



Newtownmoyaghy Road Safety Improvement Scheme

**S.177AE PLANNING APPLICATION
REPORT**

October 2025

Meath County Council

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1.0 Introduction

This report describes the proposal to be submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála for s.177AE planning approval, following consultation with Meath County Council Planning Section and other stakeholders, to carry out development aimed to improve road safety at Newtownmoyaghy Road Kilcock, Co. Meath.

1.1. Background

Newtownmoyaghy Road L-6219 (also known as Moyglare Road) is a local secondary road situated to the northeast of Kilcock within the Meath County Council Local Authority Area as indicated in Figure 1.1. While it is a local secondary route, the road serves as a busy link road between Kilcock and Maynooth especially at peak traffic commuter times enabling vehicles to avoid the busy R148. Traffic surveys carried out in March 2023 indicated an Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) figure of approximately 2400 vehicles for this section of the road.



Figure 1.1 Newtownmoyaghy Road

Newtownmoyaghy Road Safety Improvement Scheme

The existing road edge and verge of Newtownmoyaghy Road has in discrete sections collapsed into the adjacent stream due to erosion from stream flood events compounded by vehicles passing close to the road/stream interface. The present narrow road width increases the risk of vehicles travelling on, and on occasion over, the edge and also higher risk of collisions. Temporary non-retaining/non-structural edge barriers are currently in place to help prevent this, acting more as a warning system. Refer to Figures 1.2 and 1.3 below.



Figure 1.2 Newtownmoyaghy Road



Figure 1.3 Newtownmoyaghy Road

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The road has been the subject of periodic flooding in the past whereby the existing drainage regime cannot cope with major rainfall events which results in water entering and inundating the road at the northern end near an existing ESB sub-station and surface water flowing down the roadway before re-entering the existing channel on the west side of the roadway (refer to figure 1.4 below). These flooding events result in an increased likelihood of vehicle collisions, through factors such as obscuring the definition of road carriageway edge, traffic disruption, severance of communities, further erosion of the road edge and damage to the road surface.



Figure 1.4 Newtownmoyaghy Road

2.0 Planning Policy

The Newtownmoyaghy Road project aims to mitigate the risk associated with the hazard caused by erosion of the existing road edge by the adjacent stream and to reduce the potential for future flooding of the road. Some relevant policies are outlined below which support the progression of the proposed intervention.

2.1 National Development Plan 2021-2023

The National Development Plan (NDP) outlines the key investment priorities aimed at effectively supporting the implementation of the corresponding National Planning Framework (NPF). Through the National Development Plan (NDP), Ireland is poised to drive long-term economic, environmental, and social advancement in all regions of the country throughout the next decade. The NDP emphasizes the importance of continued investment in Regional and Local Road Protection and Renewal including Safety related works and Climate Adaptation & Resilience Works (NDP Box 8.1) and also notes the importance of making the road network more resilient to the effects of climate change by utilising measures such as improved road drainage systems and raising of roads in certain instances in order to prevent roads becoming impassable after heavy rainfall.

2.2 Meath County Council Development Plan 2021 – 2027

The Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027 sets out the following policy objectives which are applicable to this project:

Movement and Access Policies

- MOV POL 25 - To implement the actions of the Meath Road Safety Strategy and promote road and traffic safety measures in conjunction with Government Departments, the Road Safety Authority, and other agencies.
- MOV POL 26 - To provide for and carry out improvements to sections of national, regional, and county roads that are deficient in terms of alignment, structural condition, or capacity, where resources permit, and to seek to maintain that standard thereafter. To ensure that, where possible, any maintenance and improvement strategies have regard to future climates.

Movement and Access Objectives

- MOV OBJ 40 - To develop an annual strategic road network plan for upgrading and required works for national, regional, and strategically important local roads for the targeting of funding.
- MOV OBJ 42 - To develop and implement, in consultation with the Department of Transport, a programme for the upgrading, improvement and maintenance of the non-national road network in the County.

Written Statements – Kilcock Environs Objectives

- KIL OBJ 5 - To examine the feasibility of a new road which will connect the lands at Newtownmoyaghy with the L6219/L2211.
- KIL OBJ 6 - To manage flood risk and development in Kilcock in accordance with the policies and objectives set down in Volume 1 of the County Development Plan in relation to 'Flood Risk Management'.

It is a national policy objective to promote sustainable mobility, by linking people and places in a sustainable way, providing that the environmental impacts of individual proposals are acceptable. The RSES for the Eastern Region is aligned with this national policy objective. Finally, the proposal will allow Meath County Council to prioritise the provision of sustainable cycling and walking travel modes in the future.

Overall, the proposed development will contribute positively to the realisation of national, regional and local planning policy objectives and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

3.0 Problems Identified

Newtownmoyaghy Road has been under review by Meath County Council given the safety concerns which have arisen in the area. This has been made even more of a priority given the expansion of Kilcock to the Northeast and a resulting increase in traffic within the area. The proposed development seeks to address a number of existing road safety issues.

