

Navan Cycle Network


(Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme)

Part 8 Report

December 2018

Quality information

Prepared by



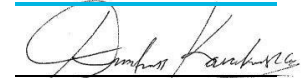
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1. Introduction

Meath County Council have commissioned AECOM to undertake a review of the route from Athlumney to the Trim Road in Navan with the aim of providing new safe and attractive infrastructure to encourage an increase in walking and cycling for education, work and for recreation trips. The proposed scheme being brought forward for Part 8 will help deliver the following objectives:

- Improve local movement capabilities including access to Navan Town Centre from residential areas south and east of Navan for cyclists and pedestrians.
- Improve cycle safety.
- Create a sustainable mode of access to the many primary and secondary schools in the area.
- Provide consistent and coherent cycle facilities into Navan Town Centre.
- Improve pavement quality and width increasing comfort for cyclists.
- Provide safe and convenient junction layouts for pedestrians and cyclists.
- Provide additional recreational links by linking the local communities to future Greenway routes for Navan and the existing walking routes at the Ramparts.

The proposed scheme will also link in with a number of existing and proposed transport infrastructure schemes in the Navan area, including the proposed Navan 2030 public realm improvements within Navan Town Centre and the new pedestrian/cyclist bridge on the Kentstown Road (R153).

The scheme route, presented in Figure 1.1 below, extends from Trim Road to Convent Road via Railway Street, Circular Road, Kells Road (R147) and Summerville (Convent Road).

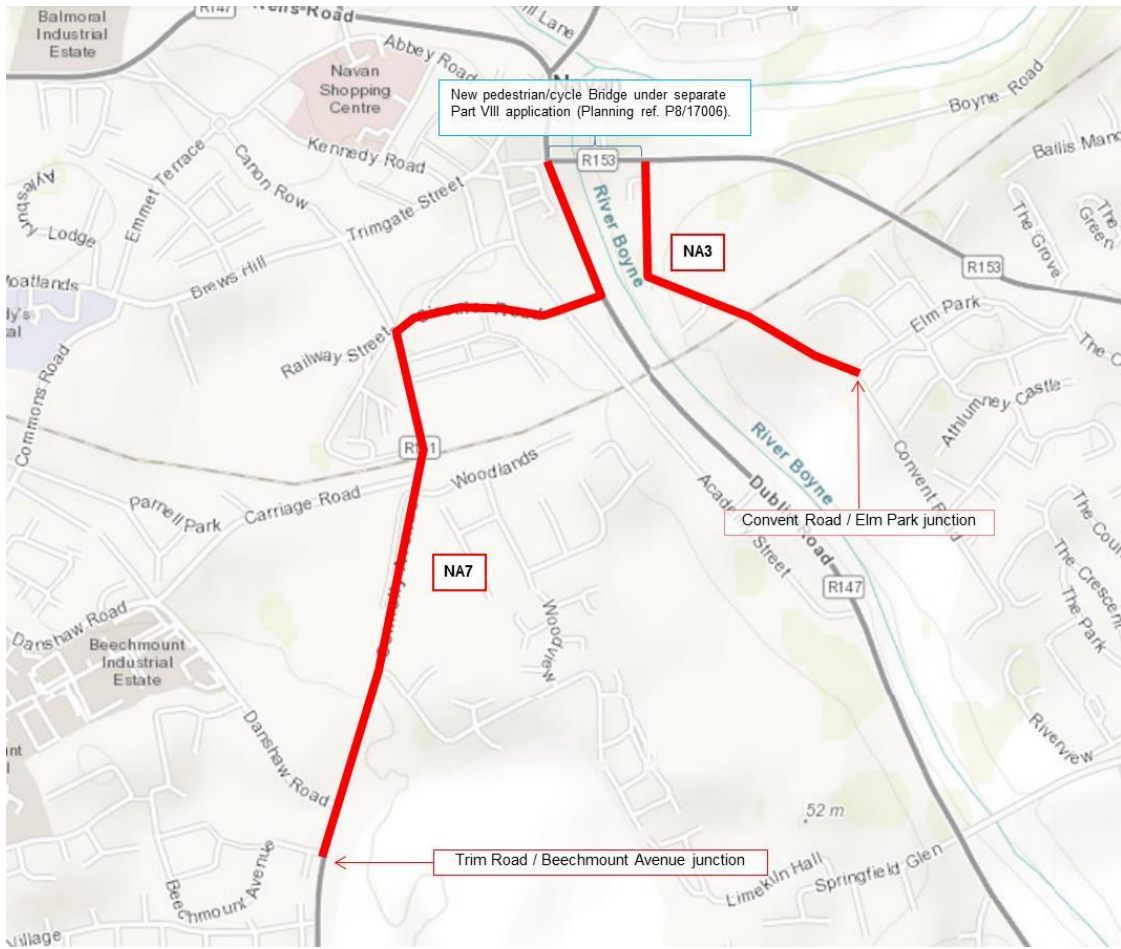


Figure 1.1: Scheme route

The proposed cycle scheme is based on the National Transport Authority's published Greater Dublin Area Network Plan, which includes a network of cycle routes for Navan. As illustrated in Figure 1.2, the scheme route would overlap with the two National Transport Authority (NTA) GDA Primary cycle routes, NA3 and NA7.

