The Committee
Galway Cycling Committee

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info@galwaycycling.org

Galway Cycling Campaign
Feachtas Rothaíochta na Gaillimhe

FAO:
Senior Planner,
Planning Department,
City Hall,
College Road,
Galway
publicrealm@galwaycity.ie

Regarding: GALWAY PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY
https://www.galwaycity.ie/public-realm-strategy

Development Description: The draft Galway Public Realm Strategy is a proposal for a vision of place, design guidance and outline project proposals to improve Galway's streets and public spaces.

On behalf of the committee I wish to make observations on the above strategy as advertised. We would welcome an opportunity to meet members from the Planning Department to discuss our concerns and alternative proposals in greater detail.

Introduction

In the Executive Summary, of *"Part 2: Design, Activity and Delivery Manuals"* the opening section of the section Making Space begins as follows :

Galway's Transport Strategy seeks to redress the balance in favour of pedestrians and cyclists over vehicular traffic and the Public Realm Strategy seeks to capitalise on this by creating a high quality public realm, made possible by reducing the dominance and upgrading the quality of the physical fabric, hard and soft.

While welcome these stated, broad goals of both strategies, in our submission we will outline a number of areas which we observe that the delivery of measures will be inadequate in achieving such goals.

Figure 0.1 *Extent of area covered by Galway Public Realm Strategy (taken from Strategic Environmental Assessment Report, page 5)*

Reference to design standards and guidance on cycling

We make reference throughout this document to the following documents and use the indicated abbreviations:

- **The National Cycle Policy Framework 2009-2020 (*NCPF*)**, Smarter Travel, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2009
- **The National Cycle Manual (*NCM*)**, The National Transport Authority, 2011
- **The Design Manual for Urban Streets (*DMURS*)**, Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport and the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government, 2019
- **Traffic Signs Manual**, The Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, 2019

Ministerial Circular PSSP 8 - 2010 states that the National Cycle Policy Framework is a National Policy under the terms of section 9(6) of the Planning and Development Act 2000. Accordingly development plans must be consistent in so far as is practicable with that policy.

Strategy of assessment

The **five needs of cyclists** are outlined in the NCM as follows:

a. *Road Safety*
b. *Coherence*
c. *Directness*
d. *Attractiveness*
e. *Comfort*

Our assessment of the design features and measures included in the Galway Public Realm Strategy will be guided by how well these five needs are deemed to be met.

It is our expectation that any traffic management programme for Galway City, and by extension the Galway Public Realm Strategy, will follow the Hierarchy of Road Users starting with pedestrians at the top and ending with private car users.

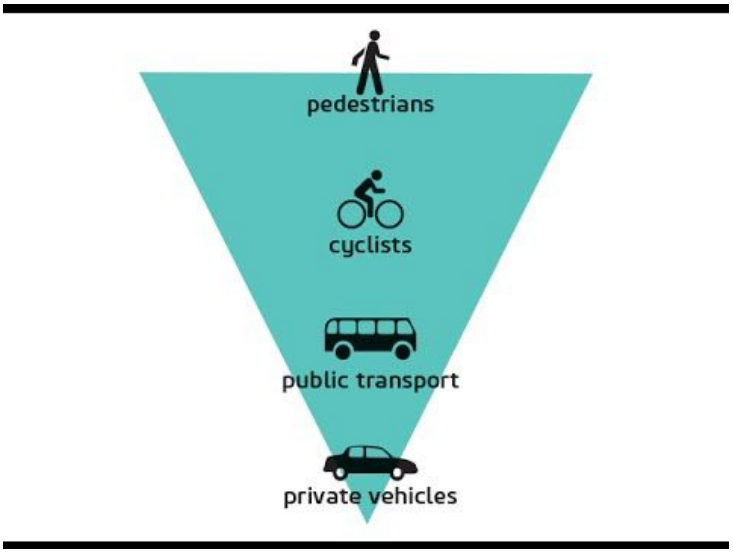


Figure 0.2 *Hierarchy of Road Users.*

We also expect any programme to be drafted in accordance with the Hierarchy of Solutions set out in the NCPF:

i. Traffic reduction, particularly of HGVs.
ii. Traffic calming - reducing speed through enforcement and other measures
iii. Junction treatment and traffic management, e.g. modifying or removing urban roundabouts, eliminating slip roads and left-only turns, adding Advanced Stop Lines.
iv. Increasing road space and overtaking space for cyclists.
v. Cycle lanes and cycle tracks.
vi. Cycleways – roads dedicated to cyclists.

