

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council

CYCLING ROUTES MASTERPLAN



Report prepared by Sustrans May 2017

About Sustrans

Sustrans is the charity making it easier for people to walk and cycle.

We connect people and places, create liveable neighbourhoods, transform the school run and deliver a happier, healthier commute.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to produce a series of masterplans that illustrate both the existing and the future potential cycling network within the Borough of Mid and East Antrim. Individual plans have been prepared for the major settlements of Ballymena, Larne and Carrickfergus. In addition, Borough wide plans illustrate the existing and potential wider area network, including strategic greenways and links into neighbouring local authority areas.

A number of opportunity areas are highlighted here but not illustrated in detail. These include:

- **A Safe Routes to School programme** which would look in detail at how parents and children access their local schools and identify local improvements necessary to make that journey safe and achievable on a bike, walking or scooting.
- **Safe routes to public transport centres**, such as bus and rail stations, enabling people to walk or cycle safely to these destinations. Transport NI and Translink would be key partners in this initiative.
- **Safe routes to community / leisure facilities.** Again, this supports and promotes active travel to these key local destinations.
- **Planning for the future** would include ensuring active travel provision is included as part of all major planning applications, with the objective of reducing dependency / provision for cars.

This could include residential developments, retail, industrial, educational and leisure provision. In the absence of legislation such as an Active Travel Bill, the Council should refer planning applications for comment to an active travel specialist company / organisation or develop that expertise internally. Guidance such as the DOE's Planning Policy Statements should be considered in developing good quality cycle networks.

The plans illustrate a 10 year Vision for the Borough.

The plans will help inform the statutory planning process and influence cycling provision on roads, which are the responsibility of Transport NI.

The plans will also provide the Council with a programme for route development within sites owned by them. The production of the plans in this report has involved both desk based research and on site survey work, consultations and an internal workshop with key Council officials.

2.0 BACKGROUND

In this section we set out the context for the development of these Masterplans. Firstly, how they relate to the recently published **Draft Community Plan** and the **Development Plan**, secondly how they relate to the Department for Infrastructure (DfI) publication 'Changing Gear' and finally how they relate to the (DfI) document, "Exercise Explore and Enjoy, a strategic plan for Greenways in Northern Ireland."

2.1 Planning Policy - Community Plan and Development Plan

Mid and East Antrim Borough Council have recently put their Draft Community Plan out to public consultation. The plan, when adopted, will provide strategic direction for the Borough up to 2032.

There are five themes and 19 objectives in the plan. The five themes are:

- Our Environment
- Good Health and Wellbeing
- Community Safety and Cohesion
- Progress in Education
- Sustainable jobs and tourism

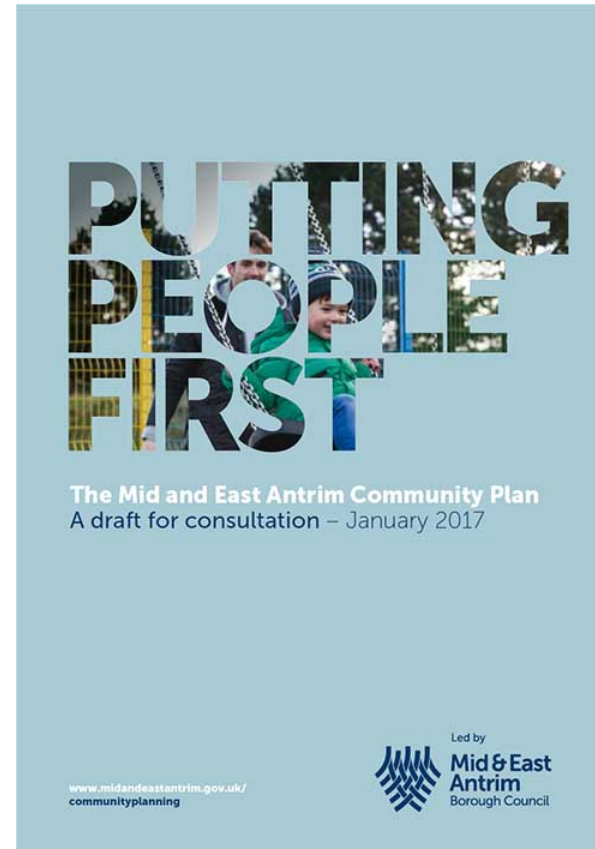
The proposed cycling networks, set out in this document as a series of masterplans, will play a major part in promoting and facilitating active travel (walking and cycling) within the Borough.

Active travel not only promotes good health and wellbeing, it also reduces dependency on cars, particularly for shorter journeys and supports efforts to improve air quality. Through this provision the Council will encourage residents to get out and enjoy their local environment and enhance community cohesion and a sense of belonging to an area.

Active travel facilitated by the development of the cycling and walking networks has a role to play in each and every one of the Community Plan themes.

The Council is committed through the development of these masterplans to creating safe routes to schools and colleges and by

developing connected networks of routes, substantially reducing the dependency on cars.



Development Plan

The Council's forthcoming Development Plan should give consideration to inclusion of the routes outlined in this study. This should ensure land is protected to enable construction of routes.

2.2 Changing Gear - A Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland

In August 2015 the Department for Infrastructure published the Bicycle Strategy for Northern Ireland, 'Changing Gear'. This document sets out how the Department has a vision for the progressive development of a bicycle network in Northern Ireland so that people travel by bike as an everyday activity.

The main objectives of the bicycle strategy include:

- Making urban areas in Northern Ireland more accessible for people using a bicycle
- Improving opportunities for social interaction
- Improvements in public health
- Increasing safety for people using a bicycle.

The document highlights that the development of a bicycle network will contribute to achieving modal shift, creating and supporting opportunities for people to travel actively for everyday journeys, improving access to education, employment and social opportunities. Greenway development is an important part of achieving this.

2.3 Exercise Explore and Enjoy - A Strategic Plan for Greenways

The Department for Infrastructure's Strategic Plan for Greenways. 'Exercise, Explore Enjoy' was published in November 2016 and sets the high level plan for the development of Greenways across Northern Ireland. The plan highlights how the development of Greenways can contribute significantly to a number of other Departmental strategies and policies such as the Public Health Agency's, 'Making Life Better 2012-2023' strategy, which supports the contribution active travel makes to health, the 'Outdoor Recreation Action Plan' (published by Sport Northern Ireland)

and the 'Strategy for Sport and Physical Recreation' produced by the Department for Communities.

To further highlight the role Greenways can play in contributing to the strategic objectives of a number of Departments, 'Exercise, Explore, Enjoy' also highlights the impact Greenways could make towards a number of outcomes identified in the draft Programme for Government Framework 2016-2021.



3.0 MASTERPLANS

In this section we have set out a series of masterplans that illustrate the proposed strategic cycling networks. Effectively these are the principal routes to be developed. Through time, however, linking paths can be added, along with cycling infrastructure provision associated with new developments.

3.1 Ballymena

Introduction

Ballymena has good potential for developing cycling. It is relatively flat and has a number of traffic free paths that, when upgraded and linked, could form a town wide cycle network. To the east of the town is the Ecos Nature Park along the Braid River which has a network of shared use paths. It is on National Cycle Network Route 97, which runs from Ballymena to Glenarm and is known as the Ecos Trail. People's Park provides a potential high quality route to the north of the town.

To the west of the town is Galgorm and a quality route into Ballymena would help provide an alternative to the busy Galgorm Road (A42). There are two significant development opportunities, namely St Patrick's Barracks site and Green Pastures, where significant cycle networks can be incorporated. In terms of potential greenways, a route along the Braid River to Broughshane would be attractive and this could then extend to the Glens via Cargan and Martinstown.

Priorities for Ballymena

- North Ballymena Cycle Loop
- Braid Riverside Path - Galgorm to Broughshane
- South Ballymena Greenway - Green Pastures, Ballee to the town centre and Ecos Nature Park
- Safe routes to school
- Route to rail and bus station

North Ballymena Cycle Loop

This loop route would provide a fantastic route that includes the Ecos Nature Park and People's Park, linked by a route through Dunclug, starting at the Ecos Centre where the existing paths,

now 15 years old, need an upgrade by scraping back vegetation. A new cycle track along Fry's Road will be useful for Dunclug Housing Estate, passing several schools. This route was designed in good detail by Transport NI back in 2012. This links to People's Park where the tarmac paths would require resurfacing due to poor surface of old bitmac. The link into town would use the quiet Ballymoney Road. A link back to Ecos via the Leisure Centre would complete the route with exact alignment at Lower Mills Street/Town Centre to be agreed.

Braid Riverside Path - Galgorm to Broughshane

This riverside route is partially in place with paths in Galgorm, Ecos and Broughshane. A high quality, well surfaced, continuous greenway would be a tremendous facility for the town and local villages. However alignment of the river to the west of the town is meandering, so while great for recreational trips, an on road route along the Galgorm Road (A42) would provide a direct route for commuting journeys to school and work. Completing the route through the town centre will be a challenge but there seems to be potential using the Waveney Avenue /Pat's Brae corridor.

