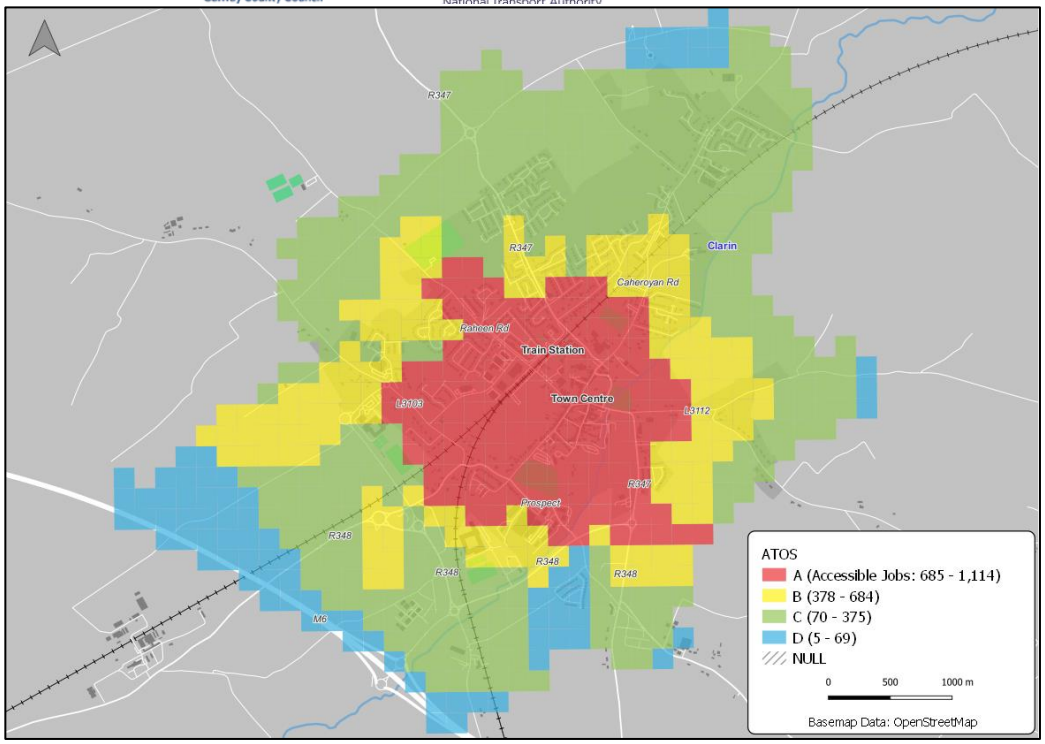

Figure 5-1: Access to Employment (Walk)

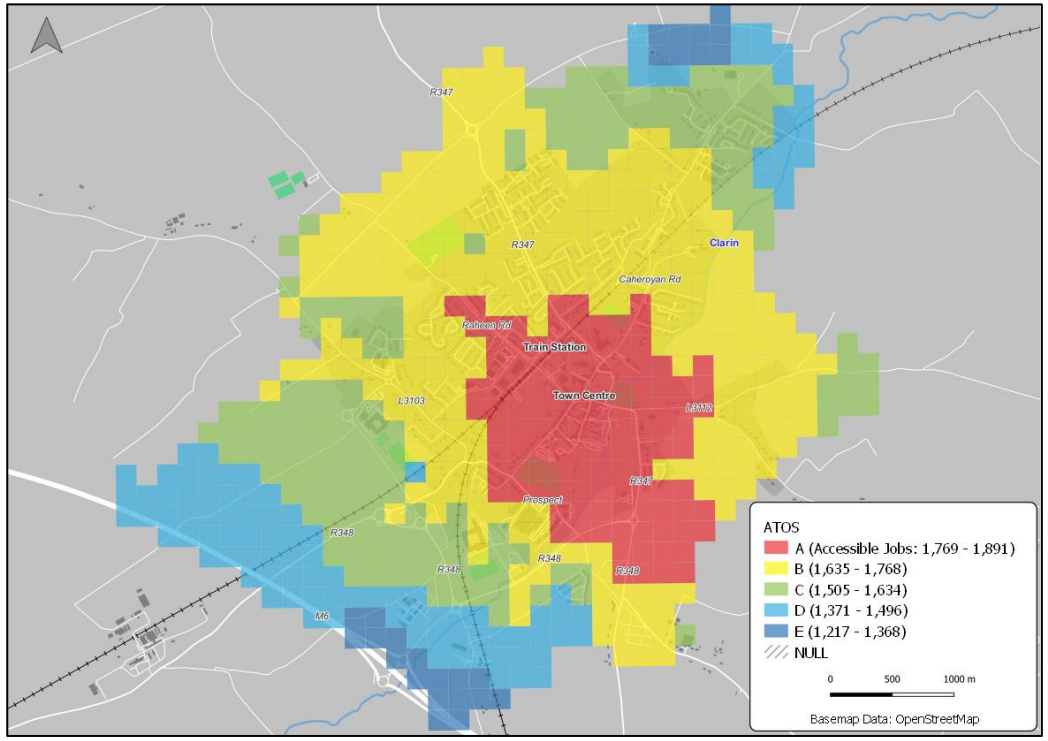

Figure 5-2: Access to Employment (Cycle)

The results of the ATOS assessment for access to employment in Athenry shows a high level of access around the town centre. The Raheen Industrial Estate increases access to employment west of the railway line, however the effects of the railway line induced severance is evidenced in other areas to the north-west of the town. Páirc an Rí and nearby housing estates have relatively poor walking access to employment despite being geographically quite close to the Raheen Road which has very good access. This is due to severance cause by the railway line and housing estate cul de sacs, with no east-west route between the R347 Tuam Road and the Raheen Road west of Station Road. Housing Estate Páirc na hAbhainn by the new Clarin College has very poor walking accessibility due to its lack of connection to the Clarin College side of the R348 despite being located alongside it.

The increased distances that can be covered by cycling are evident in the much greater area that gets a “B” rating for access and the relative homogeneity in the number of accessible jobs. The entirety of the study area is within a 15-minute cycle of the main employment centres, so there is little difference in accessibility levels. However, housing around Ballydavid towards Monivea has relatively poor levels of access to employment by both walking and cycling due to its increased distance out from the town.

5.3 Access to Schools

The ATOS tool has been run for access to primary and post-primary schools within the study area by walking and cycling. For this analysis, the defined criteria was the ability to access any primary school (at least one) and any post-primary school within a 15 minute walk and 15 minute cycle. As outlined above, the scoring for each grid is then determined by how the travel time compares to the average travel time for all squares that have access to a primary/post-primary school within the specified timeframes.

It should be noted again that the score is calculated based on how travel times to the nearest relevant destinations (for the specific type of service) compared to the average travel time across all locations in the study area. The score is comparative, measuring where accessibility is higher and lower than the mean in the study area, rather than an objective score of the levels of accessibility.

The figures below present the ATOS results for accessibility to schools in Athenry by walking, with analysis, first and then cycling.

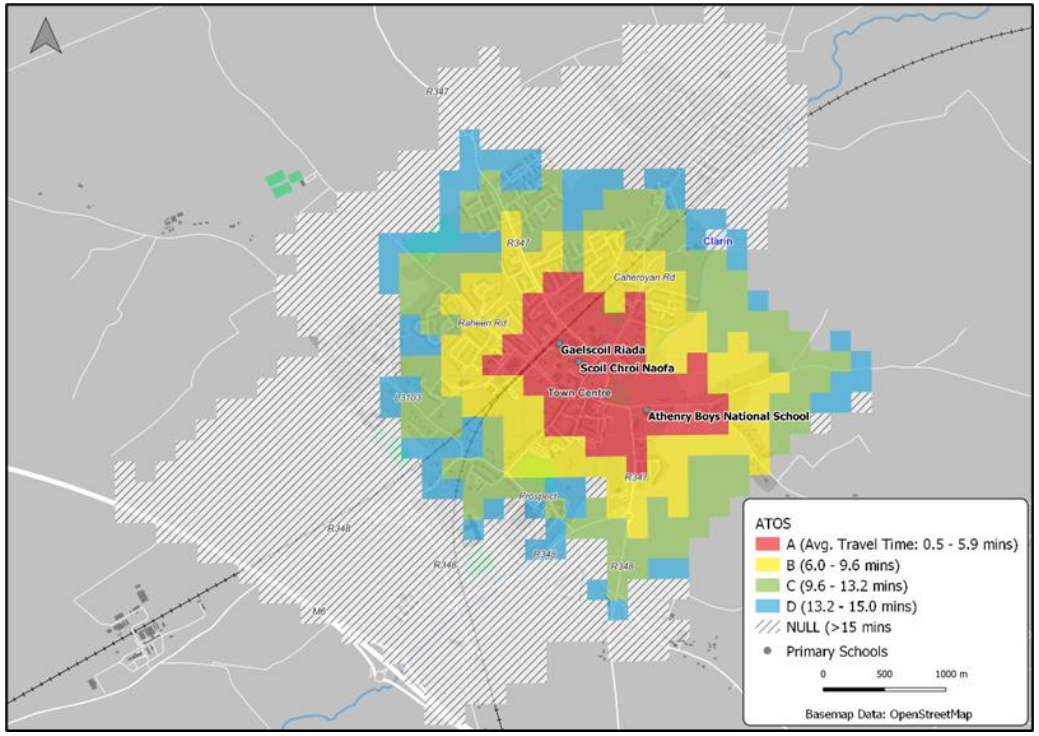

Figure 5-3: Access to Primary Schools (Walk)

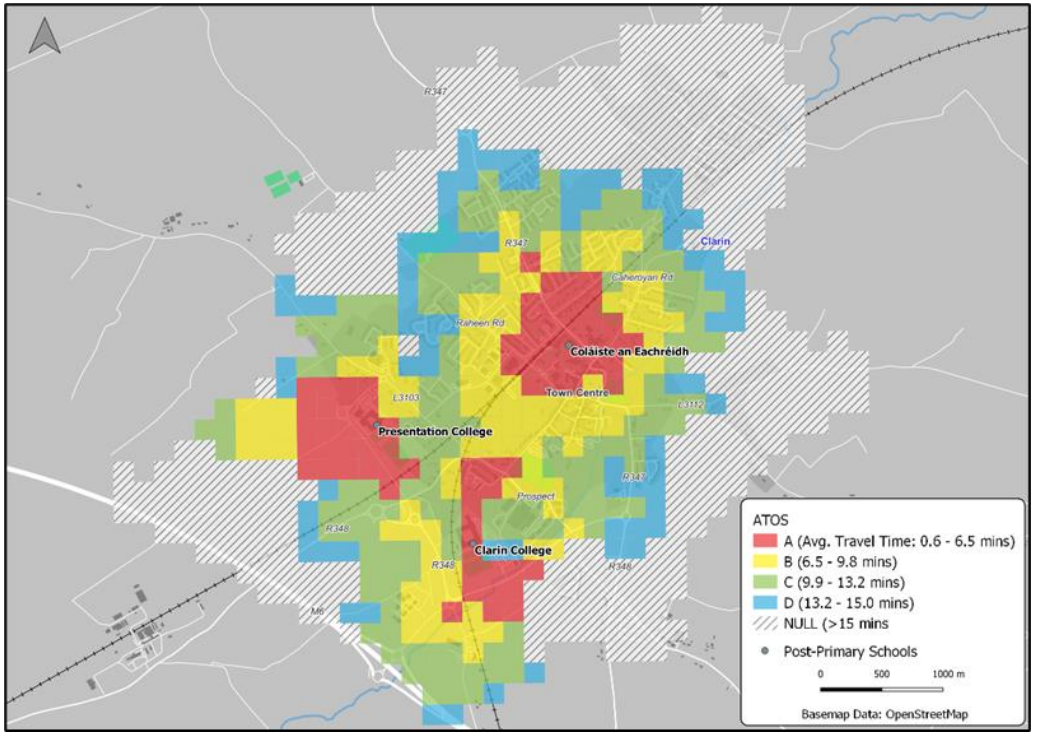

Figure 5-4: Access to Post Primary Schools (Walk)

The ATOS results for walking to schools in Athenry shows very high levels of accessibility in the town centre for both primary and secondary schools. The denser street network around the town centre enables a high level of access to the schools from the centre. The relatively poor level of permeability between housing estates and between the Tuam Road and Raheen Road is evident once again however, with a relatively quick transition from areas with A ratings to areas with C or D ratings moving north and west of the town centre. For primary schools, housing in the south and north-east of the study area are too far from the centrally located primary schools to reach in a 15-minute walk.

For Presentation College and Clarin College located in the west and south of the study area, the lack of a dense street network and development between these sites and the M6 is evident in the relatively small walking catchment of the two schools. Presentation College in particular suffers from poor east-west permeability between housing estates along the Tuam Road and Raheen Road. The lack of connection between Páirc na hAbhainn and the R348 severs this housing area from Clarin College's 15-minute walking catchment.

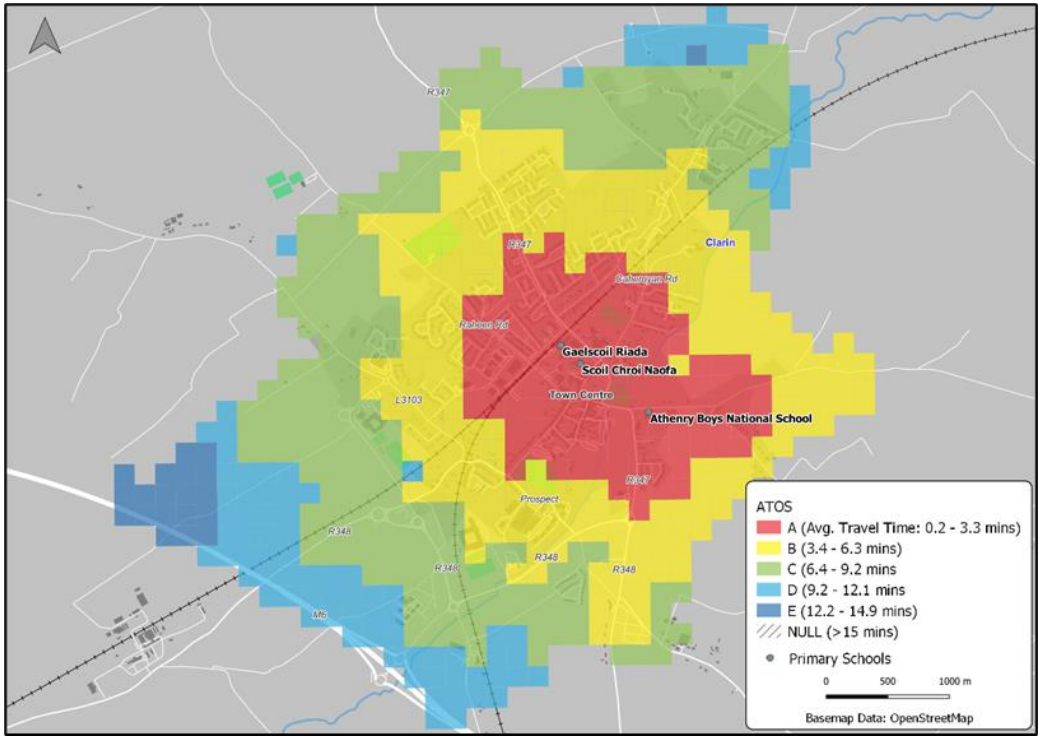

Figure 5-5: Access to Primary Schools (Cycle)

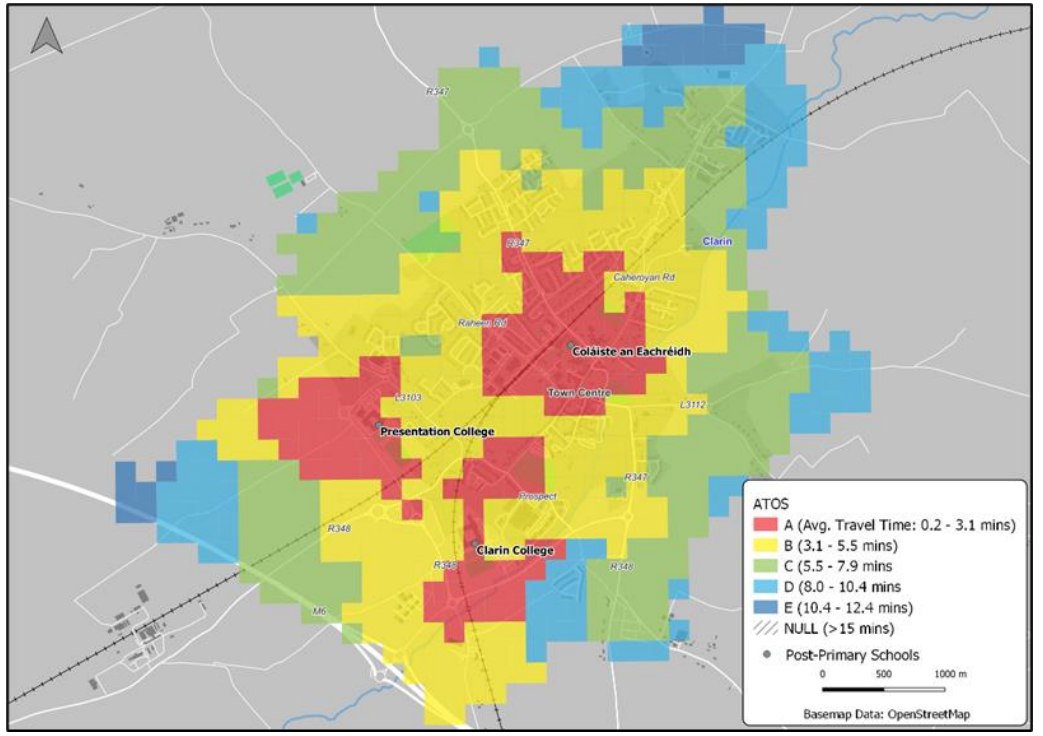

Figure 5-6: Access to Post-Primary Schools (Cycle)

The increased distances that can be covered by cycling are again evident in the much greater area that gets achieves a B or C rating for access to both primary and secondary schools compared to walking. As in access to employment, housing around Ballydavid towards Monivea has relatively poor levels of access to schools by both walking and cycling due to its increased distance from the town centre. The lack of access between Páirc na hAbhainn and the R348 by Clarin College is visible by the estate's better access to primary school (Athenry Boys National School) than Clarin College which it is much closer to as the crow flies.

The much higher levels of access by cycling than walking to schools and employment in the study area shows the potential of cycling in Athenry to provide great levels of access without the need to drive.

5.4 Access to Public Transport

The NTA's Public Transport Accessibility Level (PTAL) tool combines the walk or cycle journey time to a Public Transport stop with the level of service at that stop. It gives an idea of how well connected an area is to Public Transport services. The method was developed in 1992 by the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham and was subsequently adopted by Transport for London (TfL) and applied to the Greater London Network. The NTA has adapted the methodology from London for use in Ireland.

PTAL ranges for 0 (worst) to 6b (best). In general an area will have a higher PTAL if:

- It is a short walk to the nearest station or stop
- There are short waiting times
- There are multiple services passing the stop
- There is a nearby major rail station

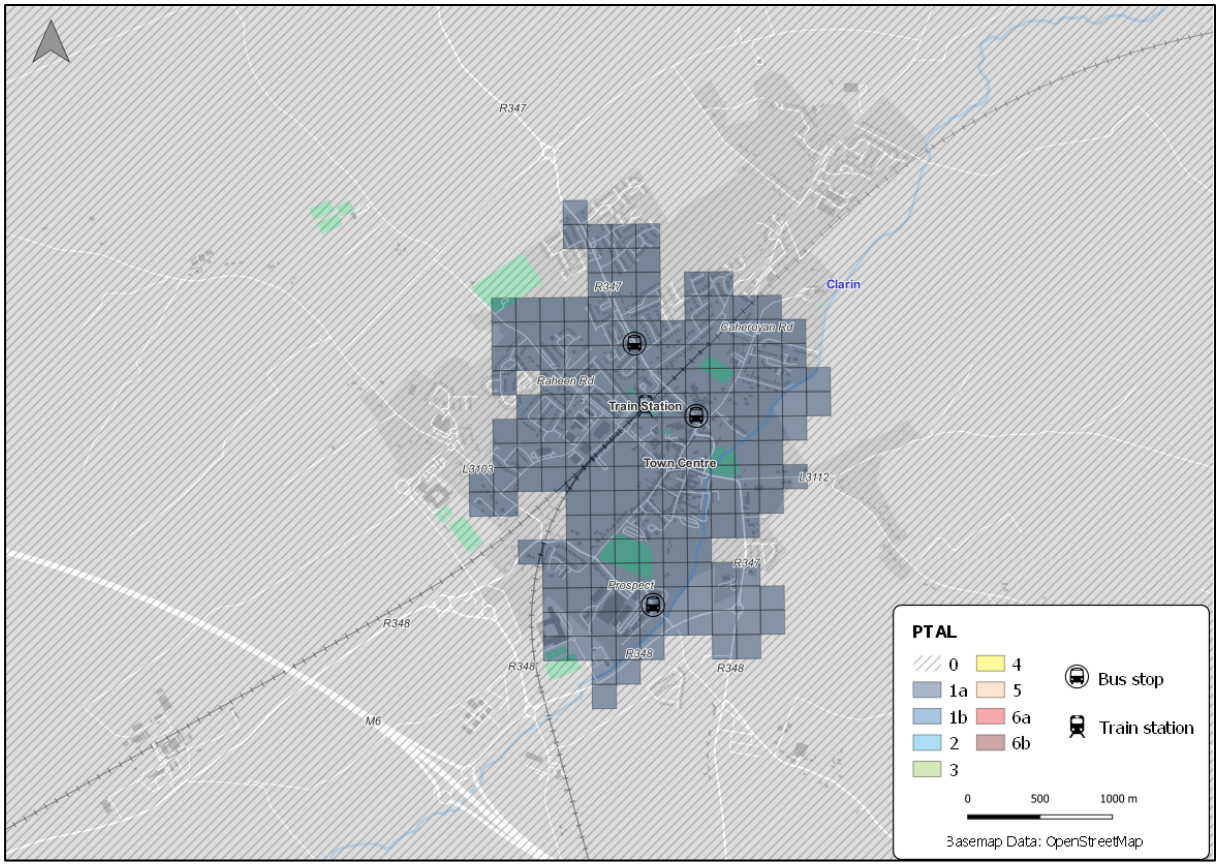

Figure 5-7: PTAL Assessment Results for Galway

As can be seen from the map, areas within a short walk of either a bus stop or rail station in Athenry have the highest level of access to public transport within the study area. The low PTAL score (1a) in general for Athenry is likely due to the low frequency of public transport services at bus stops and rail stations in the town. PTAL is generally aimed at large urban areas and for reference, the area surrounding Eyre Square in Galway only achieves a PTAL of 5. Again, the effects of severance caused

by cul de sacs along the Tuam Road and R348 are evident in areas quite geographically close to bus stops on these roads having a PTAL of 0.

5.5 Summary

The previous sections provided an overview of the results of an Access to opportunities and Services (ATOS) analysis of the study area. In summary:

- There is a high level of access to employment around the town centre by both walking and cycling, extending west due to the Raheen Industrial Estate.
- The lack of permeability between housing estates and between the Tuam Road and Raheen Road reduces access to employment.
- Housing Estate Páirc na hAbhainn's lack of access to the R348 by the new Clarin College results in severance and very poor levels of access to employment for this housing.
- Most of the same problems are evident for access to schools, with high levels of access around the town centre but poor levels of permeability, resulting in a rapid reduction in levels of access moving away from the town centre.
- For secondary schools to the west of the study area, the lack of surrounding development and street network results in a relatively small walking catchment around them.
- Housing Estate Páirc na hAbhainn's severance from the R348 by Clarin College also causes poor access to schools.
- There are much higher levels of access to schools by cycling than walking, showing the potential of cycling in Athenry.
- There is a relatively good level of coverage of access to public transport stops in Athenry due to three dispersed bus stops, although a large part of the study area has a PTAL rating of 0.
- The low frequency of bus and train services results in a low PTAL rating of public transport accessibility in the town with areas achieving a rating above zero only rising to rating 1a.

6. EXISTING TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE AND SERVICES

6.1 Introduction

This chapter sets out the characteristics of the existing transport infrastructure in the Athenry LTP study area, including:

- **Active Travel:** provides an overview of facilities for pedestrians and cyclists including elements such as footpath provision, crossing facilities and cycle lanes;
- **Public Transport:** outlines the key public transport services operating in the study area with information on destinations served and typical headway;
- **Road Network:** identifies the key roads within the study area including information on areas of congestion;
- **Parking Provision:** an overview of parking provision within the study area; and
- **Road Safety:** accident mapping of available Road Safety Authority data.

6.2 Active Travel

6.2.1 Walking Network

An analysis of the walking network in Athenry has been undertaken involving both a desktop review and site visit. Key areas, including both strengths and weaknesses are highlighted in figure 6-1 below.

Figure 6-1: Highlighted Sections of Walking Infrastructure in Athenry

The quality of pedestrian infrastructure in Athenry is quite varied. While most of the approach roads to the town centre have footpaths of acceptable width on at least one side of the road, and often both sides such as on Tuam Road in figure 6-1, footpaths tend to narrow or disappear completely at pinch points in the town centre. As shown in the figure above, pinch points such as on Court Lane and Barrack Street have limited or no pedestrian infrastructure, a pattern that is replicated along most side streets in the town centre.

A notable exception is at the Railway overbridge on the Tuam Road (right), where restrictions are in place for motor traffic in the form of a stop-go shuttle system, and continuous footpaths are maintained at this location close to multiple schools. High quality walking infrastructure is also evident on the eastern end of Cross Street where the public realm and footpath widths have been enhanced.

Outside of main roads and streets, the residential areas north of the railway line in Athenry suffer from poor permeability in places, particularly in an east-west direction – see example in figure 6-2 below. This can significantly increase walking distances to key services for residents in the town.

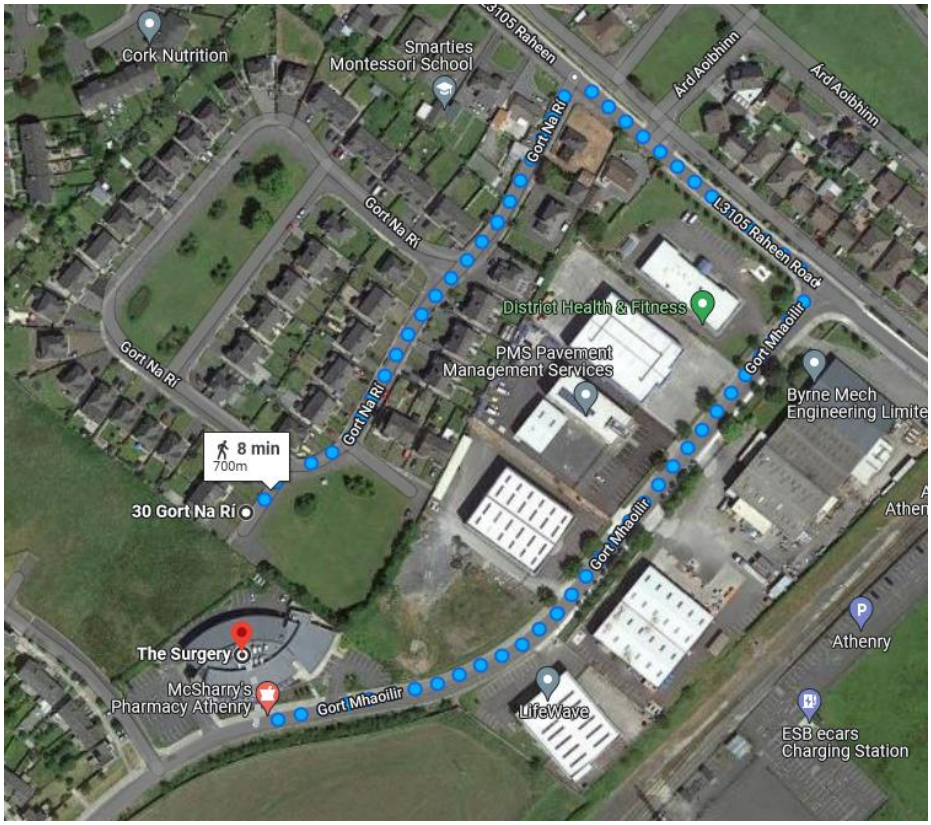

Figure 6-2: Permeability block in Athenry (700m walk for 50m crow fly distance)

A positive piece of walking permeability however is the footpath from Lorro Gate to the new Clarin College site which greatly increases the walking accessibility of the new school site from the town and local residential areas, as well as removing the need for pupils to walk along the busy R348.

Throughout the study area there are limited formal crossing facilities, apart from a small number of zebra crossings at schools in the town centre, leading to a low level of service for pedestrians with mobility or visual impairments.

6.2.2 Cycling Network

Figure 6-3 below illustrates the existing cycling infrastructure in Athenry. There are grade separated cycle tracks on the completed sections of the Athenry Relief Road to the north of the town and along the newly completed section of road at Presentation College, however there are no cycle tracks along the section at the school gate. These cycle tracks have a version of a cycle friendly roundabout at junctions, featuring shared space, but no raised crossings resulting in priority for vehicular traffic and reduced safety for cyclists and pedestrians.