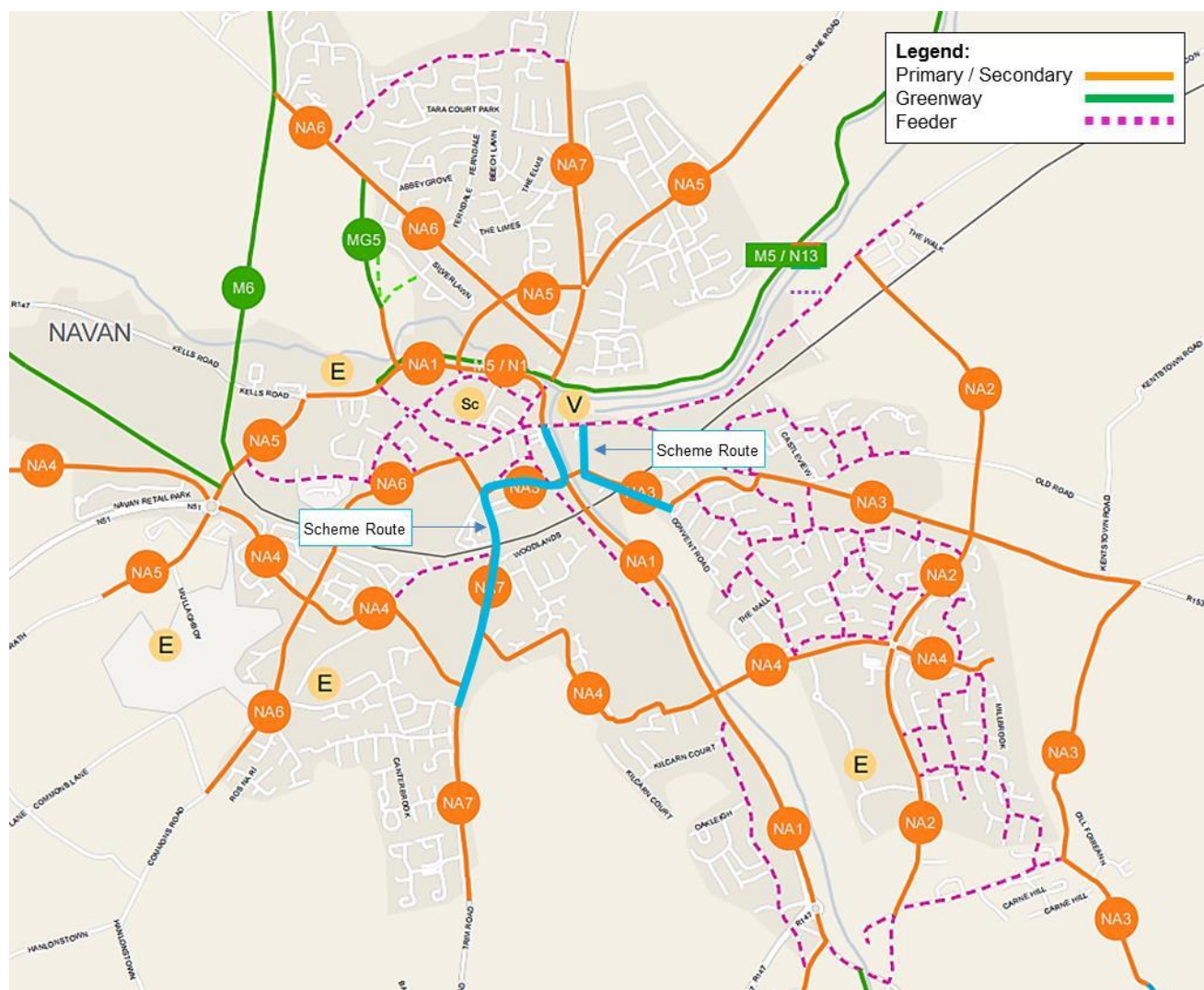


Figure 1.2: GDA Cycle Network Map of Navan

1.1 Policy Context

Planning Context

The delivery of this cycle route supports a number of national, regional and local planning and policy documents, including the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, and Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future. Its development will provide a cycle route as set out in the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan, and will fulfil objectives and actions in the Navan Transport Plan 2014-2019.

The Navan Transport Plan 2014-2019 sets out a vision for transport in the future to "provide a safe and sustainable transport network within Navan Town & Environs". The plan sets out a number of high level objectives and actions in order to provide a safe and sustainable transport network. The provision of the GDA cycle network routes will fulfil the objectives of these plans, with an enhanced sustainable transport network, while delivering some of the Transport Plan actions.

Navan Town Development Plan

The proposed development supports the following policies and objectives of the Navan Town Development Plan:

- To prepare an integrated pedestrian and cycle path network for Navan, inclusive of additional bridging points over the Boyne & Blackwater Rivers, and to implement the emerging network, subject to the availability of finances, resources and physical constraints.
- To promote and facilitate the development of cycling and walking facilities in the town.

- To encourage the successful incorporation of safe and efficient cycleways, accessible footpaths and pedestrian routes into the design scheme for town centres/neighbourhood centres, residential, educational, employment, recreational developments and other uses.
- To provide cycleways, where appropriate, as part of all road improvement/redesign schemes.
- To ensure, where possible, that cycleways and footpaths are effectively separated from major vehicular carriageways.
- To promote the policies set out in the National Cycle Policy Framework 2009- 2020.

Navan 2030 Plan

On 3rd May 2017 Meath County Council launched detailed plans to revitalise and rejuvenate Navan Town Centre. The plans lay out improvements and enhancements to the appearance of the town and its public areas and improved access and movement in and out of the town centre. Some of the key elements of the Plan include;

- Visual enhancements to the streetscape;
- Upgrading streets, laneways and public spaces in the historic and modern areas of the town centre, with high quality pedestrian facilities and connectivity throughout;
- Greater accessibility for pedestrians, including people with disabilities, cyclists, public transport, cars and other vehicles;
- Maximised connectivity around the town centre for pedestrians;
- Safer, multi-functional, and traffic calmed streets, that balance movement and 'place';
- Establishing and promoting strong pedestrian connections between the historic and modern areas and the retail/commercial quarter and the cultural quarter of Navan; and
- Pedestrian space increased and enhanced throughout.

Navan Transport Plan 2014-2019

The Navan Transport Plan sets out the transport strategy for the town to cover the period 2014 to 2019. The vision for this strategy is to "provide a safe and sustainable transport network within Navan Town & Environs". This means that it is an objective of this strategy to provide safe and secure facilities for a transport network that is both environmentally and financially sustainable.

The following aims and objectives are represented in the Navan Transport Plan. These objectives are specifically aimed towards increasing pedestrian and cycle facilities and providing a safe environment in which to do so.

- To promote sustainable transport and make travel safer by ensuring that pedestrians and cyclists are afforded higher priority than motorised vehicles.
- To develop integrated transport and to promote public transport, walking, cycling and other sustainable forms of transport.
- To develop an integrated pedestrian and cycle path network for Navan.
- Make the radial routes leading to the town centre cycle friendly.
- Provide missing links in the cycle and pedestrian networks, which includes the forging of linkages between cul de sacs, new non-motorised bridges across the river and new routes through the green wedges.
- Provide Trim – Navan – Drogheda rural cycle route linking with the cycle friendly town of Navan, allowing Navan to develop as a tourist base for the wider Boyne Valley.

Land Use and Planning Survey

A land use and planning survey was undertaken along the route of the two proposed cycle schemes. The Meath County Council online planning database was reviewed to identify planning schemes that could impact on the proposed scheme. The main constraint identified from this planning search is the potential for route NA3 to connect into the riverside park.

During the concept stage the possibility of route NA3 connecting into the riverside park was examined. This option would have allowed the scheme to connect to the new pedestrian/cyclist bridge on the R153 and also to the Boyne Valley greenway. However there is an approved planning application for a mixed use development (NA 14/0618) that potentially blocks the access routes from the NA3 route to the riverside park.

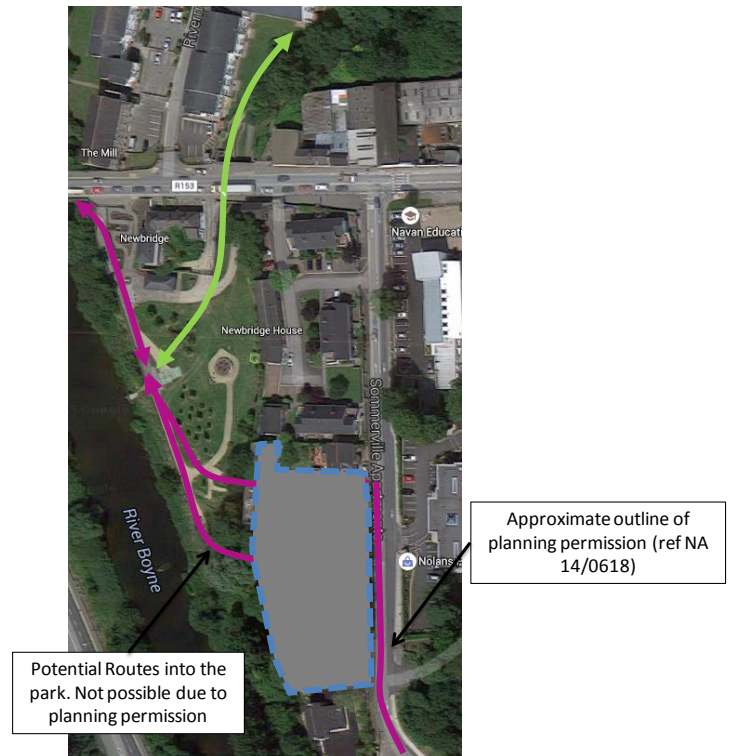


Figure 1.3: Scheme Constraints

2. Proposed Scheme

2.1 Proposed Scheme

The proposed route is approximately 2.9 km in length. The majority of the route is proposed within the curtilage of existing road ways and footpaths. From west to east, the route travels along Trim Road from the Beechmount Avenue junction to Convent Road, at the Elm Park Junction.

The route primarily consists of: 1.75m or 2.0m wide cycle lanes, either raised cycle tracks or on-road delineated cycle lanes (at parking, junctions and crossings etc.); shared space areas at a limited number of junctions; and a short section where bicycles and vehicular traffic share road space in a traffic calmed environment on Convent Road. In order to provide a high quality of service and enhanced cycling experience, the scheme has been designed, where possible, with vertical segregation from traffic by means of a raised kerb which is provided to separate traffic from the cycle facility.