South Ballymena Greenway - Green Pastures and Ballee to the town centre and Ecos Nature Park

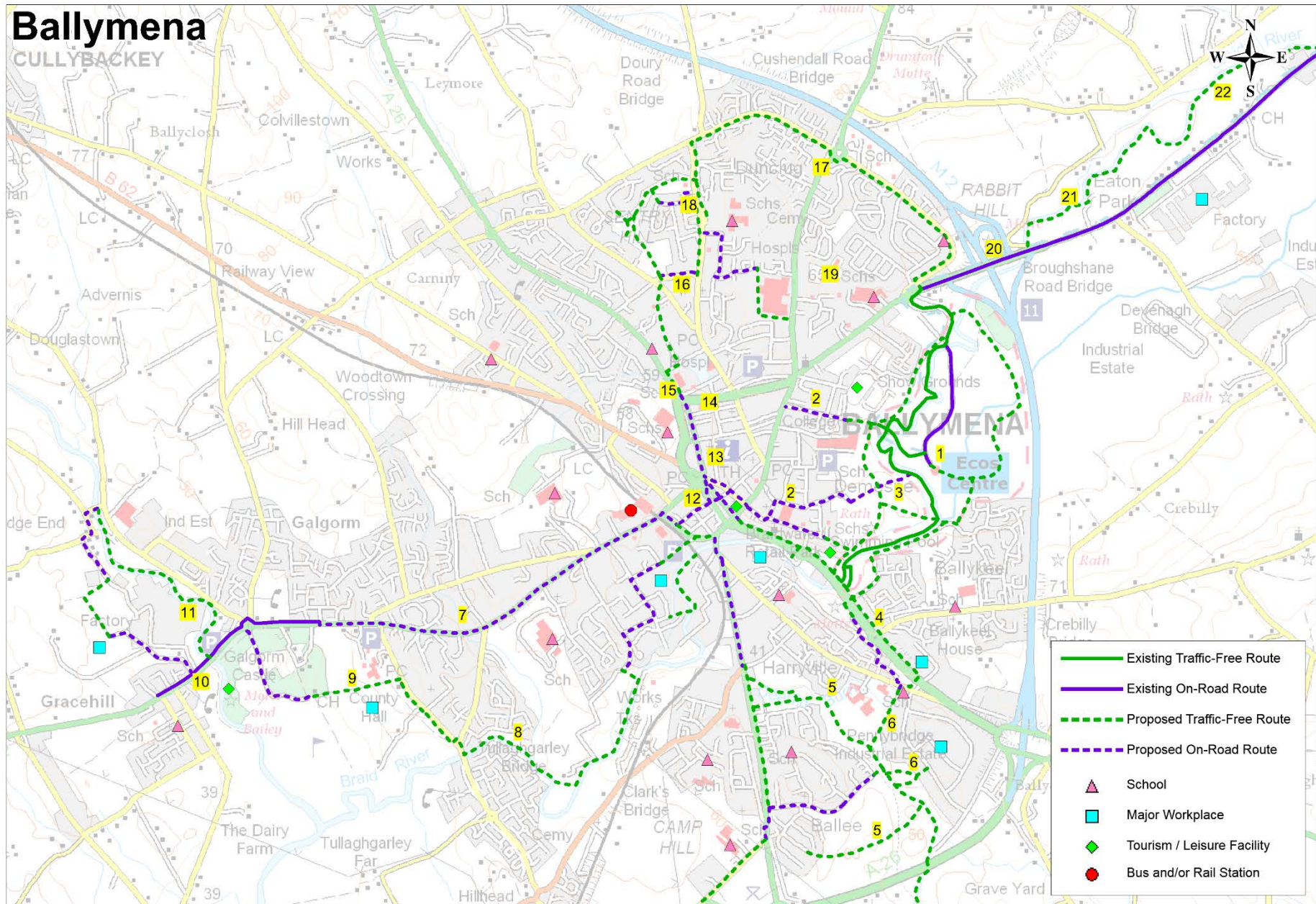
This route uses the green corridor between Ballee and Pennybridge Industrial Estate and links to the Antrim Road and also via the Motte, to Ecos Park. The Green Pastures work is under way and includes cycle facilities. This route will link Green Pastures toward the town centre as well as providing good links to Pennybridge Industrial Estate, the Dale Farm factory and Slemish College.

Safe Routes to Schools

Encouraging cycling to school is a major priority for the Public Health Agency and Department for Infrastructure as a means of improving children's health and cutting congestion during the morning commute. Sustrans is delivering a behavioural change programme called the Active School Travel Programme. The building of safe routes to these schools should be a major focus within Ballymena. This report does not examine the potential for routes to all schools in Ballymena but we show the schools on the route maps. The current Ballymena schools involved in the Active School Travel programme include Ballykeel Primary School, Ballymena Primary School, Camphill Primary School and St Brigid's Primary School, as well as several in the rural hinterland. We would recommend that a separate study of Safe Routes to Schools, involving consultation with each school community, is developed with support of Transport NI.

Route to Rail and Bus Station

Ballymena is served by a rail and bus depot on a joint site close to the town centre. The park and ride car park is popular and there is little available room to expand this facility. Encouraging multimodal travel by bike and train and bus should be a major focus to cut down congestion and reduce emissions. Car parking space is limited at all stations. There should be a major focus on creating safe routes and very secure cycle parking at the Ballymena Bus and Rail Station. The three major routes proposed in this report all pass near the Train Station and good links should be developed. Exact alignment of this route should be given further consideration, in liaison with Transport NI.




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Ballymena Town Centre


Map showing existing and proposed traffic-free routes (numbered 1-16) in Ballymena Town Centre. The map includes a legend for symbols: School (triangle), Major Workplace (square), Tourism / Leisure Facility (diamond), and Bus and/or Rail Station (circle). The map also shows existing and proposed traffic-free routes (green lines) and existing on-road routes (purple lines). Key locations include Ballymena, Rathfriland, and Ballykeel. The map is titled 'Ballymena Town Centre' and includes a north arrow.



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Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
1	 	Ecos Nature Park	existing paths	There is a network of tarmaced paths that were built when the Ecos Centre was developed in 2000. The surface has narrowed with vegetation over-growth and they are now around 1.5 metre wide. To promote as shared use paths, work is required to cut back overgrown vegetation and resurface paths, if needed. To the east of Ecos near the motorway some of the paths are rough stone surface. Improving the surface would be beneficial but tarmac (a good long term investment) while desirable is not necessary as these are recreational paths, not used for transport journeys.
2		Ecos Nature Park	new paths	Links from Ecos Park are really important to make the park as accessible as possible. There are good links like the Suffolk Street bridge - the quality of the links to local housing estates and the commercial centre eg Trostan Avenue should be reviewed.


Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
3		St Patricks Barracks		The old army barracks is due for development with a mix of leisure, business and education use. The plans show networks of traffic-free cycle and walking paths and it is important these are built to the same high quality throughout the scheme. A road network is planned including a road from the Larne Link Road to the Broughshane Road and the Central Boulevard to Demesne Avenue - these main roads should have cycle tracks and all other minor roads should be 20mph with cycle friendly traffic calming.
4		Ballymena South		There is space along the Larne Link Road to build traffic-free cycle tracks. These would link to the factories and also provide links between the networks on the east and south of the town .

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
5		Ballymena South		The area between the Larne Link Road and the Antrim Road has a great potential network with the existing traffic calmed roads of Ballee and the paths linking Ballee, Pennybridge Industrial Site and the new Green Pastures development. The immediate issue is to ensure the Green Pastures path network (under construction) is built to appropriate standards.
6		Ballymena South		The links from the Ballee Linear Park to Slemish College and Pennybridge Industrial site are very useful and these should be lit to encourage the journey to work and school
7		West to Galgorm		The area to the west of Ballymena has substantial housing, schools and the main Government centre. All this generates significant amount of traffic. There is no direct cycle route to Galgorm from Ballymena. A direct cycle route along the Galgorm Road would be very beneficial and the road is wide over most of its length.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
8		West to Galgorm		A significant length of the meandering Braid River has a path alongside. This path should be widened with clear links at the eastern and western end. A detailed design, along the road and the riverside path should be progressed, to assess cost and preferred alignment along this corridor.
9		West to Galgorm		The existing paths through the grounds of County Hall and Galgorm Castle Golf Club provide great traffic free links to the Braid Riverside paths. Certain sections of path need to be widened and resurfaced with route signed.
10		West to Galgorm		The link from Galgorm to Gracehill Village is good and was developed as a Safe Routes to School in 2008
11		West to Galgorm		A recreational circular walking route exists in Galgorm village using the Lisnafillon Lane. This could be upgraded to a cycle route. It does use a section of the Corbally Road.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
12		North Ballymena		There is a challenge to link Galgorm Road to the town. The lane along Waveney Avenue (which is blocked to through traffic) to the Ballymoney Road is a good corridor.
13		North Ballymena		Consideration should be given to traffic calming on the old Ballymoney Road (south of Fountain Place) as this provides a key link to the north of the town.
14		North Ballymena		The pedestrian crossing at Parkway should be converted to shared use for cyclists.
15		North Ballymena		The short section of the Ballymoney Road past Ballymena Primary School should have a two way cycle track (eastside of road) linking Parkway to the People's Park entrance. This would require losing 10 car parking bays outside the school. This would provide a strategic link to north Ballymena and a safer route to the school.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
16		North Ballymena		People's Park has a potentially wonderful network of paths but they are in very poor condition with the surface of bitmac turned to loose stone. Resurfacing the path, widening to 3 metres, lighting the park and extending opening hours would provide a very valuable cycle and walking route.
17		North Ballymena		There is room alongside Fry's Road and Grove Road to convert the existing pavement to a cycle route.
18		North Ballymena		Link needed to Dunclug school campus.
19		North Ballymena		Link need from People's Park to All Saint's Primary School

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
20		Ballymena to Broughshane		There are cycle lanes on the Broughshane Road from Ecos to the edge of the village - however the road is busy and cycle tracks segregated from cars would be preferred.
21		Ballymena to Broughshane		The completion of traffic free riverside path from Ecos to Broughsane should be explored - The section behind the rugby ground has no path.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
22	 	Ballymena to Broughshane		The riverside path and mill race running west from Broughshane are wonderful. However the path is narrow and should be widened for shared use.

3.2 Carrickfergus

Introduction

Carrickfergus would seem to have good potential to develop as a cycling town, despite low numbers at present. Its strengths are it is relatively compact, the southern area is fairly level and it has potential for a largely traffic free network including linking to the greenways running from Newtownabbey to Belfast. The major disadvantage is narrow busy roads which are not pleasant to cycle on and where there is little space to improve cycle facilities. It is hilly to the north of the town. There appears to be no obvious solution to developing a safe route linking the town to Eden and the Kilroot Industrial Estate.

Priorities for a Carrickfergus Network

The key priorities should be focused on creating infrastructure which allows for cycle growth. The focus should be on:

- Creating a coastal greenway that will link Carrick to Jordanstown. This will link to the existing popular cycle and walkway (NCN93) to Belfast, linking to Lisburn and Comber.
- Creating a network of traffic free routes that will be used by people new to cycling or wanting to cycle more.
- Develop safe routes to the train stations, with Translink providing safe cycle parking
- Develop safe routes to schools at those schools keen to promote cycling.