In addition, there is a new section of one-way cycle track along the R348 between Clarin College and the Baunmore Roundabout, stopping short of the roundabout itself.

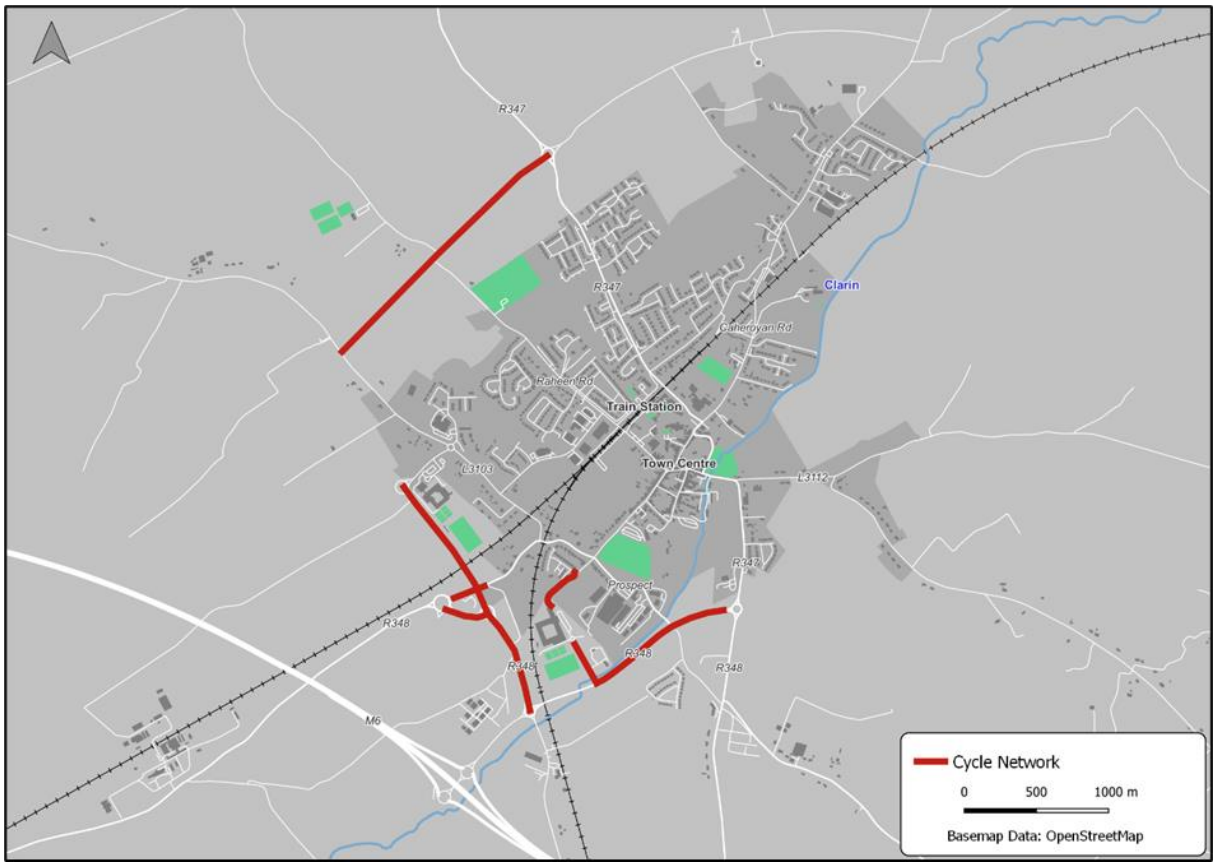

Figure 6-3: Cycle Infrastructure in Athenry

Existing proposals for cycling infrastructure investment in Athenry will be analysed, along with the development of potential new cycling options, during the Options Development and Assessment stages of the LTP.

6.3 Public Transport

6.3.1 Rail Network

Figure 6-4: Athenry Rail Station in Context

Athenry rail station is located on the Galway to Dublin rail line and is also the current terminus of the Western Rail Corridor providing connections to Ennis and Limerick. Athenry therefore has direct rail connections to Galway, Limerick and Dublin.

The table below outlines the daily services to/from Athenry:

Table 6-1: Athenry Rail Services

ROUTE	MAX NUMBER OF SERVICES (MONDAY – FRIDAY)	MAX NUMBER OF WEEKEND SERVICES (SATURDAY)
Athenry - Galway	17	15
Galway - Athenry	18	15
Limerick - Athenry	9	9
Athenry - Limerick	8	8

ROUTE	MAX NUMBER OF SERVICES (MONDAY – FRIDAY)	MAX NUMBER OF WEEKEND SERVICES (SATURDAY)
Athenry - Dublin	10	9
Dublin - Athenry	9	8

The station is located in the centre of the town, with access via Station Road and Church Street. Active travel links to the rail station are poor for cycling, with no dedicated cycling infrastructure and front of station treatment aiming to maximise ease of car drop offs and parking.

Walking access is relatively poor via Station Road, with no formal crossings and the footpath on the station side discontinuous to provide car parking. Walking access is also poor from Church Street with only a short section of very narrow footpath provided – again car access and parking is prioritised.

Figure 6-5: Access to Train Station from Church Street (left), Tuam Road (right) and Station Road (bottom)

There are 27 formal car parking spaces on Station Road in addition to an area of informal parking. There are 21 formal parking spaces off Church Street. In addition there is a large car park across Church Street with 185 parking spaces, including 9 Disabled Parking spaces and two Electric Vehicle charging spaces.

There are ten cycle stands at the station. The station is not integrated with the bus network.

Once inside the station, it is wheelchair accessible with level access to the platforms and lifts for the overbridge. However, accessibility to the station for wheelchair users and visually impaired pedestrians is poor given the discontinuous footpaths and lack of formal pedestrian crossing points.

6.3.2 Bus Network

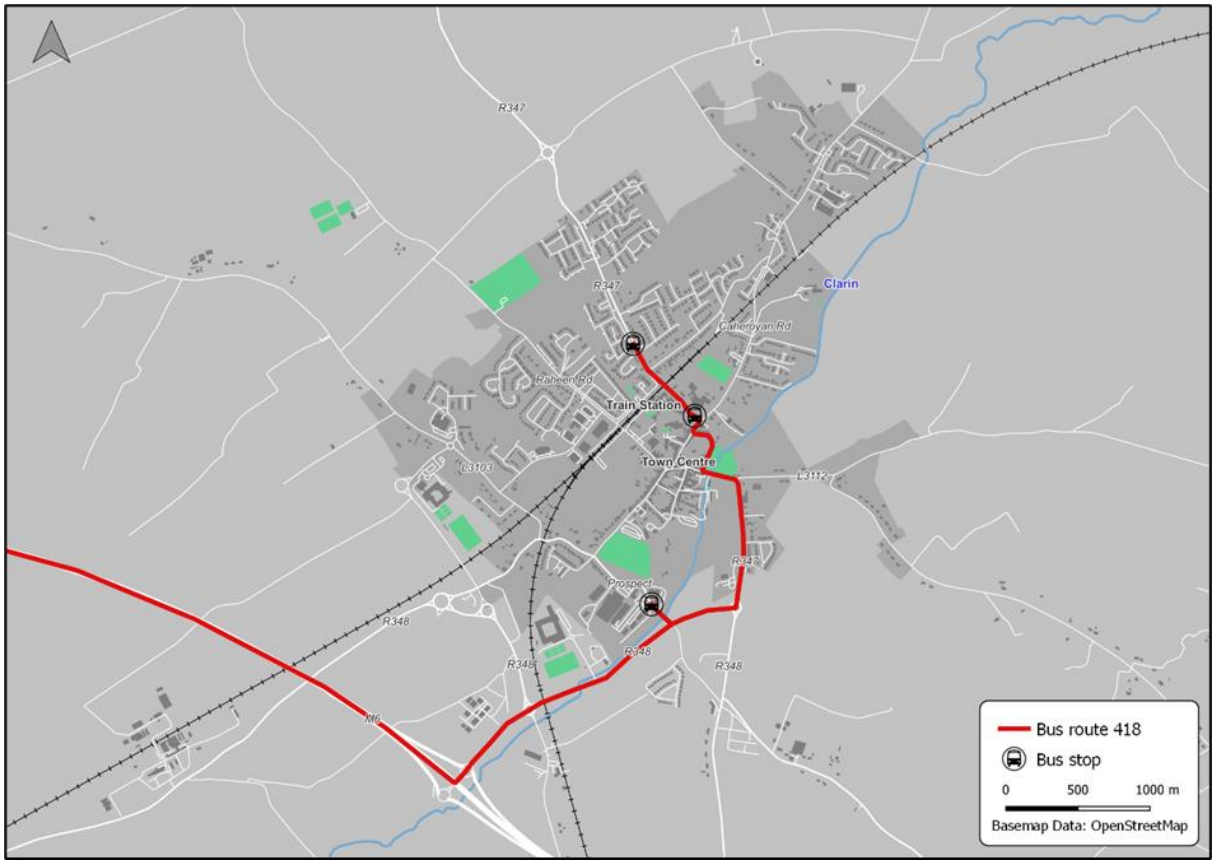

Figure 6-6: Athenry Bus Network

Figure 6-6 illustrates the bus services currently operating in Athenry. There are no town bus services, with the main service being a commuter route to Galway City operated by commercial operator Farrells focused on the AM and PM peaks. This route is complemented by a once-weekly return service to Loughrea on Thursday operated by Local Link Galway/Bealach na Gallaimhe Teo, leaving at 09:30 and returning at 13:30. This is a door to door, advance booking service and times vary depending on pick-ups. The bus routes and frequencies serving Athenry are presented in the table below:

Table 6-2: Athenry Bus Routes

ROUTE	OPERATOR	MAX NUMBER OF WEEKDAY SERVICES	MAX NUMBER OF WEEKDAY SERVICES
418 (Athenry – Galway)	Philip Farrell	7	7
Athenry – Loughrea (Door to Door Service)	Local Link Galway/Bealach na Gallaimhe Teo	1	1

The Farrells bus serves three stops in Athenry – Londis on Tuam Road, the Arch Car Park and Athenry Shopping Centre.

There is no formal bus stopping infrastructure at any of these locations. All existing bus stopping locations lack any dedicated facilities such as bus stop poles or shelters, benches, tactile paving, timetable information or real-time information.

The lack of dedicated bus stop poles at stopping locations, timetable information or real time information presents a barrier when encouraging people to consider travelling by bus rather than by car, due to the lack of clarity over stopping locations and passenger information.

This lack of formal bus waiting infrastructure also hinders people with many types of mobility or visual impairments from using the bus due to lack of tactile paving, seating, level access and other issues.

Walking access to the stops is generally provided with footpaths on both sides of the street and crossings to get to the stops. The crossings are unsignalised and only at the Arch Car Park is the crossing raised.

Cycling access is poor with no dedicated cycle lanes/tracks and no cycle parking nearby. All existing bus stops lack any dedicated facilities such as benches, waiting shelters, tactile paving or real-time information.

The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan[5] is a major national public transport initiative developed by the National Transport Authority (NTA), with the aim of increasing connectivity, particularly for people living outside our major cities and towns. Consultation on the proposed network took place during 2022, with the feedback currently being assessed by the NTA. For Athenry, there are no new services proposed, with the existing 418 route retained.

School buses also serve the local educational institutions in Athenry. The School Transport Scheme provides transport to and from school for children who live remote from their nearest school. The scheme is operated by Bus Éireann on behalf of the Department of Education.

[5] Source: https://www.nationaltransport.ie/connecting-ireland/proposals/

6.4 Road Network

6.4.1 Strategic Road Network

The primary road serving Athenry is the M6 which bypasses the town and provides links to Galway and Dublin. The M6/M17/M18 junction lies roughly 3km west of Athenry, linking to Ennis/Limerick and Tuam and onwards to Claremorris and Sligo.

Access to the town road network from the M6 is via Junction 17 and the R348.

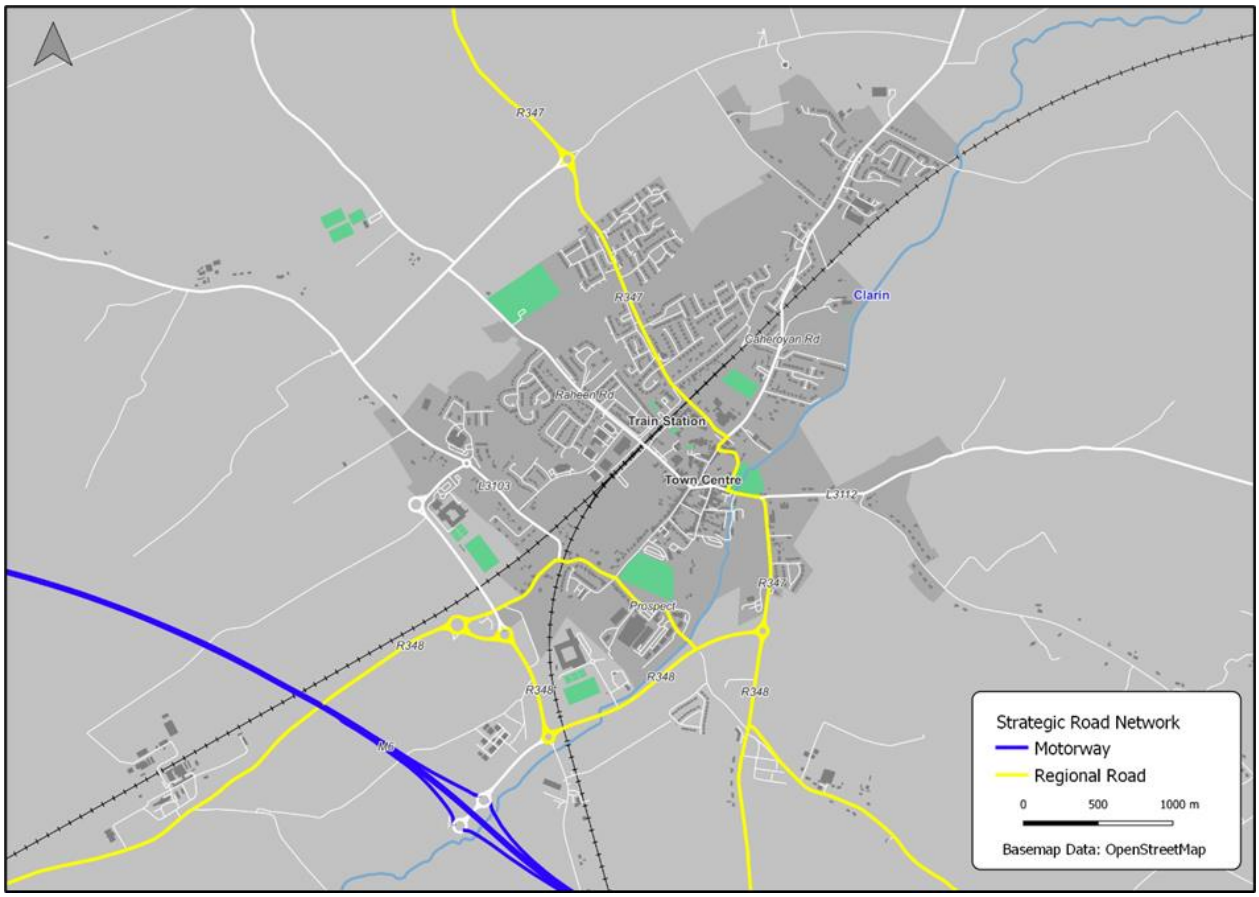

Figure 6-7: Athenry Strategic Road Network

In addition to this national route, two main regional roads serve the town. The R347 connecting to Tuam and Craughwell and the R348 connecting to Oranmore and Ballinasloe act as main arterial routes towards the town. The L3107 towards Monivea, and the L3112 from the east also act as an arterial routes to the town.

6.4.2 Local Road Network

Figure 6-8: Athenry Town Centre Local Road Network

In the town centre, the L3107 connects with the R347 and flows into North Gate Street, meeting with Davis Street towards Cross Street and Old Church Street. The R347 becomes Bridge Street then Court Lane, passing Athenry Castle before crossing over the railway lane and onwards to the Athenry Relief Road.

Outside the school campus on Court Lane, there is an unsignalised junction with Caheroyn Road where north/south traffic meets east/west traffic through the town. There are two raised zebra crossings which provide pedestrian priority and traffic calming, but there is no formal pedestrian crossing on the Caheryon Road arm and no cycle lanes/tracks.

The Relief Road also connects with the L3103 and L3105 which links residential areas north of the railway line with the town centre on the southern side.

Figure 6-9: Zebra Crossings at Court Lane/Caheryon Road junction

There is an effective gyratory in place in the town centre, up Old Church Street and down Cross Street via Davis Street and Clarke Street. There is minimal carriageway width along much of this route due to parking on both sides of Old Church Street and Cross Street.

Figure 6-10: Main Railway Line Road Crossings in Athenry, Railway Overbridge (left) and Level Crossing (right)

Given the existing land uses in the town, with residential development concentrated on the northern side of the rail line and the town centre to the south, there is an element of severance with a large amount of traffic to the town centre required to cross the rail line at either the railway overbridge on the Tuam Road or the level crossing on Church Street (see figure 6-10).

Figure 6-11: Congestion During Pick-Up at Presentation College

Congestion in the town is mostly associated with school traffic, with traffic building up around the new Presentation College site in particular. This is despite many school bus services running. Footpath parking on both sides of the road outside the school exacerbates issues with congestion.

The Raheen Woods Roundabout by Presentation College does not have raised pedestrian crossings despite proximity to the large school, and the footpath can be too narrow to cater for the number of pupils at peak times. There are no cycle lanes/tracks at the roundabout. These congestion issues will be taken into account during the Options Development and Assessment stages of the LTP.

Figure 6-12: Athenry Mart

There are also issues with traffic on Mart days (Monday and Tuesday) at Athenry Mart by Athenry Shopping Centre, with queuing traffic backing up to the junctions either side of the Mart causing localised congestion.

6.5 Parking

6.5.1 Car Parking

A high level desktop count of the available public car parking spaces has been undertaken to understand the level of existing car parking provision in Athenry.

There are significant levels of car parking in Athenry, with the majority of street space in the town centre dedicated to on-street parking, particularly on Cross Street, Old Church Street and Market Square. Most streets have formal on-street parking provision, even narrow streets without footpaths.

The largest public car park is at Backlawn Car Park, which has 99 spaces, including seven disabled parking spaces. There are smaller public car parks outside the schools on Tuam Road and on Church Street.

The train station car parks on both sides of Church Street have 185 spaces, including nine Disabled Parking spaces and two Electric Vehicle charging spaces.

There are also private car parks on North Gate Street and off Old Church Street serving the train station There are additional dedicated private car parks at a number of locations including a major car park at the shopping centre, the primary care centre and at Pixie Lane Creche.

The vast majority of on-street parking spaces are pay and display during operational times. Pay and display spaces are €1 per hour between the hours of 09:00 and 18:00, with a maximum stay of two hours. An additional level of non-marked on-street parking is available within Athenry however this is very limited. Long stay parking is available in car parks, with Backlawn Park and North Gate Street[6] offering rates of €3 per day.

Figure 6-13: Pay & Display Rates in Athenry

[6] Source: https://www.apcoa.ie/parking/athenry/north-gate-street-athenry/

There are two public 22kW Electric Vehicle charging parking spaces in Athenry[7]. These are in the large train station car park on the west side of Church Street. In addition there are four 250kW Tesla Supercharging spaces outside the Raheen Woods Hotel[8], suitable for Tesla vehicles only, and two private 3kW charging spaces in the basement car park of the Raheen Woods Hotel[9].

There are no dedicated spaces for Car Share vehicles within Athenry.

The high level of available parking is expected to be a contributing factor to the high mode share of internal trips which are undertaken by private vehicle.

6.5.2 Cycle Parking

The currently available public cycle parking in Athenry can be found in following locations:

- Backlawn Car Park (5 stands)
- Outside the schools at The Arch (5 stands)
- Athenry Train Station (5 stands)
- Cross Street (2 stands)
- Athenry Shopping Centre (30 stands across two location)
- Car park opposite Joyce's Filling Station (5 stands)
- Kenny Park (5 stands)

In total this provides 57 stands or 114 public cycle parking spaces in the study area.

In addition, there is cycle parking provided at Clarin College (72 stands) and at Presentation College (54 stands), providing 124 cycle parking spaces.

[7] Source: https://esb.ie/what-we-do/ecars/charge-point-map#
[8] Source: https://www.tesla.com/findus/location/supercharger/athenrysupercharger
[9] Source: https://www.zap-map.com/location/2ms4wpa/

Figure 6-14: Cycle Parking Provision in Backlawn Car Park

6.5.3 Coach Parking

There are coach parking places for school buses in the car parks of Presentation College and Clarin College, and in the public car park outside the schools on the Tuam Road.

6.6 Road Safety

Collision data was reviewed to assess the safety of the local road network and examine if trends across the town are present at particular locations. The figure below includes all accidents that resulted in injury to a road user between 2010 – 2016. During this period, there were 16 no. reported accidents comprising 15 no. minor injuries and 1 no. serious injury. There were no accidents with fatal injuries.

The majority of reported accidents within the study area occurred at junctions around the town, particularly in the town centre and near entrances to residential estates. There were two reported accidents along the Caheroyan Rd, with a third further north along the route where it becomes Ballydavid Cottages. A concentration of accidents is seen along the Raheen Road close to the train station.

Figure 6-15: Collision data 2010 - 2016

6.7 Summary

The previous sections of this chapter provide an overview of existing transport infrastructure in the Athenry LTP study area. Key points include:

- Pedestrian facilities (pavement widths and pedestrian crossings) are poor or lacking at a number of links and key junctions within the town centre.
- There is an absence of cycle infrastructure in the town, bar some disconnected links on the town edge, although cycle parking is available in a few central locations.
- There is severance caused by the rail line, limiting access from northern residential areas to southern destinations.
- There are public transport services provided to Galway City (both bus and rail), however there are very limited bus connections to other settlements. There is a lack of adequate bus passenger waiting facilities or bus timetable information.
- Strategic traffic to Galway, Dublin and Limerick is well served by the nearby M6 and onward connection to the M18.
- School traffic is the major cause of congestion in the town, exacerbated by footpath parking on key links.

7. SUMMARY, SWOT ANALYSIS & CONCLUSION

7.1 Baseline Summary

This report outlines the existing local policy context, area characteristics, travel patterns, transport accessibility and transport infrastructure for the Athenry LTP study area. In summary:

7.1.1 Chapter 2: Policy Context

- A technical note comprising a policy review of international, national, regional, and county level policies and plans relevant to the studies in the Galway Transport Support Programme has been compiled and is available in Appendix A.
- Athenry is classified a town with strategic potential in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028, and allocated population growth of 1,350 or 23%.
- The County Development plan includes a number of specific infrastructural objectives related to the rail line through Athenry, including policy to support dual-tracking of the line between Galway and Athenry, and the reopening of the Western Rail Corridor between Athenry and Collooney linking to Tuam and Claremorris.
- The Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029 aims for Athenry to be a sustainable, self- sufficient, vibrant and socially inclusive key town with development progressing in a way that consolidates around the town centre.
- The County Development plan includes a number of specific infrastructural objectives related to transport including the completion of the Athenry Relief Road, provision of an integrated public transportation hub close to the railway station, an "amenity cycleway/pathway" along Cashla Road, a River Clarin Walkway and long stay car parking an Backlawn and Knockaunglass.
- Both the County Development Plan and the Local Area Plan include objectives to promote the use of sustainable transport in place of the private car in the town including the provision of active travel infrastructure and facilities, appropriate traffic management and compact growth.
- A number of other local plans for Athenry were also examined, including the council's Regenerating Athenry plan, the community developed Reimagine Athenry plan, plans for public realm enhancements for Market Square and Cross Street, and the draft Safe Routes to School Delivery Plan developed for Scoil Chroí Naofa and Athenry Boys National School.

7.1.2 Chapter 3: Local Area Characteristics

- The defined study area broadly aligns with the existing LAP boundary.
- The study area has a population of 5,023 according to the 2016 Census, with growth of 3.9% from 2011. Approx. 28.3% of the population are under 18, with 10.0 % over the age of 65.
- 10.2% of households do not own a car and may be reliant on other means of transport including public transport, cycling, walking, taxis, etc. However, in general car ownership is quite high within the study area with 89.8 % of households owning at least one car.
- Athenry town centre is the largest attractor of employment trips (1,428 attractions) within the study area. Other key employment areas include the train station environs and Raheen Industrial Estate.
- There are a number of centrally located schools within the study area, with a mix of primary, secondary institutions as well as two very large recently constructed school campuses between the M6 and the town. This results in a total of 2,321 school trips ending in Athenry every morning.
- The LTP study area is constrained by the physical barrier of the rail line which causes severance in relation to movement and desire lines.

7.1.3 Chapter 4: Existing Travel Patterns

Trip Distribution:

- Approximately one-third of commuting trips from Athenry remain within the study area, and due to the local nature of these trips, there may be an opportunity to support this demand via walking and cycling
- 42% of trips from Athenry are heading towards Galway City.
- There are a very large number of school trips destined for the study area originating within the surrounding rural hinterland. It will be difficult for these trips to be served by active travel but there may be potential opportunities to improve school bus provision.

Trip Length Distribution:

- The majority of commute trips towards Athenry (72%), are more than 10 km long, 22% are less than 5km in length.
- The car mode share for employment trips under 2km is very high, with 60% undertaken by car.
- A majority (55%) of longer distance (>5km) education trips are made by public transport.
- A majority of trips to school under 2km (57%) are undertaken by car.

- Trips to education in Athenry are generally shorter and therefore more suited to active travel than employment trips.

Mode Share:

- Approximately 9.5% of commute trips originating in the study area are undertaken by active modes – 8.5% walking and 1% cycling.
- Public transport represents just 5.5% of commute trips versus 9.9% nationally.
- The private car is the most dominant mode of transport for work trips from the study area at 85.1%.
- The overall mode share for active travel (walking and cycling) to education is close to 29.7%, slightly higher than the national average 26.5%, and County average (7.4%, excluding Galway City), due to the relatively small area of rural hinterland within the study area.
- Overall, car is still the dominant mode of transport for education-related trips, accounting for 76.5% of all journeys.

7.1.4 Chapter 5: Access to Employment & Education

- There is a high level of access to employment around the town centre by both walking and cycling, extending west due to the Raheen Industrial Estate.
- The lack of permeability between housing estates and between the Tuam Road and Raheen Road reduces access to employment.
- Housing Estate Páirc na hAbhainn's lack of access to the R348 by the new Clarin College results in severance and very poor levels of access to employment for this housing area.
- Most of the same problems are evident for access to schools, with high levels of access around the town centre but poor levels of permeability resulting in a rapid reduction in levels of access moving north and west from the town centre.
- For secondary schools to the west of the study area, the lack of surrounding development and street network results in a relatively small walking catchment around them.
- Housing Estate Páirc na hAbhainn's severance from the R348 by Clarin College also causes poor access to schools.
- There are much higher levels of access to schools by cycling than walking, showing the potential of cycling in Athenry to provide great levels of access without the need to drive.
- There is a relatively good level of coverage of access to public transport stops in Athenry due to three dispersed bus stops and the rail station.
- However the low frequency of bus and train services results in a low rating of public transport accessibility in the town with a large area of the study area achieving a rating of 0.

7.1.5 Chapter 6: Existing Transport Infrastructure & Services

- Pedestrian facilities (pavement widths and pedestrian crossings) are poor or lacking at a number of links and key junctions within the town centre.
- There is an absence of cycle infrastructure in the town, bar some disconnected links on the town edge, although cycle parking is present in a couple of central locations.
- There is severance caused by the rail line, limiting access from northern residential areas to southern destinations.
- There are public transport services provided to Galway City, however there are very limited public transport connections to other settlements.
- Strategic traffic to Galway, Dublin and Limerick is well served by the nearby M6 and onward connection to the M18.
- School traffic is the major cause of congestion in the town, exacerbated by footpath parking on key links.

7.2 SWOT Assessment

The findings summarised above from the Baseline Assessment have been used to inform a Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) analysis for the study area. The results are outlined in Table 7-1 below. This will be used to inform subsequent stages of the LTP, in particular the objectives setting and options development.

Table 7-1: SWOT Assessment of Athenry

Strengths	Weaknesses
Key Points: • Athenry is classified a town with strategic potential in the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028. • Strategic traffic to Galway, Dublin and Limerick is well served by the nearby M6 and onward connection to the M18. • There are public transport services provided to Galway City by bus and train. • Athenry town centre is the largest attractor of employment trips (1,428 attractions) within the study area. Other key employment areas include the train station environs and Raheen Industrial Estate. • The town is generally quite flat, although it rises towards the relief road, while the surrounding greenfield land within the study area is generally hillier, rising again towards Monviea and Attymon. The flat nature of the town core is beneficial for active travel.	**Key Points:** • Very limited public transport connections to surrounding towns. • There is severance caused by the rail line, limiting access from northern residential areas to southern destinations. • There is an absence of cycle infrastructure in the town, bar some disconnected links on the town edge, although cycle parking is present in a few locations. • Pedestrian facilities (pavement widths and pedestrian crossings) are poor or lacking at a number of links and key junctions within the town centre. • Car remains the dominant mode of transport, even for shorter distance commute trips. • A number of key junctions are unattractive to pedestrians and cyclists due to design prioritising motor vehicles. • Public transport represents just 5.5% of commute trips and active travel just 9.5%.