The route itself (as shown in Figure 1.1) extends from the Beechmount Avenue junction on the Trim Road to Railway Street, connecting with the recently constructed roundabout at the Solstice and onto Circular Road, where it then connects to the Kells Road, follows the River Boyne northbound to the New Bridge and onto the new cycle and pedestrian facility (currently under construction) as far as Convent Road. From the Convent Road junction, the route continues south on Convent Road and over the railway bridge, past Athlumney Castle, and ends at the junction with Elm Park in Athlumney.

2.1.1 Trim Road

The Trim Road route option extends from the junction of Beechmount Avenue to the railway line across Railway Street. The improvements on Trim Road will involve the redistribution of road space and the provision of improved and widened pedestrian and cycle facilities. In addition, to facilitate road widening on Trim Road, land take will be required along the proposed route which will include the removal of overgrown hedges and grass verges.

The proposed upgrade facilities include the following;

- Upgraded 2.0m wide pedestrian footpaths;
- New 1.75m – 2.0m wide cycle lane / tracks;
- New Cycle Crossing at Beechmount;
- The upgrading of the Dan Shaw Road junction including cycle lanes and new Pedestrian Crossings;
- New controlled pedestrian crossing at St. Columbus Crescent (Beaufort College's Access);
- Upgraded controlled pedestrian crossing at Flowerfield National School;
- New controlled pedestrian crossing at the Trim Road / Carriage Road junction;
- New public lighting; and
- New trees to replace any trees removed for the upgraded scheme.

These proposals are shown on the following drawings;

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_201 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 1 of 7
- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_202 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 2 of 7

Figure 2.1 shows the proposed layout at St. Columbus Crescent (Beaufort College's Access).



Figure 2.1: Photomontage of Proposed Scheme on Trim Road

2.1.2 Railway Street

The Railway Street route option proposes to connect new cycling facilities on Trim Road, via Railway Street, to the recently constructed roundabout at the Solstice and onto Circular Road. The improvements on Railway Street will involve the redistribution of road space and also land take on the eastern side of the road from the roundabout to the railway bridge (approximately 200m in length). This will include the demolition of an extension to the old station house opposite Fulham's Pub.

The provision of improved and widened pedestrian and cycle facilities will include the following;

- Upgraded 2.0m wide pedestrian footpaths;
- New northbound 2.0m wide cycle lane with 0.75m wide buffer to adjacent parking;
- New southbound 2.0m wide cycle lane developed via land take to the east;
- Cycle connect to the recently constructed roundabout at the Solstice;
- New uncontrolled comfort crossing on Railway Street to the north of the Bus Station;
- New uncontrolled comfort crossings on four minor roads on the eastern side of the street;
- New public lighting; and
- New trees to replace any trees removed for the upgraded scheme.

These proposals are shown on:

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_203 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 3 of 7

Figure 2.2 shows the proposed layout on Railway Street.



Figure 2.2: Photomontage of Proposed Scheme on Railway Street

2.1.3 Circular Road

The Circular Road route option proposes to continue the proposed upgraded pedestrian and cycle facilities at the recently constructed roundabout at the Solstice and onto Circular Road. The improvements on Circular Road will involve the redistribution of road space and also land take on the southern side of the road from the Academy Car Sales to the Fair Green Junction (approximately 200m in length). The land take will be required from the existing green space to the south of the road. Any trees that are to be removed will be replaced.

The provision of improved and widened pedestrian and cycle facilities will include the following;

- Upgraded 2.0m wide pedestrian footpaths;
- New eastbound 2.5m wide cycle track;
- New westbound 2.0m wide cycle track;
- Cycle connection to the recently constructed roundabout at the Solstice;
- Upgrading Circular Road / Bridge Street to a signal controlled junction with pedestrian/cycle crossings on all arms;
- Upgrading Circular Road / Kells Road junction with pedestrian/cycle crossings;
- New public lighting; and
- New trees to replace any trees removed for the upgraded scheme.

These proposals are shown on:

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_204 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 4 of 7
- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_205 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 5 of 7

2.1.4 Kells Road

The improvements on Kells Road will involve the redistribution of road space, reducing the existing road carriageway lanes from 3.5m to 3.0m each, and also repositioning the existing footpath railings to the edge of the gabion baskets along the Kells Road, thus creating additional space for pedestrians. With these changes to the road layout it is possible to provide a 3.0m two-way cycle track on the eastern side of the road carriageway.

There is a pinch point on the road network on the approach to the Kentstown Bridge. In order to continue the 3.0m wide two-way cycle track, it is proposed to provide a cantilevered boardwalk for 27m on the approach to the bridge. The boardwalk section will extend from the retaining wall to support the new footway and will be constructed by piles and supports/restraints constructed on public road side of the retaining wall. The cantilevered boardwalk will join with the recently constructed Pedestrian / Cycle Bridge on Kentstown Road. Planning for the cantilevered pedestrian/cycle bridge has been approved under a separate Part VIII application (Planning Reference: P8/17006).

The provision of improved and widened pedestrian and cycle facilities will include the following;

- Upgraded 2.0m wide pedestrian footpaths;
- New two-way 3.0m wide cycle track on the eastern side of the road carriageway;
- Pedestrian and cycle connection to the recently constructed Pedestrian / Cycle Bridge on Kentstown Road;
- Upgrading Kells Road / Kentstown Road Junction with pedestrian/cycle crossings; and
- New public lighting.

These proposals are shown on

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_206 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 6 of 7

2.1.5 Convent Road

Turning off the Kentstown Road, onto Convent Road, there will be a short section where cyclists and vehicular traffic share road space in a traffic calmed environment. This will be achieved by reducing the road carriageway width to 5.5m and maximising the width of the pedestrian footpaths. These proposals are shown on the following drawing;

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_206 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 6 of 7

South of the Loreto secondary school (St. Michaels) entrance, cycle lanes/tracks will be provided for both north and southbound cyclists. A two-way road will be provided to allow access to and from the Riverside residential estate. South of Riverside residential estate, Convent Road continues as southbound only for motorists, south of the railway bridge

A northbound cycle track is proposed along the entire length of the route and a southbound cycle track from the Convent Road junction of St. Michaels to the railway bridge crossing. South of the railway bridge crossing, cyclists would share the one-way (southbound) lane with traffic. To facilitate these additional cycle facilities land take is required along St. Michaels Loreto, along the Athlumney residential estate and the former Mercy Convent.

Figure 2.3 shows the proposed layout on Convent Road.



Figure 2.3: Photomontage of Proposed Scheme on Convent Road at the Riverside Estate

South of the St. Michaels to the junction with Elm Park, the provision of improved and widened pedestrian and cycle facilities will include the following;

- Upgraded 2.0-3.0m wide pedestrian footpath on the eastern side of Convent Road;
- A 2.0m wide northbound cycle lane / track is proposed along the entire length;
- A 2.0m wide southbound cycle track from the St. Michaels access to the railway bridge crossing to facilitate cyclists travelling uphill;
- A new landscaping scheme on Convent Road, adjacent to St. Michaels to mitigate the loss of trees due to the proposed scheme
- Expansion of the Navan Town CCTV Network; and
- New public lighting along Convent Road.

These proposals are shown on the following drawing;

- 60437741_SHT_30_P8_CT_206 – GDA Cycle Route Sheet 7 of 7

Figure 2.4 shows the proposed layout on Convent Road.



Figure 2.4: Photomontage of Proposed Scheme on Convent Road at Athlumney Castle

3. Impact of the Scheme

3.1 Ecological Constraints

Based on the current proposed route no significant ecological constraints have been identified at this stage.

3.2 AA Screening

The first stage of the Appropriate Assessment process, screening, has been completed in compliance with the relevant European Commission and national guidelines.

The evaluation undertaken has identified that there will be no impact on any Natura 2000 Site (i.e. the River Boyne and River Blackwater SAC and the River Boyne and River Blackwater SPA, either alone or in-combination with other plans or projects).

Therefore, as a result of the assessment carried out, it is considered that the conservation objectives for the Natura 2000 sites will not be compromised by the proposed development nor will the proposed scheme have any likely significant effect on any Natura 2000 site or the habitats or species for which they been designated.