Coastal Greenway

The greenways that radiate from Belfast to Lisburn, Comber and Jordanstown are a very popular resource. This can be evidenced from the number of visitors on bikes, particularly for leisure trips. The A2 road east of Jordanstown has reasonable cycle facilities as far as the PSNI Forensic Site. However cycling the last mile of the route in

Carrickfergus is very unpleasant with a four lane carriageway and narrow pavements. We propose consideration be given to creating a loughside path linking Trooperslane to Carrickfergus Marina. While expensive, this would be transformative for the town. It would put Carrick on the greenway map within a perfect day trip distance from Belfast. For pedestrians it would extend the Marine highway pavement, while providing an opportunity for increased trade for the retailers at the Marina and town centre.



Carrickfergus circular cycle route

Starting from the Town Hall a circular cycle route around Carrickfergus is possible on either lightly trafficked roads or traffic free paths. This route can be used as a leisure route and by commuter cyclists accessing town centre shops, places of employment and Carrickfergus train station.

The circular cycle route uses Shaftesbury Park, Taylor's Avenue, Prince Andrew Way, Hart's Loanen (lane) looping back to town via the Middle Road and either Oakfield Glen or Prospect Heights and Sunnyside. Bluefield Lane provides a good local route to the impressive Andrew Jackson Cottage, although a direct route into Carrick town centre from the cottage seems difficult. The existing routes in Taylor's Avenue and

Prince Andrew Way will fit within a wider network, with new paths at Hart's Loanen and a high quality route in Sunnylands Estate. This loop route would also be a good route for runners and pedestrians.

Safe Routes to Railway Stations

Carrickfergus is served by 4 railway stations at Trooperslane, Clipperstown, Carrickfergus and Downshire. Encouraging multimodal travel by bike and train should be a major focus to cut down congestion and reduce emissions, plus car parking space is limited at all stations. There should be a major focus on creating safe routes and very secure cycle parking at Downshire and Carrickfergus stations. Currently there is no cycle parking at Downshire and a small number of covered racks at Carrickfergus. Clipperstown is only a minute's cycle ride from Carrickfergus station and is linked by a traffic free path. The fact Clipperstown is an unmanned halt would indicate Carrickfergus is a better station of the two to invest in cycle parking.



Safe Routes to Schools

Encouraging cycling to school is a major priority for the Public Health Agency and Department for Infrastructure as a means of improving

children's health and cutting congestion during the morning commute. Sustrans is delivering a behavioural change programme called the Active School Travel Programme. The building of safe routes to these schools should be a major focus within Carrick. This report does not examine the potential for routes to all schools in Carrickfergus but we show the schools on the route maps. The schools currently involved in the Active School Travel Programme are Carrickfergus Central Primary School, Acorn Integrated Primary School, Carrickfergus Model Primary School, St Nicholas' Primary School and Eden Primary School.



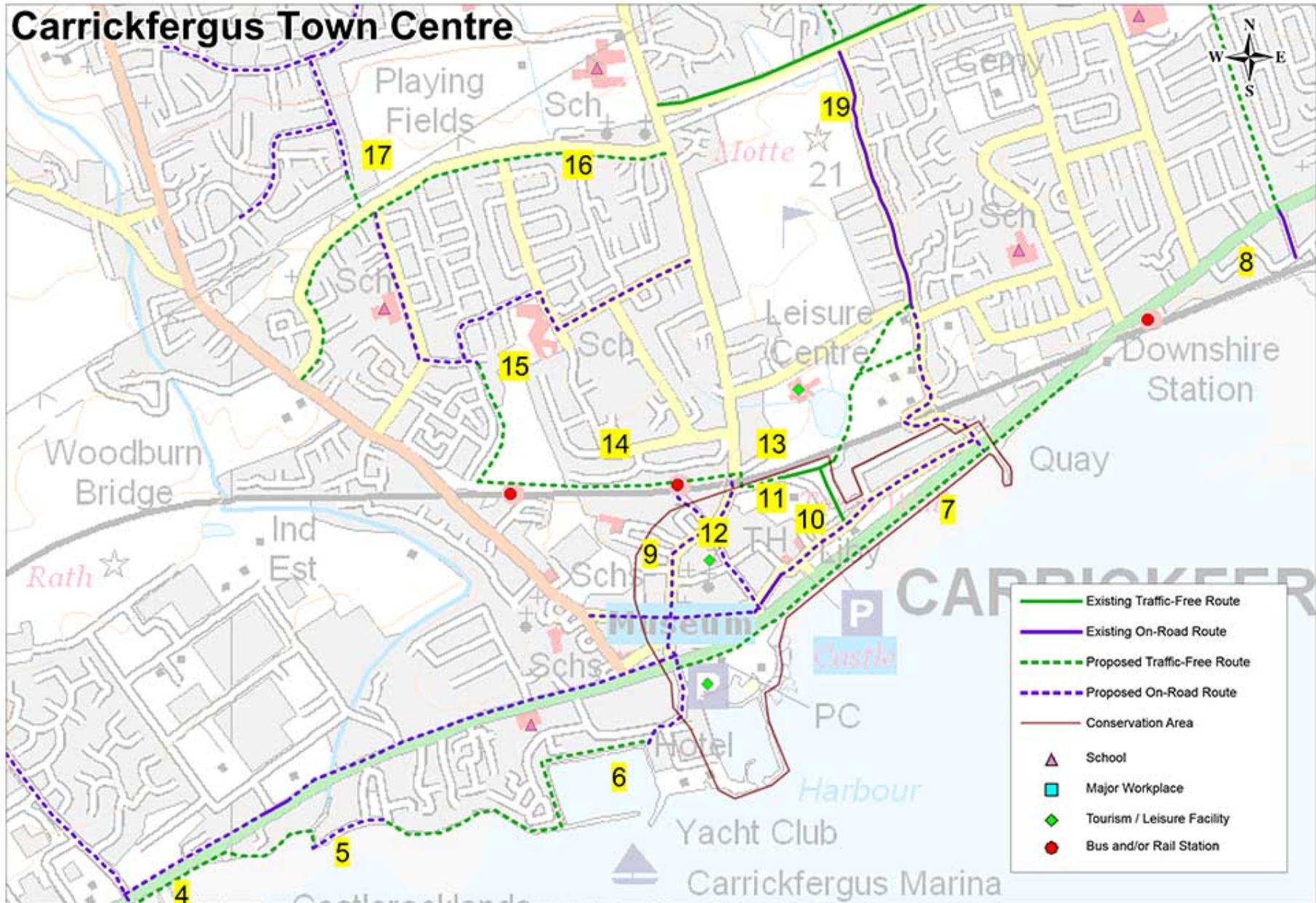
Carrickfergus

Including route to Greenisland






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Carrickfergus Town Centre





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Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
1		Coastal greenway	A2 existing cycle route from Jordanstown to PSNI forensic lab	Good cycle track. Better maintenance required to keep path clean and free of stones / rubbish deposited on path by vehicles on adjacent road.
2		Coastal greenway	A2 PSNI forensic lab pavement to Troopersland	Widen pavement alongside A2
3		Coastal greenway	Link to Trooperslane Industrial site	Quiet road which is ok for sharing
4		Coastal greenway	A2 west of Carrick	Limited space on pavements no easy cycle route
5		Coastal greenway	A2 coastal greenway	Create new coastal path with new sea wall

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
6		Coastal greenway	Marina	4m paths are fine for shared use around Marina
7		Coastal greenway	Marine highway pavement	Paths are fine for shared use along Marine Highway
8		Coastal greenway	Marine highway to Eden and Andrew Jackson Cottage	Twisty narrow road - little scope for cycle provision
9		Town centre	Pedestrian streets in Historic Walled city	Cycling is banned - this should be reviewed within context of cycle network
10		Town centre	Contra flow cycle lane High Street	Good design of cycle lane

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
11		Shaftesbury Park green wedge	Shaftesbury Park	Wide paths suitable for shared use with pedestrians
12		Shaftesbury Park green wedge	Lake side path Shaftesbury Park to Prince William Way	Paths are narrow - would require widening
13		Shaftesbury Park green wedge	Bowling club linking Shaftesbury	Widen path through Bowling Club car park. Prevent cars overhanging on path by use of attractive bollards or grass strip
14		Sunnylands	Fergus Avenue path to Salthill Park in Sunnylands	Popular path for Sunnylands residents - widen and resurface

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
15		Sunnylands	Paths in Sunnylands	Paths in Sunnylands - need to widen and resurface network of paths
16		Central East West Spine	Oakwood Road and Northland	A two way cycle track on south side would complete east west access linking to Prince Andrew Way
17		Central East West Spine	Sunnylands to Prospect Heights	Upgrade road crossing and improve maintenance of laneway to Prospect link
18		Central East West Spine	Prince Andrew Way	Good existing cycle track - needs better vegetation management

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
19		North South Oakland and Taylors Ave	Taylors Ave	Excellent road to cycle on with bollards restricting car use
20		North South Oakland and Taylors Ave	Oakfield Glen	Glen would need path widening and resurfacing over southern section. And better link to Prince Andrew Way
21		East west spine - Middle Road	Middle Road pavement widening	Widening existing pavement to 3m to create loop routes with three North South corridors
22		North South Bluefield Lanes and Harts Loanen	Harts Loanen	Roughly surfaced laneway which should be converted to a greenway with links to housing with routes created through new housing developments either side of this potential greenway on Harts Loanen.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
23		North South Eden	Bluefield Lanes	Roughly surfaced laneway which should be converted to greenway with links to housing.
24		North South Bluefield and Harts Loanen	Trailcock Road	Use existing road and ideally re open to Craig's Road
25		North South Bluefield and Harts Loanen	Potential for greenway lane in future new development	Potential for greenway lane in future new development should housing extend to the east.

3.3 Larne

Introduction

Larne currently has little cycle infrastructure other than cycle tracks on the A8 west of the town and some narrow lanes marked on a section of promenade. The town has level terrain in the town centre, Port and Redland Retail and Leisure Park, but there is a very steep hill, linking to the residential area to the north of the town. Once at Linn or Seacliff it is fairly level terrain. There are cycle clubs in the town and the town is the gateway to the Antrim Coast Road which is popular for more confident leisure cyclists and is visited by touring cyclists. There does not appear to be a lot of cycling amongst less experienced adults and children in the town, other than at some schools. The town is well served by bus and rail links to Belfast and there is good potential to encourage people to cycle to the public transport.