Opportunities	Threats / Constraints
Key Points: • Most of the study area is accessible within a 15-minute cycle. The provision of safe and attractive active travel links provides a potential opportunity for modal shift from car. • Footpaths and crossing points for pedestrians in the town centre could be greatly improved within existing street widths, improving the attractiveness of the town. • The large number of school places within the study area compared to the study area population shows the large catchment of the town that could potentially be better attracted to shop and spend time in the town through improvements to the urban realm. • Approximately one-third of work and education combined trips from Athenry remain within the study area, and due to the local nature of these trips, there may be an opportunity to support this demand via active travel. • The relatively flat topography of the study area would be beneficial for potential trips shifted to active travel. • Significant improvements to public transport between Athenry and Galway City will be enabled by the passing loop to be installed at Oranmore station, and further improvements could be made possible via double tracking between Galway and Athenry as proposed in regional and local policy. • The very low cycling mode share for education trips, despite high levels of cycling accessibility to schools from the study area in the ATOS assessment and large number of shorter trips, provides an opportunity to see large growth in numbers cycling to school through active travel measures	**Key Points:** • School traffic is the major cause of congestion in the town, exacerbated by footpath parking on key links. • There are a very large number of school trips destined for the study area originating within the surrounding rural hinterland. It will be difficult for these trips to be served by active travel. • The LTP study area is constrained by the physical barrier of the rail line which causes severance. • Car ownership is quite high within the study area with 90% of households owning at least one car, and 42% owning 2 or more. If this pattern continues for new developments, it will likely lead to additional vehicular traffic on the road network.

7.3 Next Steps

Part two of the LTP process focuses on establishing the key principles and objectives which will inform the recommended strategy measures for Athenry and its wider hinterland. This step also focuses on determining estimated future travel demand patterns and identifying development options to support the sustainable growth of Athenry.

7.3.1 Establish Transport Planning Principles and Objectives

The objectives and Key Performance Indicators (e.g. mode share targets) by which the success of the preferred transport strategy will be measured will be informed the national, regional and local policy as well as the opportunities and constraints identified in Part 1 Baseline Assessment.

7.3.2 Determine Travel Demand, Travel Patterns and Mode Split Assumptions

In consultation with Galway County Council, future land use zoning and initial planning forecasts will be agreed for population, employment and education.

This information will then be used to identify potential desire lines for travel, and to assist in the development of future transport strategy options.

7.3.3 Identify Transport Options

A longlist of options will be identified for serving existing and future travel demand and key desire lines. These options will prioritise sustainable travel insofar as possible e.g. attractive walking routes, cycleways, greenways and bus services. For trip patterns that cannot be served by sustainable transport, network options for car travel will also be developed.

Utilising the insight gained during the Baseline Assessment and online engagement phase of the Study, the strategy options will focus on the following categories of improvement:

- Walking;
- Cycling;
- Public Transport;
- Road Network; and
- Supporting Measures and Demand Management.

PART 2 OUTCOME: Identification of transport objectives for the LTP, its travel characteristics and potential transport strategies incorporating the opportunities and constraints

APPENDIX A – POLICY REVIEW

APPENDIX B – ADDITIONAL MODE SHARE INFORMATION

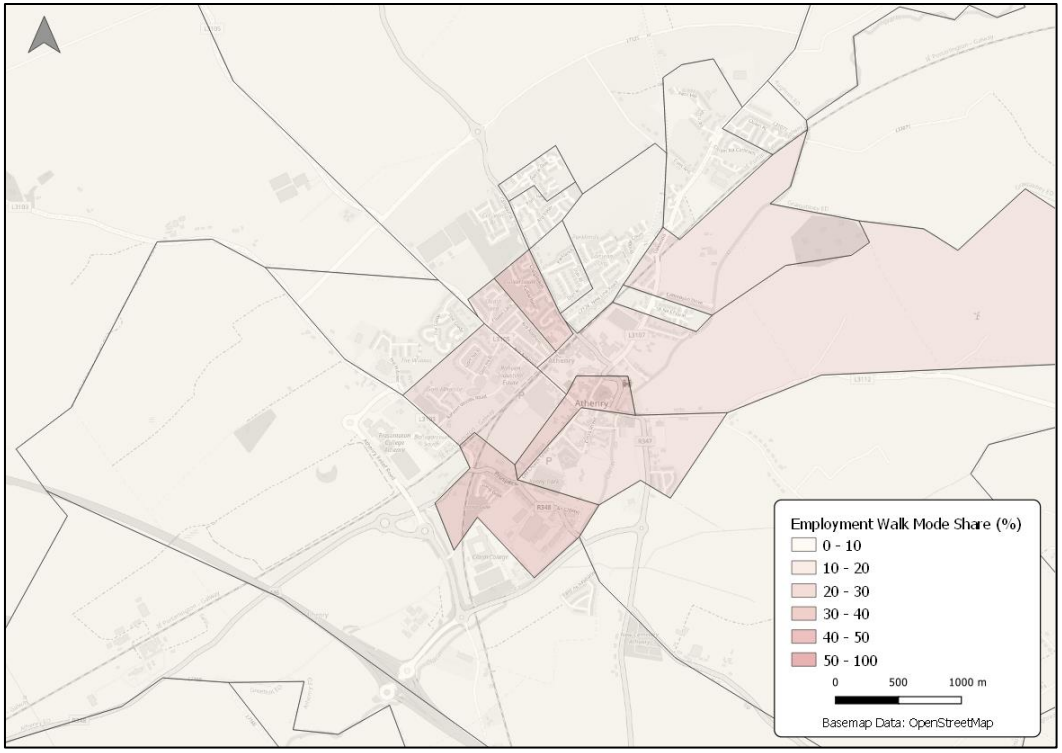

Figure 0-1 : Employment Trip Mode Share – Walk

Figure 0-2 : Employment Trip Mode Share – Car

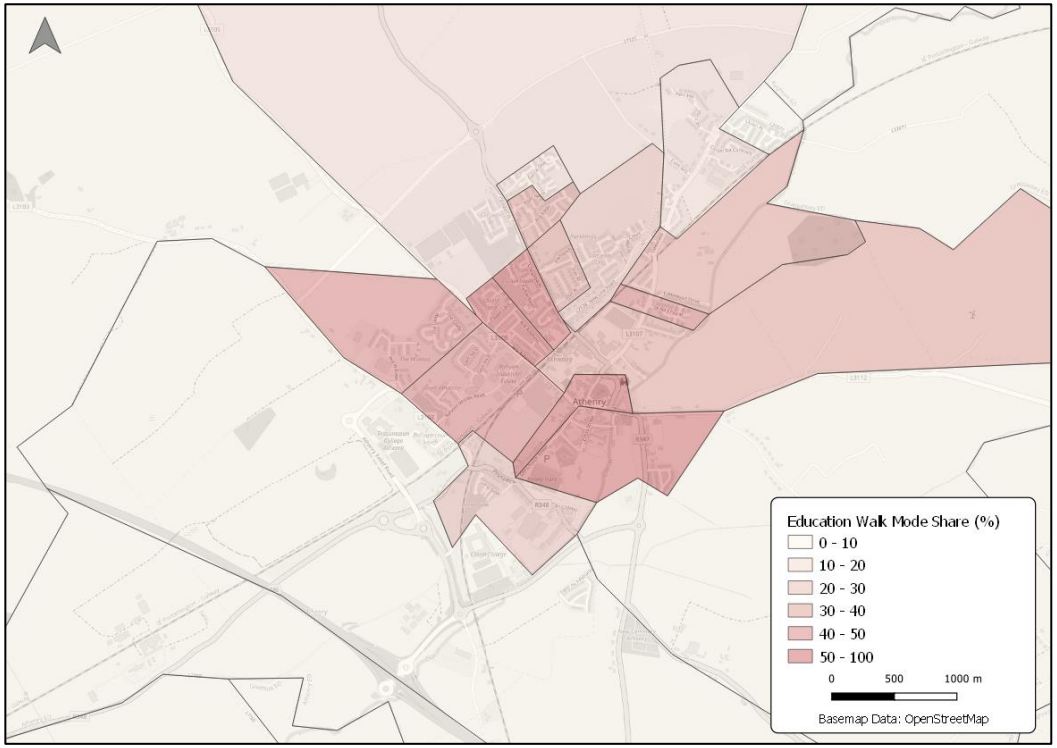

Figure 0-3: Education Trip Mode Share – Walk

Figure 0-4: Education Trip Mode Share – Car


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SYSTRA

Appendix C
ATHENRY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – OPTION SELECTION REPORT

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

NTA
Údarás Náisiúnta Iom
National Transport Auth

SYSTRA

ATHENRY LOCAL AREA PLAN 2023-2029ATHENRY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – OPTION SELECTION REPORT

Athenry Draft Local Transport Plan – Option Selection Report

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1. INTRODUCTION

This Option Selection Report should be read in conjunction with the draft Athenry Local Transport Plan (LTP) and includes more detailed information on the following:

- The long-list of options developed for Athenry across active modes, public transport, road network and supporting measures. A description of each proposed measure is provided along with associated maps (**Chapter 2**);
- The assessment process used to determine the Emerging Preferred Strategy measures for the Athenry LTP (**Chapter 3**);
- The results of the Stage 1: Screening of the long-list of options against the study objectives and feasibility criteria (**Chapter 4**);
- The results of the interim Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) undertaken to assess different options and identify the emerging preferred solution for Athenry (**Chapter 5**); and
- A description of the full set of measures forming the Emerging Preferred Strategy for the Athenry LTP (**Chapter 6**).

2. OPTIONS DEVELOPMENT

2.1 Introduction

An initial long-list of transport options were developed to address some of the weaknesses and constraints identified in the baseline assessment, and achieve the defined objectives for the LTP. The options list was developed in collaboration with the wider project working group including members from Galway County Council (GCC) and the National Transport Authority (NTA), through the following:

- **Data review** to identify proposals from wider policy/strategies for the study area;
- **Site visits** to review issues identified in the baseline assessment and opportunities for improvement; and
- **Workshops** between the project working group to discuss and agree potential options.

The options development process followed the Department of Transport's National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) modal and intervention hierarchies (Figure 2-1). As such, options for applicable measures were first considered in relation to active modes (walking and cycling), followed by public transport and finally vehicular traffic. Options were also initially focused on maintaining, optimising and improving existing facilities before considering the construction of new infrastructure.

Figure 2-1: NIFTI Modal and Intervention Hierarchy

The following sections provide a brief overview of the options considered across active modes, public transport, vehicular traffic and supporting measures identified to assist in achieving the overarching Athenry LTP objectives.

2.2 Active Travel – Walking and Cycling

The development of the walking and cycling options built on the existing proposals of the NTA's Cycle Connects inter-urban network and planned network improvements identified by Galway County Council.

The key aim in developing Active Travel Options is to provide Athenry with a safe, comfortable and integrated walking and cycling network enabling trips to school, work, shopping and all other purposes to be made using active travel. Options focused on improving connectivity and permeability from residential areas to main trip attractors, including the town centre, key employment and education sites and leisure opportunities. Of particular focus was connecting residential areas north of the rail line with schools south of the rail line, building on the work underway with An Taisce's Safe Routes to School programme.

Figure 2-2: Example of a Segregated Cycle Track

Where feasible, fully segregated cycle facilities are proposed to improve safety for cyclists. Where segregation was not possible given space constraints, particularly within the town centre, measures have been proposed to provide a safe, low speed, traffic calmed environment for sections of cycle trips which must be made on-road.

The town centre's medieval streets are often very narrow, creating difficulties for the provision of segregated cycle infrastructure. Footpath widths are generally below minimum standards with a lack of formal road crossings creating an unattractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists. Given these spatial constraints and existing conditions, improving pedestrian safety and comfort was the priority in central areas. In addition, a number of contra-flow cycle tracks are proposed to increase cycling safety and permeability on the town centre's one-way streets.

A number of leisure and amenity routes have also been proposed. This includes the proposed town wall walk and a pedestrian/cycle route along the Clarinbridge River connecting Clarin College to the town centre.

The long list of potential Active Travel measures for Athenry is shown in the figures and table below.

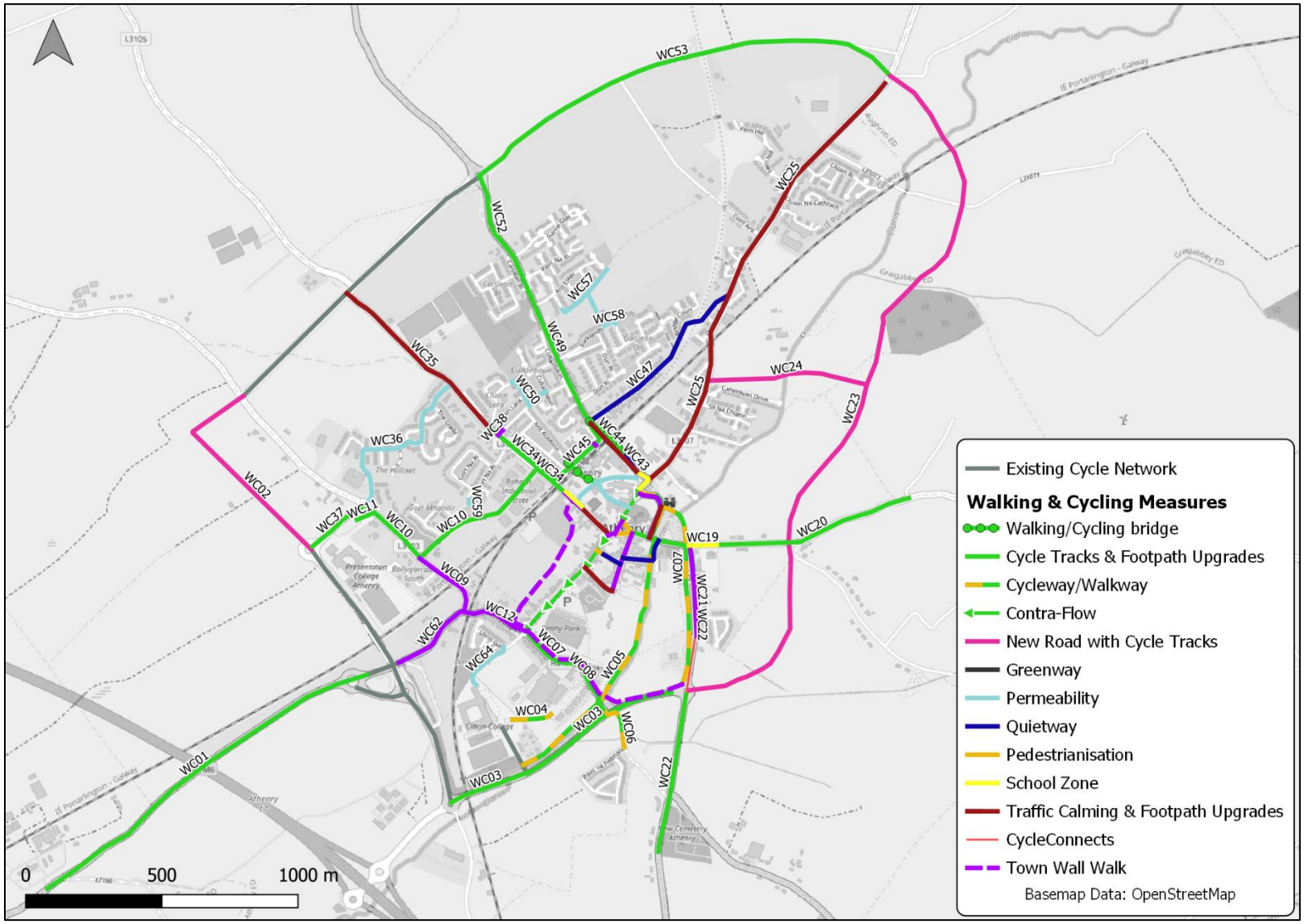


Figure 2-3: Walking & Cycling Options

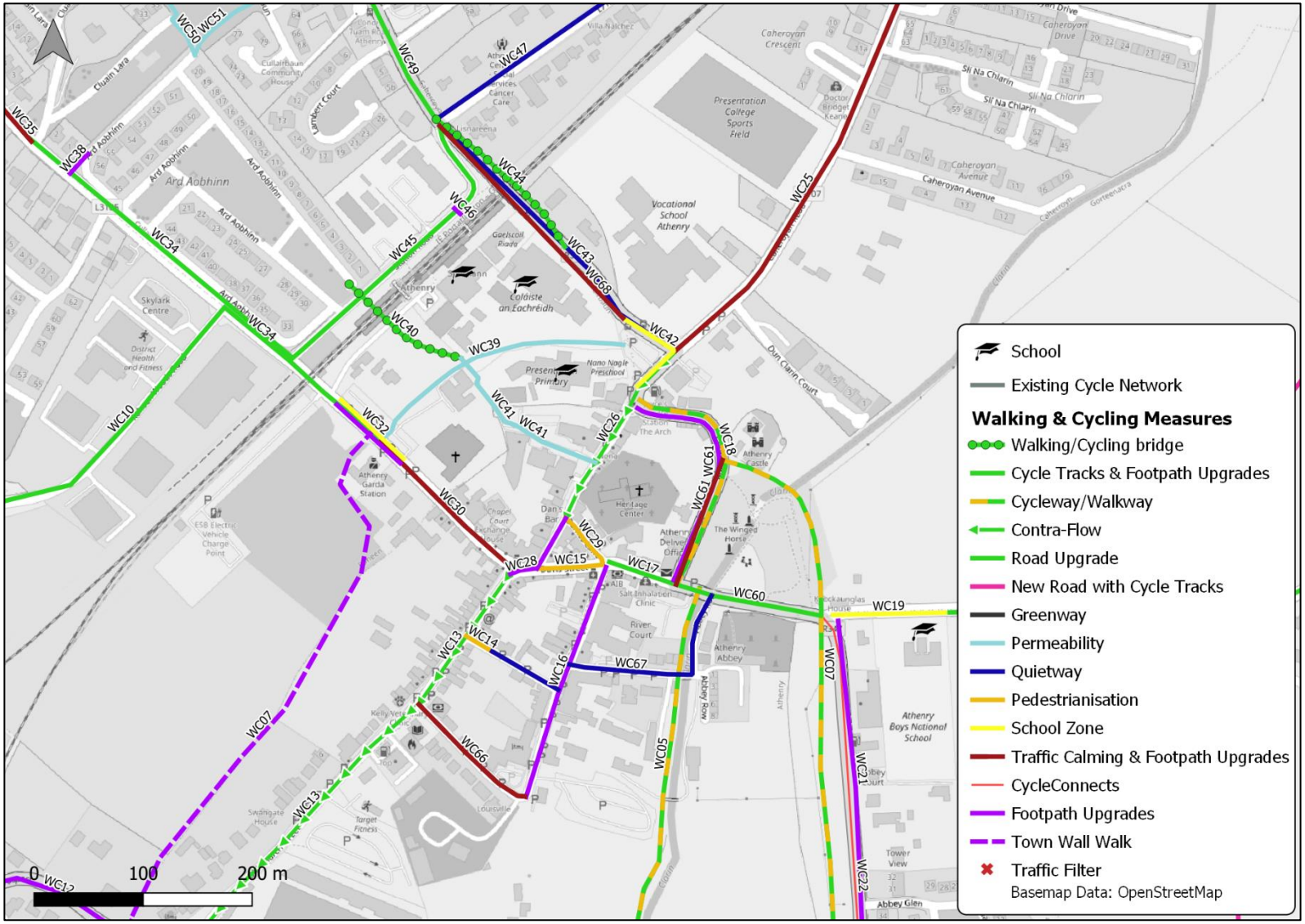


Figure 2-4: Walking & Cycling Options (Town Centre)

Table 2-1: Walking & Cycling Options

Option Ref.	Location	Description
WC01	R348	Cycleway and Footway linking Bia Innovator Campus to town. Widths constrained at Prospect, but connects to existing cycling infrastructure along completed relief road sections and from there onto other proposed active travel measures.
WC02	Athenry Relief Road Elbow section	This section of the Athenry Relief Road is at an advanced stage in terms of moving towards construction. This option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road linking with existing infrastructure on the completed sections.
WC03	R348	Add missing cycle tracks and footpaths, resulting in cycle tracks and footpaths on both sides of this section of R348, linking Clarin College with existing infrastructure along the relief road, the new bridge and proposed crossing at Prospect as part of WC06 and proposed cycle infrastructure along the R347 as part of WC07 and WC22.
WC04	Shopping Centre Car Park to Clarin College	Cycleway and footway linking from proposed park & stride in Shopping Centre to Clarin College
WC05	River Clarin	River Clarin Walk as an Active Travel route for Walking and Cycling with footway and cycleway provided. Provides a quality active travel alignment from the town to the shopping centre and Clarin College, with the potential to link further north through the park to Caheroyan Drive. Careful environmental management and examination of tie-in in the town centre will be required. Indicative alignment only subject to further investigation and consultation.
WC06	Prospect to R347 via Páirc na hAbhainn	New pedestrian and cycle crossing of R348 from recently completed active travel bridge, and upgrade of link to Páirc na hAbhainn for pedestrians & cyclists. Further east to include upgrade/provision of footpaths between Páirc na hAbhainn to Cemetery Cross.
WC07	Along Town Walls	Town Wall Walk potentially with both cycleway and footway as proposed for River Clarin Walk given potential to provide active travel infrastructure along roads/streets with constrained widths by the R347, Prospect and Old Church Street. This would combine this option with WC22 and WC08. Indicative alignment only subject to further investigation and consultation.
WC08	Prospect	Cycle tracks and footpath upgrades to provide for travel between proposed links along R348 past the shopping centre linking to the town centre and Old Church Street. Potential to combine with the WC07.
WC09	L3103	Add missing footpath links along this section of road to serve desire line and existing trips to/from Presentation College.
WC10	L3103, Raheen Woods Road and Raheen Road (L7124)	Cycle tracks and footpath upgrades from Presentation College to train station via L3103, Raheen Woods Road and Raheen Road providing a high quality active travel corridor between this large school and the town centre.
WC11	L3103 to Presentation College	Provide short walk and cycle connection directly into Presentation College from L3103 to avoid conflict with vehicular traffic at the junction, linking to WC10.
WC12	Prospect	Footpath upgrades along this section of road to serve desire line and existing trips to/from Presentation College.
WC13	Old Church Street/Outside Kenny Park	Contra-flow cycle track from Church Street to Clarke Street, continuing down to Prospect. Provision of wider footpaths between Church Street and Clarke Street. Footpath upgrades and widening from Clarke Street to Prospect.
WC14	McDonald's Lane (upper)	Pedestrianise top of McDonald's Lane with cycling permeability. This is currently a dangerous junction with Old Church Street for all road users given constrained sightlines for traffic turning onto Old Church Street and the requirement for pedestrians to walk on-road with traffic for this section.
WC15	Davis Street	Pedestrianise Davis Street with potential for low-speed cycling access to enable safe access between North Gate Street, Old Church Street, Church Street, Market Square, Cross Street and Market Street.
WC16	Cross Street	Improvement of public realm and pedestrian environment along Cross Street as part of Market Square Public Realm Enhancement Scheme.
WC17	Market Street/Bridge Street	Constrained widths on Market Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other in order to facilitate two-way traffic, creating a safety hazard. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety and a contra-flow cycle track to maintain cycle permeability towards Athenry Boys National School. Maintaining the disabled parking bay to be a priority in the design.

WC18	Court Lane	Constrained widths on Court Lane means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other in order to facilitate two-way traffic, creating a safety hazard. This option involves a one-way southbound system for motor traffic and reallocation of road space for wider footpaths and a contra-flow cycle track. This will enable active travel to Athenry Castle/Park for residents and tourists, opening up this key tourist attraction from the town centre, as well as travel to Athenry Boys National School and the school campus at The Arch.
WC19	L3112 outside Boys National School	Delivery of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme of interventions outside Athenry Boys National School gate, involving provision of footpaths and school zone to increase pedestrian safety for students accessing the school.
WC20	L3112	Cycle Tracks and footpaths along L3112 to R347 to link to residential zoned greenfield lands in the east of study area. To be delivered as lands are developed.
WC21	R347	Pedestrian Upgrades. Potential in the short term to shift footpath to east side of road to better serve existing development and strengthen connection to the Boys National School and Bridge Street for pedestrian access to town centre. As WC07 Town Wall Walk is developed provide connections to this high quality corridor.
WC22	R347	Proposed NTA CycleConnects route. From the cemetery/Páirc na hAbhainn to Baunmore Roundabout there is greater road width and active travel infrastructure here would link to other proposed active travel routes. North of Baunmore Roundabout width is more constrained, but this route could be combined with the WC07 Town Wall Walk to provide an active travel corridor off-road form the R347 to the Athenry Boys National School and Town Centre. Option cycle tracks and footpaths from New Cemetery to Baunmore Roundabout, linking to cycleway/footway to Bridge Street as part of WC07 north of the roundabout.
WC23	New Road	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC24	New Road	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC25	Caheroyan Road	NTA CycleConnects proposed route. It is considered that widths on this section are too constrained to enable the construction of cycle tracks along it. As mitigation, this option involves traffic calming of motor traffic along the link, footpath upgrades, pedestrian crossings at Quinn's funeral home & beside Green Acres Estate and alternative routing for cyclists through a proposed Quietway along the existing residential New Line Road
WC26	North Gate Street	This option involves the improvement of the public realm and active travel environment along North Gate Street. Widened pedestrian areas and improved public realm along the length of the street. In addition, contra-flow tracks to be provided until the junction with Burke's Lane, facilitating inwards travel to Market Square.
WC28	Church Street/Old Church Street Junction	This junction is currently a real pinch point with very poor pedestrian facilities, limiting pedestrian travel around the town. This option involves footpath upgrades, carriageway narrowing for traffic calming & pedestrian safety improvements.
WC29	Burke's Lane	Market Square Public Realm Works on Burke's Lane with potential to allow low-speed cycling access to/from North Gate Street.
WC30	Church Street Lower	Constrained widths on Church Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other as a result of facilitating two-way traffic, creating a safety hazard. This section of Church Street is particularly constrained, and vehicles regularly mount the already too narrow footpath to allow oncoming vehicles to pass. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety.
WC31	Church Street	Provision of a footpath on this section of Church Street outside the Garda Station as per SRTS proposals, with pedestrian crossing to access school campus.
WC32	Church Street	School Zone for proposed Church Street entrance to school campus as per SRTS proposals.
WC33	Church Street	Widening of level crossing to create dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists. Can't be physically segregated due to rail lines but segregated up to railway on either side and then marked space through crossing
WC34	Raheen Road	Footpath upgrades along this inbound route to the town centre. Cycle infrastructure provided through use of segregated cycle tracks where possible and potential use service streets parallel to

		main road for cycling. Signalisation of Station Road junction may be required due to poor sightlines.
WC35	Raheen Road	New Footpaths on both sides and traffic calming to relief road.
WC36	Willow/Glade	Permeability links through housing estates to provide north-westerly link from Raheen Road to Presentation College as per Reimagine Athenry map.
WC37	Outside Presentation College	Cycle Tracks outside Presentation College linking to existing and proposed cycle infrastructure on the Athenry Relief Road and to proposed cycle tracks on the L3103.
WC38	Ard Aoibhinn	Upgrade to surface and condition of permeability link per SRTS proposals.
WC39	Through School Campus, The Arch to Church Street	"Yellow Brick Road through the Campus" as per SRTS proposals. This proposal would significantly improve access to the school campus from the Raheen Road and further south, increasing the active travel catchment of the schools.
WC40	Ard Aoibhinn to school campus	The project team recognises the requirement for a safe Active Travel crossing(s) of the rail line from Tuam Road in particular to access the town centre and school cluster at The Arch. A Preferred Option will be chosen at Option Selection stage. This option involves the construction of a new Active Travel bridge over the railway linking to both the schools and the town centre through North Gate Street car park in conjunction with option 41.
WC41	Through School Campus, North Gate to Rail Station	Permeability link from north gate street car park linking with proposed Active Travel bridge in WC40 and SRTS proposal through the campus in WC40
WC42	Court Lane/Tuam Road junction	School Zone for proposed Tuam Road entrance to school campus as per SRTS proposals.
WC43	Tuam Road - Station Road to The Arch	The project team recognises the requirement for a safe Active Travel crossing(s) of the rail line from Tuam Road in particular to access the town centre and school cluster at The Arch. A Preferred Option will be chosen at Option Selection stage. This option involves the removal of vehicular traffic from the existing Tuam Road bridge and the use of the bridge for Active Travel. Combined with cycling infrastructure proposals on Tuam Road, Raheen Road and Station Road this option provides a strong active travel connection to the school cluster and town centre.
WC44	Tuam Road Overbridge	The project team recognises the requirement for a safe Active Travel crossing(s) of the rail line from Tuam Road in particular to access the town centre and school cluster at The Arch. A Preferred Option will be chosen at Option Selection stage. This option involves bridge widening for active travel infrastructure or a cantilevered active travel bridge and widening of the bridge approaches where possible. Combined with cycling infrastructure proposals on Tuam Road, Raheen Road and Station Road this option provides a strong active travel connection to the school cluster and town centre.
WC45	Station Road, Church Street	This option involves footpath upgrades and the provision of segregated cycle tracks along Station Road to improve general active travel accessibility and in particular access to the rail station. This would likely require the relocation of parking on the station side of the road to the existing large park and ride facility off Church Street.
WC46	Station Road	Pedestrian crossing from proposed park & stride in GRETB to existing footpath on Station Road as per SRTS proposals.
WC47	New Line Road	Quietway for cycling from Caheroyan Road to Tuam Road along New Line Road, possible footpath upgrades and traffic calming to ensure comfortable active travel along road. Top of New Line Road to be made two-way for cyclists only, creation of safe crossing for cycle traffic to take a right turn from Caheroyan Road to New Line Road required.
WC48	Tuam Road north of Station Road	Provision of missing sections of footpath between Station Road and Londis
WC49	Tuam Road	This option involves footpath upgrades and the provision of segregated cycle tracks along Tuam Road to improve active travel accessibility generally and in particular to the rail station and school cluster at The Arch.
WC50	Cluain Lara to Cullairbaun	Linking of housing estates, provides permeability connection between existing estates and between Tuam Road and Raheen Road via WC51
WC51	Ard Aoibhinn to Cullarbaun	Linking of housing estates, provides permeability between Tuam Road and Raheen Road
WC52	Tuam Road	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC53	Athenry Relief Road western	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.

	section, road upgrade	
WC56	Caheroyan Road/New Line Road junction	Footpath provision from proposed SRTS Park & Stride to New Line Road junction as per SRTS proposals
WC57	Ard Esker	Permeability link, linking Ard Esker culs de sac and Ard Esker to Parklands and Caisleáin Oir housing estates. Greatly increases permeability between Tuam Road and New Line Road/town centre from existing housing estate culs de sacs
WC58	Parklands to Caisleáin Oir	Permeability link, linking Ard Esker culs de sac and Ard Esker to Parklands and Caisleáin Oir housing estates. Greatly increases permeability between Tuam Road and New Line Road/town centre from existing housing estate cul de sacs
WC59	Gort na Rí to Primary Care Centre	Link Gort na Rí Cul de Sac to primary care centre and Raheen Woods Road, increasing permeability for work trips to the industrial estate and school trips to Presentation College and Clarin College
WC60	Bridge Street	This option involves the provision of segregated cycle tracks from the town centre to Athenry Boys National School as well as footpath upgrades.
WC61	Court Lane	This is an alternative option to WC18 which involves the provision of footpath upgrades, and footpaths on the park side where none exist, where there is space to do so. It does not however provide for footpaths at The Arch end of Court Lane if two-way traffic is maintained due to constrained widths.
WC62	Prospect	Provision of footpaths along this section of prospect, linking the new fire station to the town centre.
WC64	Clarin College	Make permanent existing active travel connection to Clarin College from Lorro Gate. Greatly increasing active travel catchment to Clarin College from the town.
WC65	Tuam Road Overbridge	The project team recognises the requirement for a safe Active Travel crossing(s) of the rail line from Tuam Road in particular to access the town centre and school cluster at The Arch. A Preferred Option will be chosen at Option Selection stage. This option involves a one-way outbound system for motor traffic using the existing shuttle system and two-way segregated Active Travel corridor - segregated physically until existing shuttle system lights using and segregated by signals across bridge. Combined with cycling infrastructure proposals on Tuam Road, Raheen Road and Station Road this option provides a strong active travel connection to the school cluster and town centre.
WC66	Clarke Street	Footpaths are too narrow on this section, falling below minimum standards in DMURS. This option proposes widening and upgrading of footpaths along Clarke Street.
WC67	Barrack Street and Abbey Row	Convert to one-way street eastbound to provide additional space for public realm improvements. Traffic calming and low-trafficked street with potential for quiet route with pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles sharing the carriageway.
WC68	Tuam Road Overbridge	Pedestrian railing to improve pedestrian safety due to level difference between footpath and road. General footpath upgrades along route and traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

2.3 Public Transport Options

While active travel investment focuses on encouraging people to switch from car to cycling or walking for short distance journeys, public transport has the potential to encourage mode shift from car journeys for medium and longer distance trips.

