

Section 1 Introduction

Meath County Council in conjunction with BDP Planning Consultants prepared a Draft Public Realm Plan for Slane. The Draft Plan and accompanying Natura Impact Statement were on public display from Wednesday 19th of January to Friday 18th of February 2022.

The Draft Plan was on display at Meath County Council, Buvinda House, at Slane Library and at https://consult.meath.ie/en/consultation/draft-slane-public-realm-plan-2022.

Submissions were invited on the Draft Plan over a four-week period. 23 submissions were received from a variety of stakeholders. Upon receipt, each submission was given a number. This report cites the names of the individuals/groups who made submission, gives a summary of and a response to the principal issues raised in each submission.

This period of public consultation, taken in conjunction with the previous stakeholder workshops/public meetings were all beneficial will inform the final plan.

Section 2 Submission Themes

2.1 Cycling

Cycling was referenced in 12 of the 23 submissions received. Two principal issues were raised:

- 1. The need to cater for local cycling trips.
- 2. The need to link the village to the future Boyne Greenway.

The draft Public Realm Plan includes specific objectives which seek to address vehicular dominance and increase pedestrian permeability in the village, whilst acknowledging the challenges with the existing road network in Slane. Section 5.1 sets out objectives as follows:

- Improve continuity and quality of footpaths to increase pedestrian and cyclist comfort and safety.
- Create safe and regular pedestrian crossing points.
- Promote new pedestrian and cycling recreational links to the main cultural heritage in the area with opportunity to link the village to the Boyne Greenway.

Local Cycling Trips

Local cycle trips within the village can be facilitated with the provision of east/west links from residential developments to the village centre, community facilities etc. The Active Travel Unit of Meath County Council in conjunction with the NTA will seek to advance this project shortly.

Enhanced facilities for cyclists on the N51 are difficult to provide due to the limitations in width of the existing road space. Enhanced facilities for cyclists on the existing N2 are also challenging to deliver due to the width of the existing road space and current levels of traffic.

Connection to Boyne Greenway

The connection of Slane to the future Boyne Greenway is a key tenet of the public realm plan as it is essential that greenway users are encouraged and facilitated to visit Slane village. Currently there are four possible routes for the Boyne Greenway under examination, work is ongoing on the identification of an emerging preferred route. Connectivity to Slane Village from the greenway in the absence of the bypass will form part of the emerging preferred route option.

With a proposed bypass and a HGV ban in place, there will be a significant reduction in traffic in the village. A segregated cycle track is proposed on Mill Hill as part of the Slane by pass and public realm enhancement project for north bound cyclists. This will link Slane bridge and the future greenway with the proposed new off-street car park. At this location south bound cyclists will have the option of either dismounting and using the footpath or using the road sharing the downhill traffic lane with traffic. A signage strategy will be in place to provide guidance in this regard. Cycle parking facilities will be provided in the proposed car-park and at appropriate locations within the village. A new shared pedestrian/cycle link will be provided to the proposed car-park from Mill Hill. This will facilitate visitors wishing to travel to Slane by car, park and visit the area on foot or cycle.

Recommendation

Page 45 of the public ream plan will be amended as follows:

- The text of Point 1 will include reference to the provision of a segregated cycle track on Mill Hill;
- The text of Point 1 will include reference to the provision of a shared pedestrian/cycle link from Mill Hill to the proposed car-park off the N51.
- The text of Point 1 will include reference to the provision of a signage strategy for cyclists.

2.2 Heritage Status of the village

The majority of the submissions reference the importance of the careful selection of appropriate materials for paving and street furniture. The greening of the village while welcomed in most of the submissions, a long - term maintenance plan for planting is requested to be considered. Section 7.5 sets out the approach to paving and Section 7.6 sets out considerations for street furniture. The heritage of the area will be a key consideration in the selection of materials at implementation stage.

Recommendation

Amend Section 7.5 Page 66 as follows:

Add the following sentence: All paving proposals shall reflect the heritage status of the village and shall refer to the ACA Character Statement for Slane Village.