Priorities for Larne Network

The key priorities should focus on creating infrastructure which facilitates users to start cycling. The current confident leisure cyclists are using the road network - the routes we outline will be useful for those new to cycling or those not confident cycling on the roads. Experience from elsewhere in Northern Ireland is that when traffic free networks are constructed people will cycle more in great numbers. A local example can be the greenway from Belfast to Jordanstown. Most of the recommended routes in this report provide traffic free corridors that currently may not form a comprehensive town wide network, but do provide linked corridors where people would feel safe to start cycling.

The focus should be on:

- Completing a cycle route through the town from the A8 to the Antrim Coast Road linking to the Port of Larne.
- A circular route around the Larne Lagoons for leisure and access to the Redland retail and leisure outlets
- Develop a linear park/greenway in West Larne along the Linn Glen corridor extending this route through Linn joining the A8 at Antiville Road
- A cycle route from Seacliff to the Leisure Centre passing through the Town Park and linking to the Promenade.
- Develop safe routes to the train and bus stations including Millbrook Park and Ride with Translink providing safe cycle parking
- Develop safe routes to schools at those schools keen to promote cycling.

A8

The new A8 dual carriageway east of Corr's Corner includes a cycle path alongside. This will be useful for touring cyclists wanting to ride from Larne toward Belfast and for leisure cyclists. On approaching Larne the route along the A8 stops and starts so a priority should be to continue this route as far as Larne Port.

Larne Lagoons and Redland Retail and Leisure Park

There is great potential to create a circular path for walkers, cyclists, wheelchair users and joggers in the scenic, level area of Larne. This circular route would serve as a popular leisure route and would be useful for those working or visiting the retail and leisure facilities of Redland. This route would link to the Promenade and would provide a real focal point for recreation in the town. The land appears to lie in the ownership of the Port of Larne.

West Larne Greenway

The area to the Western suburbs of Larne is expanding, with the on-going development of new houses. The established community of Linn with a primary school has a network of roads and paths and also has Linn Glen, a short pleasant walking linear park. There is great potential to upgrade Linn Glen to a greenway for walkers and cyclists and extend this to the north, linking to Linn by using the paths that have been built as part of the new housing. This greenway would link Linn Glen to the Primary School and Community Centre. Linking to the A8 at the south of the Linn Road would be challenging, but there is space by the shops and garage to link to the Antiville Road.

Leisure Centre to Town Park and onto Seacliff

This route would create an accessible path from the Leisure Centre to the Town Park via Bankheads Lane and would provide an alternative to the current very steep path linking the promenade to the park which is not usable by bikes. The route would link through residential roads to the Old Glenarm Road where it would be possible to construct a cycle route on the east side of the road from the Greenland Park to the Seacliff community including Corran Primary School.

Safe Routes to Railway Stations

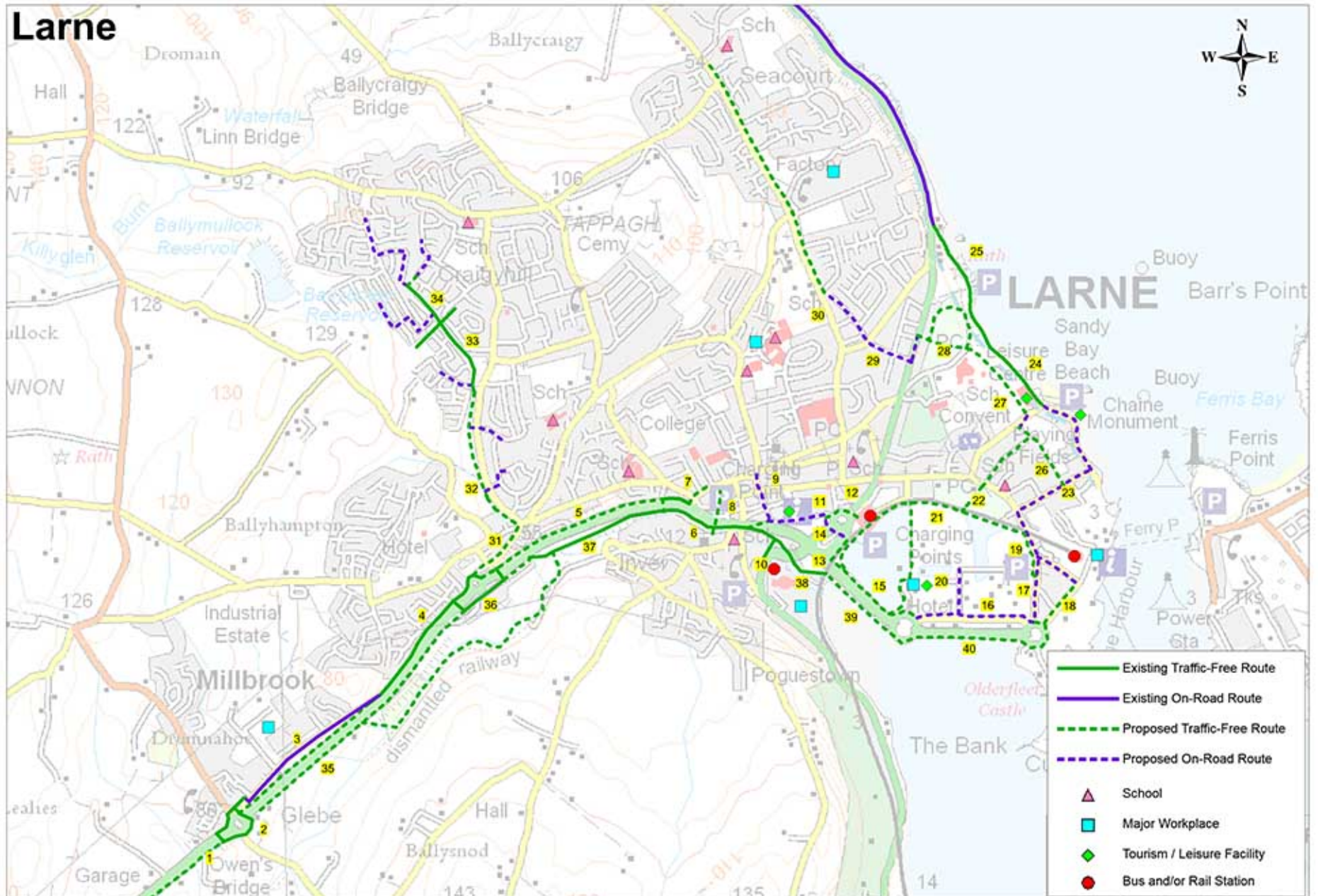
A focus for future infrastructure would be to improve routes to Larne Train and Ulsterbus Stations and to Millbrook Park and Ride, with its regular services to Carrickfergus and Belfast, with some services to Ballymena. Secure cycle parking and possibly lockers would be useful. DfI did a small survey in 2012 at Larne, Ballycarry and Whitehead stations, which showed more people would

consider cycling to stations, with secure cycle parking a significant influencing factor on whether they would cycle to stations.

Safe Routes to Schools

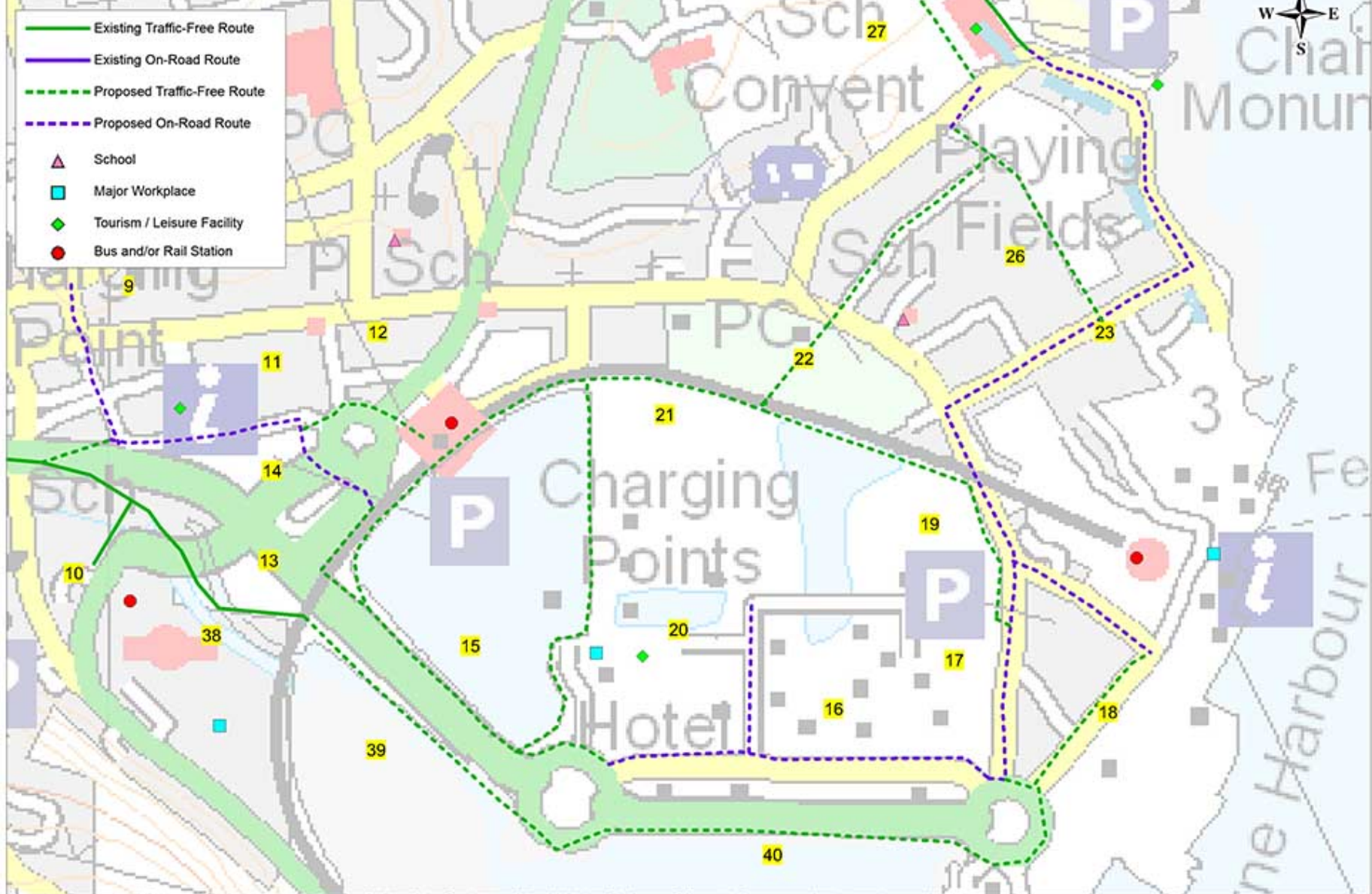
Encouraging cycling to school is a major priority for the Public Health Agency and Department for Infrastructure as a means of improving children's health and cutting congestion during the morning commute. Sustrans is delivering a behavioural change programme called the Active School Travel Programme. The building of safe routes to schools that are keen to promote cycling, should be a major focus within Larne. This report does not examine the potential for routes to all schools in Larne but we show the schools on the route maps. The schools currently involved in the Active School Travel Programme are St Anthony's and St Macnissi's in Larne and Glynn and Cairncastle Primary Schools in the rural area.