The development of public transport options has incorporated insight from the Baseline Assessment and engagement with the NTA, with the aim of encouraging increase in use. As such, the options within the LTP seek to:

- Enhance accessibility for active modes from residential areas to bus stops and the rail station;
- Improve facilities at public transport nodes, through the provision of sheltered waiting areas, cycle parking, passenger information etc; and
- Work alongside the NTA to deliver enhanced bus and rail services to villages and towns in the wider region.

The long list of potential Public Transport measures is shown in the Figure 2-5 and Table 2-2 below.

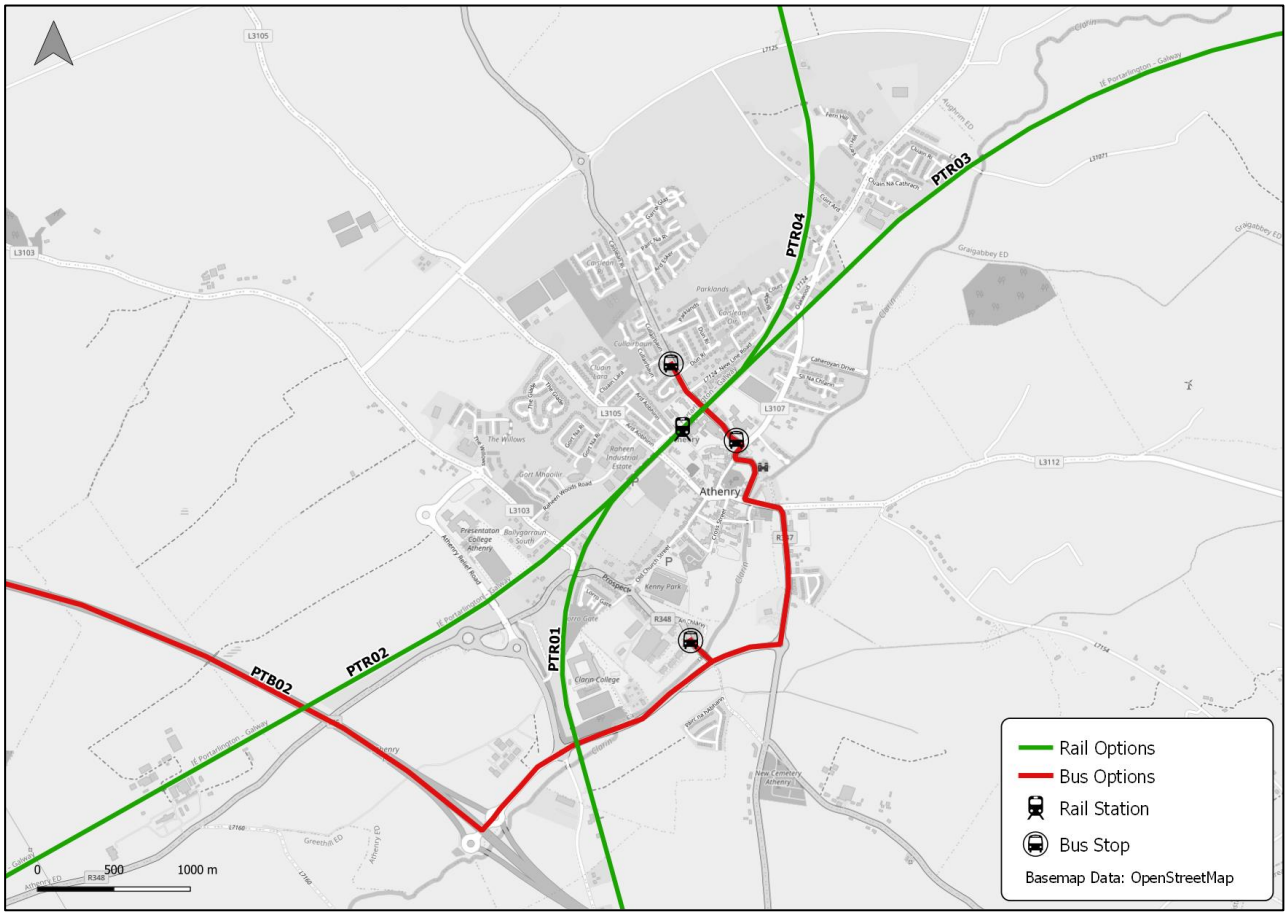


Figure 2-5: Longlist of Options - Public Transport

Table 2-2: Longlist of Options - Public Transport

Option Ref.	Location	Description
PTR01	Towards Limerick	Increase service frequency, with particular focus on earlier and later services to expand pattern of trips served.
PTR02	Towards Galway	Increase service frequency, with particular focus on earlier and later services to expand pattern of trips served.
PTR03	Towards Dublin	Increase service frequency, with particular focus on earlier and later services to expand pattern of trips served.
PTR04	Towards Collooney, Western Rail Corridor	To support the opening of the Western Rail Corridor route from Athenry, Tuam, Claremorris to Collooney as an option for passenger and cargo transportation.
PTR05	Galway to Athlone	To secure in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann improved rail infrastructure and services between Galway to Athlone which includes a dual railway track and additional improvement works to include an additional platform and a passing loop at Garraun, Oranmore to ensure enhanced capacity and frequency of service.
PTR06	Towards Loughrea	To support the addition of Loughrea to the Western Rail Corridor and to plan for the addition of a commuter route from Loughrea to Galway by linking Loughrea to either Attymon or Athenry train station to create a commuter tributary to Galway.
PTR07	Athenry Station	To provide safe and secure cycle parking at Athenry train station.
PTB01	Towards Loughrea, Tuam	Engagement with the NTA and Local Link team to assess potential for public transport services to surrounding significant towns not accessible via rail network.
PTB02	Bus Stop Waiting Infrastructure & Passenger Information	Bus Stop Waiting Infrastructure & Passenger Information to support bus patronage increases (timetables, bus poles, shelters, seating, kassel kerbs).

2.4 Road & Traffic Management Options

Options for the Road Network strategy were identified in order to improve safety for all road users. The priority in the development of the road network options (as per NIFTI) is to maintain, renew, manage and operate the existing road infrastructure in a more efficient manner, and any new road schemes must demonstrate that public transport, traffic management or demand management measures can't effectively address the problem prompting the road proposal or are not applicable/appropriate.

Therefore, road options that would unduly induce car trips that could otherwise be made by active travel would not be appropriate. However, road options that facilitate the reallocation of road space in the town centre by enabling traffic to bypass the town centre streets are more in line with the LTP objectives and current national policy.

Given these considerations, the main road options are associated with the Athenry Relief Road as defined in the LAP, and included as a policy objective in the GCDP 2022-2028. The sections yet to be

completed of this scheme have been separated out for assessment. No further new road infrastructure options are proposed as part of the long list.

In addition to options concerning upgraded and new road infrastructure, a number of traffic management options were developed in combination with associated Walking & Cycling proposals. These traffic management options are mainly located in the town centre where streets are narrow and active travel facilities are presently poor. These options and their associated Walking & Cycling measures aim to improve the public realm in key areas and provide a safer environment within the town (further information on the traffic management options proposed is provided in Section 5.2).

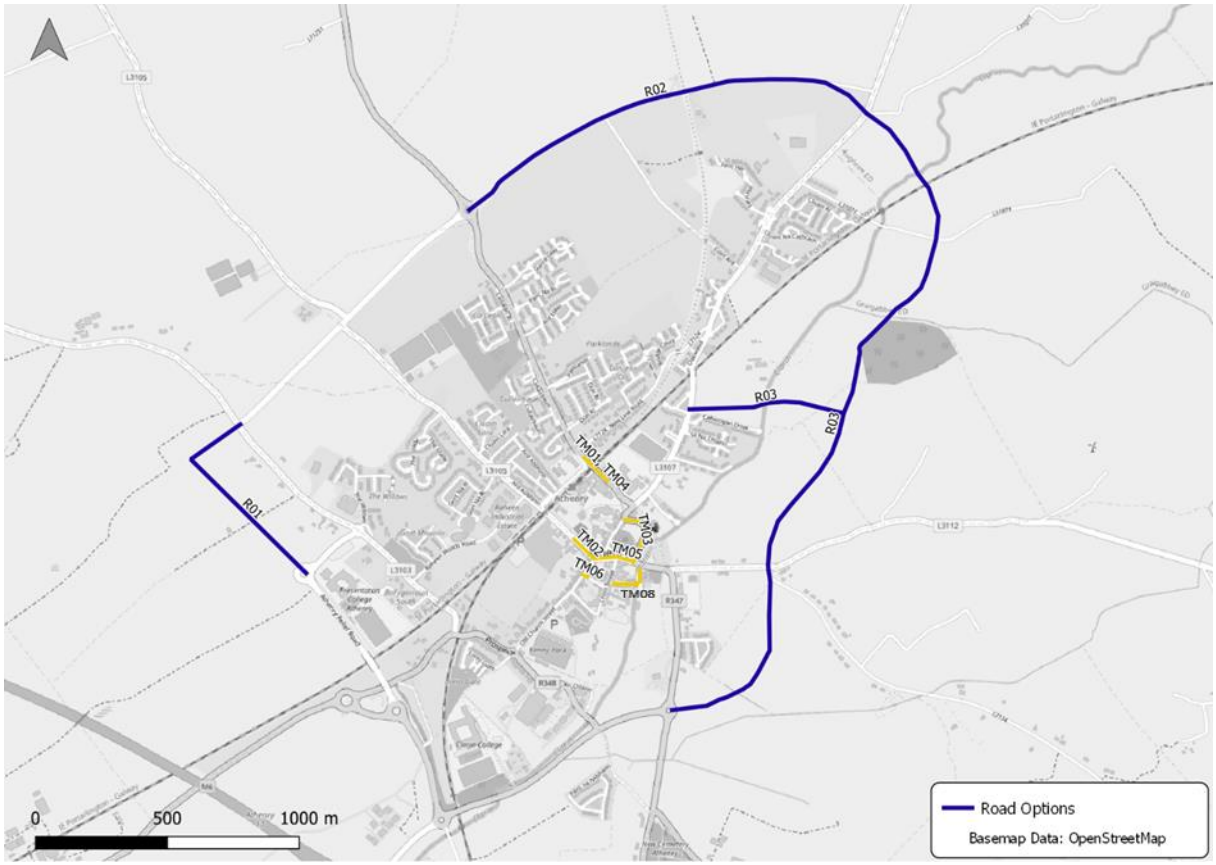


Figure 2-6: Longlist of Road Options

Table 2-3: Longlist of Road & Traffic Management Options

Option Ref.	Location	Description
R01	New Road	Athenry Relief Road Phase 2 (Elbow section)
R02	L7125	Athenry Relief Road Western Section (Ballydavid Road Upgrade)
R03	New Road	Athenry Relief Road Eastern Section
TM01	Tuam Road railway overbridge	Active Travel only on bridge
TM02	Church Street Lower	Church Street lower one-way eastbound
TM03	Court Lane	One-way southbound
TM04	Tuam Road railway overbridge	One-way outbound for traffic using shuttle system

Option Ref.	Location	Description
TM05	Bridge Street	One-way westbound
TM06	McDonald's Lane (upper)	Pedestrianise western end of McDonald's Lane at junction with Old Church Street
TM07	Davis Street	Pedestrianisation of Davis Street to address road safety concerns
TM08	Barrack Street / Abbey Row	One-way eastbound

2.5 Supporting Measures

In line with the Five Cities Demand Management Study Avoid-Shift-Reduce-Manage Transport Demand Management (TDM) Toolkit to reduce carbon, improve air quality and the urban environment, and manage congestion, a range of TDM Measures have been identified to support the switch to sustainable modes across the Study Area.

In line with Safe Routes to School measures proposed by An Taisce in Athenry, a number of potential Park & Stride[1] sites have been identified which would reduce congestion at school gates. Schools in Ireland which have implemented park and stride have found that children are more alert in the morning, having had some fresh air and exercise[2].

Supporting measures include those to promote Active Travel, Public Transport and School Travel. A number of behavioural change measures are identified, including the role that Mobility Management can play in both avoiding the need to travel and supporting a switch from car travel to sustainable modes on a site by site basis.

[1] The concept of 'Park & Stride' means parking the car a short distance from your destination and making the last leg of the journey on foot. This can have health benefits in terms of promoting physical exercise, whilst also removing traffic from heavily congested areas e.g. outside school gates.

[2] Fingal School Streets: Pilot Review 1 https://www.fingal.ie/sites/default/files/2020-03/20200302-300548-school-streets-pilot-review-1-issue-1.pdf

Table 2-4: Longlist of Supporting Measures

Option Ref.	Location	Description
P01	Athenry Shopping Centre	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P02	Backlawn Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P03	Rail Station Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P04	North Gate Street Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P05	Just east of Boys National School	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P06	GRETB	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P07	Londis	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P08	Senshin Sports Centre	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
SM - O1	15/10 Minute Town Principles	15/10 Minute Town Principles - embed within Athenry land use planning decisions and development of transport network and transport investment decisions. Under the RSES, the Southern Regional Assembly have developed a framework and methodology to be used by local authorities to integrate the '10 Minute Town Concept' into future Local Development Plans. This approach was developed following assessment of 3 key towns (Carlow, Ennis and Tralee) and aims to support increase in sustainable transport and reduce carbon emissions.
SM - O2	Slow Zones	Slow Zones – introduction of 30kph on town centre streets and on residential streets in the Study Area, supported by traffic calming measures and signage to encourage driver compliance.
SM - O3	Workplace Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) & Area MMPs	Workplace Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) & Area MMPs – support major employers & business parks/industrial estates with the implementation of MMPs in conjunction with the NTA Smarter Workplaces Team.
SM - O4	Residential Mobility Management Plans (RMMPs)	Residential Mobility Management Plans (RMMPs) - introduce requirement for RMMPs for all new residential developments over certain size. RMMPs manage transport demand at source and combine hard measures (e.g., access to a car club, pool bikes) and soft measures (e.g., Travel Welcome Packs, PT taster tickets).
SM - C1	Cycle Parking Strategy	Including on-street short-stay parking locations & volume (consistent with development standards); provision of parking for cargo bikes & adapted bikes, etc; longer stay bike parking / mobility hubs (e.g., at rail station, residential areas); eBike public parking Strategy; eScooter public parking strategy
SM - C2	End of trip facilities	Showers, changing rooms, lockers, etc. at major employment/leisure destinations
SM - C3	Public Bike Repair Stands	Deliver at key locations, e.g., at Rail Station, large schools
SM - C4	Cycle Skills Training - children and adults	Deliver at schools, workplaces and via community events
SM - C5	Cycle Maintenance Training & Bike Maintenance Checks	Deliver at schools, workplaces and via community events
SM - C6	Behavioural change campaigns to tackle speeds, inconsiderate parking & engine idling near schools	Behavioural change campaigns to tackle speeds, inconsiderate parking & engine idling near schools
SM - S1	Education Mobility Management Plans (MMPs)	Provide Council resource for Education MMP support (in partnership with An Taisce Green Schools/SRTS) for large schools in Athenry
SM - S2	Bike and scooter parking at schools	Enhancement of existing facilities
SM – S3	School based Active Travel initiatives & events	e.g., Bike Week, Scoot to School), challenges, curriculum activities – link to Green Schools
SM – S4	Walking Bus & Cycling Bus support for local schools	Council support for cycle and walking buses to schools

Option Ref.	Location	Description
DM - P1	Public Parking Controls – refresh of town centre Parking Controls and Pricing Strategy to strengthen parking as a Traffic Demand Management Measure	Including: Review parking duration to reach suitable balance between long and short-term parking, with duration limits well signed and enforced; Proactive enforcement to ensure short stay parking not used for long-stay parking e.g., on main centre streets; Proactive enforcement to reduce incidents of inconsiderate parking (e.g., on pavements & cycle lanes) to safeguard road space for vulnerable and active travel users;
DM - P2	EV Parking Strategy	At new developments, in public car parks, on-street (for rapid charging and those without access to private driveways), taxi ranks, mix of rapid and slow charging, distinguish between O&D charging needs. Expanding on existing provision as identified in the baseline report, typically An Bord Pleanála mandates 10% of parking spaces be EV charging spaces
DM - P3	EV Parking Pricing Strategies	Integration over time with Public Parking Pricing policies, balanced to encourage take up of EVs without encouraging unnecessary car trips by providing free parking for EVs.
DM - P4	Car Clubs	Car Club provision in town centre and at key residential and mixed use developments (currently no providers) – promotes concept of shared mobility, reducing need for individual car ownership & storage. Reliant on commercial operators to deliver, who are impacted by market conditions/demand.
DM - P5	Parking for new developments	Reduced Residential Parking & Workplace Parking standards for new developments in appropriate locations (e.g., in areas well served by sustainable transport options); Require EV spaces within new residential, workplace and mixed use developments; Require Car Club spaces within new residential, workplace and mixed use developments
DM - TM1	HGV Management Strategy for Town Centre	HGV Management Strategy for Town Centre including HGV timed restrictions; 5-axle (or HGV weight) restrictions in town centre zone – permits required 0700-1900hrs

3. OPTIONS ASSESSMENT

3.1 Introduction

Having developed a long list of options, the following chapter provides an overview of the assessment process used to determine which of these options are to be included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy for the Athenry LTP. It includes an initial screening process followed by more detailed Multi-Criteria Analysis to determine the optimal package of measures to meet the study objectives.

3.2 Options Assessment Methodology

To determine the Emerging Preferred Strategy to form the LTP, the long list of options were passed through a four-stage assessment process as outlined in Figure 3-1, including:

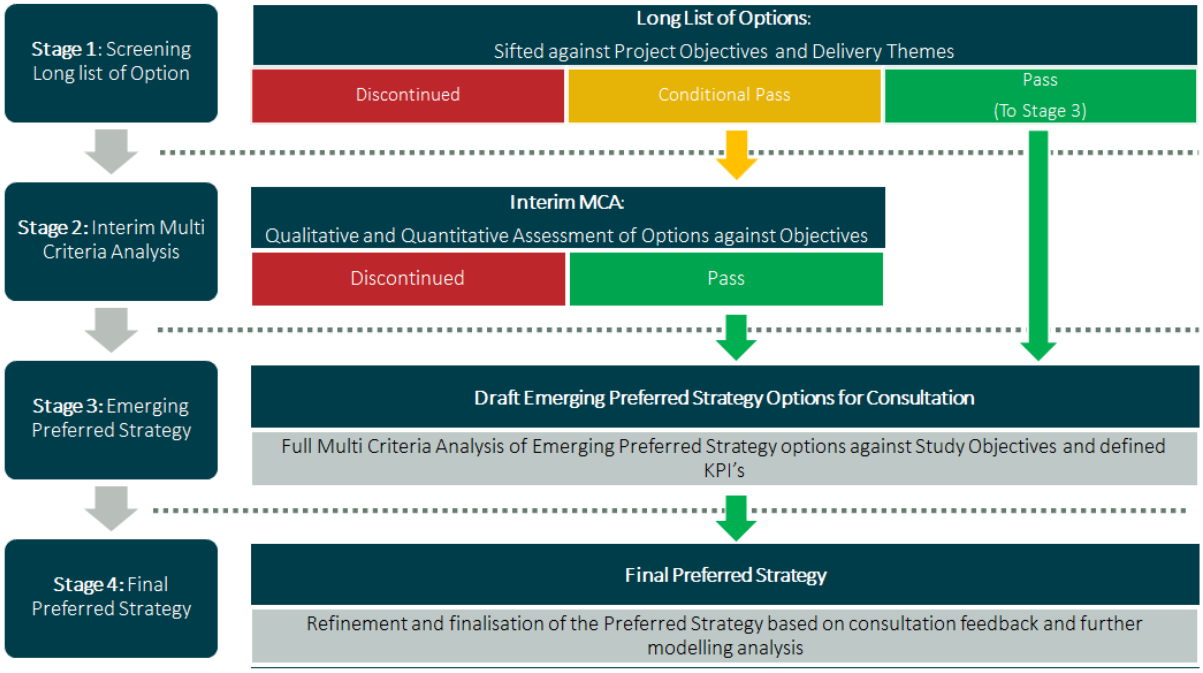


Figure 3-1: Options Assessment Methodology

- **Stage 1 Options Screening:** The long-list of options were screened against the overall project objectives (outlined in Table 3-1) and core delivery themes to identify which ones should be discontinued, which could pass directly to the final strategy, and which required further assessment;

- **Stage 2 Interim Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA):** Options requiring further analysis were passed through a MCA with qualitative indicators used to score each option against the study objectives;

- **Stage 3 Draft Emerging Preferred Strategy Options for Consultation:** Options passing Stage 1 and Stage 2 form the initial draft Emerging Preferred Strategy for the LTP.

- **Stage 4 Final Preferred Strategy:** Feedback from the project steering group and public consultation as part of the Athenry LAP process, will be used to refine the preferred strategy for the final LTP.

The following sections provide a more detailed description of Stages 1 and 2 outlined above, along with the assessment results for the long-list of options.

Table 3-1: Athenry LTP Study Objectives

CAF Heading	Objective
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm

4. STAGE 1: OPTIONS SCREENING

4.1 Overview

Stage 1 of the Options Assessment examined each of the long list of measures against the LTP objectives. The options were also assessed against the following core delivery themes:

- Engineering feasibility;
- Acceptability;
- Funding potential; and
- Value for money

Based on this initial screening, options were classed as follows:

- **Discontinued:** the option did not align with the LTP objectives or did not meet the core delivery themes and therefore is not included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy;

- **Pass:** the option satisfied the project objectives and the core delivery themes, and no alternative proposals were identified in the options development process. These options passed directly into the Emerging Preferred Strategy without the need for an interim assessment.

- **Conditional Pass:** the option aligned with the LTP objectives, however, either didn't fully meet all of the core delivery themes or had a number of alternative proposals identified. In these instances, the options were assessed in further detail as part of the interim MCA described in Chapter 5.

4.2 Stage 1 Screening Results

The tables below summarises the options that were either 'Discounted' or given a 'Conditional Pass' and advanced to Stage 2 Interim MCA, where further assessment was deemed necessary along with explanatory remarks. The only option discounted at this stage, as presented in Table 4-1 below, is permeability link WC36.

Table 4-2 provides a brief description of the options which require further detailed assessment as part of Stage 2 Interim MCA. Where applicable, options have been packaged together for assessment and this is outlined in Table 4-2.

Those options not listed below have been passed directly to Stage 3 Emerging Preferred Strategy (EPS). The EPS will form a combination of separate modal strategies, against which final Key Performance Indicators will be assessed. A full list of measures included in the EPS is contained in Chapter 6.

Table 4-1: Options Discounted at Screening Stage

Option Ref.	Location	Description	Rationale
WC36	The Willows/The Glade	Permeability links through housing estates to provide north-westerly link from Raheen Road to Presentation College as per Reimagine Athenry map.	This option, although included on map of proposals in the 'Reimagine Athenry' document, does not seem feasible to deliver without significant disruption to private dwellings and possible demolition to connect the two housing estates. Although the permeability improvement would be worthwhile, it is not a major measure and given the disruption required to construct, it does not meet the feasibility and acceptability criteria, and as such it has been discounted.
WC04	Shopping Centre Car Park to Clarin College	Cycleway and footway linking from proposed park & stride in Shopping Centre to Clarin College.	This option has been screened out based on feasibility criteria due to 3rd party land owner issues with the delivery of this option. WC64 provides an alternative routing from Prospect road to Clarin College.

Table 4-2: Options Advanced to Interim MCA at Screening Stage

Option Ref.	Location	Description	Grouping of Options for MCA
WC14 & TM06	McDonald's Lane (upper)	Pedestrianise west end of McDonald's Lane with permeability provided for pedestrians and cyclists. The junction with Old Church Street is currently unsafe for all road users given constrained sightlines for traffic turning onto Old Church Street and the requirement for pedestrians to walk on-road with traffic for this section.	**Town Centre Circulation Options:** A number of alternative options have been developed for facilitating improvements to the public realm, road safety and active travel environment in the town centre that involve different traffic management measures and layouts. As such these require further comparative assessment to identify a preferred option for inclusion in the Emerging Preferred Strategy – See Section 5.2 for further details
WC17 & TM05	Market Street/ Bridge Street	Constrained widths on Bridge Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety and a contra-flow cycle track to maintain cycle permeability towards Athenry Boys National School. Maintaining the disabled parking bay to be a priority in the design.	
WC18 & TM03	Court Lane	Constrained widths on Court Lane means that footpaths are currently well below minimum standards in places. This option involves a one-way southbound system for motor traffic and reallocation of road space for wider footpaths and a contra-flow cycle track. This will enable active travel to Athenry Castle/Park for residents and tourists, opening up this key tourist attraction from the town centre, as well as travel to Athenry Boys National School and the school campus at The Arch.	