Amend Section 7.6 Page 67 as follows:

Add the following sentence: Street furniture shall form an integral part of the reimagined public realm in Slane and shall reflect the heritage status of the village and refer to the ACA Character Statement for Slane Village

Section 3 Submissions

Submission No.:	MH-C60-1	
Submitted by:	Paul Rock	
Summary of Submission:		
The submission expresses support for the Draft Plan noting that is it exactly what is required for the village to be a greener and more user-friendly environment. The submission suggests that linking the village to a greenway would encourage visitors.		
Response		
Support for the plan is welcomed.		
Recommendation		
No change required.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-2	
Submitted by:	Daniel Walsh	
Summary of Submission:		
States that the plan goes no way to remove the dominance of the private car in the town. Questions the point in building the Bypass if a car centric town is maintained. Concern expressed that cycling is not encouraged in the reimagined public realm.		
Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response.		
Recommendation		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-3	
Submitted by:	Slane Community Forum	
Summary of Submission:		
Welcomes and supports that Draft Slane Public Realm Plan.		
Response		
Support for the Draft Plan is acknowledged and welcomed.		
Recommendation		
No change required.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-4	
Submitted by:	Eamonn McElduff	
Summary of Submission:		
Bus shelters are required to be incorporated into	the overall design.	
High quality materials need to be used for all surfaces.		
Accessibility for all is a significant challenge.		
There is a need for secure cycle parking. The widening of shared pedestrian and cycle paths to 3m should be examined.		
The Anglers Car Park can be completely full at weekends, the possibility of an overspill car park should be considered.		
Consideration should be given to solar and or/wind power for public lighting.		
Response		
Several issues raised in the submission are operational and are more appropriately addressed as part of detailed design at project implementation stage.		
Bus shelter provision will be subject to future discussion with bus companies and physica constraints in the village. Refer to section 6.1 Project 01 – The Square- indicative proposed overal		

layout for the Village Centre; Point 9 shows the location for the provision for a bus stop north and west of the village junction.

Section 7.5 sets out the approach to paving an	d Section 7.6 sets out considerations for street
furniture. The heritage of the area will be a ke	y consideration in the selection of materials at
implementation stage.	

Recommendation

No change required

Submission No.:	MH-C60-5
Submitted by:	Janey Quigley

Summary of Submission:

The submission writer is the owner of the Millhouse and raises the following concerns:

- 1. No consultation regarding the redevelopment of their property.
- 2. The Millhouse is a private exclusive wedding venue and as such cannot operate as a public park.
- 3. Does not wish to sell their property or have the buildings knocked.

The submission concludes by stating the plans for the village seem good however, more car parking is required.

Response

The vision for Slane, as set out in the Public Realm Plan, is to protect and enhance the historic character of the village. The plan acknowledges the needs of the local community, local business, visitors and the necessity to support the role of Slane as a gateway to the Boyne Valley.

The Council notes that the lands referenced in this submission are in private ownership, any redevelopment proposals are therefore a matter for the landowner subject to appropriate planning and other consents being in place.

Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-6
Submitted by:	Alex and Carina Conyngham

Summary of Submission:

This submission welcomes and supports the preparation of a Public Realm Plan for the benefit of local people and visitors. An extension of the plan study area to include areas to the north of the Main Street, Hill of Slane and Ledwidge's Cottage would be welcomed.

The lack of traffic calming measures in the village needs to be addressed while facilitating local agricultural traffic through the village which will continue with or without the Bypass.

Welcomes objectives to provide cycling infrastructure but notes the Plan does not mark out any segregated cycle lands or other facilities. Queries how the proposed cycle infrastructure connects to Slane Castle, the Hill of Slane, Ledwidge Cottage and the Boyne Ramparts etc. Co-ordination with other plans, to, the Boyne Greenway proposal is considered essential

Detail on the quantum and location of car, bike and coach parking is sought.

Welcomes the inclusion of proposals for pedestrian crossings and raised tables. Calls on MCC to take immediate action to implement these measures prior to any ABP hearing in respect of the bypass.

Paving, street furniture and planting proposals should reflect the heritage status of the village and refer to the ACA character statement. Appropriate resources need to be identified for the long-term management and maintenance of planting, paving etc.

Materials chosen for the resurfacing of the angler's car park should reflect the use of this area by agricultural traffic.

Finally, the submission author thanks Meath County Council for the opportunity to make the submission and states that a meeting with all the stakeholders to discuss the plan would be welcomed.

Response

The Council welcomes this submission.

Several issues raised in the submission are operational and are more appropriately addressed as part of detailed design at project implementation stage.