As such it was concluded that the proposed scheme can be screened out at Stage 1 of the Appropriate Assessment process.

Further detail is set out in AECOM-ROD's AA Screening Report which accompanies this application.

3.3 Invasive Species

The Invasive Alien Plant Species (IAPS) Report was undertaken along the Navan GDA Cycle Routes in July 2018. The survey findings found no IAPS of concern i.e. listed under the Third Schedule of SI 447/2001 along the proposed cycle routes. Further detail is set out in AECOM-ROD's IAPS Survey Report which accompanies this application.

3.4 Ecology Assessment

ROD-AECOM has undertaken an ecological assessment to inform proposals for the cycle route in Navan.

The ecological study consisted of desk-based research and field surveys. The desk study was carried out to collate information on the ecology of the route that will potentially be impacted by the Project. The study area in this case included a 1 km buffer around the proposed route and the sub-basins of the River Boyne and River Blackwater taken from New Bridge on the Kentstown Road, Navan.

The conclusion of the Ecology Assessment noted that the proposed cantilevered boardwalk and footpath along the Kells Road was considered the most ecologically sensitive section of the route. The field surveys did not identify any protected habitats or species, or, invasive species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011-2015. The habitats that will be directly impacted by the route, namely existing hard standing, driveways, ornamental trees and managed grass verges are not considered to be of ecological importance.

It is recommended in the conclusion that "vegetation along the route supports nesting birds and therefore no vegetation should be removed during the nesting bird season (1st March- 31st August inclusive)".

3.5 Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report

ROD-AECOM has undertaken an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report to inform proposals for cycle routes in Navan. The purpose of the EIA Screening Report was to determine whether the preparation of EIA is required for the proposed Navan GDA Cycle Route.

The evaluation undertaken has identified that the Project does not meet the thresholds for which the preparation of an EIAR is a mandatory requirement. AECOM-ROD recommends that Meath County Council determine that the Project does not have the potential to have likely significant effects on the environment.

Further detail is set out in AECOM-ROD's EIA Screening Report which accompanies this application.

3.6 Arboricultural Constraints

The Navan Town Development Plan has identified a number of 'individual trees' and strand of trees to be protected along the scheme route.

Of particular note is the presence of the individual trees to be protected along sections of Convent Road. Therefore, an Arboricultural Assessment has been undertaken to assess the tree vegetation located along the boundary of 'St. Michael's Loreto Convent' with Convent Road, which accompanies this application.

The site area assessed as part of the Arboricultural Assessment is made up of a linear strip of land which runs along the inside of the boundary wall between the grounds of 'St. Michael's Loreto Convent' and Convent Road. This linear strip of ground runs eastwards, from near the entrance to the convent grounds, off this road to the 'Athlumney Bridge', and the trees in question are located either against this wall or slightly in from it.

It is proposed that 22 of the 28no. individually tagged trees included within this assessment area are to be removed to facilitate the proposed scheme. The Arboricultural Assessment notes that "the loss of the above tree vegetation on the treescape of the overall area is minor. Furthermore, it is noted that the "loss of these trees is to be mitigated against within the landscaping of these completed works with new tree, shrub and hedge planting that will complement the existing tree cover in this area and will help provide good quality and suitable long-term tree cover".

Measures to protect the remaining tree vegetation is set out in the Arboricultural Assessment. All recommendations in the Arboricultural Assessment will be incorporated into the scheme at detailed design stage.

3.7 Archaeological and Built Heritage Constraints

The Archaeological and Built Heritage constraints are set out in detail in IAC's Archaeological and Built Heritage Assessment which accompanies this application.

The report notes that a section of Convent Road will require widening to facilitate the works. A recommendation is made that "the three sections of stone walling that will require relocation along Convent Road should be re-erected in consultation with the Meath County Council Conservation / Heritage Officer and aim to replicate the character of the existing walls". Other measures recommended include but not limited to the the following;

- Both sides of the walls should be subject to a full written and measured photographic record prior to demolition, with vegetation removed in advance if required;
- Original walling material should be reused within the reconstructed walls, including the weathered facing of the existing walling;
- Sample panels may be required for agreement with Meath County Council, along with advice from a conservation specialist, in order to define the appropriate specification;
- It is recommended that muted colours are used to denote the difference between the proposed cycle way and the carriageway;
- It is recommended that a programme of test trenching be carried out within those areas that are accessible, in order to assess the archaeological potential of the proposed wall foundation trenches;
- It is also recommended that the demolition of the walls to be reconstructed is subject to archaeological monitoring;
- It is recommended that any excavation works required for services that are located within the above zones of notification are subject to archaeological monitoring. Where works are proposed within the zone of notification for Athlumney Castle, works will require ministerial consent, due to its designation as a National Monument; and
- It is recommended that all excavation works associated with the planting of new trees along Convent Road are subject to archaeological monitoring.

The report also notes that works along Railway Street may lead to the removal of the existing cast iron lamp stands, which are located on both sides of the street. In the report it is recommended that "all historic street lamp stands be retained as part of the proposed scheme. If this is not possible the items should be re-erected in close proximity to their original positions".

Apart from the recommendations on Convent Road and Railway Street, the report notes that “no direct, negative impacts are predicted upon the remaining architectural heritage resource”.

All recommendations in the Archaeological and Built Heritage Assessment will be incorporated into the scheme at detailed design stage.

3.8 Conservation Architect

A Conservation Architect was requested to inspect and to assess the cycle and pedestrian scheme proposals along Railway Street, Circular Road (R161), and Covent Road, that passes close to a number of historic buildings and sites.

An assessment of the impacts of the proposed route and suggestions on how these impacts could be further mitigated in the detailed design and construction have been provided in two memorandums issued by the Conservation Architect. These memorandums accompany this application.

Set out below is a summary of the proposed mitigation measures as suggested by the Conservation Architect for Railway Street and Circular Road:

- Repair the railings and gate piers along the council offices;
- The proposals along St. Finian’s Terrace should be carried out by a skilled mason, using lime mortar;
- The limestone cappings to the gate piers into the carpark should be retained and set back on the realigned wall;
- The tall limestone wall and capping should be rebuilt on a new alignment, using only the salvaged stone bedded and pointed using lime mortar;
- The low limestone wall at the green area to the south of the gate crossing should also be rebuilt using lime mortar;
- At the spa well at Circular Road, to draw attention to this feature, the new surface and guarding should carefully designed using steel grille decking and well-designed guarding to allow views of the well below; and
- The proposals should seek to minimise visual clutter in relation to signage and street furniture, and maintain the settings for the historic buildings through sensitive design.

Set out below is a summary of the proposed mitigation measures as suggested by the Conservation Architect for Convent Road:

- Recording both sides of walls using photogrammetry, and on plan prior to taking down;
- Ensuring that the operation to demolish and rebuild the walls occur together;
- Using masons skilled in the repair of historic masonry and the use of lime mortars, and overseen by a conservation specialist consultant;
- Ensure that the weathered faces of the stone are reset when rebuilding the wall, to retain the patina of age and a plumb wall surface;
- Along the former Mercy Convent site, consideration could be given to using a lime harling coat to complete the wall;
- Use a more subtle colour such as buff or a sandy grey to distinguish the cycle lane from the main carriageway;
- Upgrade existing interpretative signage and ensure that new lighting is carefully designed so as not to detract from the setting;
- Where feasible, overground services should be ducted underground to improve visual amenity in this historic setting. This should be undertaken under archaeological supervision; and
- Railings to be installed along both parapets of the Railway Bridge should be well-designed and of good quality.

All recommendations by the Conservation Architect will be incorporated into the scheme at detailed design stage.

3.9 Transport Impact

The proposed scheme will have significant benefits for cyclists and pedestrians along this important route in Navan.

The impact of the proposed scheme on the key junctions along the route has been assessed and the key junctions will continue to operate with satisfactory capacity and level of service.