Key issues

Our submission covers the following issues:

1. Car parking provision
2. Cycle parking provision
3. Car and vehicle restrictions
4. One-way streets and cycling
5. Space to cycle safely and conveniently
6. Speed reductions through design and speed limits
7. Street design near city centre schools
8. Provision for cycling in pedestrianised zones

Many of these issues have been raised previously in a range of other submissions to the city council, including a submission on the Galway Transport Strategy (2015).

Issue 1. Car parking provision

Observations

Reducing car-parking - rationale

Simply put, abundant city centre car-parking acts as a strong magnet, attracting non-local traffic into city centre streets. Reducing car parking capacity is a method which can be utilised for traffic restraint and is thus part of the hierarchy of solutions of reducing the dominance of motor vehicles and redressing the balance in favour of pedestrians and cyclists, as is a stated aim of the Galway Transport Strategy and the proposed Strategy.

International examples

As international examples: Copenhagen's renewal as a sustainable city can be traced to a policy, adopted in the 1970s, of reducing available car parking capacity by several per cent a year. Between 1986 and 1996 Copenhagen reportedly eliminated 600 car parking spaces. In Amsterdam, car parking availability and tariffs are a key component of the traffic management program. As part of a ten year plan formulated in 1992 up to half the car parking spaces were to be removed. To quote a recent story on Amsterdams transport policy: The number of trips by car, compared to 1990, has fallen in all districts (-14%), whereas the number of trips by bicycle has only risen within the ring road (+36%). The bike is used most often in the town centre (41% versus an average of 28%) and the car least often (10% versus an average of 28%). This can be attributed to the restrictive parking policies enacted here since the 1990s.

In Groningen (pop 180,000), city centre zones with strict limits on car parking have been implemented with the maximum number of parking spaces set at one for every 10 employees. Galway will need to follow these best practice examples by removing car parking from the city centre. The priority will have to be those locations where road capacity has been removed from cyclists to provide parking thereby creating traffic lanes of unsuitable width on roads with heavy traffic. Examples include Bohermore, Headford at Wood Quay, Marys Rd, University Rd. If combined with tolling the bridges this measure could be revenue neutral for the council. It is also noteworthy that the current concentration of multi-story car-parking on the east side of the river has the effect of forcing car-traffic from the west to cross the river looking for parking.

On-street parking should be the primary target of reduction, primarily because of the direct impact this has on the "function of place" but also on the "function of movement" for pedestrians and cyclists on these streets. Vehicles that have no function once parked, have priority over the movement of other road users and the enjoyment and utility of street space for those lingering. It also attracts drivers in search of parking to circulate on city streets, further compounding the damaging impact on these locations.

On-street car-parking

We propose that there should, at the very least, be no on-street parking on "Principal Streets", given the stated design principles underpinning their form and function in the Strategy. It is not consistent with the high value of these streets to the visitors and locals, to have a large fraction of

their area occupied with parked vehicles. Note the state aim from the strategy regarding these streets (Part 2, page 34): "***The principal streets are places which provide a city centre role and are visited by growing numbers of people...For streets within this typology, the level of ambition and investment in the urban design must be raised to align with their increasingly significant role as a destination, while continuing to support movement.***"
We would contend that the vast majority of visitors to these streets arrive on foot, and if sufficient cycle parking was provided (see Issue 2 of this submission), they would arrive by bicycle.

Restrictions on on-street car parking is a recommendation of the National Cycle Policy Framework.

Page 18 Objective 2 (3) Junction treatment and traffic management
This includes:

- *on-street parking restrictions;*

The simple reallocation of space would enable a huge improvement in the public realm of many of these streets, with provision of cycle lanes, cycle parking, trees, widened footways and other improvements to both the function of movement and the function of place.

Figure 1.1 The intensity and abundance of on street car-parking on Market Street highlights the impact this has on the public realm, both in terms of stymieing the movements of cyclists and pedestrians and the attractiveness to visit and linger on such a street. Note that there are 4 off-street car-parks with hundreds of spaces within a 200m (<3 minutes walk) from this location (2 operated by Galway City Council and 2 privately-operated).

Recommendations

- Systematic removal of car-parking from the area of the proposed Strategy is required to achieve the stated goals of the Strategy.
- This should be targeted primarily at on-street car-parking.
- Initial focus should target but not be limited to "Principal Streets".