The Public Realm plan focuses on the village core to create a functional and pleasant environment in the centre of the village. These principles can be expanded to other areas as appropriate as part of future public realm initiatives. Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Section 5.1 of the draft plan sets out the plan objectives. This section clearly sets out those elements of the plan it will not be possible to implement in the absence of the bypass. The Council will endeavour to implement those parts of the plan in the absence of the bypass, subject to available funding.

The Draft Plan still allows for through traffic to travel through the village post plan implementation, and with the addition of the Bypass and the introduction of traffic calming measures the speed of vehicular movement will be much slower and more controlled.

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

Section 7.5 of the draft plan sets out the approach to paving and Section 7.6 sets out considerations for street furniture. The heritage of the area will be a key consideration in the selection of materials at implementation stage.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Refer to Section 2.2 above for recommendation in relation to paving and street furniture.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-7
Submitted by:	Aisling Law
Summary of Submission:	

It is submitted that nowhere in the report is it made clear which measures can only be delivered if the Bypass is built. References in the draft plan to the Bypass should be removed.

The residents of Slane village have sought the regeneration of the village for years, and as such, the Slane Public Realm Plan is very welcome to support the safety, well-being, and future prosperity of the village and its residents.

Response

The Public Realm plan focuses on the village core to create a functional and pleasant environment in the centre of the village.

Section 5.1 of the draft plan sets out the plan objectives. This section clearly sets out those elements of the plan it will not be possible to implement in the absence of the bypass. The Council will endeavour to implement those parts of the plan in the absence of the bypass, subject to available funding.

Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	МН-С60-8
Submitted by:	Robert Kenny, on behalf of Slane Tourism
Summary of Submission:	

Welcomes the opportunities contained in the Draft Plan.

Would like to see dedicated cycling lanes with a provision for secure bicycle parking, storage and rental. It is also seeking a well-connected and integrated Greenway within the village, along with safe walking and cycling routes to Slane Castle & Distillery be provided.

The lack of consultation regarding several proposed footways/walkways crossing private land is raised.

Lighting, signage, street furniture, paving, planting should be carefully chosen to reflect the heritage character of the village

A 'French style' covered marketplace, facilities for outdoor dining and public toilets should be included in the plan. Provides detail of the history of the Square 'formally known as the Octagon, historically it had 8 Flambeaus, two on street. Submission recommends the Council consider the reinstatement of the fountain and to try to embrace the history of the Octagon in the Plan.

The need for long term parking for visitors combined with a parking strategy for the village is set out in the submission.

Public transport facilities including bus stops need to form part of the plan.

Pedestrian safety is highlighted as a concern in the submission.

Response

Several issues raised in the submission are operational and or are more appropriately addressed as part of detailed design at project implementation stage.

The Council notes that several of the proposed walking routes are shown on private lands. For these routes to progress detailed consultation will be required to take place with the relevant owners.

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

The Draft Plan proposes the addition of resurfaced raised tables with pedestrian crossings and tightening of the carriageway along each of the approach roads to aid as traffic calming measures. This is shown in section 6.1 Project 01 – The Square – Indicative Proposed Layout for Village Centre, figure's 2 and 4 refer.

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction for on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

The provision of bus shelters will be subject to discussion with bus companies and any physical constraints.

Section 7 of the draft plan sets out the approach to paving, street furniture, signage and way finding and planting. The heritage of the area will be a key consideration in the selection of materials at implementation stage.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Refer to Section 2.2 above for recommendation in relation to paving and street furniture.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-9
Submitted by:	Rebecca Wogan

Summary of Submission:

The submission wishes to see the removal of on street parking in the village and give more consideration to cyclist safety in providing a high standard of cycle lanes to facilitate cycling of all ages.

Response

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling

Submission No.:	МН-С60-10	
Submitted by:	Dara Ingoldsby	
Summary of Submission:		
The submission outlines that the plan should include cycle lanes, especially to link to greenway.		
Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.		
Recommendation		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-11	
Submitted by:	Una Ni Mhurchu	
Summary of Submission:		
Consideration should be made to include cycle lanes in the Plan. The submission queries how footpaths are proposed to be widened and car parking maintained, yet no provision made to make cycling safer.		
Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.		
Recommendation		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-12
Submitted by:	Antoin Lawlor
Summary of Submission:	

Submission raises concerns about cyclists cycling on footpaths, stating there is a need for segregated cycle lanes. Submission states that the Draft Plan is unclear regarding how a safe cycling initiative is being provided for the village.