Option Ref.	Location	Description	Grouping of Options for MCA
WC30 & TM02	Church Street Lower	Constrained widths on Church Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each. This section of Church Street is particularly constrained, and vehicles regularly mount the already narrow footpath to allow oncoming vehicles to pass. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, with widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety.	
WC15 & TM07	Davis Street	Pedestrianise Davis Street to improve public realm and enable safe access between North Gate Street, Old Church Street, Church Street, Market Square, Cross Street and Market Street.	
WC67 & TM08	Barrack St / Abbey Row	Given the narrow nature of these streets, lack of footpaths but also the natural beauty of the river and old church this option proposes 1-way traffic on Barrack Street and Abbey Row to support public realm and footpath improvements	
WC40	Ard Aoibhinn to school campus	This option involves the construction of a new Active Travel bridge over the railway linking to both the schools and the town centre through North Gate Street car park in conjunction with option WC41.	**Bridge Crossing Options:** A number of alternative options have been proposed to reduce severance caused by the railway and improve connectivity from residential areas to the north to key destinations via walking and cycling. These proposals require comparative assessment to identify a preferred option for inclusion in the Emerging Preferred Strategy – See Section 5.3 for further details.
WC41	Through School Campus, North Gate Car Park	Permeability link from north gate street car park linking with proposed Active Travel bridge in WC40 and SRTS proposal through the campus in WC40	
WC43 & TM01	Tuam Road - Station Road to The Arch	This option involves the removal of vehicular traffic from the existing Tuam Road bridge and the use of the bridge for Active Travel. Combined with cycling infrastructure proposals on Tuam Road, Raheen Road and Station Road this option provides a strong active travel connection to the school cluster and town centre.	
WC44	Tuam Road Overbridge	This option involves widening of the R347 Tuam Road railway bridge to include improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities.	
WC65 & TM04	Tuam Road Overbridge	This option involves a one-way outbound system for motor traffic using the existing shuttle system and delivery of a two-way segregated Active Travel corridor. Combined with cycling infrastructure proposals on Tuam Road, Raheen Road and Station Road this option provides a strong active travel connection to the school cluster and town centre.	

Option Ref.	Location	Description	Grouping of Options for MCA
WC13	Old Church Street/ Outside Kenny Park	Contra-flow cycle track from Church Street to Clarke Street, continuing down to Prospect. Provision of wider footpaths between Church Street and Clarke Street. Footpath upgrades and widening from Clarke Street to Prospect.	**Old Church Street:** Option will require the reallocation of existing road space and the potential rationalisation of on-street parking. Further detailed assessment required to illustrate the benefits of the proposal in achieving the study objectives when compared to the existing layout – See Section 5.4 for further details.
WC26	North Gate Street	This option involves the improvement of the public realm and active travel environment along North Gate Street. Widened pedestrian areas and improved public realm along the length of the street. In addition, a contra-flow track to be provided until the junction with Burke's Lane, facilitating inwards travel to Market Square.	**North Gate Street:** Option will require the reallocation of existing road space and the potential rationalisation of on-street parking. Further detailed assessment required to illustrate the benefits of the proposal in achieving the study objectives when compared to the existing layout – See Section 5.5 for further details.
WC45	Station Road, Church Street	This option involves footpath upgrades and the provision of segregated cycle tracks along Station Road to improve general active travel accessibility and in particular access to the rail station. This would likely require the relocation of parking on the station side of the road to the existing large park and ride facility off Church Street.	**Station Road:** Option will require the reallocation of existing road space and the potential rationalisation of on-street parking. Further detailed assessment required to illustrate the benefits of the proposal in achieving the study objectives when compared to the existing layout – See Section 5.6 for further details.

5. STAGE 2: INTERIM MCA

5.1 Overview

The Interim MCA stage was used to evaluate alternatives based on their performance in achieving the overarching study objectives outlined in Table 3-1. This assessment was predominantly qualitative in nature and a five-point scoring system, outlined in Table 5-1, was used to assess the options across the various objectives. This produced a performance matrix which was reviewed to rank the scenarios and identify which ones performed best in terms of achieving the defined objectives of the study, and therefore, passed into the Emerging Preferred Strategy.

Table 5-1: Interim MCA Scoring System

Scoring	
Major Benefit: The proposal is expected to have a clear and considerable benefit or positive impact when compared to existing conditions.	
Minor Benefit: The proposal is expected to have a minor benefit or positive impact when compared to existing conditions.	
Neutral: Overall, the proposal is expected to have neither a positive nor negative impact when compared to existing conditions.	
Minor Disbenefit: The proposal is only expected to result in a minor negative impact when compared to existing conditions.	
Major Disbenefit: The proposal is expected to have a clear and considerable negative impact when compared to existing conditions.	

To ensure that the options that had advanced to the interim MCA stage were assessed holistically, and that mutually exclusive options were assessed at the same time, where possible/reasonable options were packaged together for the MCA process.

As outlined in Table 4-2, the 22 options brought forward for interim MCA were packaged into 5 different categories for assessment:

- **Town centre traffic circulation** options and associated active travel improvements;
- **Bridge crossings** over the railway line close to the R347; and
- **Old Church Street, North Gate Street and Station Road** rationalisation of on-street parking and active travel infrastructure.

The following sections provide further details on the options considered and their assessment against the study objectives.

5.2 Town Centre Circulation

Athenry is a historic town which is characterised by meandering and irregular width streets within its centre. The constrained widths result in narrow footpaths at a number of key locations which severely impedes safe access for pedestrians, particularly those with mobility impairments. This, combined with a general lack of formalised pedestrian crossing points, create an unwelcoming environment for visitors arriving on foot or by bike.

A first step towards improved public realm in Athenry's Town Centre is being taken as part of the upcoming Athenry Public Realm Enhancement Scheme. As part of the scheme, Burkes Lane will be pedestrianised (with access for deliveries before 11am). Parking on the square will be removed bar a drop-off/pick-up point and a pedestrian plaza created on Market Square.

Figure 5-1: Market Square Proposals as part of the Athenry Public Realm Enhancement Scheme

It is intended that the public realm scheme will be submitted for planning early in 2023 and, subject to approval, will begin construction in 2024. As such, this scheme is the starting point for the town centre circulation options developed for this LTP.

Through the baseline assessment and option development process, a number of key constraints within the town centre were identified, including:

Church Street

Figure 5-2 illustrates the existing layout of Church Street at the connection with Davis Street and Old Church Street. Currently, it accommodates traffic movements in both directions. However, the narrow carriageway results in both carriageway and footpath widths considerably below the standards set out within the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) guidance. This leads to vehicles mounting the footpaths to pass each other creating a safety hazard for pedestrians. The footpaths along this section of road on access to the town centre are also extremely narrow with insufficient space for pedestrians to pass each other safely or to facilitate safe access for pedestrians with mobility impairments.

Figure 5-2: Church Street Existing Layout

Bridge Street

Bridge Street is the main connection from the east of the town into the proposed Market Square plaza. It currently operates two-way for vehicular traffic, however, there is insufficient space for vehicles to pass each other safely due to the narrow carriageway widths and on-street parking and loading bays. Footpaths are also extremely narrow in places creating an unattractive environment for pedestrians.

Figure 5-3: Bridge Street Existing Layout

Court Lane

Court Lane is a very important link in the wider Athenry town network. Within the street, it provides a connection to the Athenry Castle, Community Park and Playground. From a wider context it provides a link to the town centre and Athenry Boys National School via Bridge Street, along with the school campus off the Tuam Road (R347). Currently, Court Lane operates two-way for traffic with narrow footpaths and on-street parking along its eastern side. Towards the northern end of Court Lane, footpaths narrow significantly, well below minimum acceptable standards (illustrated in Figure 5-4). This, combined with poor visibility due to building alignments along the road, creates an unsafe environment for pedestrians.

Figure 5-4: Court Lane Existing Layout

McDonald's Lane

McDonald's Lane is a narrow one-way street connecting Cross Street to Old Church Street within the town centre. At the western end of the lane, existing building layouts create an unsafe environment for pedestrians. Poor visibility exists for pedestrians on Old Church Street viewing traffic exiting from McDonald's Lane onto Old Church Street. There are also no footpaths provided at this pinch point for pedestrians using McDonald's Lane to access Old Church Street as illustrated in Figure 5-5.

Figure 5-5: McDonald's Lane Existing Layout

Barrack Street & Abbey Row

Barrack Street and Abbey Row are narrow residential streets in the heart of Athenry town centre. These roads currently operate with traffic in both directions, however, with parking on street, it often acts as an informal 1-way as it is not feasible for two cars to pass each other on certain sections.

Pedestrian facilities are also poor. There are no footpaths on either side of Abbey Row. On Barrack Street there are footpaths along some sections but these are well below minimum width standards

Figure 5-6: Abbey Row Existing Layout

Davis Street

Davis Street is an important connection in the centre of Athenry linking Church Street and Old Church Street to the proposed Market Square public realm upgrades. As such it functions as a key artery into the town centre and towards the schools for those travelling on foot. Currently, Davis Street operates 1-way for traffic and has extremely narrow footpaths on the southern side of the road only. On the northern side, properties open directly onto the road. Given the constraints of buildings located either side, there is limited scope to improve footpaths whilst maintaining traffic flows.

Figure 5-7: Davis Street Existing Layout

Town Centre Circulation Option Proposals

In order to alleviate the safety concerns highlighted above within the town centre, the following options have been considered:

- **Church Street 1-way Inbound**: This includes making Church Street 1-way at its eastern end for traffic heading eastbound towards the town centre. This will remove the dangerous manoeuvre for vehicles attempting to pass each other on this narrow stretch of road, whilst providing additional space to upgrade the footpaths for pedestrians accessing the town centre. (Options WC30 & TM02 in Table 4-2)

- **Bridge Street 1-way:** As outlined previously, there is currently insufficient width to accommodate two-way traffic movements along with parking and loading at this location. As such, it is proposed that Bridge Street be converted to 1-way westbound for vehicular traffic entering the town centre. This will allow for reallocation of road space to provide improved footpaths and an eastbound contra-flow segregated cycle lane. This will help provide a safe walking and cycling connection to the planned Market Square plaza. Combined with wider measures on Bridge Street and the Safe Route to School proposals, this will facilitate a continuous safe connection between the Athenry Boys National School and the town centre. (Options WC17 & TM05 in Table 4-2)

- **Court Lane 1-way:** It is proposed that Court Lane be converted to 1-way southbound for vehicular traffic creating a wider circulatory loop around the town centre. This will provide sufficient space to implement significant footpath improvements and a contra-flow segregated cycle lane. Court Lane is an extremely important connection in the Athenry network linking schools and local amenities such as the Athenry Park and Playground. Providing safe access for pedestrians and cyclists, particularly for vulnerable users is vital for promoting sustainable travel within Athenry. (Options WC18 & TM03 in Table 4-2)

- **McDonald's Lane Traffic Filter**: As noted previously, the existing connection from McDonald's Lane to Old Church Street creates a safety hazard due to poor visibility between pedestrians and motorists. Given the other proposed measures within the town, there is also a potential that McDonald's Lane could become more widely used for traffic as a short-cut. As such, it is proposed that McDonald's Lane is closed for vehicular traffic at the western end on access to Old Church Street, with two way access retained for residents on the street. This will allow for the creation of a shared street on McDonald's Lane which will be very low-trafficked and provide

a safe connection for pedestrians and cyclists from Cross Street to Old Church Street. It is envisaged that two-way local access will be provided from Cross Street for vehicles along McDonald's Lane to off-street residential parking which will be prioritised for elderly and mobility impaired residents. There may be some reallocation of existing on-street parking required to nearby streets. (Options WC14 & TM06 in Table 4-2)

- **Davis Street Pedestrianised**: In order to improve safety for pedestrians and cyclists and create a more vibrant town centre, this option considers the closure Davis Street for vehicular access similar to the treatment of Burkes Lane in the Market Square Public Realm scheme. This would create a strong network of safe pedestrian and cycle routes through the town centre linking the proposed public realm upgrades with Church Street, Cross Street and North Gate Street (Options WC15 & TM07 in Table 4-2).

- **Barrack Street & Abbey Row 1-way:** In order to improve the environment for pedestrians and cyclists, it is proposed to convert Barrack Street and Abbey Row to 1-way traffic only in an eastbound direction. Public realm upgrades are proposed along the route including elements such as pavement treatments and traffic calming measures to promote its function as a residential street rather than a through route for vehicular traffic. This would provide a safe route for active travel providing a connection to the town centre and also Athenry Community Park and playground off Bridget Street. This has the potential to be an extremely attractive route with the Clarin river running along Abbey Street and the historic Church also located along the route (Options WC67 & TM08 in Table 4-2).

5.2.1 Traffic Modelling Analysis

All of the traffic circulation options outlined above will have an impact on vehicular movements through the town centre. In order to understand the impact of these proposals on the performance of the road network, a detailed traffic modelling exercise was undertaken. A VISSIM microsimulation model was created to test the various traffic circulation arrangements proposed as part of the LTP. This model was calibrated and validated to traffic surveys undertaken in Athenry in-line with Transport Infrastructure Ireland guidance.

All option testing involved comparing a 'Do Something' to a 'Do Minimum' scenario. The 'Do Something' represents proposed changes to the traffic circulation within the town centre. Whilst the 'Do Minimum' represents existing traffic arrangements within Athenry. By comparing all options back to the 'Do Minimum' their relative performance can be assessed. The VISSIM model was used to test the following scenarios:

5.2.1.1 Option 1

Option 1 builds on the Athenry Public Realm Enhancement Scheme and includes the closure of Burkes Lane to vehicular traffic. In addition to this, Church Street is changed to 1-way in an eastbound direction, and Bridge Street is 1-way westbound to support public realm and footpath enhancements.

The main impact of this scenario on traffic movements is travelling from the town centre towards the L3105 (Raheen Road). This traffic needs to re-route via North Gate Street, R347 and Station Road. The introduction of 1-way westbound traffic on Bridge Street also removes the direct west-east connection through the town centre via Davis Street.

Overall, the modelling results indicate the following:

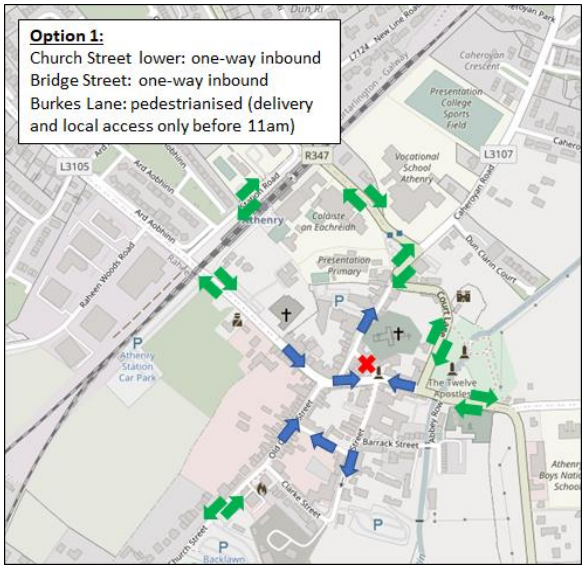


Figure 5-8: Option 1 Modelling Scenario

- An increase in traffic volumes on North Gate Street from 130 vehicles per hour (veh/hr) in the 'Do Minimum' to 250 veh/hr in the AM peak (08:00-09:00) in Option 1. This equates to an increase of 2 vehicles per minute.
- There is a reduction in traffic volumes on Davis Street (approx. 80 vehicles) in the AM peak which will help improve the attractiveness of the environment around the Market Square public realm scheme.
- The network performs adequately with the proposed traffic circulation changes. There is a very minor increase in delay across the town centre of less than 30 seconds on average compared to the existing street layouts ('Do Minimum').

5.2.1.2 Option 2

Option 2 builds on from Option 1 and investigates the potential to make Court Lane 1-way. This would need to be in a southbound direction to compliment the wider 1-way loop around the town centre.

In this option, the 1-way on Church Street has also been reversed. This is to provide access for larger busses and goods vehicles travelling from the southeast to the northwest of the town who are unable to fit through the arch at the top of North Gate Street. However, this would still lead to difficult manoeuvres for larger vehicles through constrained areas such as the junction between Station Road/R347.

The modelling results from this test indicate the following:

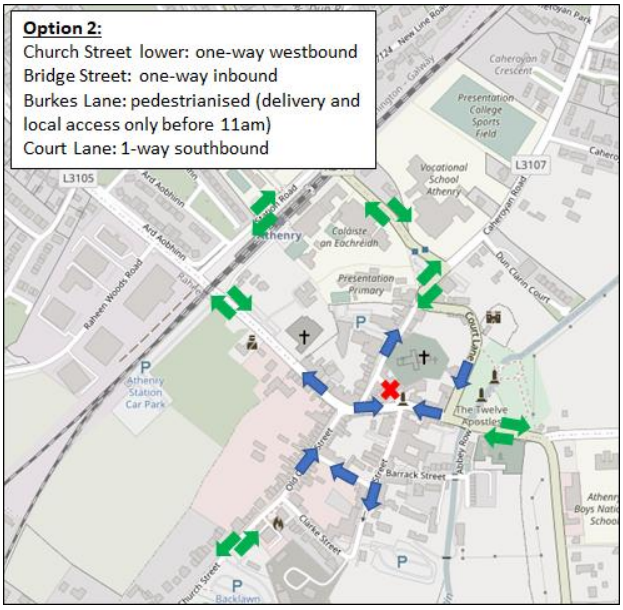


Figure 5-9: Option 2 Modelling Scenario

- There is a larger increase in traffic on North Gate Street when compared to Option 1. This increases to just under 400 vehicles per hour in the AM peak which is a tripling of traffic when compared to existing conditions. The removal of the northbound traffic on Court Lane means that anyone travelling north through the town must use North Gate Street.
- There is a significant increase in traffic volumes on the R347 Tuam Road from 295 veh/hr in the 'Do Minimum' to over 500 veh/hr in Option 2 in the AM peak. All traffic entering Athenry from the large residential area to the north of the rail line must use the R347 in this scenario. This pushes a lot of additional traffic passed a sensitive area at the access to the schools.
- There is a significant increase in overall average delay across the network in Option 2 – almost 2.5 times higher than Option 1. The additional volumes of traffic on North Gate Street and the R347 lead to more congestion and queuing on the network.

Overall, the modelling analysis indicates that the 1-way proposal on Court Lane should be discounted. It would allow for enhanced pedestrian and cycle facilities on an important town centre link. However, there are significant knock-on implications in terms of additional traffic on sensitive town centre streets and overall congestion on the network. It would also increase difficulty for busses and goods vehicles travelling through the town, particularly larger school buses trying to access the R347. An alternative pedestrian and cycle route through the centre can be provided along North Gate Street, the proposed pedestrianisation of Burkes Lane and Bridge Street.

5.2.1.3 Option 3

Option 3 builds on Option 1 and investigates the impact of closing McDonald's Lane to vehicular traffic with local access allowed.

Overall, the modelling results show very little change in network performance as a result of the closure of McDonald's Lane. It is already a very low trafficked street mainly for local access. As such, it performs almost exactly the same as Option 1 in terms of town centre congestion and delay.

Therefore, the proposal to close McDonald's Lane for vehicular traffic at the western end on access to Old Church Street is recommended for inclusion in the LTP. It has a very minor impact on traffic within the town and facilitates the creation of a safe, quite route for pedestrians and cyclists between Cross Street and Old Church Street.

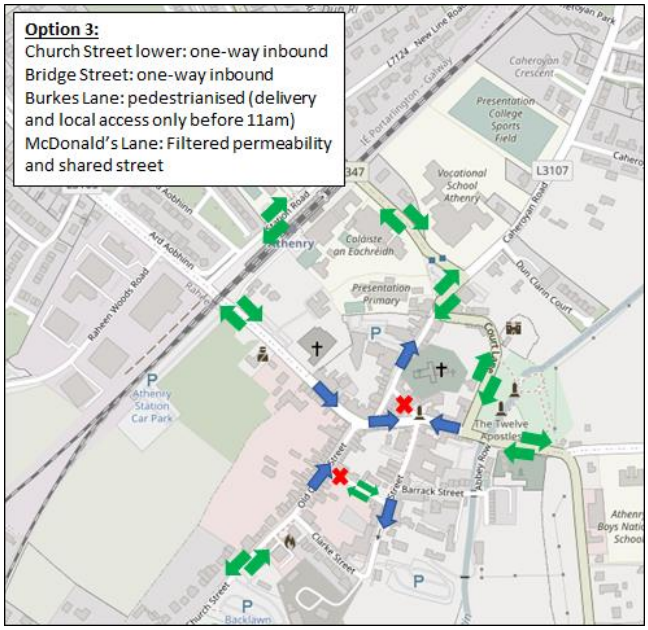


Figure 5-10: Option 3 Modelling Scenario

5.2.1.4 Option 4

Option 4 builds on Option 3 and includes the pedestrianisation of Davis Street (similar to Burkes Lane). Davis Street is a critical link within the Athenry town centre network. Without it, all traffic must pass through North Gate Street. The modelling results indicate:

- A significant increase in traffic volumes on North Gate Street – from 130 veh/hr in the 'Do Minimum' to over 400 veh/hr in Option 4 (AM peak)
- Increase in right-turning traffic at the north end of North Gate Street. This is a difficult manoeuvre for vehicles coming out from under the arch with high two-way traffic volumes on Court Lane.
- Leads to a significant increase in congestion on North Gate Street with queuing back to the junction with Old Church Street at times during the peak hours.

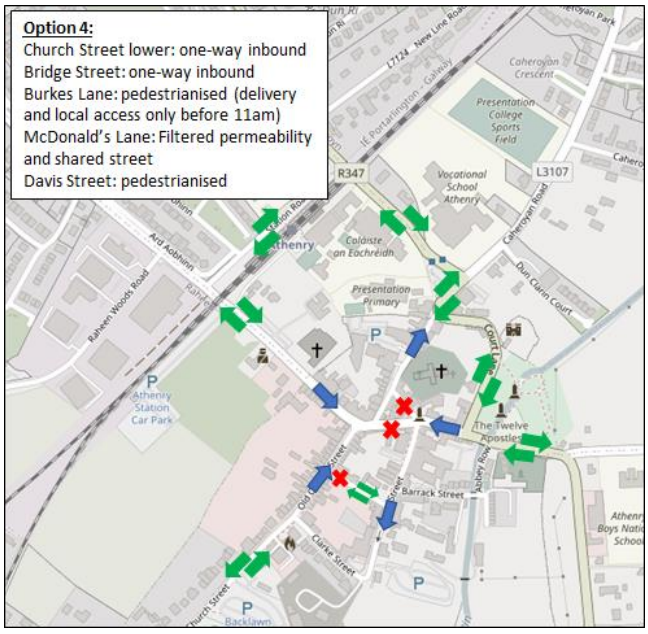


Figure 5-11: Option 4 Modelling Scenario

It is recommended that the closure of Davis Street to vehicular traffic is not included in the Athenry LTP. It is a critical link on the network and its closure leads to significant traffic problems elsewhere in the town.

5.2.1.5 Option 5

Option 5 builds on Option 3 and converts Barrack Street and Abbey Row to 1-way in an eastbound direction. This facilitates improvements to public realm and active mode facilities on these streets.

In summary, Option 5 performs very similarly to Option 3 outlined previously. There is a minor increase in delay across the network of less than 30 seconds on average when compared to the 'Do Minimum' scenario. The network operates effectively in this scenario with no significant queueing or congestion within the town centre during the AM (08:00-09:00) and PM (17:00-18:00) peak hours.

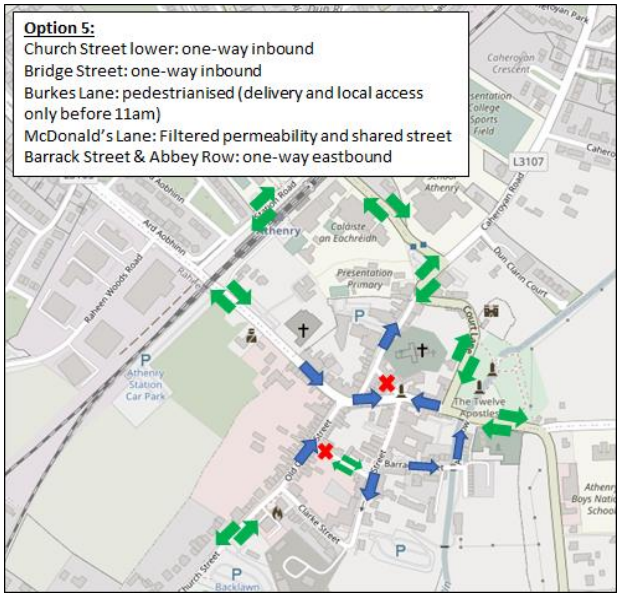


Figure 5-12: Option 5 Modelling Scenario

The proposed changes to 1-way systems on Bridge Street, Church Street and Barrack Street/Abbey Row, along with the closure of McDonald's Lane and Burkes Lane facilitate significant upgrades to public realm and pedestrian and cyclists facilities within the town centre. The impact on traffic circulation and congestion in the town centre as a result of the changes is relatively minor, and is far outweighed by the positive benefits in terms of attractiveness of Athenry for walking and cycling and a place to spend time.

The modelling analysis suggests that Option 5 is the preferred town centre circulation option.

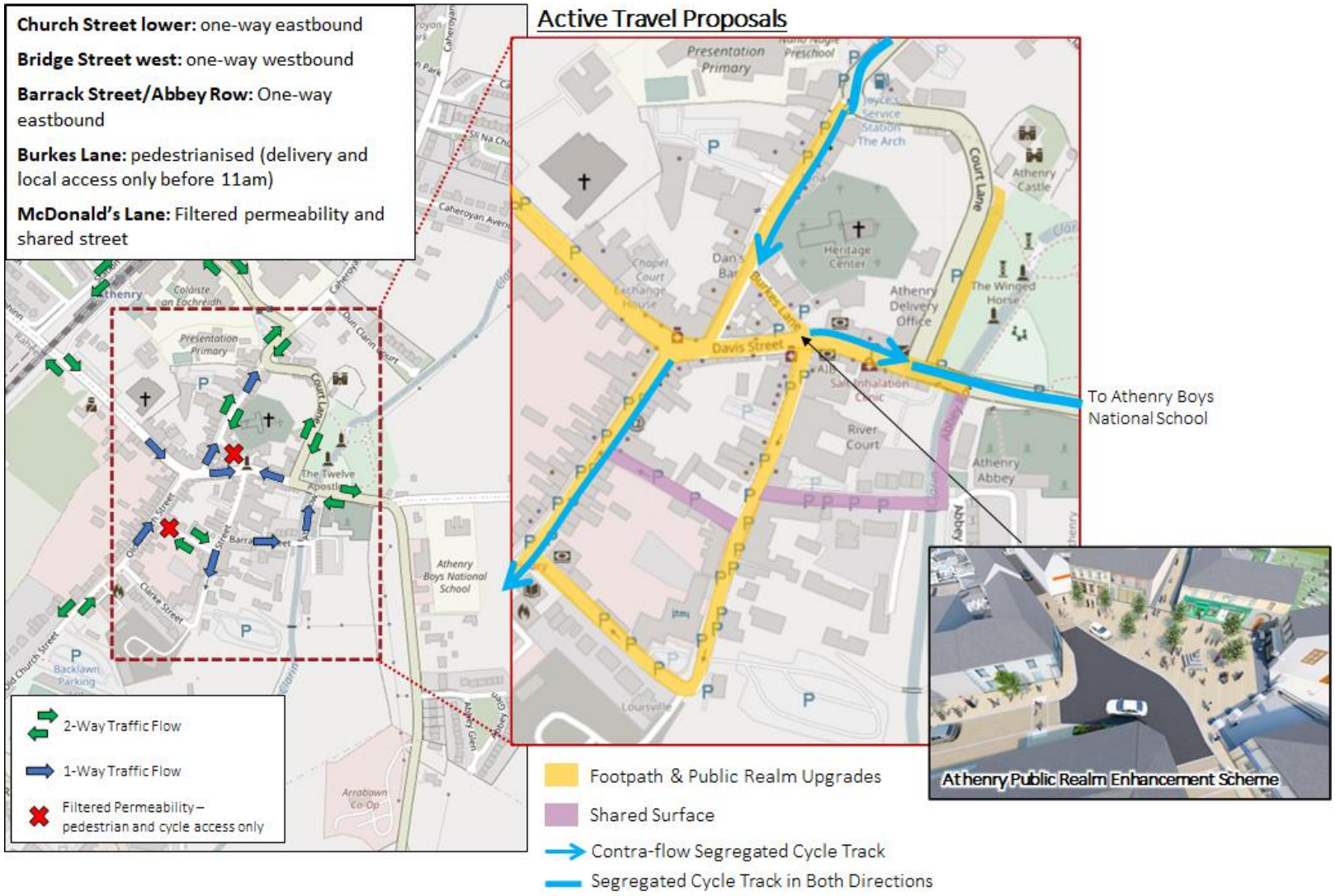


Figure 5-13: Town Centre Circulation and Active Travel Proposals

5.2.2 Town Centre Circulation – Option Assessment

The preferred town centre circulation option has been qualitatively assessed against the study objectives using the scoring system outlined in Table 5-1, and the results are presented in the following table.

Table 5-2: MCA Scoring for Town Centre Circulation Options

CAF Heading	Objective	Score
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes	
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy	
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment	
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes	
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm	

Overall, the proposed town centre measures score positively when compared to the existing conditions. The implementation of 1-way traffic and reallocation of road space on Church Street and Bridge Street facilitates the improvement of footpaths and enhancement of the public realm throughout the town centre, along with the introduction of safe cycling infrastructure. This helps to improve accessibility to the town centre via walking and cycling as well as local schools and amenities such as the Athenry Castle, Park and Playground.

The closure of the McDonald's Lane access as a through route for vehicles to Old Church Street will remove the existing safety hazard at this junction. It will also help create a quiet street environment providing a safe connection for pedestrians and cyclists between Cross Street and Old Church Street.