The study area is also located within a flood risk area as identified on the Kilcock Environs Land Zoning Map and associated CFRAMs maps.

Specific issues associated with this stretch of road include:

- The existing carriageway of the Newtownmoyaghy Road is narrow with several pinch points. The width varies to as low as 4m in some sections which is substandard.
- This narrow cross-section renders the route unsafe for vulnerable road users and a risk of fall into the adjacent stream along a rural road link.
- Areas of the carriageway edge which drop directly into the Newtownmoyaghy Stream have also been noted to show signs of subsidence, further highlighting the risk.
- The road has been the subject of periodic flooding in the past whereby the existing drainage regime cannot cope with major rainfall events which results in water entering and inundating the road.

The existing road has been identified by Meath County Council as a location for improvement given the current sub-standard alignment, cross-section and pavement condition.

4.0 Scheme Objectives

The main project specific objectives for this proposed scheme are as follows:

- Reduce the risk of errant vehicles and/or users leaving the Newtownmoyaghy Road and entering the adjacent stream.
- Improve road safety for all road users during flood events.
- Bringing the current road carriageway up to current standards by increasing carriageway width, road pavement reconstruction and provision of associated line marking and signage.
- Improve journey reliability by reducing the frequency of local road flooding events and risk of future road closures and diversions.

5.0 Option Development & Assessment

In the Phase 2 Options Selection Stage, an assessment was conducted to identify and evaluate a long list of options for the study area with drawings detailing these options.

The options considered include:

- Do Nothing: Option retains existing situation within the study area without amendment.
- Do Minimum/Something: Option would include localised rehabilitation of the west bound lane where subsidence of the road verge has occurred.
- Option 1: Concrete Box Culvert to facilitate widening of road/future provision of active travel measures.

- Option 2: Open Channel and Concrete Box Culvert to facilitate part infilling of existing stream/part culverting and widening of road/future provision of active travel measures.
- Option 3: Open Channel Diversion (West side of the Road) to facilitate infilling of existing stream and widening of road/future provision of active travel measures.
- Option 4: Open Channel Diversion (East side of the Road) to facilitate infilling of existing stream and widening of road/future provision for active travel.
- Option 5: Land Acquisition of Privately Owned Lands adjacent to existing road with mature tree removal to facilitate realignment and widening of road/future provision for active travel.
- Option 6: Proposed New Link Road.

To determine the Emerging Preferred Option (EPO) from the above options, a Detailed Options Assessment was conducted in accordance with Transport Appraisal Framework (TAF) guidance. The results of the Assessment identified that Option 4, Open Channel Diversion (East side of the Road) to facilitate infilling of existing stream and widening of road/future provision for active travel was the most balanced option across all the TAF criterion, with a positive impact on changes in safety whilst mitigating significant impacts on local biodiversity and land value.

6.0 Proposed Solution

To resolve the issues, Meath County Council propose to carry out an open channel diversion (Option 4 above) within an area of agricultural grassland to the northeast of the road, in order to facilitate the infilling of the existing stream and widening of the road and road verge. The road will then hold the potential to be developed into a shared cycle and pedestrian path in the future.

The proposed development includes the following:

- diversion of the Newtownmoyaghy Stream within an area of agricultural grassland to the northeast of the existing channel and road;
- piping, infilling and topsoiling of the existing stream channel;
- provision of new culvert under the Newtownmoyaghy Road to connect the diverted stream into the existing channel downstream;
- provision of agricultural crossings over the new channel;
- widening of the existing carriageway;
- construction of new road pavement and upgrade of existing road pavement;

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- alterations to the entrance of one residential property;
- provision of new agricultural entrances; and
- provision of associated drainage infrastructure, boundary treatments, surfacing works, road marking, traffic signage and landscaping.

More detail in relation to the proposed works are outlined in the Planning Drawings which form part of the application.

7.0 Consultation

A Section 50 application was submitted to the Office of Public Works (OPW) in relation to the two proposed culverts for the road bridge and the field crossing. The OPW granted Section 50 consent in November 2024. Any changes required as a result of the planning or detailed design process will require approval from the OPW.

Meath County Council and TOBIN Consulting Engineers have had an initial consultation and site visit with Inland Fisheries Ireland (IFI) to discuss the scheme. Meath County Council will continue to consult with IFI during the detailed design process and all works will adhere to IFI 'Guidelines on Protection of Fisheries during Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters' (IFI, 2016).

8.0 Application Documents

The following reports have been prepared in relation to this Application under 177AE of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 as amended:

1. Planning Drawings
2. Appropriate Assessment Screening Report
3. Natura Impact Statement
4. Environmental Impact Assessment Screening
5. Planning and Environmental Considerations Report
6. Flood Risk Assessment
7. Archaeology Heritage Desk Based Review and Assessment