It is not proposed to reduce the capacity of the signal controlled junctions along the route below their operational capacity. The capacity at the Trim Road / Dan Shaw Road Junction, R147 Kells Road / Circular Road Junction and the R147 Kells Road / Kentstown Road Junction will operate above operational capacity.

Further detail is set out in AECOM-ROD's Transport Assessment Report which accompanies this application.

3.10 Adjoining Schemes

There are two adjoining schemes that will have an impact on the route options for this scheme, these are:

- Navan 2030 Plan; and
- Pedestrian / Cyclists Bridge at New Bridge, Athlumney Road (R153).

The Consultants for these schemes have been consulted with during the development of the options.

Part VIII approval was granted for the provision of a new cantilevered pedestrian and cycle bridge immediately to the south of, and contiguous with, the existing New Bridge. The works shall also include: replacement of footpaths; provision of shared footpath/cycleway; lighting and boundary wall adjustments on the R153 Athlumney Road; and provision of pedestrian crossings and pavement adjustments at the junction of the R147, and ancillary works.

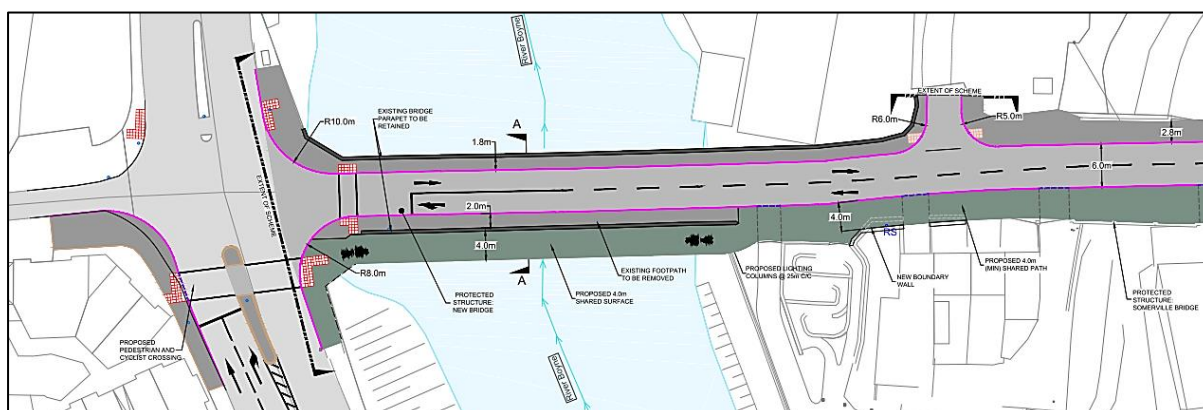


Figure 3.1: Pedestrian / Cyclists Bridge at New Bridge, Kentstown Road (R153).

4. Alternatives Considered

4.1 Introduction

A number of different options were examined to meet the objectives of the scheme. The corridor was split up into a number of sections, as follows:

- Trim Road
- Railway Street
- Circular Road
- R147 Kells Road
- Summerville (Convent Road)
- Convent Road

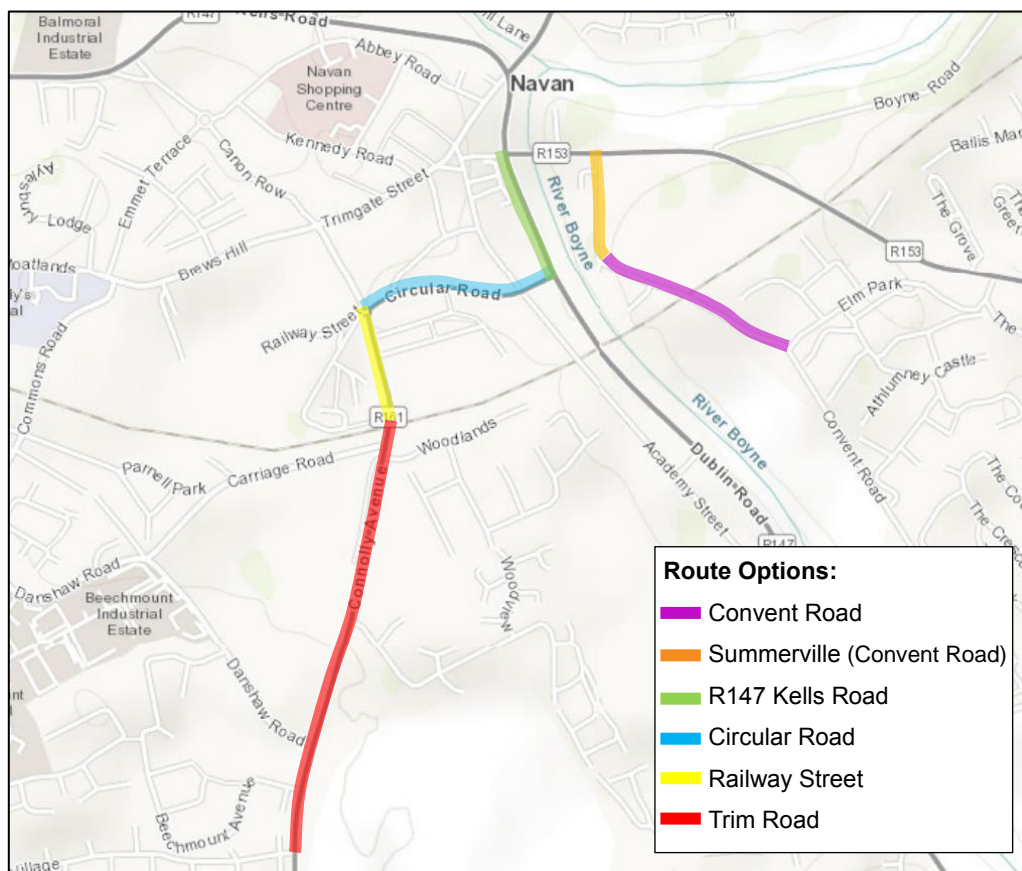


Figure 4.1: Route options along scheme route

The options considered for each section are outlined in the AECOM Navan GDA Cycle Network Plan – Feasibility and Options Assessment Report.

4.2 Convent Road

As part of the National Transport Authority's (NTA) Cycle Network Plan, Convent Road in Navan has been identified as a Primary / Secondary route for cycling and pedestrian improvements. This particular route is referred to as NA3, as illustrated on Figure 4.2.



Figure 4.2: Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan - Route NA3 Navan

As part of the NTA's Cycle Network Plan, a river crossing at the junction of the R147 / Circular Rd was identified as a possible route to Convent Road, via lands adjacent to Somerville Apartments.

However at early design stage, this option was ruled out on a number of grounds including, but not exclusive to, the following:

1. The span of bridge at this location on the River Boyne would have required a significant scale works within the River Boyne SAC and SPA;
2. The level difference between the ground levels on the R147 and the Convent Road would have resulted in non-compliant excessive gradients or necessitated a significant number of ramps resulting in a significant scale of works within the River Boyne SAC and SPA;
3. The lands were / are in private ownership, with previous planning applications for residential development;
4. This option would still have required similar work, now being proposed, on Convent Road, to cross the River Boyne to connect with Elm Park in Athlumney.