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Larne Town Centre







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Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
1		A8	A8 West of Millbrook	The new A8 dual carriageway runs from Corrs Corner to the outskirts of Larne. Between the new roundabout at Shaneshill and Millbrook there is no formal cycle route which is a gap in the network. The hard shoulder could easily be transformed into a cycle route on the southside as far as Millbrook.
2		A8	Millbrook Roundabout	There are short sections of cycle track at Millbrook roundabout
3		A8	Millbrook Old Belfast Road	The NCN is signed along the Old Belfast Road. We recommend using the A8 hard shoulder. Kerb segregation with verge between hard shoulder would be an improvement.
4		A8	A8 West Antiville Road	Existing route


Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
5		A8	A8 East Antville Road	The pavement from Antville Road and Pound Street should be converted to a cycle track
6		Inver	Inver Riverside Path	Between Pound Street and Narrow Gauge Road there is no pavement along the A8 but the route should use the high quality riverside path along the Inver River. The graffiti in the subways should be removed.
7 + 8		Links	Link to Pound Street	Links to the town centre should be developed

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
9		Links	Town Hall Link	The link from the Inver riverside path past the Town Hall is good as Lower Cross Street has no through traffic
10		Links	Link to bus station	Cycle access to the bus station is important as Larne is well served by express buses
11		Links	Narrow Gauge Road by Tourist Information Centre	The link from the Inver riverside path under the flyover is good but perhaps needs rationalised - the wide flagged area requires significant cleaning.
12+14		Links	Link to rail station	Convert pavement at Circular Road roundabout to shared cycle route to access rail station.



Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
13		Links	Inver Riverside Path Link to Shore	This link is partially in place with a flagged path. This should be widened and resurfaced. The most easterly section between the A2 and the railway line is a wasteland and could be a pleasant area to visit, offering views across the Lough.
15	 	Harbour	Harbour Highway	The hard shoulder along Harbour Highway should be converted to a cycle track but needs good segregation as the road is busy with HGV's - the slip road to the west of the Lagoons needs the kerb realigned to allow for continuous cycle track.



Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
16		Harbour	Redlands Road	Redland Road is reasonable to cycle on but would benefit from traffic calming or a two way cycle track on the north side
17		Harbour	Coastguard Road	Coastguard Road is pleasant to cycle on given it is not a through road for traffic. Improvements to the south side merge with Redlands Road should be improved as path is flagged and old.
18		Harbour	Olderfleet Road	The pavement on the west of Olderfleet Road should be converted to shared use.
19+20=21		Lagoons	Larne Lagoons	Larne Lagoons provide a wonderful underused potential space for Larne. A circular cycle route would be a wonderful leisure route for cyclists, walkers and joggers as well as providing increased access to the leisure and retail outlets in the Redlands site.


Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
22		Lagoons	Curran Park Link	This park provides a wonderful link to the Lagoons and will require a bridge linking Curran Park to Lagoons. The railway is in a cutting so a bridge should be relatively low cost.
23		Promenade	Bay Road and Chaine Memorial Road	These are pleasant roads to cycle on.



Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
24+25		Promenade	Promenade	Larne promenade provides a wonderful space to cycle on, alongside walkers and joggers. However the surface is poor. There is a short section of segregated route which does not function well. We would suggest giving the promenade a major upgrade through resurfacing, widening where possible and permitting unsegregated shared use.
26		Leisure Centre to Seacliff	Sandy Bay Playing fields link	This route would give a more direct access from Leisure Centre

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
27		Leisure Centre to Seacliff	Leisure Centre to Town Park (Bankhead Lane)	Route from the Leisure Centre through the old school grounds to the Bankheads Lane
28		Leisure Centre to Seacliff	Larne Town Park	Town Park is a potentially useful leisure cycle route that inexperienced cyclists such as children could use. Paths are narrow and should be widened and resurfaced. This also forms part of the link between north east Larne and the Leisure Centre
29		Leisure Centre to Seacliff	Old Glenarm Road to Town Park	Newington Avenue and Greenland Drive, although narrow, can provide a good link. This would need two directional cycling on a short section of Newington Avenue
30		Leisure Centre to Seacliff	Old Glenarm Road	Convert the pavement on the east side on the Old Glenarm Road to shared use through widening. Segregation would be recommended. This could provide a valuable corridor from Seacliff to the Leisure Centre.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
31		Linn Greenway	Antiville Road to Linn Road	There is potential for a cycle route using the pavement along Antiville Road - the southern section has space alongside the shops and the petrol station.
32		Linn Greenway	Linn Greenway Linn Glen	Linn Glen is a pleasant walking route. If the path is widened it would be a wonderful area to cycle. Completing a link to the Killyglen Road is easily achievable
33		Linn Greenway	Linn Greenway Lindara Drive	This path needs to be linked into Cairngorm Drive and on toward Linn Primary School.
34		Linn Greenway	Linn network	The Killyglen Road has a good pavement which could be widened and the streets either side of the road are pleasant for cycling.

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
35		Millbrook to Antiville Road - Southside A8	Inver Riverside Path	Convert the hard shoulder alongside A8 to cycle track
36		Crossings A8 Antiville Road	Inver Riverside Path	Existing crossings of the A8

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
37		Inver Riverside Path Antiville	Inver Riverside Path	Existing good quality tarmac riverside path - consideration to add lighting

Map reference	Photo	Area	Section	Descriptions of work
38		Inver Riverside Path near Bus Station	Inver Riverside Path	Poor quality flagstone riverside path with lighting - resurface path and install two toucan crossings
39+40		Causeway Road	Causeway Road	Realign crash barrier to widen path or realign outside railings to create wider path. There is lots of litter which should be addressed through increased maintenance.

3.4 Borough Wide Network

National Cycle Network and other proposed strategic greenways

National Cycle Network

The National Cycle Network (NCN) is a UK wide project, developed by Sustrans, which is over 13,000 miles of cycle routes comprising both traffic free sections, strategic greenways and on road facilities. The greenways are unusually shared with pedestrians, joggers and dog walkers.



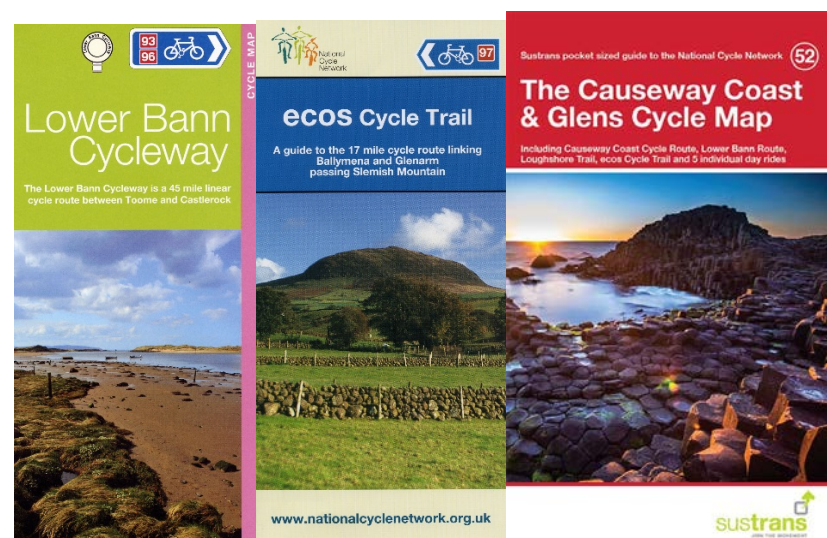
Mid and East Antrim is currently served by three National Cycle Network routes namely:

NCN 93 - The Coast Road north of Larne and a short section from Larne to Glenoe.

NCN 96 - The Lower Bann Cycle Way through Portglenone

NCN 97 - The Ecos Trail from Ballymena to Glenarm

These routes are all well signed and generally use quiet roads. Some traffic free sections include Ecos Nature Park in Ballymena and Larne Promenade. The Ecos Trail and Lower Bann Cycle Way have their own free leaflets while all the routes including the Coast Road are detailed in the Causeway Coast and Glens map.



Proposed routes include connecting Larne to the Newtownabbey Way at Corr's Corner along the A8 corridor. This simply requires signage given that a cycle track was built as part of the A8 dualling and completed in 2016 with the section to Corr's Corner. The inland route to Glenoe would therefore no longer be NCN route but could change to a regional route.

Mid and East Antrim National Cycle Network & Other Proposed Greenways



Proposed strategic greenways

1. Glens of Antrim Greenway

This exciting route, which links Ballymena to the coast at Cushendall is based on the line of a disused railway and was first proposed by NI Greenways. While a detailed study of the route is outside the remit of this report, we have noted a proposed alignment on the map overleaf. It may be that the best route would be to create a riverside path to Broughshane and then link via the country road network to the disused railway at Martinstown and Cargan. This route was not part of the DfI series of funded studies but would benefit from a detailed feasibility study to choose the best route alignment and take next steps to delivery.

2. The Greenisland Greenway

This joint venture between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council would see the development of a 5km urban greenway linking Greenisland to both, Monkstown and to the Coast Road A2 cycle track, which leads to the Belfast and toward Carrickfergus. A feasibility study was completed for the two Councils by Sustrans in March 2017 and submitted to the DfI for consideration for future funding. This proposed route would be very well used, being in an urban area and linking to local facilities including Greenisland Train Station. Immediate action is required to ensure current housing developments incorporate the greenway into their works.