Queries the need to retain on street parking when off street parking is proposed as part of the plan. Submission welcomes the introduction of increase in vegetation throughout the village and recommends the use of biofiltration and natural drainage system to deal with rainfall runoff.

Response

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-13	
Submitted by:	Fiona Devine	
Summary of Submission:		
Submission seeks that the plan be reviewed to include provision for cycle lanes, in order to reduce carbon emissions, improve accessibility in the town, facilitate expansion and attract tourists.		
Chief Executive's Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.		
Recommendation		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-14	
Submitted by:	Conor Magee	
Summary of Submission:		
Submission outlines disappointment that there is no infrastructure for safe cycling lanes. Writer advocates the many benefits of active travel and would like to see the Council promoting active travel.		

Response

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Submission No.:	МН-С60-15
Submitted by:	Bypass Slane Campaign
Summary of Submission:	

The submission broadly welcomes the Draft Plan. The group was established in March 2009 as a response to a multi-vehicle pile-up in the centre of Slane village.

The submission considers that there is a lack of emphasis within the Draft Plan to the very serious safety issues in the village as a result of the volume of traffic travelling through Slane.

The submission notes that significant elements of the Plan will be incorporated into an application to An Bord Pleanála for the Slane Bypass, specifically the elements relating to traffic management through the village and that these elements cannot be implemented in the absence of the delivery of the N2 Slane Bypass.

Urges caution against the removal of any existing parking spaces from the village prior to construction of an alternative car park.

Seeks future local stakeholder engagement to ensure their input and local knowledge is incorporated into any future, Slane Tidy Towns, who have worked tirelessly to substantially improve the village delivering high quality projects such as the Village Garden.

Response

Meath County Council welcomes the support for the public realm improvements from the Bypass Slane Campaign.

Section 5.1 of the draft plan sets out the plan objectives. This section clearly sets out those elements of the plan it will not be possible to implement in the absence of the bypass. The Council will endeavour to implement those parts of the plan in the absence of the bypass, subject to available funding.

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51.

These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

Plan implementation will require cooperation and coordination between all stakeholders including local community groups, local business, the wider community, landowners, the general public and the Council.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-16	
Submitted by:	Dónal Ó Murchú	
Summary of Submission:		
Submission welcomes the publication of the draft plan.		
The submission highlights concern regarding safety for family cyclists particularly from Slane		
Castle towards Slane Village and is seeking that this issue be addressed.		
Chief Executive's Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate		
to cycling.		
Recommendation		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-17
Submitted by:	Francis Ledwidge Museum & War Memorial Centre.
Summary of Submission:	-

The Francis Ledwidge Museum made a very detailed submission which is welcomed.

Several of the issues raised are operational and are more appropriately addressed at the implementation stage of the plan process.

Support is expressed for the key tenets of the Draft plan including garden design and proposed planting measures. Landscaping, signage etc should all respect the heritage of the village.

The re-design and re-imagining of the garden could facilitate the Ledwidge mural and bronze statue providing a greater focal point for visitors.

The reference to the provision of car parking to facilitate longer duration parking is welcomed.

A consistent design for street furniture and lighting in keeping with the character of the village is required.

The museum has the potential to function as a key visitor destination, significant enhancement of active travel and cycling infrastructure to connect the museum to key tourist, community and recreation destinations is required.

A footpath along N51 from Slane Credit Union out to the proposed new roundabout on N51 (passing the museum) should be included in any plans.

Provision must be made for cycling and walking infrastructure, for safe transfer and access to/from Ledwidge Museum with the village centre and link to other tourism spots to include Hill of Slane, out to Slane Castle and back down Mill Hill to re-join the Greenway.

Response

The Council acknowledges the importance of Francis Ledwidge to the village of Slane.

The N2 Bypass Scheme will seek permission for a footpath along N51 from Slane Credit Union to the proposed new roundabout on N51 which will serve the Museum.

The reimagined garden design will embrace the opportunity to facilitate the provision of a focal point for the local community and visitors.