Issue 2. Cycle parking provision

Observations

Quantity

We observe that no figures are stated in the Strategy for the total target number of cycle spaces to be provided within its area of extent. A stated aim of the NCPF, is to increase the proportion of journeys which are cycled to 10% by 2020. We estimate, based on analysis of Central Statistics Office data on "Workplace Zones" from Census 2016 that there are approximately 15,000 people who travel to work or education within the extent of the area (based on geospatial analysis of data: https://www.cso.ie/en/census/census2016reports/workplacezonesand1kmpopulationgrids/). The current proportion of trips to work or education by cycling in Galway City is 6% (source: Central Statistics Office, Census 2016, https://statbank.cso.ie/px/pxeirestat/Statire/SelectVarVal/Define.asp?maintable=E6013&PLanguage=0).

Thus 900 cycle-parking spaces are required within the extent of the area of this Strategy to satisfy current demand. If the 2020 NCPF target of 10% was to be achieved that figure would increase to 1,500 cycle spaces required. It should be noted that the NCPF target is a national one, so one would expect higher targets in urban compared to rural areas, thus a 15%-20% target would be more appropriate in Galway City.

This also excludes other trips to be taken to the city centre for other purposes, such as shopping. Only 35% of all adult trips are for work or education, according to the National Travel Survey, 2016 (Central Statistics Office https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-nts/nts2016/whwt/).

On the basis of above, it would not be unrealistic to expect over 3,000 cycle spaces in Galway City centre on this basis.

We would estimate that the number of cycle spaces, falls well short of even the lowest of these figures. Galway City Council should conduct a full cycle parking audit to obtain precise figures, as part of this Strategy and use an evidence-based and target-based approach to specify the number of spaces to be provided.

Location and distribution

Cycling is a door-to-door means of transport. As such we would advocate that cycle parking should be abundant and widely-distributed - with parking available on all streets. The indicated locations from the Part 1 document of the Strategy do not reflect such a consideration - with cycle parking locations indicated clustered rather than distributed.

As an addition to this principle; cycle parking should be concentrated on the periphery of any pedestrianised streets, where cycling is prohibited. If cyclists are expected to walk in certain sections of the city, then provision should be made for them to park before they must dismount.

Figure 2.1 *Indicated locations of current and proposed cycle parking from the proposed Strategy (from Part 1, page 70). Our evidence-based proposal is for a much greater provision, with a more distributed provision - cycle parking should be on every street, and concentrated on the periphery of the "Pedestrianised Core".*

Street furniture

Bollards should be dual purpose wherever possible and allow for the locking of bicycles through the frame using a standard shackle lock.

Figure 2.2 *Example of secure and stable bike parking provided at "dual-purpose" bollard.*

Design

The design indicated and illustrated in the Strategy for cycle parking stands, is the Sheffield or inverted U-stand type. We welcome this, as it represents the type most convenient and secure for parking.

Consideration should also be given to providing sheltered cycle parking where space permits, in particular at locations likely to be used by people working in the city, where cycles will be parked for extended periods of time, and no parking is provided at the location of employment. In addition there are many residences in the area with no scope for secure cycle parking. We propose a similar scheme to the Bike Bunkers initiative (https://bikebunkers.ie/) provided by Dublin City Council for designated, secure, on-street, cycle shelters for residents outside terraced houses and apartment blocks. These could be provided as reserved spaces on a yearly basis and should be offered under a similar scheme to resident car-parking permits, at similar or lower annual fee.

Figure 2.3 *Bike Bunker scheme provided by Dublin City Council for designated, on-street, sheltered and secure cycle parking for residents.*

Inclusive cycle parking

It should be noted that a reasonable proportion of cyclists may have mobility issues; elderly people or those with a disability or chronic illness. Some people use cycles as mobility aids, and others may use non-standard bicycles for their everyday travel needs. These include: handcycles, tandems, tricycles, recumbents, wheelchair cycles, side-by-sides and cargo bikes.

We recommend "*A Guide to Inclusive Cycling*" Wheels for Wellbeing (2019, https://wheelsforwellbeing.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/FINAL.pdf) for further detail on this issue.

In line with this guide, we propose that 5% of all cycle parking in Galway City should be designed with such “non-standard” use in mind and designated as such. A basic, first step would be to

designate the first and last stands in any row of Sheffield stands as inclusive to provide more room and accommodate different bike types and abilities. Further design considerations should incorporate the following from the above guide:
"*Where possible, install cycle parking bays that* ***people on nonstandard cycles can ride into and out of*** *(meaning no need for reversing, turning or lifting a cycle)*".
Also:
"*Parking facilities for non-standard cycles should either be located on ground level or have step-free access (e.g. via a shallow ramp or large accessible lift)*".