3. Doagh to Larne

This proposed route is included in the DfI NI Greenways Strategy and was one of the greenways that received funding from the Department for Infrastructure to carry out an initial feasibility

study. This study was completed in March 2017 and is now in competition with other greenways to progress to the next stage of the DfI initiative. This joint venture between Mid and East Antrim Borough Council and Antrim and Newtownabbey Borough Council can be developed in two phases. The first phase is to use the A8 corridor to Larne and then following the Inver Riverside Park to the Causeway Road that leads to the Port of Larne. The second phase of the route would utilise sections of the disused railway line, most of which lie in private ownership.

4. Ballynure to Kells

This proposed greenway along the disused railway line is included as a strategic greenway in the DfI Greenway Strategy. At the Ballymena end the route runs through the Green Pastures development with a greenway outlined in this report that we have given a working title - the South Ballymena Greenway

5. Doagh to Antrim

Although this lies within the neighbouring Council area this proposed greenway running alongside the Six Mile Water River corridor is important for Mid and East Antrim. When complete it would link Lough Neagh to the Irish Sea at Larne, therefore linking to the Doagh to Larne Greenway of which two thirds lies in Mid and East Antrim Council area.

Potential Regional Routes

In previous sections we have outlined National routes and other Strategic Greenways. In order to complete a Council wide network we recommend a number of circular routes which would be used by more experienced cyclists. We have outlined a series of loop routes starting and finishing at the same location. These routes fill in the gaps between the National Routes and greenways to ensure a Council wide network. The routes radiate out from towns and villages that would benefit from the money cyclists would spend on refreshments in the villages. The routes have not been surveyed on the ground but we have talked to a number of cyclists who live locally and use these routes. These routes should be signed two- directional and appropriate mapping put in place to allow cyclists to follow the routes.

Mid and East Antrim

Potential Regional Cycle Routes

On-Road Signage Only



3.5 EuroVelo

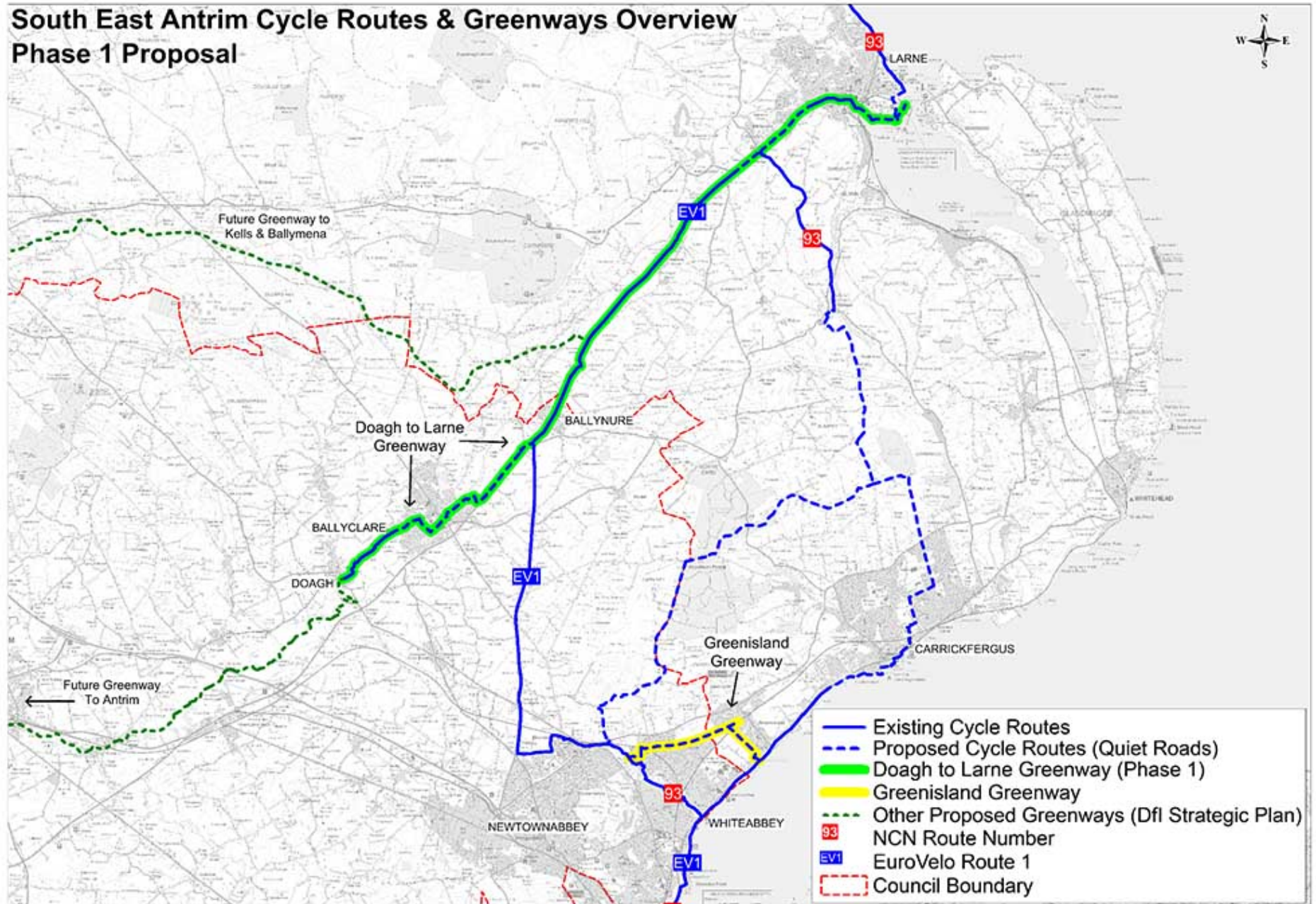
The European Cycling Federation has developed a network of trans-European routes, known as EuroVelo which are based on existing National cycle networks. The EuroVelo project is more of a branding and marketing exercise than a capital works project as the routes exist more as corridors using the existing national cycling networks as they run through countries.

EuroVelo route 1, "The Atlantic Route", stretches for the length of the continent from Scandinavia to the Algarve consisting of on road and traffic free sections. On the island of Ireland the route runs from Belfast west to Derry / Londonderry but a link from Belfast to Larne will be included. The route from Larne to Belfast will follow the A8 corridor as far as Corr's Corner where it will join the Newtownabbey Way and the coastal path to Belfast.



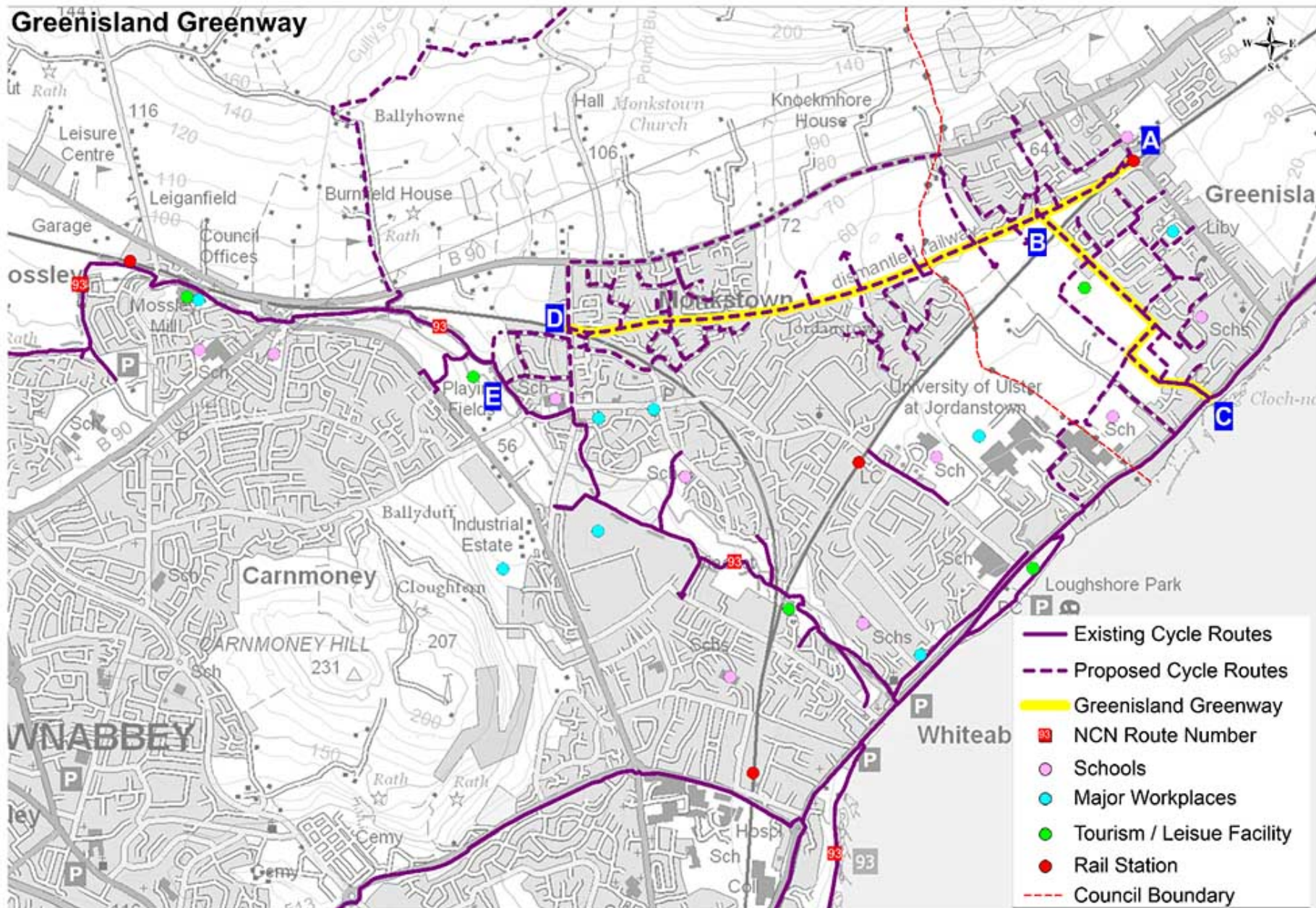
Map of the current EuroVelo network in the UK and Ireland