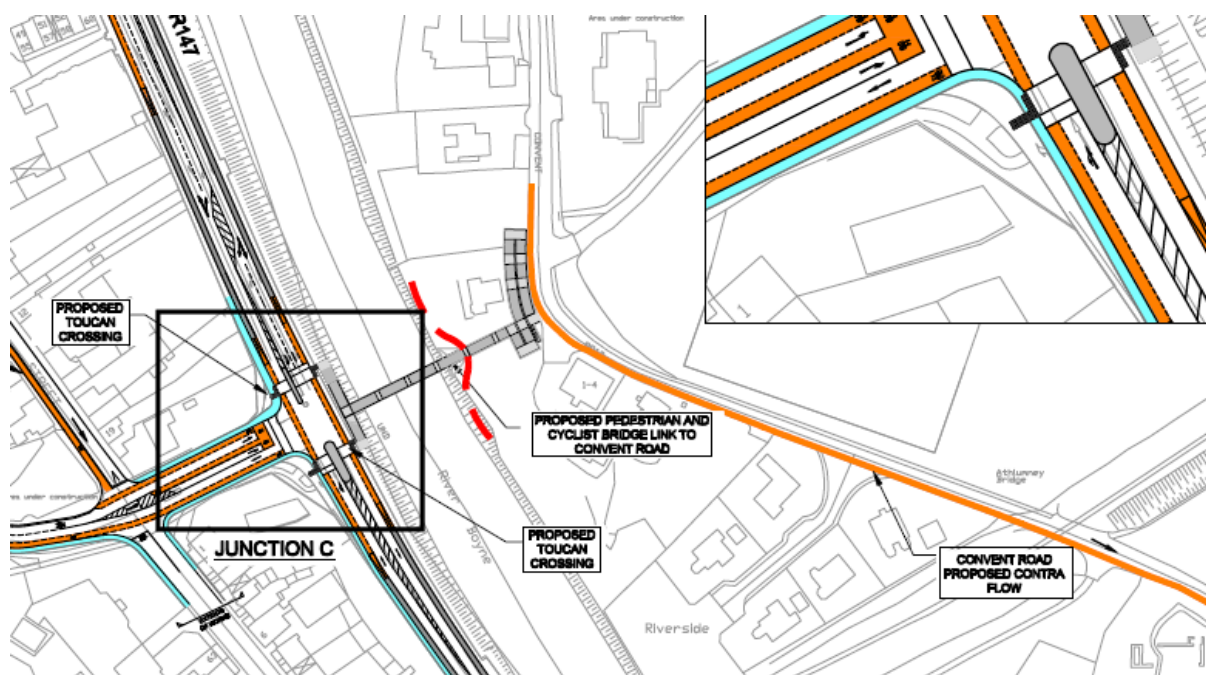


Figure 4.3: Original Proposed Works (i)

Arising from these issues, the location of the proposed bridge crossing was revised and it was decided to provide a cantilevered option (under construction) at the existing “New Bridge” / Kentstown Road Bridge. This cantilevered bridge was opened to the public on the 28th November 2018.

As a consequence, a number of options were looked at for the entire length of Convent Road. A non-statutory consultation process was held in October 2016, with an initial option of restricting Convent Road to pedestrians and cyclists only from the entrance of Riverside Estate towards Athlumney Castle/ Elm Park, with access to the graveyard, when needed, provided via removable bollards (see Figure 4.4 and Figure 4.5).

This proposal was met with significant local criticism, mainly due to concerns about existing anti-social behaviour getting worse due to lack of passing surveillance and traffic concerns from the school.

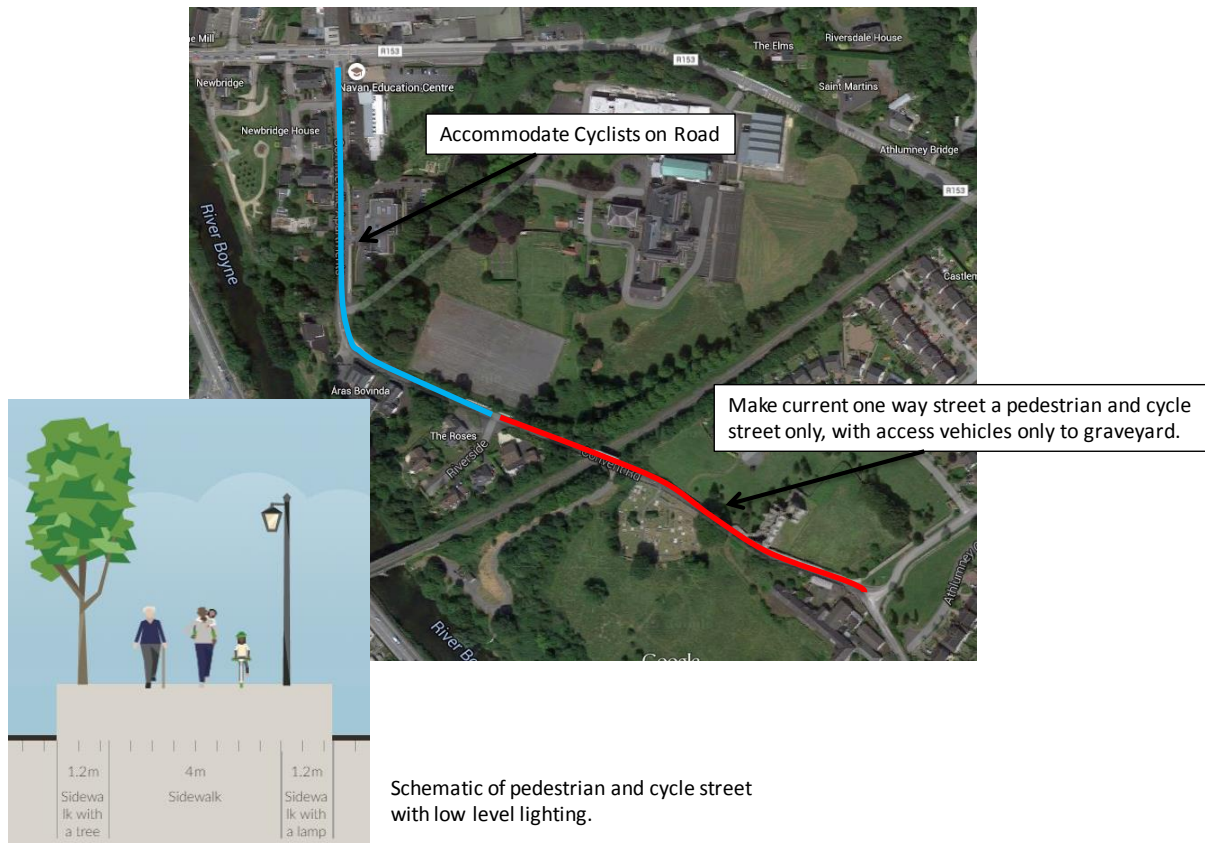


Figure 4.4: Schematic of Pedestrian and Cycle Street with Low Level lighting

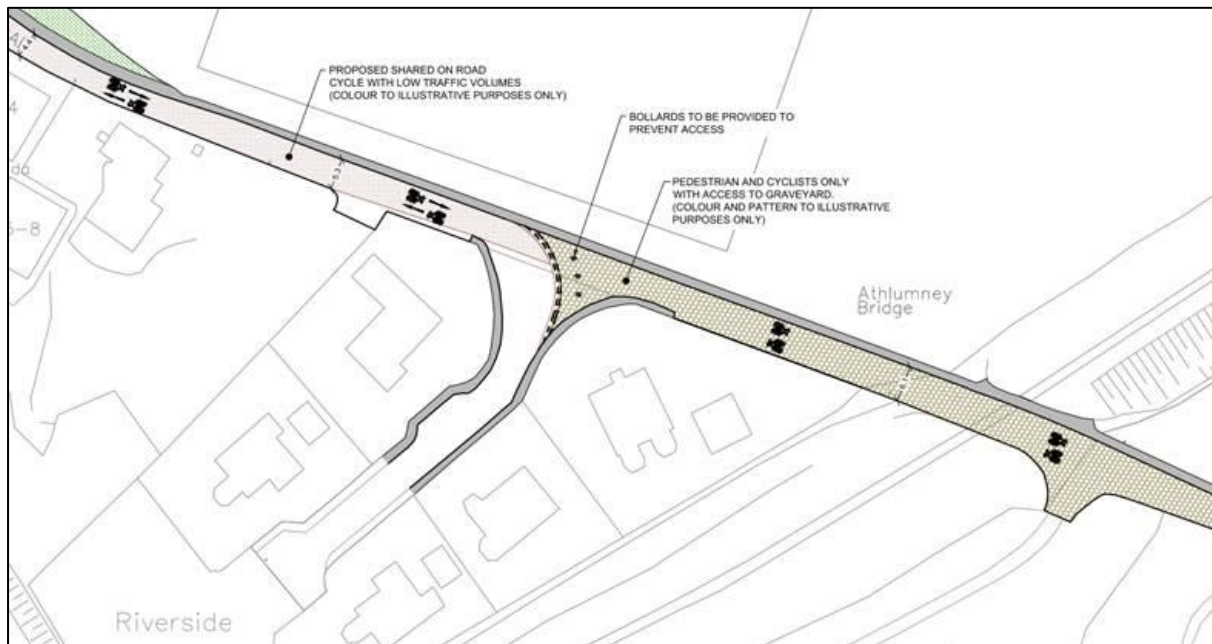


Figure 4.5: Convent Road Pedestrian and Cycle Only

Following the non-statutory consultation process, the proposed route on Convent Road was revisited by Meath County Council. Several options were considered, with three feasible options being brought forward for evaluation.