All of the proposed upgrades should help to create a more attractive environment within the town centre, particularly when combined with the proposed public realm enhancements on Market Square. This will help to increase footfall within the town supporting its economic vibrancy.

For the draft LTP, the proposals included in Town Centre Circulation Option 5 are being considered for the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Athenry. Feedback from public consultation will be used to determine the final optimal solution for the Athenry LTP.

5.3 Bridge Crossing Options over Rail Line

The Baseline Assessment for Athenry highlighted the severance caused by the rail line with a significant population living to the north of the railway and a number of key destinations to the south including the town centre and schools. The majority of education trips in the town are under 2km, however travel by car makes up the largest share of journeys. The provision of safe routes to school will help achieve a shift to sustainable modes thereby contributing towards achieving climate action plan targets and helping to create an enhanced quality of life for the town's residents.

The current railway crossing points in the town centre are quite constrained with a level crossing along the L3105 and a narrow bridge on the R347. There is a strong desire line between the residential areas and the schools and town centre, and connecting these via safe and attractive pedestrian and cycle facilities is key to encouraging sustainable travel within Athenry.

As such, a number of alternative options have been considered to provide connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists north and south of the rail line including:

Option 1 – 1-way traffic on the R347 and two-way segregated cycle track

This option includes the transition of the R347 Tuam Road to 1-way northbound for traffic as illustrated in Figure 5-14. This will enable the overall carriageway to be narrowed to facilitate improved footpaths with protection barriers where required. The second traffic lane would be converted into a 2-way segregated cycle facility connecting with proposed infrastructure north of Station Road and linking to the schools just south of the railway.

The current shuttle traffic light system would remain at the bridge over the rail line. During one phase, traffic movements will be facilitated over the bridge. Then during the second phase all vehicles will be stopped and only cycle movements will be allowed. This maintains segregation of cyclists from vehicles which is extremely important given that the route will be used for children cycling to school.

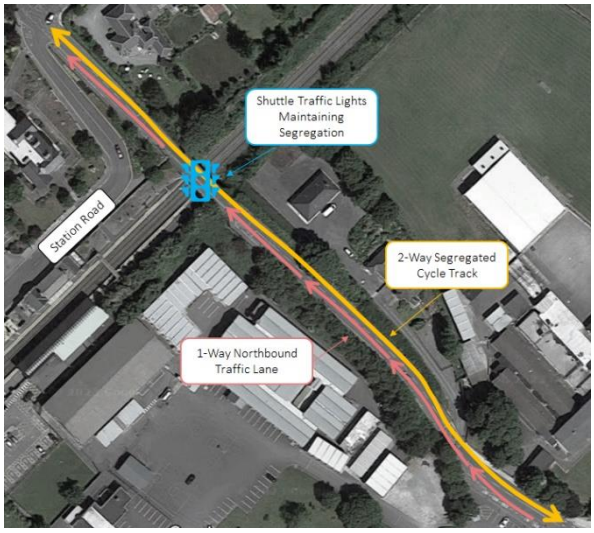


Figure 5-14: Option 1 Proposed Layout

Option 2 – R347 bridge active travel only

This option includes the closure of the R347 bridge to vehicular traffic creating an active travel corridor from the junction with Station Road to the school campus. This would require all vehicular traffic from the R347, including buses, to route via Station Road and Church Street when entering the town centre. The creation of the active travel corridor along the

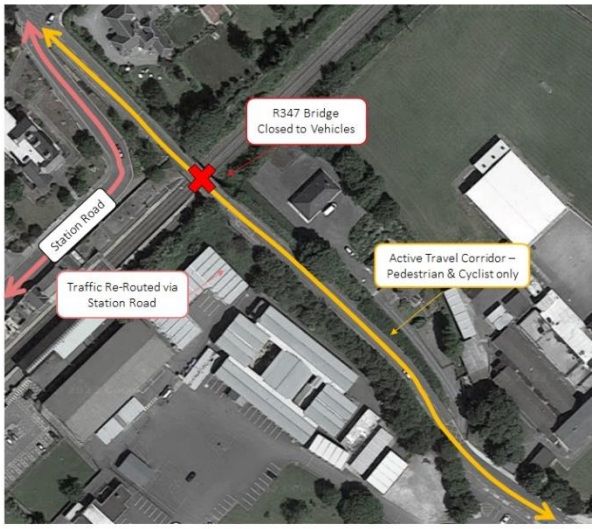


Figure 5-15: Option 2 Proposed Layout

R347 will provide a safe, segregated route for pedestrians and cyclists to schools south of the rail line and on towards the town centre.

Option 3 – Upgrade of the existing R347 bridge

This option includes the upgrade of the existing bridge to widen it and provide dedicated walking and cycling infrastructure. Irish Rail have longer term proposals to double track and electrify the rail line from Galway out to Athenry, and these works may include an upgrade to the bridge crossing.

Option 4 – Construction of a new active travel bridge over the rail line

This option includes the construction of a new active travel bridge over the railway along Station Road – See Figure 5-16 for an indicative proposed alignment. This bridge would connect with proposals to formalise the route through the school campus from Church Street. Along with the proposed connection through North Gate Street car park into the town centre. It would provide a completely segregated route for walking and cycling from residential areas to the north with the schools and town centre.

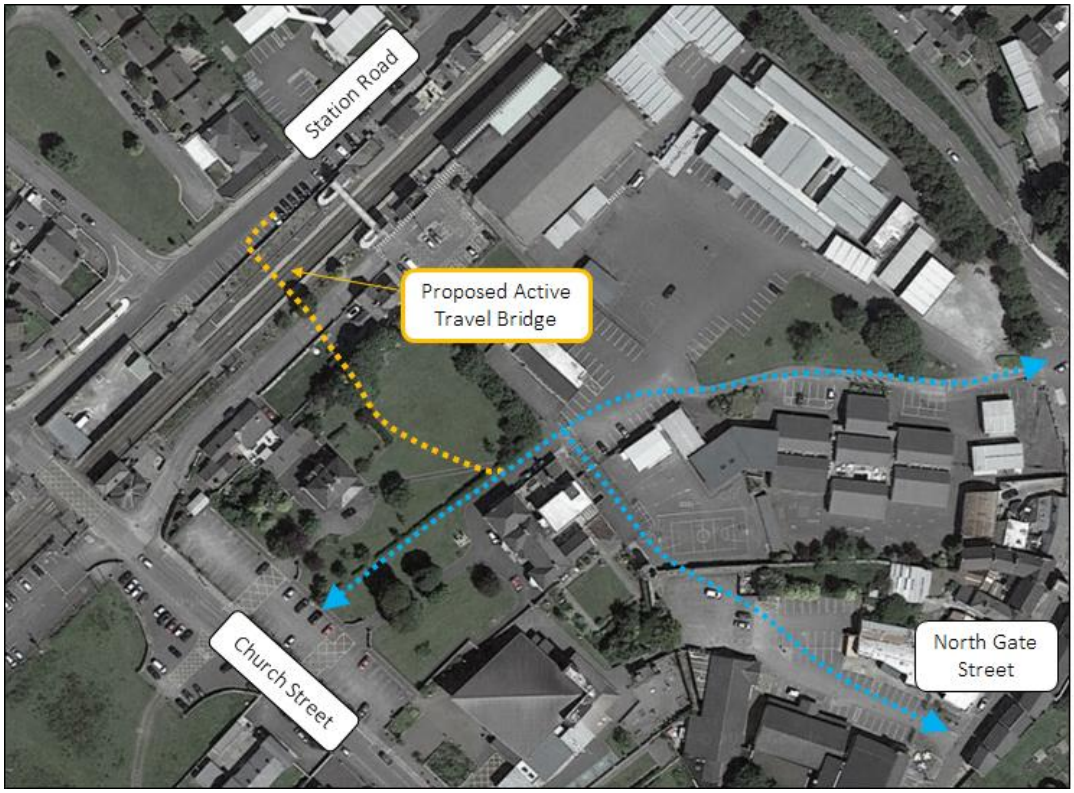


Figure 5-16: Proposed New Active Travel Bridge

5.3.1 Bridge Crossing – Options Assessment

The four bridge crossing options have been qualitatively assessed against the study objectives compared to an existing ('Do Nothing') scenario, and the results are presented in the Table 5-3.

Table 5-3: MCA Scoring for Bridge Crossing Options

CAF Heading	Objective	Option 1 (R347 1-Way)	Option 2 (Active Travel)	Option 3 (Bridge Upgrade)	Option 4 (New Bridge)
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes				
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy				
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment				
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes				
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm				

Option 1

Option 1 will deliver segregated cycle infrastructure along the R347 directly to the school campus along with footpath upgrades. This will connect with wider proposals for North Gate Street, Court Lane, Burke's Lane and Bridge Street providing linkages to the town centre and Athenry Boys National School. This will provide significant improvements to walking and cycling facilities encouraging an increase in active travel.

The conversion of the R347 Tuam Road to one-way northbound will have an impact on connectivity for bus routes (including school bus services) along with vehicular traffic to the schools and the town centre.

Traffic modelling (see Section 5.2.1) was undertaken to investigate the impact of converting the R347 Tuam Road to one-way northbound, and the results indicate:

- A significant increase in traffic volumes in the town centre on North Gate Street – approximately 450 veh/hour in the AM peak (compared to 130 veh/hr in the existing scenario). This increases to 603 vehicles in the PM peak hour (17:00-18:00); and
- The increase in traffic on North Gate Street leads to additional congestion and delay, particularly during the PM peak with traffic struggling to get out onto Court Lane.

Option 2

Option 2 provides a safe, segregated pedestrian and cycle route from the residential areas to the north of the railway to the schools and town centre to the south by removing vehicles from the R347. This would help to encourage travel via sustainable modes and a shift away from car use, particularly for

school trips. As such it scores well across safety and physical activity, environment and integration with policy objectives including Climate Action goals.

However, removing vehicular traffic from the R347 completely will significantly impact on bus routing through the town, and also create considerable severance for residents who rely on the car for travel. As outlined in the Town Centre Circulation options above, Church Street needs to become one-way at its eastern end for safety reasons. As such, under this proposal traffic returning home from the town centre will need to undertake significant detours via outer distributor roads. The closure of the R347 bridge to traffic will also push additional vehicles through Church Street and the town centre which may impact on the safety and public realm in these areas. Therefore, Option 2 is marked down in terms of overall accessibility and connectivity which may impact on the economic vitality of the town.

Option 3

The upgrade of the existing R347 bridge would provide some localised improvement for pedestrians and cyclists. However, without upgrades to the R347 Tuam Road south of this location it would fail to provide improvements in terms of a continuous active travel corridor, as outlined in options 1 and 2. Due to the level differences south of the bridge, it would be extremely expensive and challenging to try to widen the R347 and provide continuous segregated cycle infrastructure. As such, any improvements to the bridge are likely to be quite localised.

This bridge may be identified for future upgrades as part of longer-term Irish Rail works at the station. If possible at that stage, widening should be considered to provide better facilities for pedestrians and cyclists which might compliment other proposals for this area.

Option 4

The construction of a new active travel bridge over the railway line would provide an attractive safe route for pedestrians and cyclists from the north directly to the school campus and town centre via North Gate Street. Completely segregated from traffic traversing the town, the route would encourage substantially greater levels of walking and cycling to the town centre and surrounding schools.

It should be acknowledged that the proposed bridge would be expensive to deliver, and would potentially rely on agreements with local land-owners to provide a route through to the schools and town. However, the delivery of this connection would help alleviate current severance issues due to the rail line and provide significantly improved accessibility for local residents via safe walking and cycling infrastructure.

Assessment Summary

Overall based on the analysis above, it is recommended that the feasibility of delivering a new active travel bridge and associated connections to the local schools and town centre (Option 4) be included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Athenry.

However, it is acknowledged that this would be a longer-term measure given the cost of delivery and constraints in terms of land-ownership. In the short-term the existing traffic management arrangement at the R347 bridge will be retained but with proposed upgrades to footpaths to provide a strong pedestrian link to the schools south of the rail line. In addition, traffic calming measures will be implemented to reduce vehicle speeds and increase safety along this route.

An alternative safe route for cyclists has also been provided as part of the wider Emerging Preferred Strategy of measures, which includes for the provision of segregated cycle infrastructure along Station Road and connecting to the Safe Routes to School scheme on Church Street.

For the draft LTP, traffic calming and footpath upgrades along the R347 are proposed as a short-term measure to improve connectivity to schools south of the rail line. This is in combination with the promotion of alternative, safe cycle routes via Station Road and Church Road.

5.4 Old Church Street (WC13)

This option includes the reallocation of road space on Old Church Street to deliver:

- A contra-flow cycle track from the junction with Church Street to Clarke Street continuing down to the R348 (Prospect); and
- Footpath and public realm upgrades along Old Church Street.

The space for this improved walking and cycling infrastructure will mostly come from a reduction in carriageway width (including removal of the left filter lane at the Church Street junction which would no longer be required due to the 1-way system proposed). Where reducing carriageway widths is not sufficient to deliver these measures, localised reductions in on-street parking may be required. The MCA for this option is presented in Table 5-4 below followed by a narrative outlining the rationale for the scoring. As outlined previously, the proposed option has been comparatively scored against the existing 'Do Nothing' road layout.

Table 5-4: MCA Scoring for Old Church Street Upgrades (Option WC13)

CAF Heading	Objective	Option WC13
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes	
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy	
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment	
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes	
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm	

The proposed upgrades for Old Church Street will provide a significant improvement in the public realm and walking environment on the street as a result of the wider, more comfortable footpaths, meeting national policy on promotion of active travel, improved urban public realm and a reduction in car dominance in town centres.

The delivery of a segregated contra-flow cycle track will facilitate safe cycle movements in both directions along Church Street resulting in reduced travel distances and journey times for cyclists. The reduction in carriageway widths, along with cycle infrastructure provision, will help to reduce traffic speeds along the street improving general safety for pedestrians and cyclists and creating an improved town centre environment.

The provision of upgraded active travel infrastructure along Old Church Street will improve connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists from the town centre further south to Kenny Park as well as

shops and businesses along the R348 (Prospect) via the proposed town wall walk. It will also improve access from the town centre to Clarin College via the permeability link through Lorro Gate residential estate.

Whilst the delivery of the proposed upgrades to Old Church Street may result in a small reduction in the number of on-street parking spaces, it is envisaged that any spaces removed could be reallocated to the large Backlawn Car Park located nearby to the south. it is assumed that high-quality disabled parking bays would be prioritised for Old-Church Street in any designs.

Overall, it is recommended that the proposed upgrades for Old Church Street are included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Athenry. The option scores positively across all the study objectives when compared to the existing layout. The footpath and public realm upgrades, along with safe cycle facilities will help create a more attractive town centre providing connections to key services and encouraging travel by sustainable modes.

5.5 North Gate Street (WC26)

North Gate Street is an important link in the Athenry town centre network connecting from the school campus and the R347 to the heart of the town on Market Square where public realm upgrades are planned. It is currently lined with local businesses and framed at the northern end by the old medieval town wall. However, currently North Gate Street is dominated by on-street parking with very narrow footpaths in places creating a generally unattractive environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

The proposed option for North Gate Street is illustrated in Figure 5-17 and includes the improvement of the public realm and active travel environment along the street through widened pedestrian areas and public realm works, as well as a contra-flow cycle track to the junction with Burkes Lane, facilitating onwards travel to Market Square.

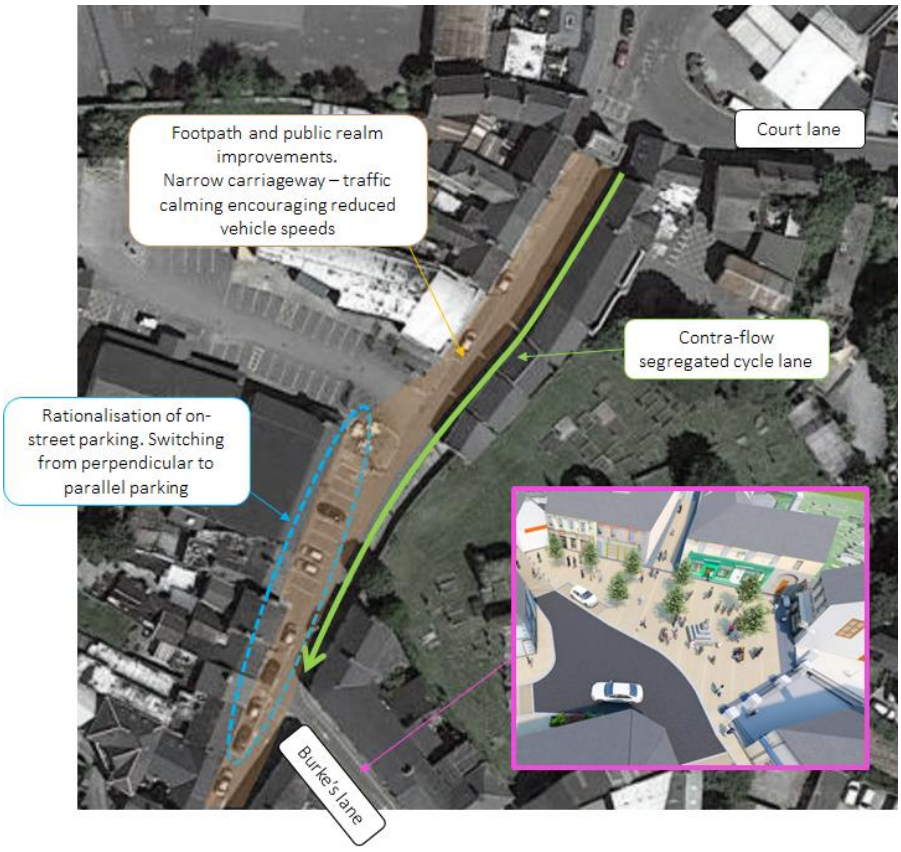


Figure 5-17 North Gate Street Proposals

As on Old Church Street, while the space for this improved walking and cycling environment will mostly come from a reduction in carriageway widths, where this is not sufficient to deliver these measures, this option may require localised reductions in on-street parking. The MCA for this option is presented in Table 5-5 below followed by a narrative outlining the reasoning for the scoring.

Table 5-5: MCA Scoring for North Gate Street (Option WC26)

CAF Heading	Objective	Option WC26
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes	
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy	
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment	
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes	
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm	

The proposals for North Gate Street could transform this area into an attractive and vibrant location framed by the old town gate. Footpath upgrades with public realm enhancements will create a more attractive environment for people to spend time on North Gate Street. The introduction of a contra-flow cycle lane will provide safe access for cyclists travelling towards the town centre and the planned upgrades to Market Square and Burke's Lane. Overall, this should encourage increased walking and cycling to the town centre via North Gate Street, and support local businesses along the route. Whilst the proposals may require some rationalisation of parking, there is a large off-street car park available along North Gate Street where any parking removed could be accommodated.

In general, the proposed upgrades for North Gate Street score positively across all the LTP objectives when compared to existing conditions. The footpath, public realm and cycle infrastructure improvements will significantly enhance the attractiveness of North Gate Street for pedestrians and cyclists whilst maintaining vehicular access. As such, it is recommended that the proposed upgrades for North Gate Street are included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Athenry.

5.6 Station Road (WC45)

Station Road is a very important link in the wider Athenry network as:

- It connects to Athenry Train Station;
- It provides a link between the two rail crossing points on entry to the town centre on the R347 and L3105 Raheen Road; and
- It provides a Northwest-Southwest connection linking residential areas along the R347 with Raheen Industrial Estate and further on to Presentation College.

The proposed option for Station Road is illustrated in Figure 5-18 and includes footpath upgrades and the delivery of segregated cycle lanes connecting from the R347 to the L3105.

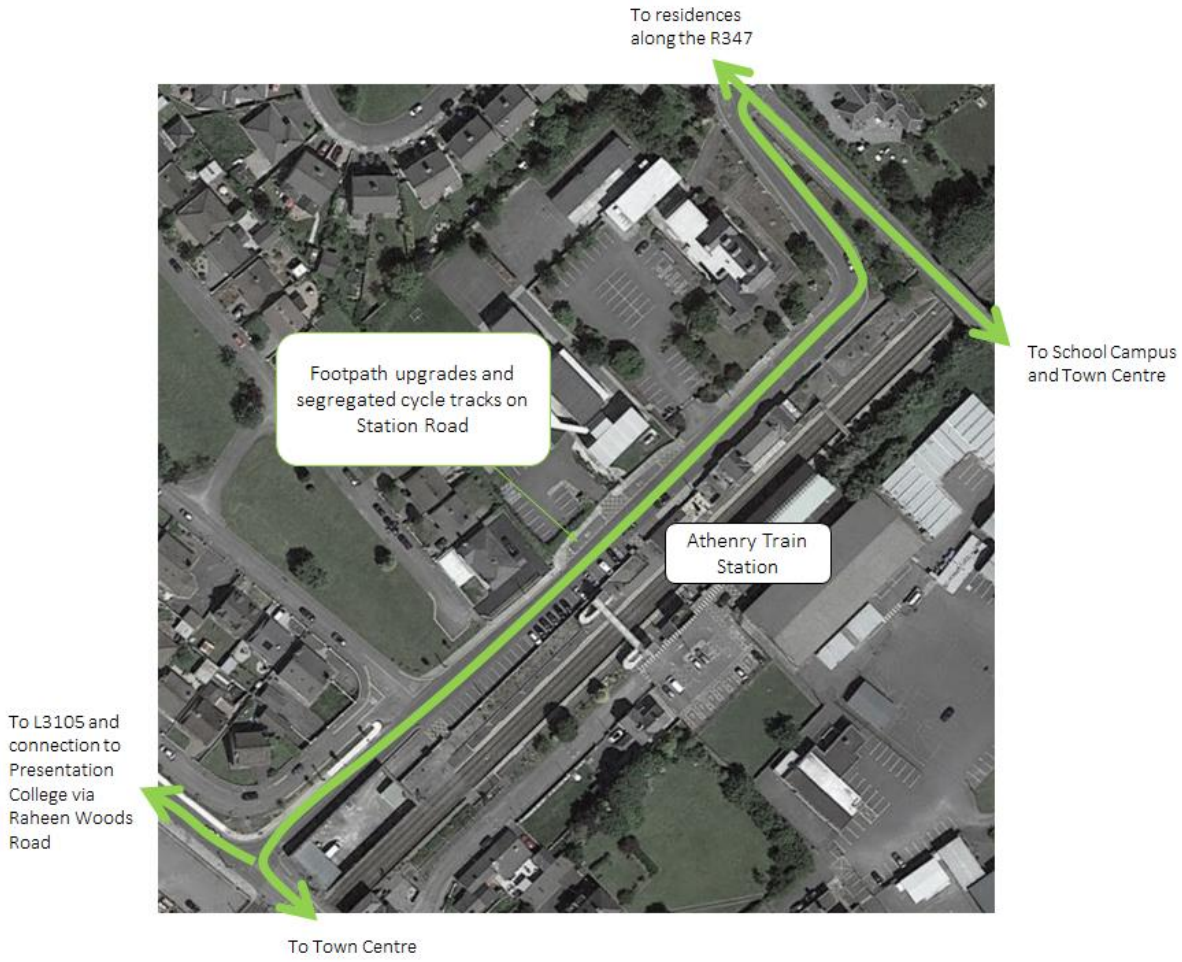


Figure 5-18: Station Road Proposals

The MCA for this option is presented in Table 5-6 followed by a narrative outlining the rationale for the scoring.

Table 5-6: MCA Scoring for Station Road (Option WC45)

CAF Heading	Objective	Option WC45
Accessibility & Social Inclusion	Support and implement transport measures which reduces car dependency and improve access to local services by sustainable modes	
Integration	To align and integrate with existing and emerging National, Regional, and Local planning policy	
Safety & Physical Activity	Provide safe access to schools for vulnerable road users and ensure a safe front of school environment	
Environment	Contribute to achieving Climate Action Plan targets through the creation of an environment which encourages a modal shift from the private car to more sustainable modes	
Economic	Contribute to Athenry's economic vitality through improved connectivity and enhanced public realm	

Overall, the proposed upgrades for Station Road score very positively across all the study objectives when compared to existing conditions. When combined with other wider proposals as part of the Athenry LTP, the Station Road upgrades will:

- Facilitate safe access by walking and cycling to Athenry Train Station from residential areas along the R347 and L3105 encouraging interchange and sustainable travel;
- Provide a connection for large residential areas to the school campus south of the rail line and the town centre – linking to the bridge crossing options described previously and proposed upgrades to the existing level crossing;
- Connect with cycle infrastructure proposed on Raheen Woods Road and the L3103 providing a safe pedestrian and cycle route to Presentation College. This should help encourage active travel for local school trips.

The proposed upgrades for Station Road will form a vital part of the wider Athenry walk and cycle network providing safe routes to schools and the town centre, and encouraging a mode shift towards sustainable travel.

The delivery of segregated cycle lanes along Station Road will require a reduction in parking along this road. However, any parking removed can be accommodated in the nearby off-street train station car park on Church Street.

It is recommended that the proposed upgrades for Station Road are included in the Emerging Preferred Strategy for Athenry.

6. ATHENRY LTP EMERGING PREFERRED STRATEGY

6.1 Introduction

The following sections provide a description of all measures included in the Athenry LTP Emerging Preferred Strategy.