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Section 7 of the draft plan sets out the approach to paving, street furniture, signage and way finding and planting. The heritage of the area will be a key consideration in the selection of materials at implementation stage.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Refer to Section 2.2 above for recommendation in relation to paving and street furniture

Submission No.:	MH-C60-18
Submitted by:	Henry Conyngham, The Marquess Conyngham
Summary of Submission:	

Submission expresses concern with proposed pathways through Slane Castle Demesne.

Response

Several of the proposed walking routes are shown on private lands. For these routes to progress detailed consultation will be required to take place with the relevant landowners.

Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-19
Submitted by:	Kevin Macken
Summary of Submission:	

Submission outlines support for the content of the Draft Plan, however expresses concern about the significant but limited details of parking and the height of trees in relation to light on existing premises.

Several proposals entail the use of private property without any communication or discussion with the owners.

Chief Executive's Response

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

The Draft Plan aims to increase local biodiversity through the planting of native and naturalised trees, shrubs and herbaceous planting. All planting proposals will take account of the conservation status of Slane.

Any redevelopment proposals of lands in private ownership are therefore a matter for the landowner subject to appropriate planning and other consents being in place.

Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-20
Submitted by:	Navan Cycling Initiative
Summary of Submission:	

The Navan Cycling Initiative is a community-based group established in Navan, advocating for improved cycling infrastructure. The publication of the Draft Plan is welcomed.

The current experience for the cyclist around Slane is poor. Cycling infrastructure and cycling links appear to have been omitted from the plan. A significant opportunity exists for Slane, considering the Boyne Greenway will be going through Slane in the next few years.

Queries the retention of on street parking on both sides of the N51 and N2, with two-way traffic lanes.

Response

The submission is welcomed. The importance of the Navan Cycling Initiative for promoting and encouraging cycling is acknowledged.

Cycling infrastructure is an essential element of any integrated public realm design plan.

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-21	
Submitted by:	Luke McGovern	
Summary of Submission:		
Draft Plan does not include any changes to help cycling infrastructure in the village.		
Would like to see a cycle lane provided along the N2 going over Slane Bridge to Slane Village.		
Consideration should be given to enable people coming off the Greenway to safely cycle into Slane		
Village.		
Response		
Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate		
to cycling.		
Recommendation		
A. Refer to Section 2.1 above for recommendation in relation to cycling.		

Submission No.:	MH-C60-22
Submitted by:	Helen McEntee TD, Minister for Justice,
Summary of Submission:	

Submission welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the proposed Public Realm Plan praising the positive impact for Slane and its environs.

Engaging with Local Community Groups, their primary concerns and issues are as follows:

The inclusion of pedestrian crossing points, with the proposed redesign of the junction, its imperative that public safety is a major consideration.

The provision of safe and accessible cycle ways.

Increased public parking, as currently there are very limited spaces for parking and a designated car park is required. Parking bays for buses are also required.

Picnic areas and recreational seating along the bank of the river are also required, again to help tourists when they visit.

Greater emphasis on planting is also required, more planter boxes and trees will help to enhance the village.

Continued investment in Greenway connections, Slane can easily be linked to Oldbridge and Navan.

Chief Executive's Response

Improving the environment for pedestrians is a key element of the public realm plan. The plan contains detailed proposals in this regard.

Cycling infrastructure is an essential element of any integrated public realm design plan.

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

The draft plan proposes a parking strategy which comprises of a reduction in on street parking, the introduction of time bound on street parking and the provision of a long stay car park on the N51. These measures will address the parking needs of all users while supporting vibrancy in the village centre.

Picnic areas and recreational seating along the bank of the river and additional planting and street trees will be facilitated as part of the Public Realm Plan. Refer to section 6.3 Project 03- Slane Bridge-Design Principles, figure 7 – picnic and recreational area.

The Draft Plan aims to increase local biodiversity through the planting of native and naturalised trees, shrubs and herbaceous planting. All planting proposals will take account of the conservation status of Slane.

Recommendation

Refer to Section 2.1 above for response in respect of matters raised in this submission that relate to cycling.

Submission No.:	MH-C60-23	
Submitted by:	Councillor Wayne Harding	
Summary of Submission:		
Submission welcomes the publication of the plan and encourages engagement with the proposed Draft Public Realm for Slane village. Submission is in support of the aspects of the plan directly relating to the delivery of the Slane Bypass, new design for the Village Square and removal of the Mill Hill gantries.		
Response		
Submission Noted.		
Recommendation		
No Change required.		