4.2.1 Option A: Create a cantilevered shared cycle and pedestrian shared space at the rear of the wall on Convent Road.

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- The existing wall along the boundary with the Loreto School was identified as being in poor condition and would inevitably have required rebuilding as part of the works;
- Openings in the wall would have been necessitated at various points to accommodate access / egress to the facility;
- Security concerns for users of the shared facility who would have been out of sight from the public road for significant lengths of the route; and
- Additional private lands would be required to accommodate this option compared with a widening of the existing road space.



Figure 4.6: Route Option A

4.2.2 Option B: To bring the route along the Kentstown Road (R153)

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- Road user safety at the Kentstown Road Railway Bridge (CIE ID UBK45), a protected structure, as the existing bridge currently has inadequate width available for traffic lanes, pedestrian and cycle facilities;
- Construction of pedestrian and cycle culverts at the rear of the abutments and lowering the road were discounted on structural grounds;
- Cyclist safety due to the high volume traffic on this route; and
- Excessive gradients for cyclists and pedestrian users at the railway bridge and to the east of the railway bridge.

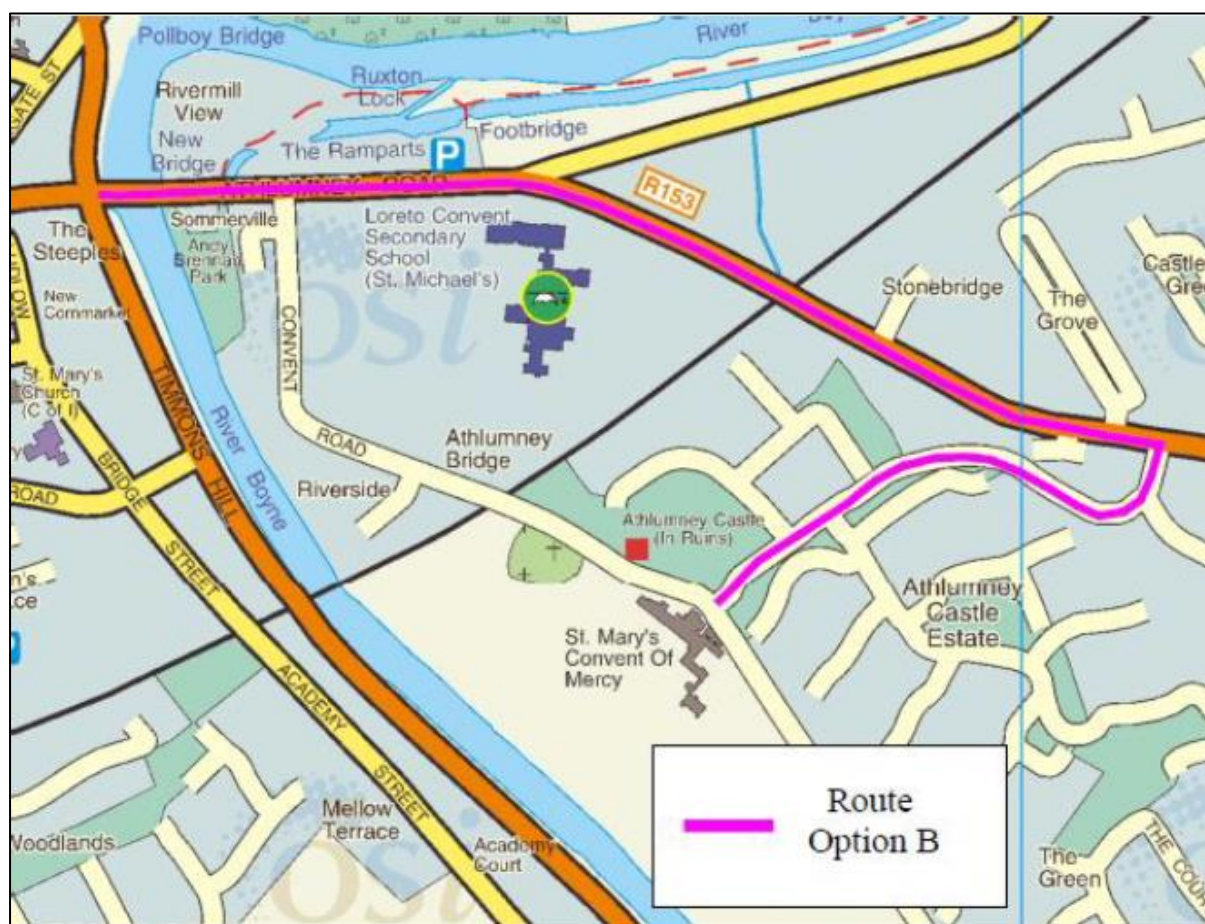


Figure 4.7: Route Option B

Option B – Sub-Option: To bring the route along the Kentstown Road (R153) & Reducing Traffic to One Lane at Railway Bridge

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- An expected severe impact on existing traffic volumes on this route, and expected traffic levels arising further developments currently under construction, and those planned (e.g. LDR 6), on this side of Navan;
- Road user safety on Kentstown Road;
- Road user safety at the Kentstown Road Railway Bridge (CIE ID UBK45);
- Cyclist safety due to the high volume traffic on the this route; and
- Excessive gradients for cyclists and pedestrian users at the railway bridge and to the east of the railway bridge.

4.2.3 Option C: To widen the road along the section of the route on Convent Road to the north of the railway bridge to the opposite side of the road from the Loreto Convent.

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- The necessity to impact on private residences fronting the road at the Riverside Estate;
- The necessity to impact on multiple private landholdings along this section of the route; and
- The necessity to impact on lands in private ownership, with previous planning applications for residential development.