6.2 Walking & Cycling

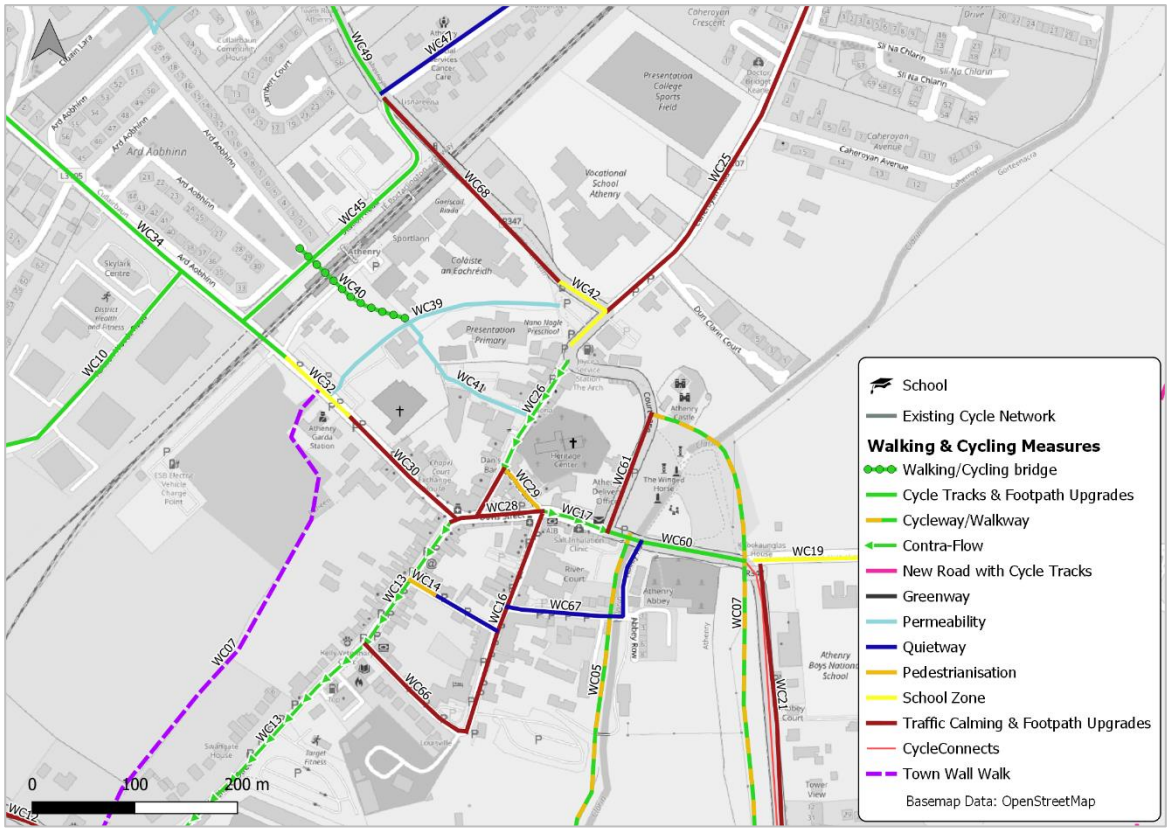


Figure 6-1: Emerging Preferred Strategy Walking & Cycling Measures (Town Centre)

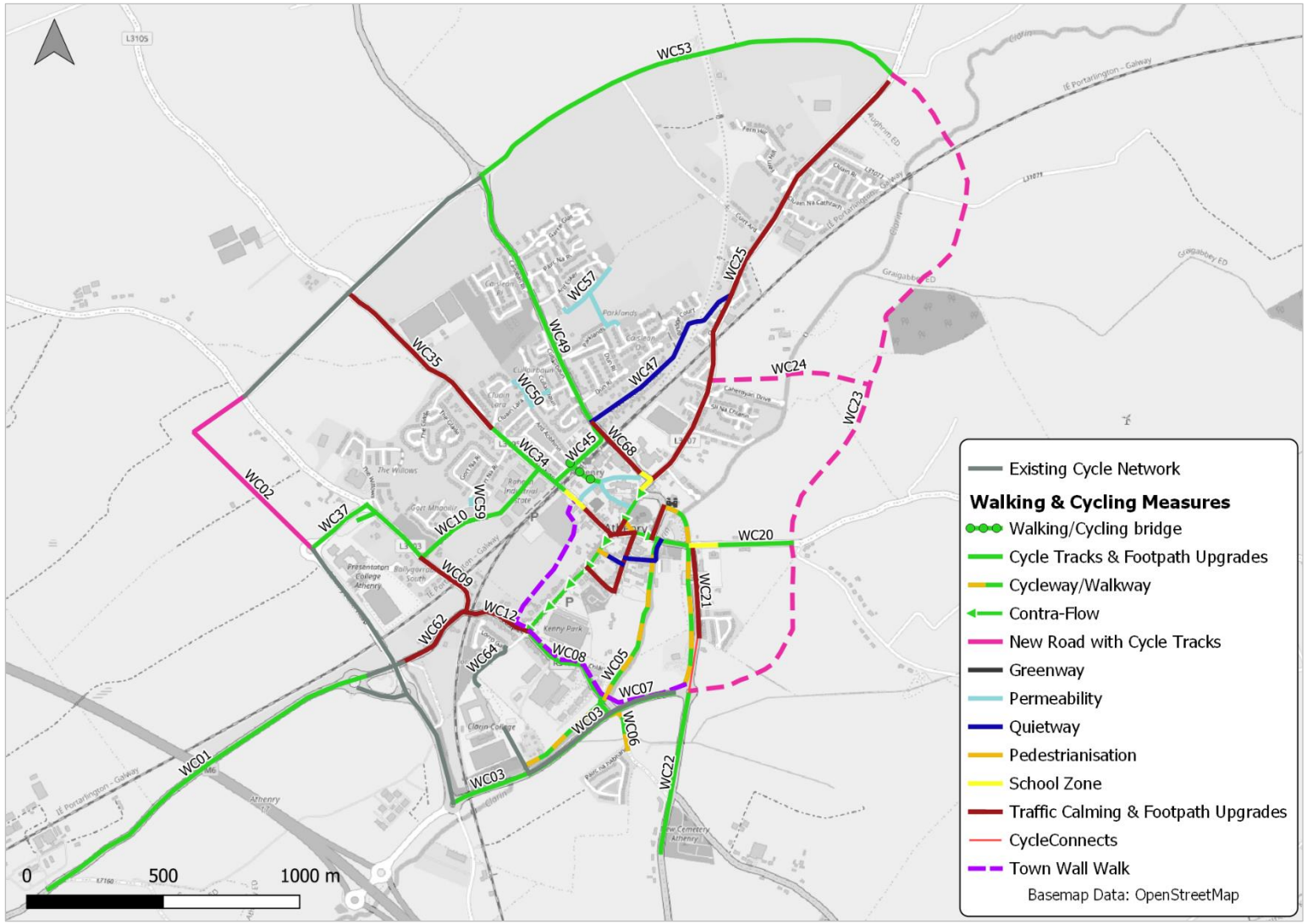


Figure 6-2: Emerging Preferred Strategy Walking & Cycling Measures

Option Ref.	Location	Description
WC01	R348	Cycleway and Footway linking Bia Innovator Campus to town. Widths constrained at Prospect, but connects to existing cycling infrastructure along completed relief road sections and from there onto other proposed active travel measures.
WC02	Athenry Relief Road Elbow section	This section of the Athenry Relief Road is at an advanced stage in terms of moving towards construction. This option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road linking with existing infrastructure on the completed sections.
WC03	R348	Add missing cycle tracks and footpaths, resulting in cycle tracks and footpaths on both sides of this section of R348. This would link Clarin College with: • existing infrastructure along the relief road; • the new bridge and proposed crossing at Prospect as part of WC06; and • proposed cycle infrastructure along the R347 as part of WC07 and WC22.
WC05	River Clarin	River Clarin Walk as an Active Travel route for Walking and Cycling with footway and cycleway provided. Provides a quality active travel alignment from the town to the shopping centre and Clarin College, with the potential to link further north through the park to Caheroyan Drive. Careful environmental management and examination of tie-in in the town centre will be required. Indicative alignment only subject to further investigation and consultation.
WC06	Prospect to R347 via Páirc na hAbhainn	New pedestrian and cycle crossing of R348 from recently completed active travel bridge, and upgrade of link to Páirc na hAbhainn for pedestrians & cyclists. Further east to include upgrade/provision of footpaths between Páirc na hAbhainn to Cemetery Cross.
WC07	Along Town Walls	Town Wall Walk potentially with both cycleway and footway as proposed for River Clarin Walk giving potential to provide active travel infrastructure along roads/streets with constrained widths by the R347, Prospect and Old Church Street. Indicative alignment only subject to further investigation and consultation.
WC08	Prospect	Cycle tracks and footpath upgrades to provide for travel between proposed links along R348 past the shopping centre linking to the town centre and Old Church Street. Upgraded facilities could potentially be provided by the proposed Town Wall Walk (WC07).
WC09	L3103	Add missing footpath links along this section of road to serve desire line and existing trips to/from Presentation College.
WC10	Presentation College, L3103, Raheen Woods Road and Raheen Road (L7124)	Cycle tracks and footpath upgrades from Presentation College to train station via L3103, Raheen Woods Road and Raheen Road providing a high quality active travel corridor between this large school and the town centre. This would include a short walk and cycle connection directly into Presentation College from L3103 to avoid conflict with vehicular traffic at the junction (Option WC11 in Table 2-1)
WC12	Prospect	Footpath upgrades along this section of road to serve desire line and existing trips to/from Presentation College.
WC13	Old Church Street/Outside Kenny Park	Contra-flow cycle track from Church Street to Clarke Street, continuing down to Prospect. Provision of wider footpaths between Church Street and Clarke Street. Footpath upgrades and widening from Clarke Street to Prospect.
WC14	McDonald's Lane (upper)	Pedestrianise top of McDonald's Lane with cycling permeability. This is currently a dangerous junction with Old Church Street for all road users given constrained sightlines for traffic turning onto Old Church Street and the requirement for pedestrians to walk on-road with traffic for this section. McDonald's lane would remain open for local access, however, public realm enhancements are proposed to encourage this as a shared surface and attractive route for pedestrians and cyclists.
WC16	Cross Street	Improvement of public realm and pedestrian environment along Cross Street as part of Market Square Public Realm Enhancement Scheme.
WC17	Market Street/Bridge Street	Constrained widths on Market Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other in order to facilitate two-way traffic, creating a safety hazard. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety and a contra-flow cycle track to maintain cycle permeability towards Athenry Boys National School. Maintaining the disabled parking bay to be a priority in the design.
WC19	L3112 outside Boys National School	Delivery of Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programme of interventions outside Athenry Boys National School gate, involving provision of footpaths and school zone to increase pedestrian safety for students accessing the school.
WC20	L3112	Cycle Tracks and footpaths along L3112 to R347 to link to residential zoned greenfield lands in the east of study area. To be delivered as lands are developed.
WC21	R347	Pedestrian Upgrades. Potential in the short term to shift footpath to east side of road to better serve existing development and strengthen connection to the Boys National School and Bridge Street for pedestrian access to town

Option Ref.	Location	Description
		centre. As the Town Wall Walk (WC07) is developed provide connections to this high quality corridor.
WC22	R347	Proposed NTA CycleConnects route. From the cemetery/Páirc na hAbhainn to Baunmore Roundabout there is greater road width and active travel infrastructure here would link to other proposed active travel routes. North of Baunmore Roundabout width is more constrained, but this route could be combined with the Town Wall Walk (WC07) to provide an active travel corridor off-road form the R347 to the Athenry Boys National School and Town Centre. Option includes cycle tracks and footpaths from New Cemetery to Baunmore Roundabout.
WC23	New Road	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC24	New Road	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC25	Caheroyan Road	NTA CycleConnects proposed route. It is considered that widths on this section are too constrained to enable the construction of cycle tracks along it. As mitigation, this option involves traffic calming along the link, footpath upgrades, pedestrian crossings at Quinn's funeral home & beside Green Acres Estate and alternative routing for cyclists through a proposed Quietway along the existing residential New Line Road. Includes footpath provision from proposed SRTS Park & Stride to New Line Road junction as per SRTS proposals (Option WC56 in Table 2-1)
WC26	North Gate Street	This option involves the improvement of the public realm and active travel environment along North Gate Street. Widened pedestrian areas and improved public realm along the length of the street. In addition, contra-flow tracks to be provided until the junction with Burkes Lane, facilitating inwards travel to Market Square.
WC28	Church Street/Old Church Street Junction/Davis Street	This area is currently a real pinch point with very poor pedestrian facilities, limiting pedestrian travel around the town. This option involves footpath upgrades, carriageway narrowing for traffic calming & pedestrian safety improvements.
WC29	Burkes Lane	Market Square Public Realm Works on Burkes Lane with potential to allow low-speed cycling access to/from North Gate Street.
WC30	Church Street Lower	Constrained widths on Church Street means that footpaths are currently too narrow for two pedestrians to safely pass each other as a result of facilitating two-way traffic, creating a safety hazard. This section of Church Street is particularly constrained, and vehicles regularly mount the already too narrow footpath to allow oncoming vehicles to pass. This option involves a one-way system inbound for motor traffic, widening of footpaths to increase pedestrian comfort and safety.
WC32	Church Street	School Zone for proposed Church Street entrance to school campus as per SRTS proposals. Includes provision of a footpath on this section of Church Street outside the Garda Station as per SRTS proposals, with pedestrian crossing to access school campus (previously Option WC31 in Table 2-1).
WC34	Raheen Road, Church Street	Footpath upgrades along this inbound route to the town centre. Cycle infrastructure provided through use of segregated cycle tracks where possible and potential use of service streets parallel to main road for cycling. Signalisation of Station Road junction may be required due to poor sightlines. It is proposed to upgrade the surface and condition of permeability link to Ard Aobhinn as per SRTS proposals (previously Option WC38 in Table 2-1). It also includes the widening of the level crossing to create dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists (previously Option WC33 in Table 2-1). Can't be physically segregated due to rail lines but segregated up to railway on either side and then marked space through crossing.
WC35	Raheen Road	New Footpaths on both sides and traffic calming to relief road.
WC37	Outside Presentation College	Cycle Tracks outside Presentation College linking to existing and proposed cycle infrastructure on the Athenry Relief Road and to proposed cycle tracks on the L3103.
WC39	Through School Campus, The Arch to Church Street	"Yellow Brick Road through the Campus" as per SRTS proposals. This proposal would significantly improve access to the school campus from the Raheen Road and further south, increasing the active travel catchment of the schools.
WC40	Ard Aoibhinn to school campus	This proposal involves the construction of a new Active Travel bridge over the railway linking to both the schools and the town centre through North Gate Street car park in conjunction with option 41.
WC41	Through School Campus, North Gate to Rail Station	Permeability link from North Gate Street car park linking with proposed Active Travel bridge (WC40) and SRTS proposal through the campus (WC39).
WC42	Court Lane/Tuam Road junction	School Zone for proposed Tuam Road entrance to school campus as per SRTS proposals.
WC45	Station Road	This option involves footpath upgrades and the provision of segregated cycle tracks along Station Road to improve general active travel accessibility and in particular access to the rail station. This would likely require the relocation of parking on the station side of the road to the existing large park and ride facility off Church Street.

Option Ref.	Location	Description
		Includes pedestrian crossing from proposed park & stride in GRETB to existing footpath on Station Road as per SRTS proposals (Option WC46 in Table 2-1).
WC47	New Line Road	Quietway for cycling from Caheroyan Road to Tuam Road along New Line Road, possible footpath upgrades and traffic calming to ensure comfortable active travel along road. Top of New Line Road to be made two-way for cyclists only, creation of safe crossing for cycle traffic to take a right turn from Caheroyan Road to New Line Road required.
WC49	Tuam Road	This option involves footpath upgrades and the provision of segregated cycle tracks along Tuam Road to improve active travel accessibility generally and in particular to the rail station and school cluster at The Arch. Includes provision of missing sections of footpath between Station Road and Londis (Option WC48 in Table 2-1). It is proposed that the footpath upgrades and cycle tracks extend along Tuam Road to the Relief Road (Option WC52 in Table 2-1)
WC50	Cluain Lara to Cullairbaun, Ard Aoibhinn to Cullarbaun	Provides permeability connections for active modes between existing estates. This will help to improve accessibility to key services by walking and cycling for residents in these estates. (Combination Options WC50 and WC51 in Table 2-1).
WC53	Athenry Relief Road western section, road upgrade	Dependant on the delivery of this section of the Athenry Relief Road, this option provides for active travel infrastructure along the new road.
WC57	Parklands to Caisleáin Oir	Permeability link, linking Ard Esker culs de sac and Ard Esker to Parklands and Caisleáin Oir housing estates. Greatly increases permeability between Tuam Road and New Line Road/town centre from existing housing estate cul de sacs. (Combination Options WC57 and WC58 in Table 2-1).
WC59	Gort na Rí to Primary Care Centre	Link Gort na Rí Cul de Sac to primary care centre and Raheen Woods Road, increasing permeability for work trips to the industrial estate and school trips to Presentation College and Clarin College
WC60	Bridge Street	This option involves the provision of segregated cycle tracks from the town centre to Athenry Boys National School as well as footpath upgrades.
WC61	Court Lane	This includes the provision of footpath upgrades, and footpaths on the park side where none exist, where there is space to do so. The proposal includes upgraded walk and cycle links from Bridge Street to the Castle via the park.
WC62	Prospect	Provision of footpaths along this section of prospect, linking the new fire station to the town centre.
WC64	Clarin College	Make permanent existing active travel connection to Clarin College from Lorro Gate. Greatly increasing active travel catchment to Clarin College from the town.
WC66	Clarke Street	Footpaths are too narrow on this section, falling below minimum standards in DMURS. This option proposes widening and upgrading of footpaths along Clarke Street.
WC67	Barrack Street and Abbey Row	Convert to one-way street eastbound to provide additional space for public realm improvements. Traffic calming and low-trafficked street with potential for quiet route with pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles sharing the carriageway.
WC68	Tuam Road Overbridge	Pedestrian railing to improve pedestrian safety due to level difference between footpath and road. General footpath upgrades along route and traffic calming to reduce vehicle speeds and create a safer environment for pedestrians and cyclists.

6.3 Public Transport

Table 6-1: Public Transport LTP Measures

Option Ref.	Location	Description
PTR01	Towards Limerick, Galway and Dublin	To support ongoing work by Iarnród Éireann and the NTA to increase service frequency along the Galway-Dublin rail line and Western Rail Corridor, with particular focus on earlier and later services to expand pattern of trips served.
PTR04	Towards Collooney, Western Rail Corridor	To support the opening of the Western Rail Corridor route from Athenry, Tuam, Claremorris to Collooney as an option for passenger and cargo transportation.
PTR05	Galway to Athlone	To secure in co-operation with Iarnród Éireann improved rail infrastructure and services between Galway to Athlone which includes a dual railway track and additional improvement works to include an additional platform and a passing loop at Garraun, Oranmore to ensure enhanced capacity and frequency of service.
PTR06	Towards Loughrea	To support the addition of Loughrea to the Western Rail Corridor and to plan for the addition of a commuter route from Loughrea to Galway by linking Loughrea to either Attymon or Athenry train station to create a commuter tributary to Galway.
PTR07	Athenry Station	To provide safe and secure cycle parking at Athenry train station.
PTB01	Towards Loughrea, Tuam	Engagement with the NTA and Local Link team to assess potential for public transport services to surrounding significant towns not accessible via rail network.
PTB02	Bus Stop Waiting Infrastructure & Passenger Information	Bus Stop Waiting Infrastructure & Passenger Information to support bus patronage increases (timetables, bus poles, shelters, seating, kassel kerbs).

6.4 Road & Traffic Management Options

A number of traffic management arrangements have been proposed within Athenry town centre to support walking, cycling and public realm improvements. These include one-way systems on Bridge Street, Church Street, Barrack Street and Abbey Row along with the closure of certain streets for non-local vehicular traffic.

The completion of the Athenry Relief Road, as illustrated in Figure 6-3, is a Policy Objective in the GCDP 2022-2028. The Athenry Relief Road Phase 2 (R01) is currently being delivered by GCC. Priority is given to completion of the western section of the Athenry Relief Road (R02) as a longer term measure to provide a full bypass of the town. This includes the upgrade of the existing L7125 which is a sub-standard road along with the delivery of segregated pedestrian and cycle facilities. In addition to reducing town centre traffic, this would provide an orbital active mode connection for residents to employment lands and schools to the northeast and southwest of the town.

The delivery of the eastern section of the Athenry Relief Road (R03) is likely to be beyond the lifetime of this LTP. As such, it is a recommendation of the plan that this corridor is preserved and the need for the road is reassessed as Athenry continues to grow beyond the current draft LAP.

The LTP also proposes the upgrade of a number of junctions throughout the town to improve safety for all road users. The current transport network in Athenry is often difficult to traverse for pedestrians and cyclists, with few formal crossings provided in the town and most junctions featuring wide, splayed turns for cars leaving long crossing distances for pedestrians and hazards for cyclists from turning vehicles. As the active travel measures outlined in Section 6.2 are delivered, all junctions along the routes will need to be reviewed and upgraded to provide safe access for pedestrians and cyclists. Exact details on proposed upgrade works will be defined at the individual project level

Table 6-2: Road & Traffic Management LTP Measures

Option Ref.	Location	Description
R01	New Road	Athenry Relief Road Phase 2 (Elbow section)
R02	L7125	Athenry Relief Road Western Section (Ballydavid Road Upgrade)
R03	New Road	Athenry Relief Road Eastern Section. likely to be beyond the lifetime of this LTP. As such, it is a recommendation of the plan that this corridor is preserved and the need for the road is reassessed as Athenry continues to grow beyond the current draft LAP.
TM02	Church Street Lower	Church Street lower one-way eastbound
TM05	Bridge Street	One-way westbound
TM06	McDonald's Lane (upper)	Pedestrianise western end of McDonald's Lane at junction with Old Church Street
TM08	Barrack Street / Abbey Row	One-way eastbound

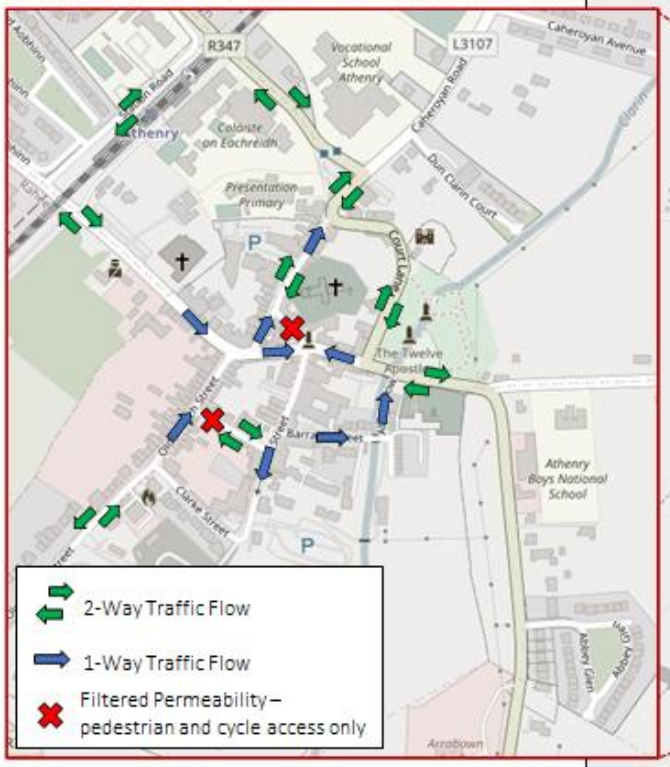
Church Street lower: One-way eastbound

Bridge Street west: One-way westbound

Barrack Street/Abbey Row: One-way eastbound

Burkes Lane: Pedestrianised (local delivery access)

McDonald's Lane: Filtered permeability and shared street



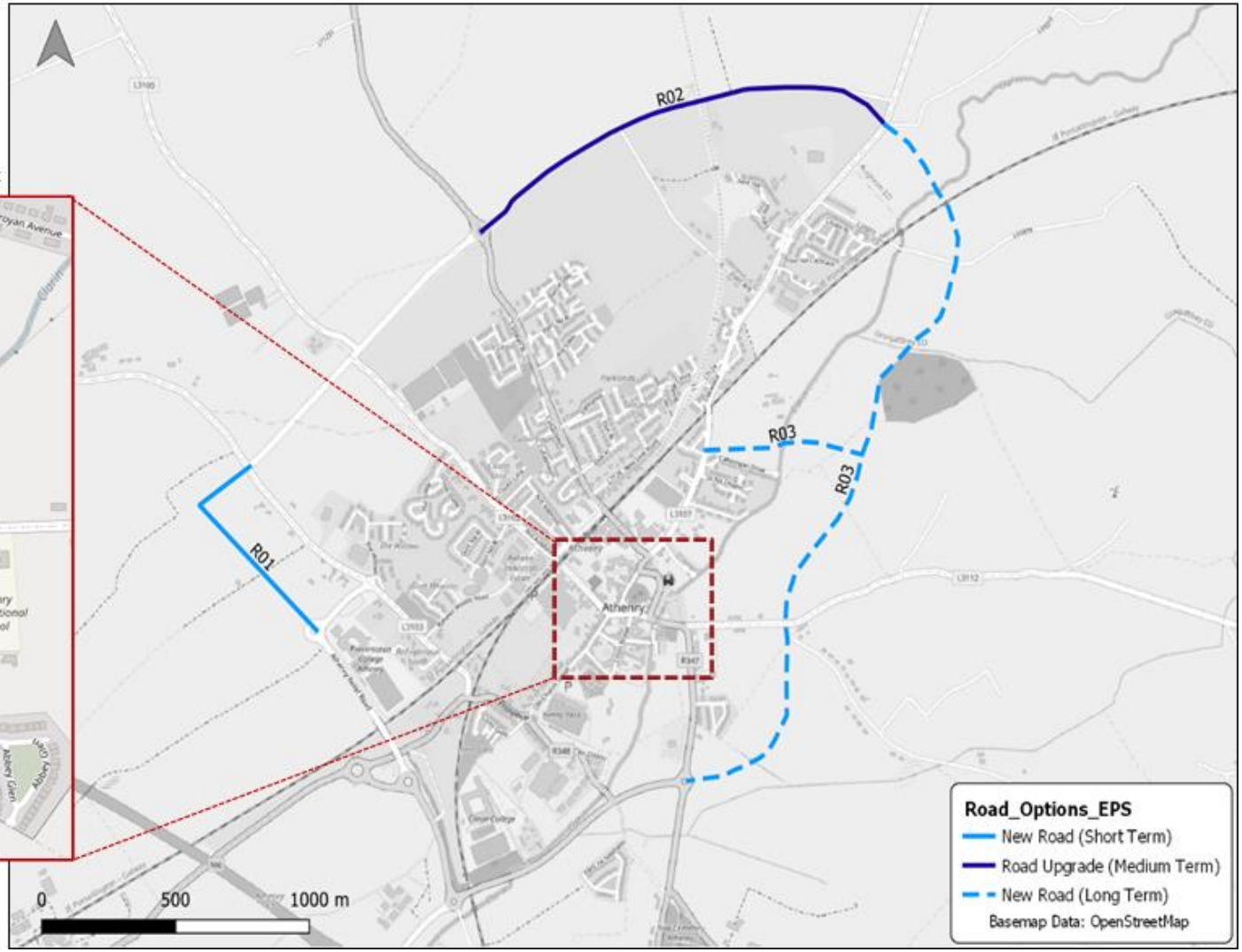


Figure 6-3: Emerging Preferred Strategy Road Infrastructure Measures

6.5 Supporting Measures

Option Ref.	Location	Description
P01	Athenry Shopping Centre	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P02	Backlawn Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P03	Rail Station Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P04	North Gate Street Car Park	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P05	Just east of Boys National School	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P06	GRETB	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P07	Londis	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
P08	Senshin Sports Centre	Use of car park as Park & Stride location as per SRTS delivery plan
SM - O1	15/10 Minute Town Principles	15/10 Minute Town Principles - embed within Athenry land use planning decisions and development of transport network and transport investment decisions. Under the RSES, the Southern Regional Assembly have developed a framework and methodology to be used by local authorities to integrate the '10 Minute Town Concept' into future Local Development Plans. This approach was developed following assessment of 3 key towns (Carlow, Ennis and Tralee) and aims to support increase in sustainable transport and reduce carbon emissions.
SM - O2	Slow Zones	Slow Zones – introduction of 30kph on town centre streets and on residential streets in the Study Area, supported by traffic calming measures and signage to encourage driver compliance.
SM - O3	Workplace Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) & Area MMPs	Workplace Mobility Management Plans (MMPs) & Area MMPs – support major employers & business parks/industrial estates with the implementation of MMPs in conjunction with the NTA Smarter Workplaces Team.
SM - O4	Residential Mobility Management Plans (RMMPs)	Residential Mobility Management Plans (RMMPs) - introduce requirement for RMMPs for all new residential developments over certain size. RMMPs manage transport demand at source and combine hard measures (e.g., access to a car club, pool bikes) and soft measures (e.g., Travel Welcome Packs, PT taster tickets).
SM - C1	Cycle Parking Strategy	Including on-street short-stay parking locations & volume (consistent with development standards); provision of parking for cargo bikes & adapted bikes, etc; longer stay bike parking / mobility hubs (e.g., at rail station, residential areas); eBike public parking Strategy; eScooter public parking strategy
SM - C2	End of trip facilities	Showers, changing rooms, lockers, etc. at major employment/leisure destinations
SM - C3	Public Bike Repair Stands	Deliver at key locations, e.g., at Rail Station, large schools
SM - C4	Cycle Skills Training - children and adults	Deliver at schools, workplaces and via community events
SM - C5	Cycle Maintenance Training & Bike Maintenance Checks	Deliver at schools, workplaces and via community events
SM - C6	Behavioural change campaigns to tackle speeds, inconsiderate parking & engine idling near schools	Behavioural change campaigns to tackle speeds, inconsiderate parking & engine idling near schools
SM - S1	Education Mobility Management Plans (MMPs)	Provide Council resource for Education MMP support (in partnership with An Taisce Green Schools/SRTS) for large schools in Athenry
SM - S2	Bike and scooter parking at schools	Enhancement of existing facilities

Option Ref.	Location	Description
SM – S3	School based Active Travel initiatives & events	e.g., Bike Week, Scoot to School), challenges, curriculum activities – link to Green Schools
SM – S4	Walking Bus & Cycling Bus support for local schools	Council support for cycle and walking buses to schools
DM - P1	Public Parking Controls – refresh of town centre Parking Controls and Pricing Strategy to strengthen parking as a Traffic Demand Management Measure	Including: Review parking duration to reach suitable balance between long and short-term parking, with duration limits well signed and enforced; Proactive enforcement to ensure short stay parking not used for long-stay parking e.g., on main centre streets; Proactive enforcement to reduce incidents of inconsiderate parking (e.g., on pavements & cycle lanes) to safeguard road space for vulnerable and active travel users;
DM - P2	EV Parking Strategy	At new developments, in public car parks, on-street (for rapid charging and those without access to private driveways), taxi ranks, mix of rapid and slow charging, distinguish between O&D charging needs. Expanding on existing provision as identified in the baseline report, typically An Bord Pleanála mandates 10% of parking spaces be EV charging spaces
DM - P3	EV Parking Pricing Strategies	Integration over time with Public Parking Pricing policies, balanced to encourage take up of EVs without encouraging unnecessary car trips by providing free parking for EVs.
DM - P4	Car Clubs	Car Club provision in town centre and at key residential and mixed use developments (currently no providers) – promotes concept of shared mobility, reducing need for individual car ownership & storage. Reliant on commercial operators to deliver, who are impacted by market conditions/demand.
DM - P5	Parking for new developments	Reduced Residential Parking & Workplace Parking standards for new developments in appropriate locations (e.g., in areas well served by sustainable transport options); Require EV spaces within new residential, workplace and mixed use developments; Require Car Club spaces within new residential, workplace and mixed use developments
DM - TM1	HGV Management Strategy for Town Centre	HGV Management Strategy for Town Centre including HGV timed restrictions; 5-axle (or HGV weight) restrictions in town centre zone – permits required 0700-1900hrs

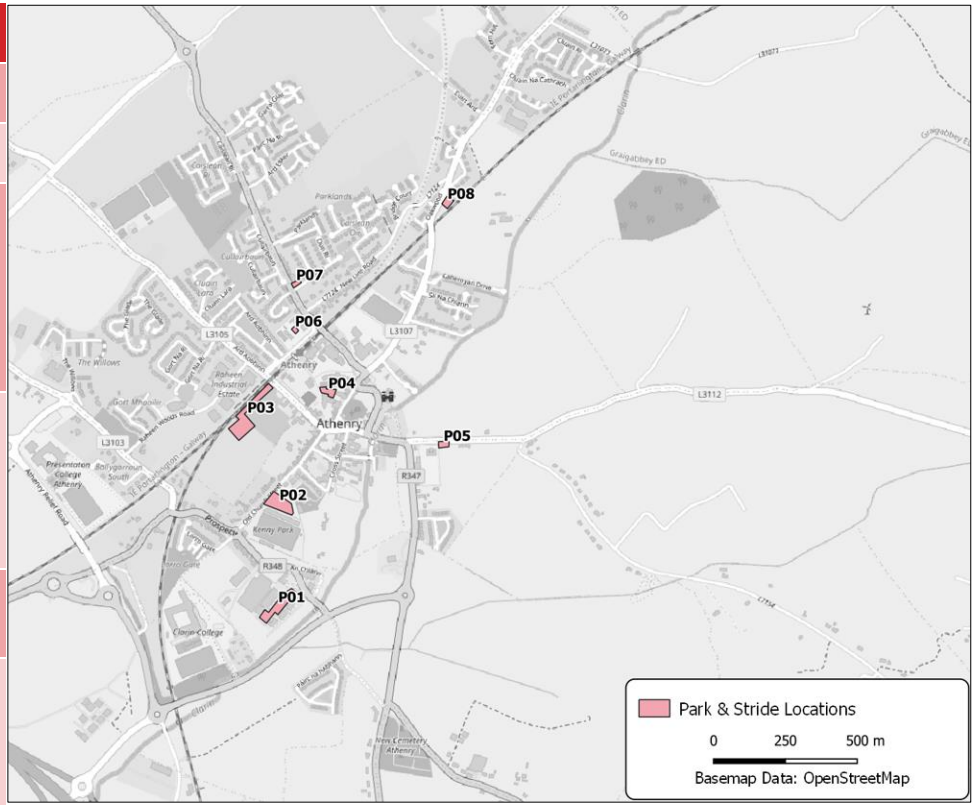


Figure 6-4: Proposed Park & Stride Locations

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Africa:
Abidjan, Douala, Johannesburg, Kinshasa, Libreville, Nairobi

Latin America:
Lima, Mexico, Rio de Janeiro, Santiago, São Paulo

North America:
Little Falls, Los Angeles, Montreal, New-York, Philadelphia, Washington

Appendix D
ATHENRY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – ATOS RESULTS

Comhairle Chontae na Gaillimhe
Galway County Council

NTA
Údarás Náisiúnta Iom
National Transport Auth

SYSTRA

ATHENRY LOCAL AREA PLAN 2023-2029ATHENRY DRAFT LOCAL TRANSPORT PLAN – ATOS RESULTS

Athenry Draft Local Transport Plan – ATOS Results

IDENTIFICATION TABLE	
Client/Project owner	Galway County Council
Project	Athenry Local Area Plan 2023-2029
Study	Athenry Draft Local Transport Plan – ATOS Results
Date	22/05/2023
Reference number	300876
Number of pages	15

APPROVAL					
Version	**Name**		**Position**	**Date**	**Modifications**
1	Authors	Ronan Fallon & Diarmuid Bailey	Consultant & Associate	10/05/2023	
	Checked by	Diarmuid Bailey	Associate Director	17/05/2023	
	Approved by	Andrew Archer	Director	22/05/2023	
2	Author			DD/MM/YY	
	Checked by			DD/MM/YY	
	Approved by			DD/MM/YY	

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1. INTRODUCTION

Access to Opportunities and Services (ATOS) is a measure of how easy it is to access key services and employment by walking and cycling. In developing the ATOS tool, the National Transport Authority (NTA) have followed a methodology established by Transport for London and adapted it to make it more suitable for use outside of large metropolitan areas.