South East Antrim Cycle Routes & Greenways Overview Phase 1 Proposal



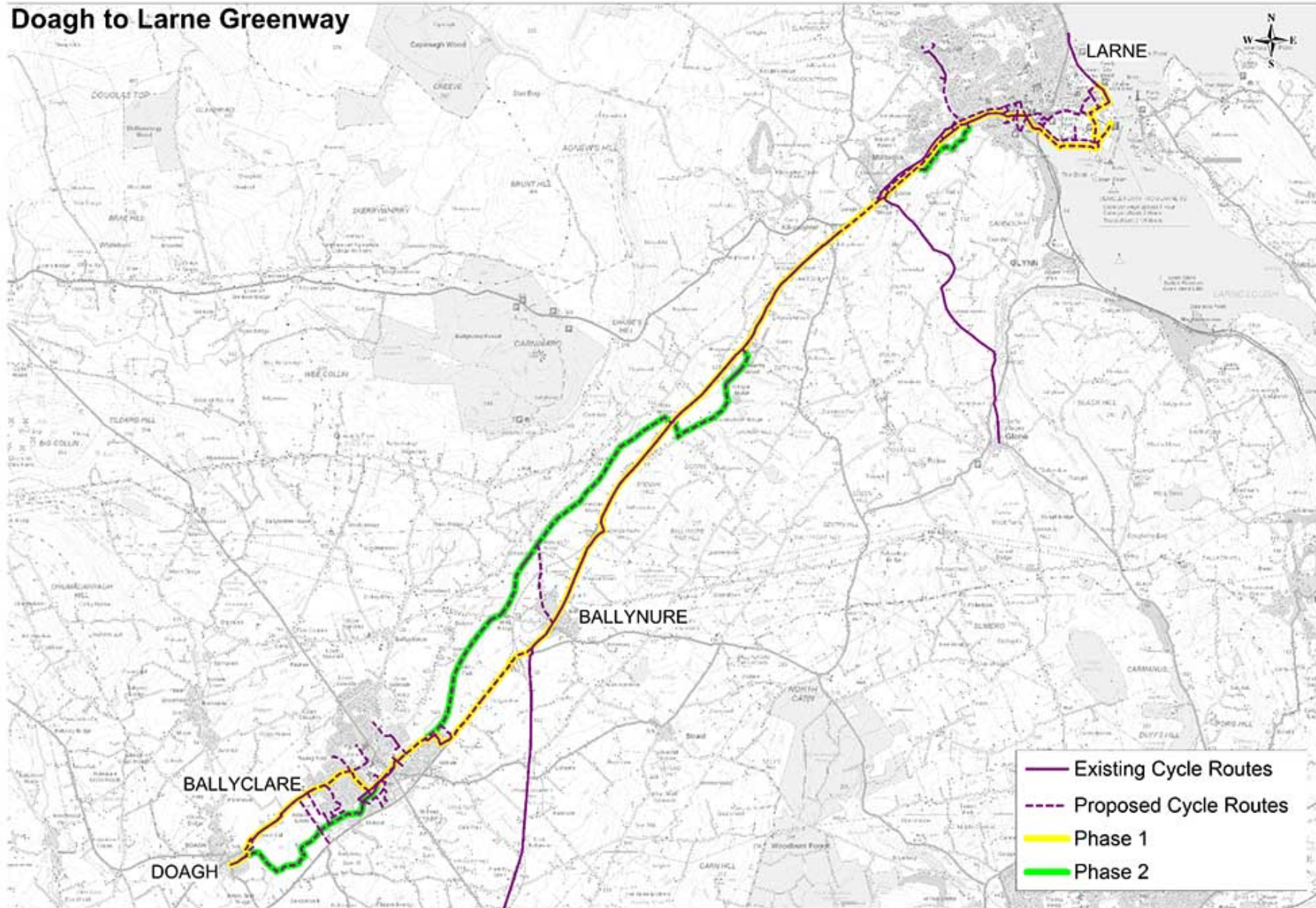
3.6 Greenisland Greenway

Greenisland Greenway



3.7 Doagh to Larne Greenway

Doagh to Larne Greenway



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3.8 Castle to Castle Greenway

An exciting strategic project we have identified is to create a greenway around the shores of Belfast Lough. The **Castle to Castle Greenway** will link Carrickfergus with Bangor through the centre of Belfast. Over recent years the greenways in the greater Belfast area have proved to be extremely successful. These include

- the Comber Greenway
- the Lagan and Lough route alongside Belfast Lough in Newtownabbey
- the riverside routes along the River Lagan through Belfast and onto Lisburn
- Titanic Quarter
- the Connswater Greenway and
- the sections of the upgraded North Down coastal path.

However, despite the proximity of Carrickfergus to this network, there is no link. Carrickfergus would benefit significantly from connecting into this network with visitors spending time and money in the historical old town and the enjoying some

refreshments by the Marina. Local residents would have a major facility for physical activity, thus improving well-being.

We recommend the Council explore a joint venture with the neighbouring Councils - Antrim and Newtownabbey, Ards and North Down and Belfast City Council to take forward this proposal. By joining together in a strategic partnership, this route would capture the attention of the local residents and visitors to the area and could become a major tourist attraction. One of the big challenges is how to link Carrickfergus town centre to the existing cycle route on the A2 at the PSNI forensic centre. The pavements alongside the A2 are narrow. We suggest that consideration be given to a new coastal path linking to the Marina. This would be expensive but we believe there would be a strong economic case if promoted in the context of the Castle to Castle Greenway.

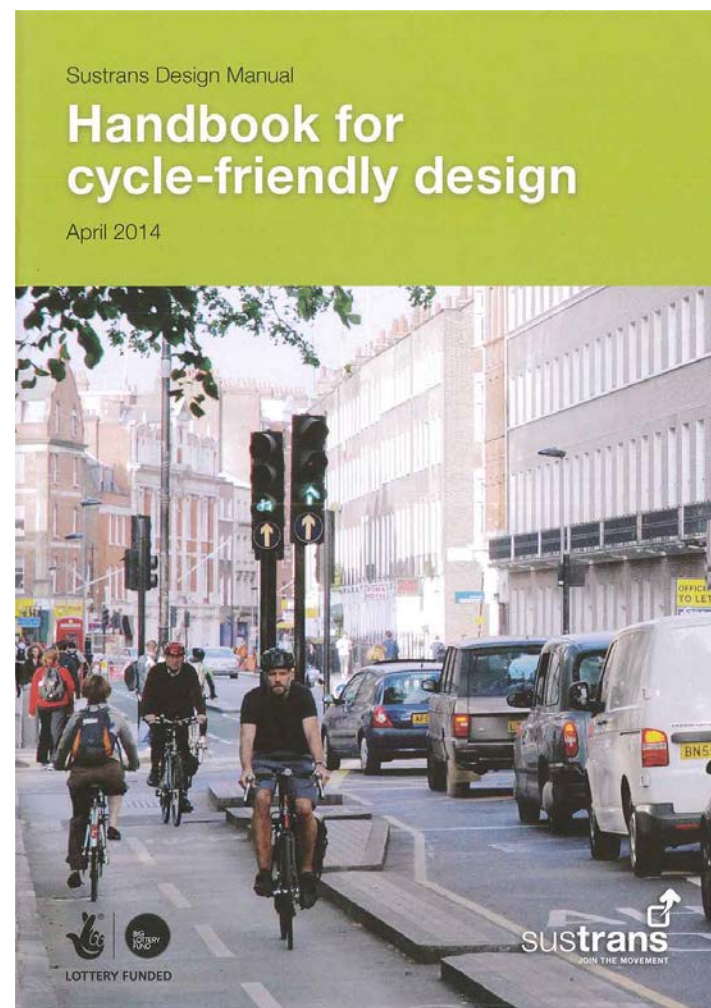


4.0 PROPOSED DESIGN STANDARDS

The following documents are recommended as on-road design and quality Greenway guidance for this project.

- Handbook for cycle-friendly design - Sustrans Design Manual 2014
- Greenway Management Handbook Sustrans Design Manual June 2016

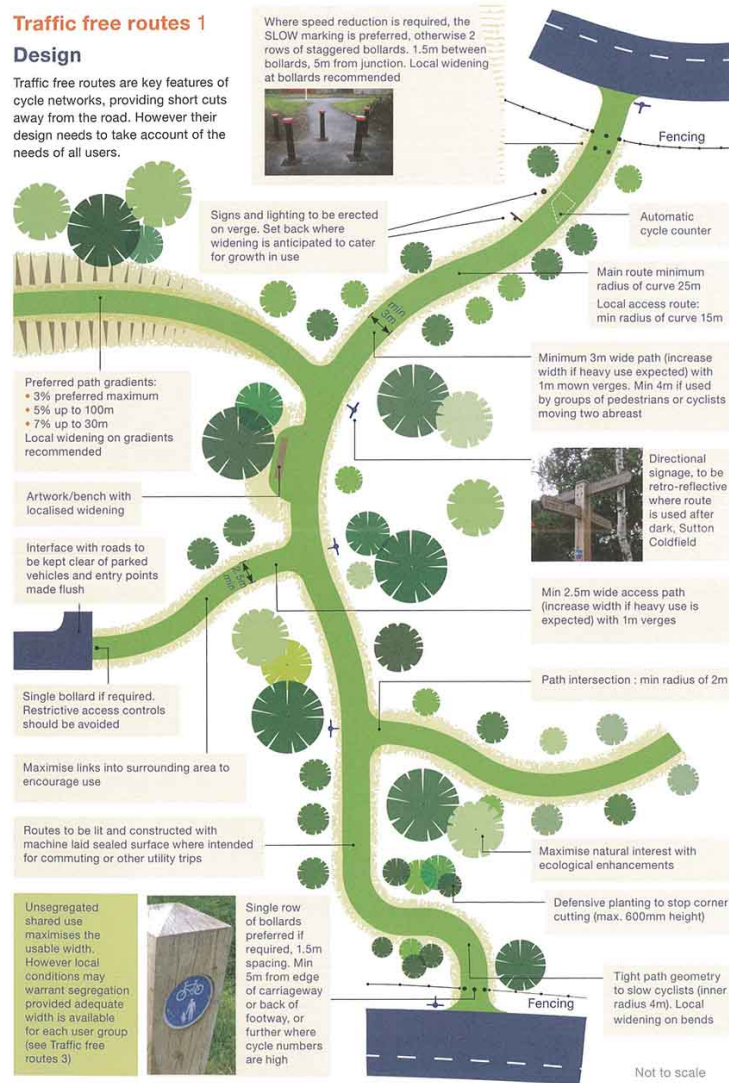
As the proposals also include urban routes and cycle tracks it is essential to have DfI Transport NI involved in delivery. Reference should also be made to Transport for London - London Cycling Design Standards adopted by the DfI (then DRD) in 2015.