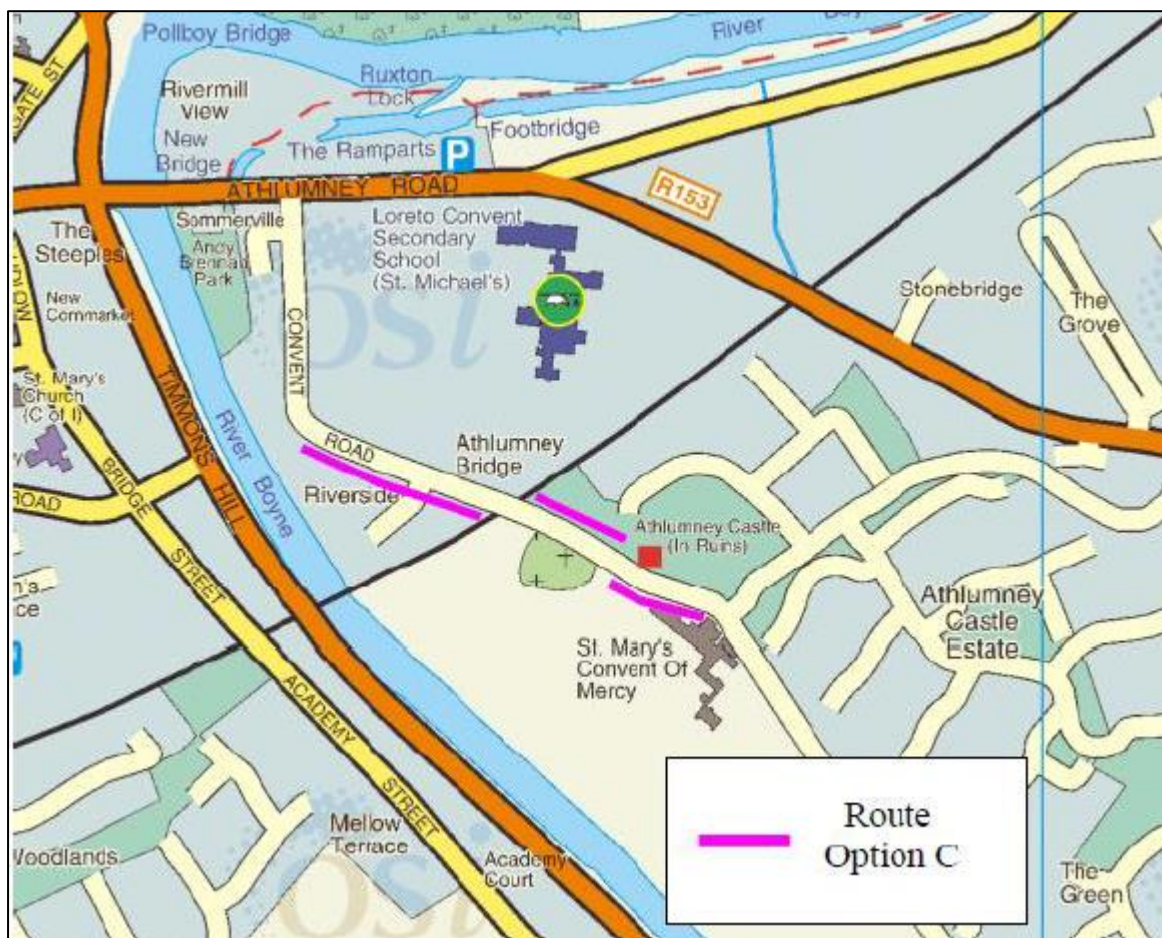


Figure 4.8: Route Option C

4.2.4 Option D: To allow cyclists to cycle contra-flow on Convent Road sharing with vehicular traffic

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- Road user safety.

4.2.5 Option E: Removal of all footway facilities on Convent Road from Loreto Entrance to Athlumney Castle/ Elm Park and creating a shared road space

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- Road user safety.

4.2.6 Option F: Routing the cycle route along the River Boyne, parallel to the River Boyne, to connect with the Kentstown Road via the Councillor Andy Brennan Park

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- The route would have necessitated a significant scale of works within or directly adjacent to the River Boyne SAC and SPA;
- The significant different ground levels on the R147 and the Convent Road would have resulted in non-compliant excessive gradients and necessitated a significant number of ramps resulting in a significant scale of works within or directly adjacent to the River Boyne SAC and SPA;
- The lands were / are in private ownership, with previous planning applications for residential development;
- Potential unattractiveness of this remote route due to personal safety of users, in particular during the hours of dusk and darkness; and
- This option would still have required similar work, now being proposed, on Convent Road from the railway bridge southwards to connect with Elm Park in Athlumney.

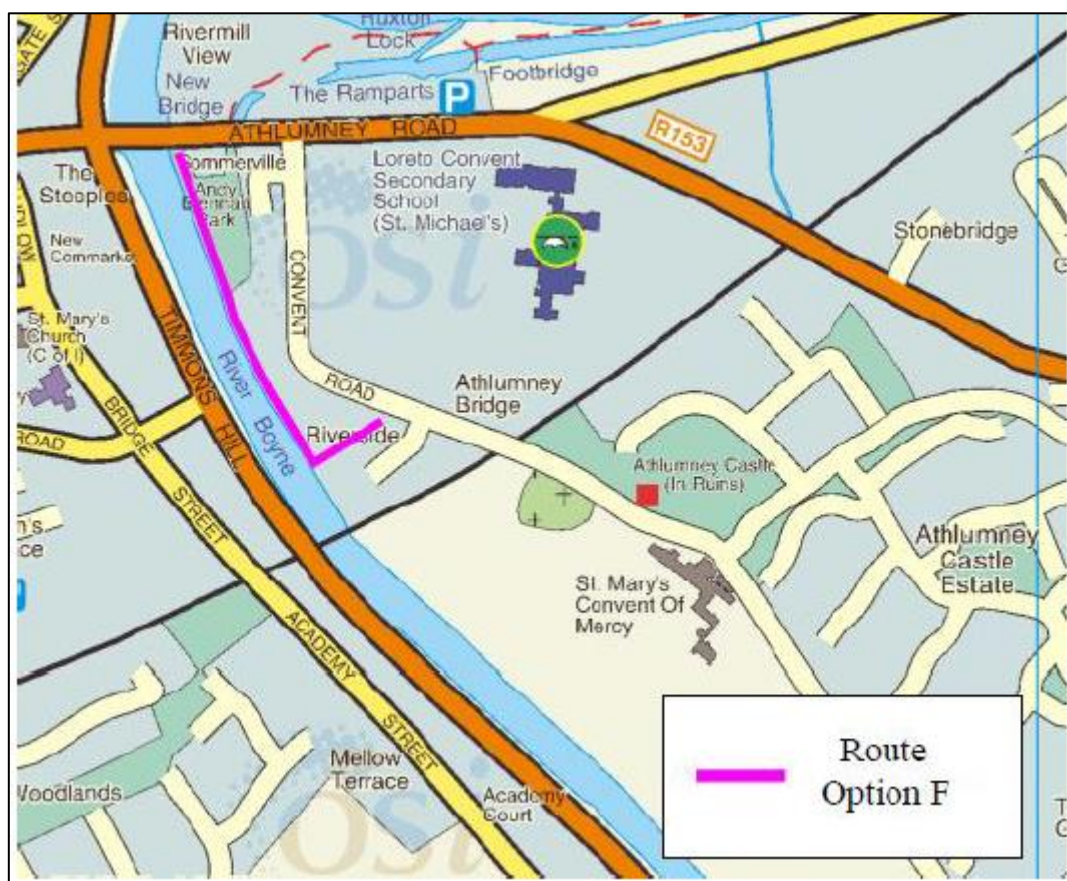


Figure 4.9: Route Option F

4.2.7 Option G: Not to provide cycling facilities linking the Athlumney area and beyond to Navan Town

This option was discounted for reasons including but not limited to:

- Non compliance with National Policy; and
- Road user safety.

4.2.8 Option H: Access vehicles only (south of Riverside) with shared space for cyclists / pedestrians.

This option was not discounted and was brought forward for Options Assessment (please refer to Navan GDA Cycle Routes Feasibility and Options Assessment Report).

4.2.9 Option I: One way traffic (south of Riverside) with contra-flow cycle lane.

This option was not discounted and was brought forward for Options Assessment (please refer to Navan GDA Cycle Routes Feasibility and Options Assessment Report).

4.2.10 Option G: One way traffic (south of Riverside) with cycle lanes either side.

This option was not discounted and was brought forward for Options Assessment (please refer to Navan GDA Cycle Routes Feasibility and Options Assessment Report).

4.2.11 Summary:

Following the options assessment process (outlined in the aforementioned assessment report), Option I was identified as the preferred design option as it provides the safest cycle facility for northbound and southbound cyclists.

5. Submission

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and development of the area in which the proposed development would be situated may be made in writing to:

Planning Department,

Meath County Council,

Buvinda House,

Navan,

Co. Meath,

C15 Y291

Or emailed to planning@meathcoco.ie

on or before 4pm Thursday the 7th of February 2019

Submissions should be headed:

“Athlumney to Trim Road Cycle and Pedestrian Scheme”

All comments, including names and addresses of those making comments, submitted to the Council in regard to this scheme will form part of the statutorily required report to be presented to the monthly meeting of Meath County Council. Accordingly they will also be included in the minutes of that meeting and may appear in the public domain.