It should be noted again that the score is calculated based on how travel times to the nearest relevant destinations (for the specific type of service) compared to the average travel time across all locations in the study area. The score is comparative, measuring where accessibility is higher and lower than the mean in the study area, rather than an objective score of the levels of accessibility.

See Chapter 5 of Appendix B: Baseline Assessment Report for a detailed description of the ATOS tool.

The ATOS results in the following sections present the change in accessibility to a variety of services within the study area with the introduction of new links under the Emerging Preferred Strategy. This appendix should be read in conjunction with the draft Athenry Local Transport Plan (LTP) and includes more detailed information on the full set of measures forming the Emerging Preferred Strategy for the Athenry LTP (Chapter 6).

2. PRIMARY SCHOOL CYCLE

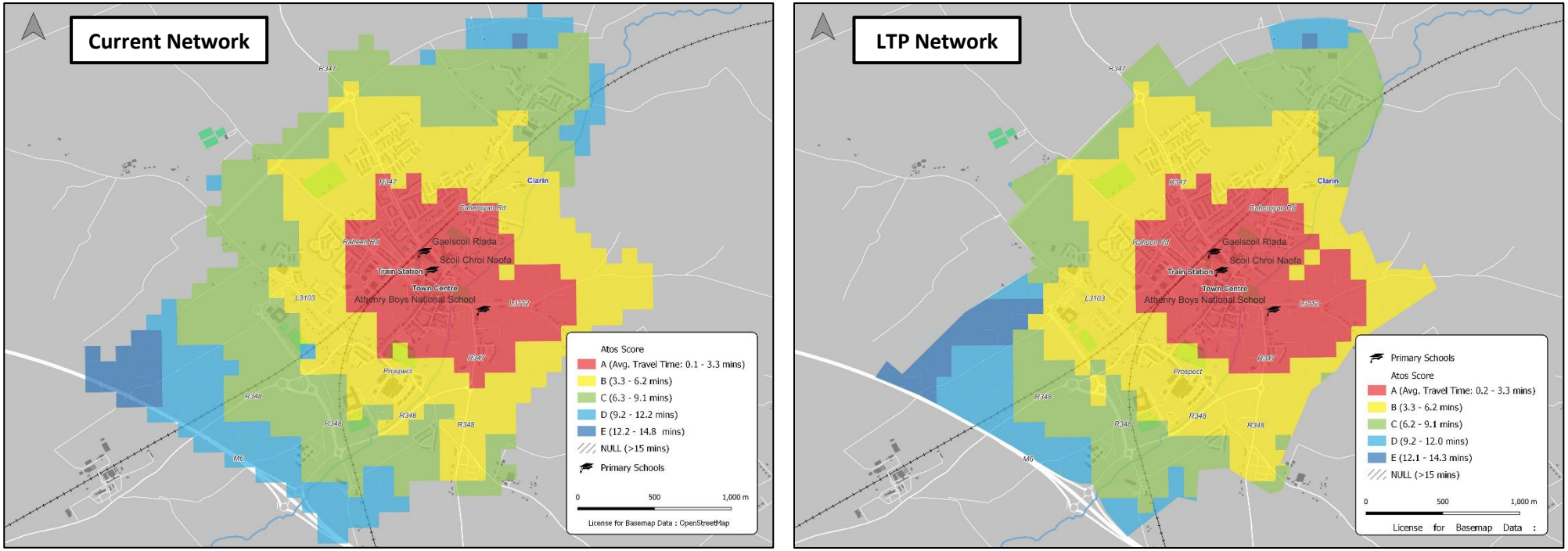

Figure 2-1: ATOS Cycle Access to Primary Schools Results (existing vs LTP network)

3. POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL WALK

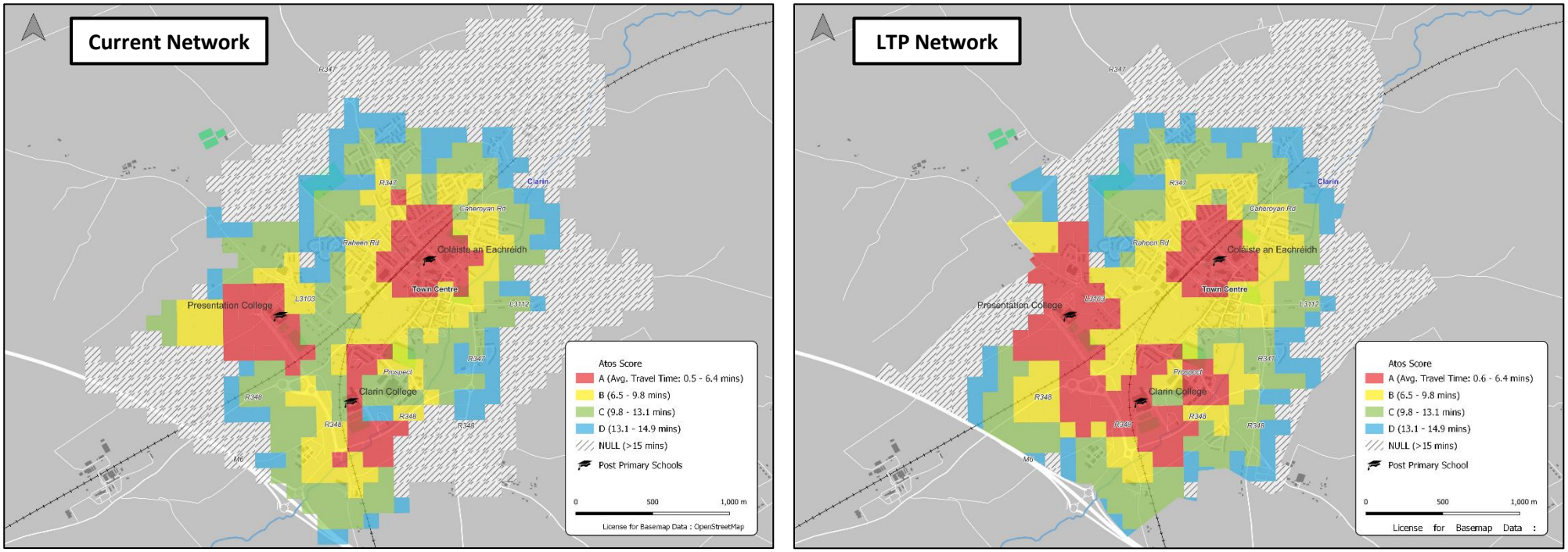

Figure 3-1: ATOS Walk Access to Post-Primary Schools Results (existing vs LTP network)

4. POST-PRIMARY SCHOOL CYCLE

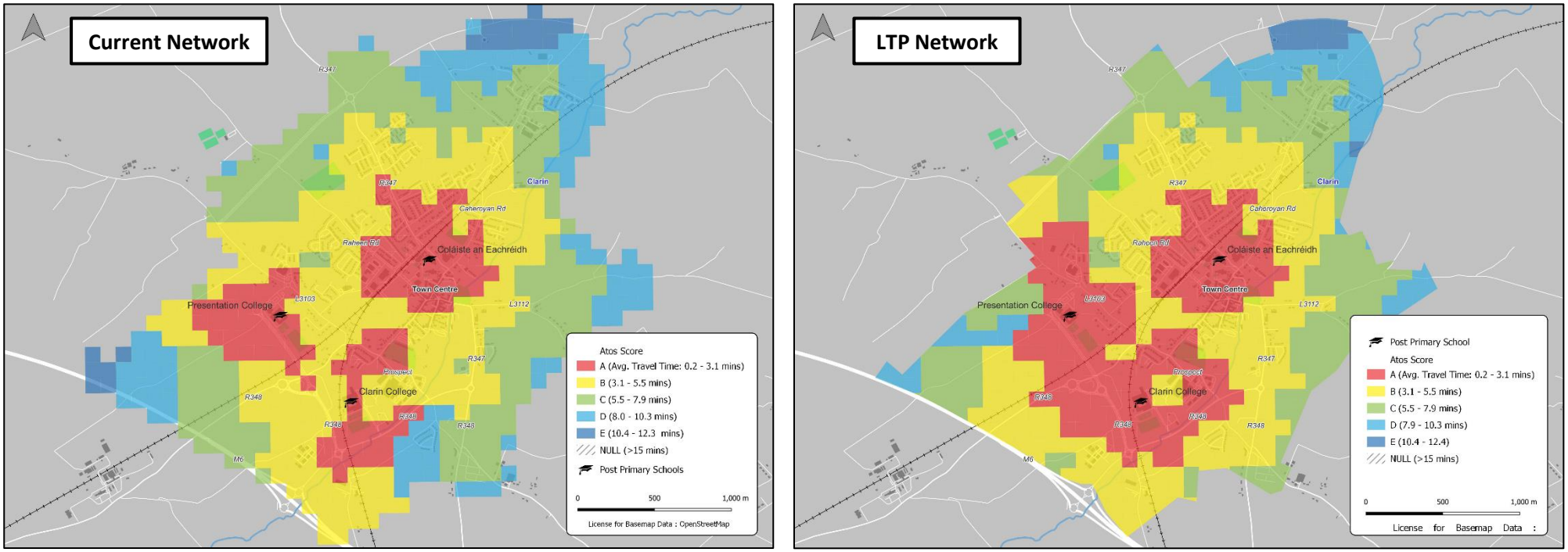

Figure 4-1: ATOS Walk Access to Post-Primary Schools Results (existing vs LTP network)

5. SUPERMARKET WALK

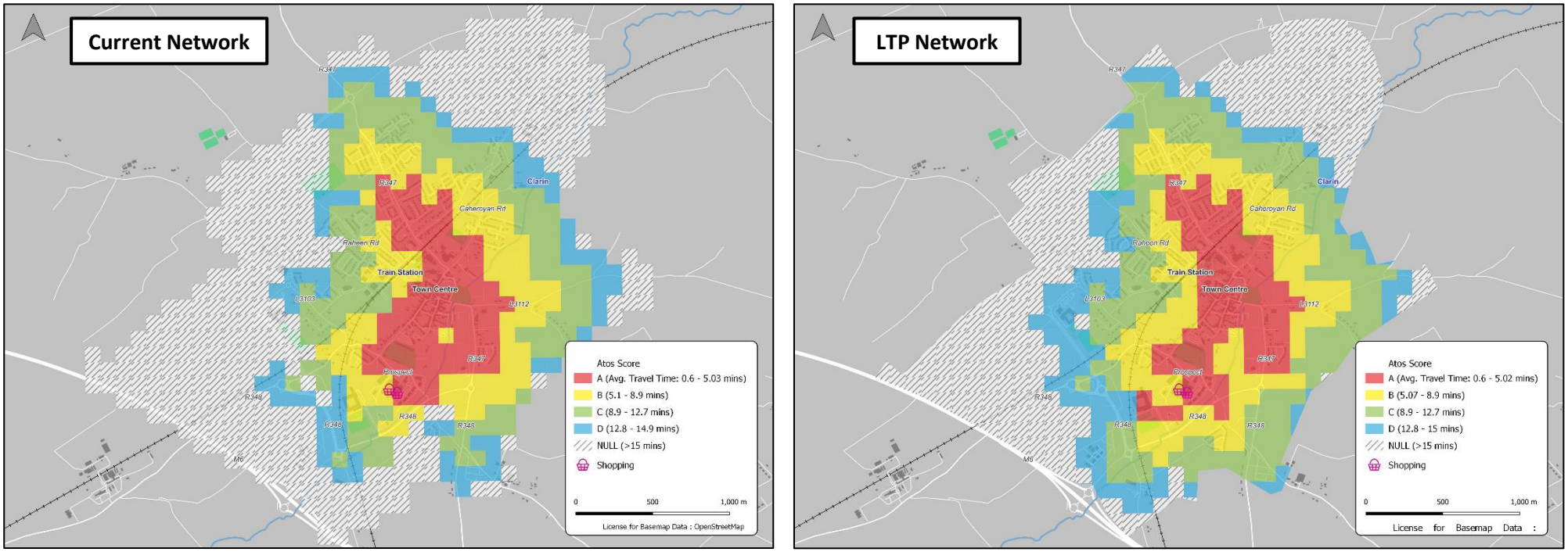

Figure 5-1: ATOS Walk Access to Supermarkets Results (existing vs LTP network)

6. SUPERMARKET CYCLE

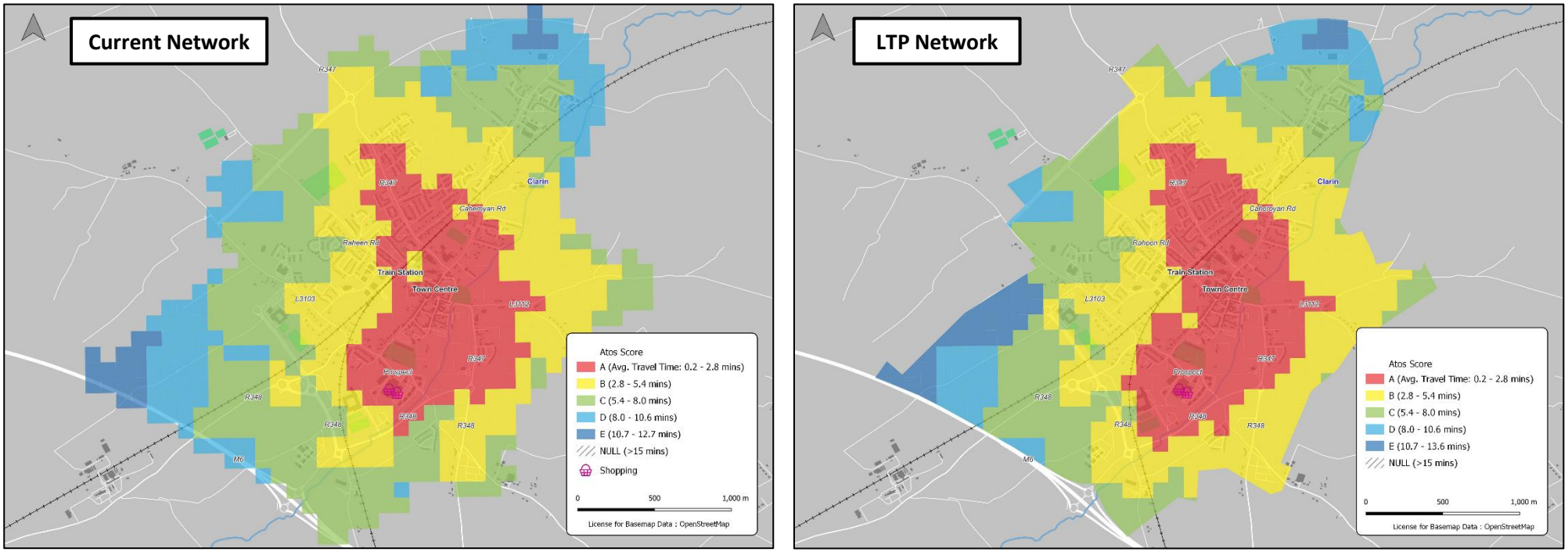

Figure 6-1: ATOS Cycle Access to Supermarkets Results (existing vs LTP network)

7. OPEN SPACE WALK

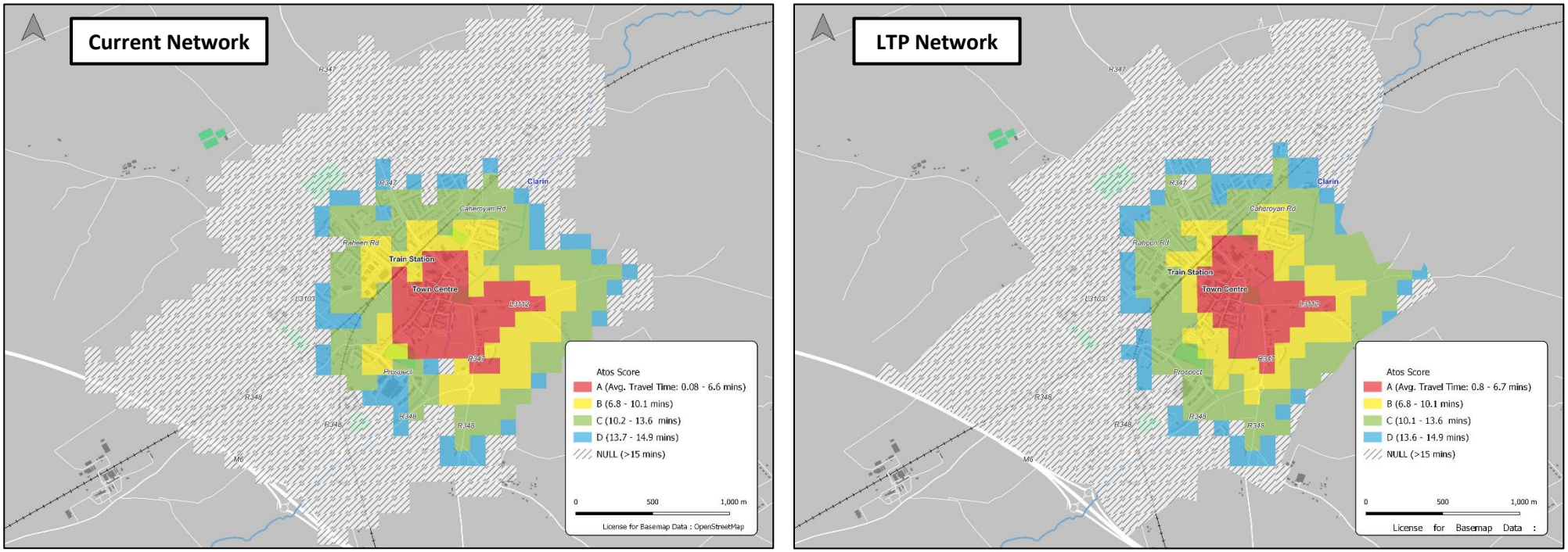

Figure 7-1: ATOS Walk Access to Open Space Results (existing vs LTP network)

8. OPEN SPACE CYCLE

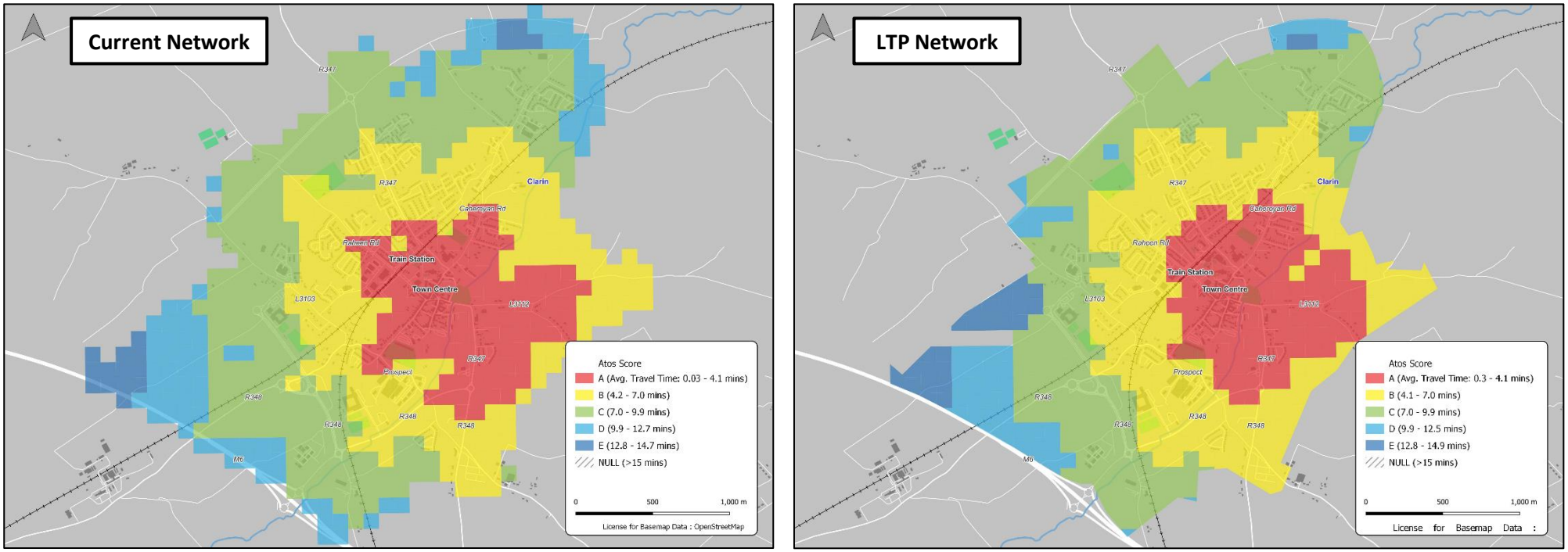

Figure 8-1: ATOS Walk Access to Open Space Results (existing vs LTP network)

9. GP WALK

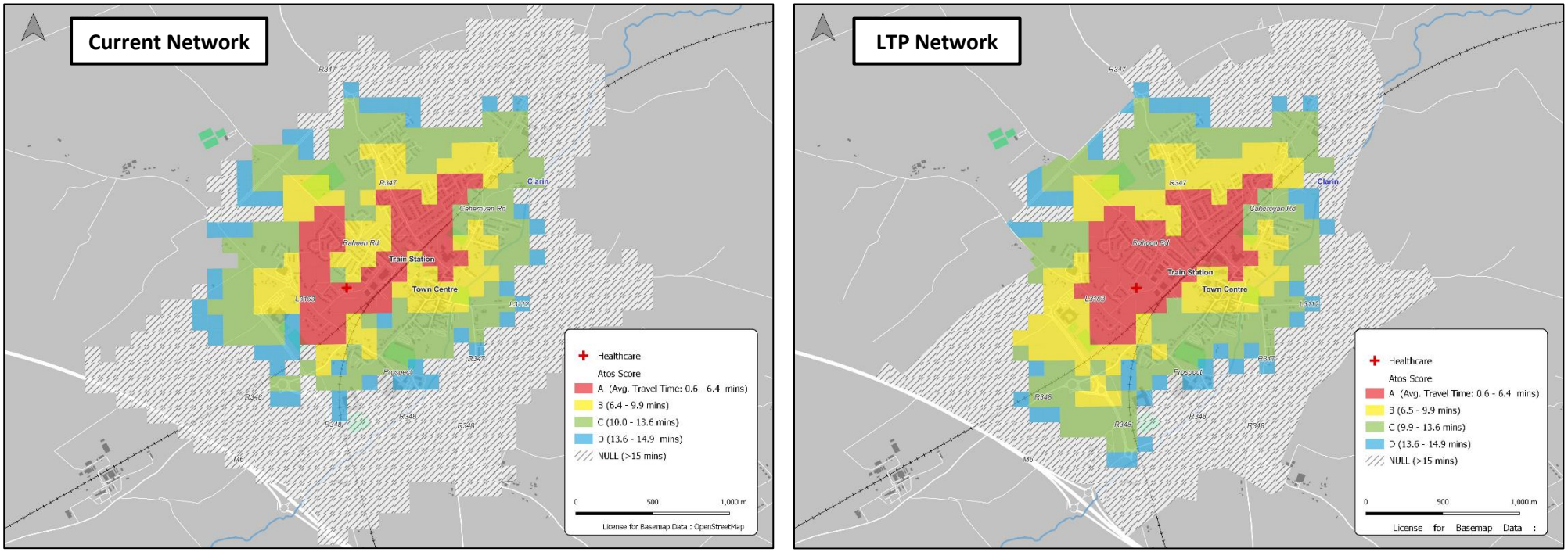

Figure 9-1: ATOS Walk Access to GPs Results (existing vs LTP network)

10. GP CYCLE

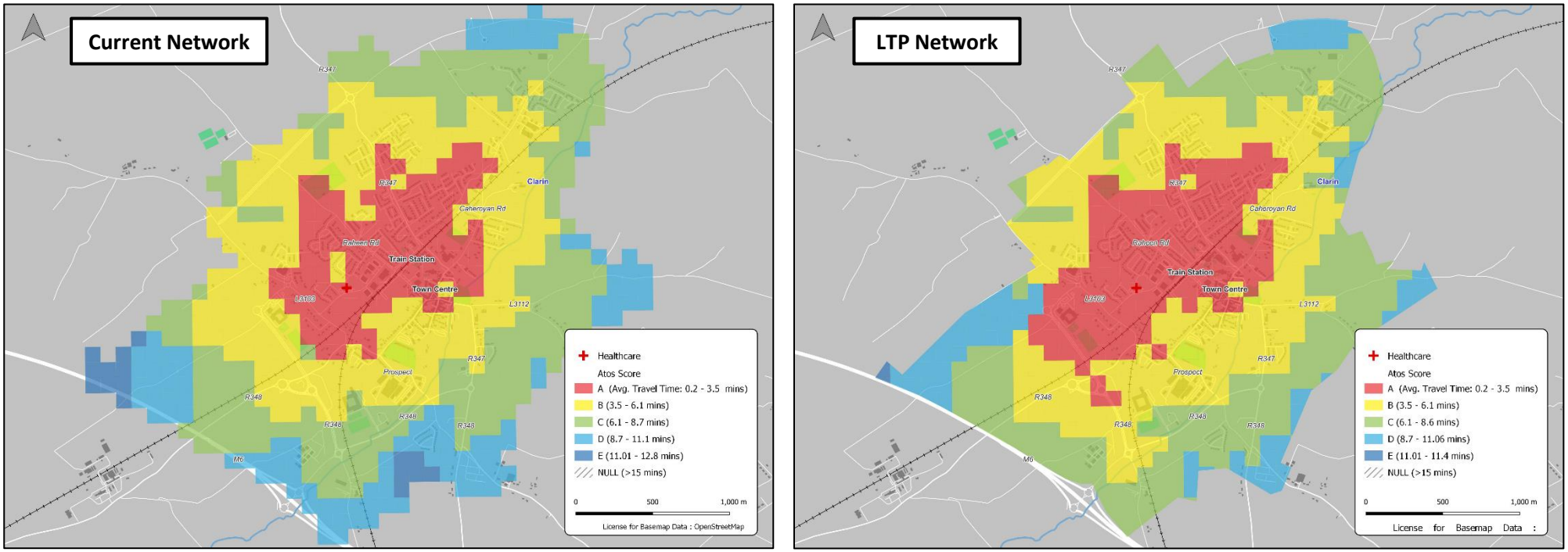

Figure 10-1: ATOS Cycle Access to GPs Results (existing vs LTP network)

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