Traffic free routes 1

Design

Traffic free routes are key features of cycle networks, providing short cuts away from the road. However their design needs to take account of the needs of all users.



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Traffic free routes 2

Path construction

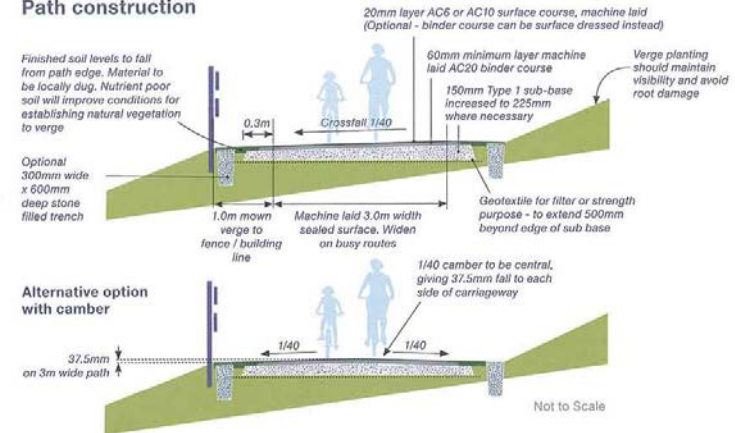


Table H.8 Path construction requirements, unsegregated shared use

Nature of route	Min. effective path width (see Note 1)	Type of surface
Urban traffic free	3.0m on all main cycle routes, secondary cycle routes, major access paths and school links; wider on curves and steep gradients. Where high usage is expected, or significant demand to ride two abreast, a width of 4m is preferred and segregation between cyclists and pedestrians considered. 2.5m possible on access routes and links with low use	Sealed surface imperative Surface dressed top to bitumen base course may be appropriate
Urban fringe / semi rural traffic free	3.0m on all main cycle routes, major access paths and school links. 2.5m possible on lesser secondary cycle routes and access links	Sealed surface imperative Surface dressed top to bitumen base course may be appropriate
Rural traffic free	2.5m on all main routes, major access paths and school links. 2.0m possible on lesser routes and links	Sealed surface required on any route within 5km of urban area or 2km of village environment Sealed surface required on routes linking villages where school traffic or other utility trips will benefit. Surface dressed top to bitumen base course may be appropriate Use of unsealed surface requires a rigid maintenance plan Use of unsealed surface not recommended on paths: • with gradient steeper than 1 in 20 • shared with equestrians • where significant run off expected

1. Refer to Table H.2 for additional width required for various edge constraints

2. Minimum acceptable verge width is 0.5m, 1.0m preferred

3. Greater width required where route is used by horses

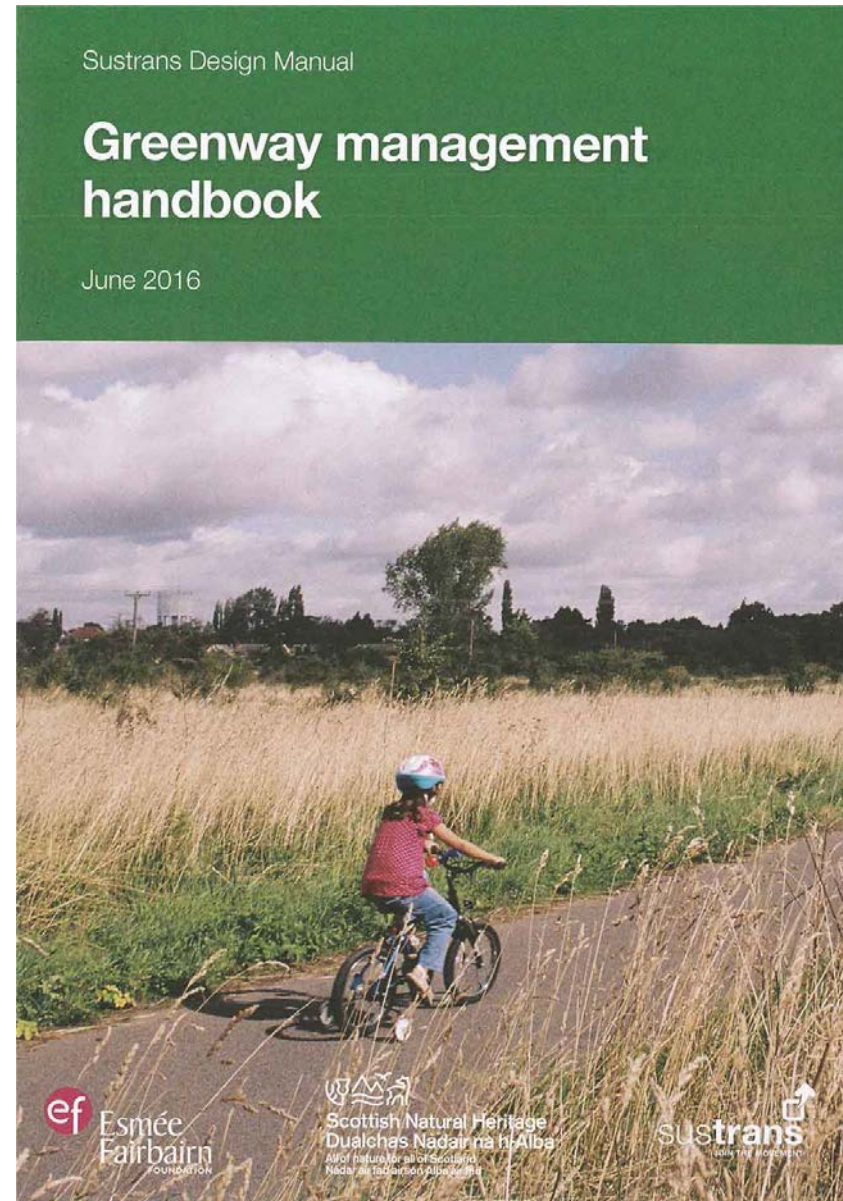
4. For widths on segregated routes see Table H.9

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A commitment and plan for long term maintenance and management is essential, the key principles of which are set out in the Greenway Management Handbook. As these Greenways develop there is the opportunity to recruit volunteers from the local community to get involved in a range of activities, from day to day maintenance, small capital improvement projects to providing information to local people and visitors.

Transport NI will play a role in maintaining the on-road sections.

Good maintenance includes regular sweeping of paths, maintain a smooth surface and appropriate level of vegetation management.



5.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ALL SETTLEMENTS

This report sets out a series of masterplans illustrating how cycling and walking infrastructure could be developed over the coming years. In the report the focus has been on the major urban centres. We are mindful however that there is potential to develop routes within smaller towns and villages and our first recommendation would be to consider these settlements with a particular emphasis on developing safe routes to schools, with networks linking housing with the local schools, community facilities and open spaces.

2. DELIVERY

Clearly the delivery of these networks will not be the sole responsibility of the Council. Partners such as Transport NI, other Government Departments and the private sector can all play their part. It is therefore recommended that a co-ordination group is set up led by the Council to oversee the development of the networks. The promotion of routes that connect with other local authority areas will need specific co-ordination arrangements. The remit of the group would include programme /phasing of developments in order to ensure complete, joined up networks of routes of consistent quality.

3. PLANNING

The masterplans set out a framework for cycling and (often) walking and we would recommend that these plans are embedded in the statutory planning process, in order to ensure all new development adequately provides for active travel.

4. DESIGN STANDARDS

It is important to ensure consistent high quality infrastructure provision especially if the implementation of the networks is likely to be undertaken by a range of organisations. We understand the Department for Infrastructure has adopted Transport for London Design Standards for urban networks and therefore these standards should be used for all urban areas. For Greenways and traffic free routes we would recommend Sustrans Greenways Design Guide.

5. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL

While we mentioned this in the context of smaller towns and villages we would recommend that the Council pursue this as a Borough wide initiative in co-ordination with the Active Schools Travel Programme. This will include infrastructure provision within the school grounds, links to the school, potential 20MPH zones around the schools.

6. BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

It is well recognised that building infrastructure alone without behavioural change programmes will not be as successful as when the two are combined. So while the networks are being developed, we would recommend the Council promote active travel within their own workplaces, with local communities and major employers across the Borough. This could involve a range of programmes and events and Sustrans could provide information and best practice to assist the Council.

7. PROMOTION/COMMUNICATION

We would recommend that linked to the delivery would be the development of a promotional campaign around the development of the networks which would help secure community buy-in to the overall strategy. The promotion of the Castle to Castle route as a brand will require a joint approach with Antrim and Newtownabbey, Belfast City Council and North Down and Ards Borough Council.

8. MAINTENANCE AND MANAGEMENT

Looking after the networks once they are in place is a major commitment and like the development will require a multi-agency commitment. We would recommend that maintenance and managements standards and arrangements/agreements are put in place at the development stage.

9. FINANCE

We would imagine funding for the network will come from a variety of sources both public and private. Currently two Greenway projects are under consideration by the DFI for further detailed design/development funding. These are Doagh to Larne Greenway and the Greenisland Greenway. Road developments and improvements clearly offer an opportunity to improve infrastructure. We would recommend that a remit of the Council led group co-ordinating the development, would also be sourcing of funding including planning/development gain.

10. VOLUNTEERING

The planning, development and management of the cycling network in particular the Greenways, offers the

opportunities for both community engagement and direct involvement. We would recommend that the Council actively encourage volunteering programmes. Sustrans runs a volunteer programme along sections of the national Cycle Network that we would be keen to develop further in the Mid and East Antrim area.