Figure 2.4 *Inclusive cycle parking at Trinity College Dublin.*

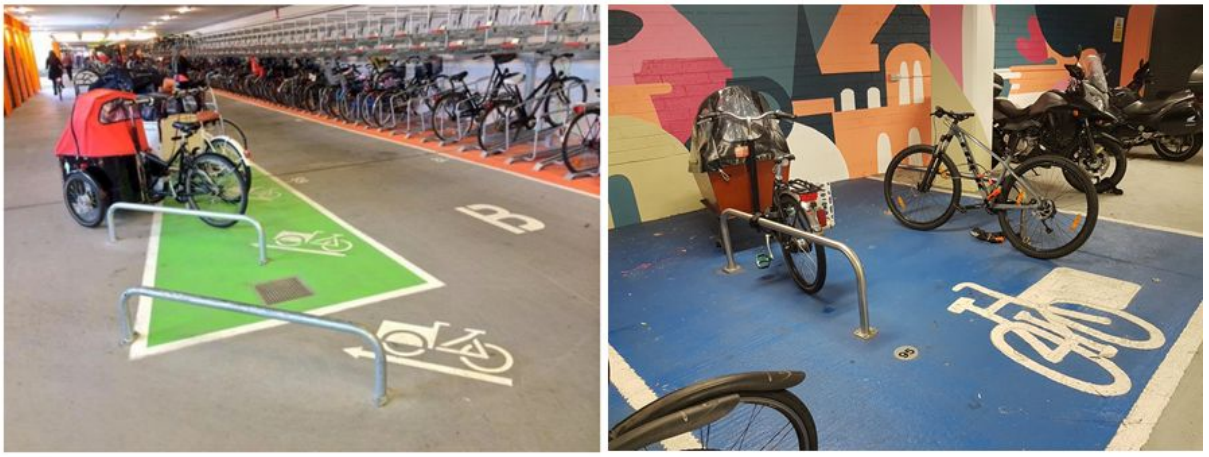


Figure 2.5 *"Half-height" stand for cargo bike parking and inclusive parking provided in Copenhagen (left) and by Dublin City Council at Drury Street Car Park (right).*

Recommendations

- The provision of cycle parking should be sufficient in number and in line with (a) evidence-based demand and (b) government targets for cycling rates.
- The provision of cycle parking should be part of a widely distributed network.
- Cycle parking should be provided for longer term storage, for workers and residents with design reflecting the needs of this use.
- Cycle parking should be provided for all users.

Issue 3. Car and vehicle restrictions

Observations

Restrictions on heavy goods vehicles

Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) are not compatible with walking and cycling. It has long been recognised that HGVs are disproportionately involved in fatal collisions and in particular in fatal collisions involving cyclists. The presence of HGVs also results in a large reduction in the comfort and perceived safety of the shared roads environment for vulnerable road users. A prominent urban collision type is where a left turning HGV crosses the path of a cyclist going ahead. There is a requirement for a HGV management strategy for the city. The NCPF states in Policy Objective 2.4 HGV Strategies. "*We will require local authorities to develop Heavy Goods Vehicle (HGV) Management Strategies for every town in the country. We will consider a ban on the movement of HGVs on routes to schools / other specific routes with mixed traffic between 08.30-09.30 and 15.00-17.00.*"

Dublin City Council have reported that of the 11 cycling fatalities that occurred in the city between 2002 – 2006, 8 of these deaths were of cyclists killed by left turning HGVs

A review of cycling deaths in London (*Morgan A et al. "Deaths of cyclists in London: trends from 1992 to 2006", BMC Public Health, 2010*) found as follows:
"***HGVs were involved in 103 of 242 (43%) of all incidents and the vehicle was making a left turn in over half of these (53%)***."
and
"***HGVs are disproportionately involved in collisions fatal to cyclists: using the data from our study, freight vehicles are approximately 24 times more likely to be involved in a fatal incident than cars, 4 times as likely as buses and 8.5 times as likely as motorcycles.***"

We are aware of plans to restrict access to heavy goods vehicles (HGVs), and welcome an objective of the Strategy (Part 1, page 100) relating to the "Pedestrianised Core" to:
"*Manage vehicular service access and restrict HGVs*". However we propose that HGV access should apply to the full extent of the Strategy, rather than just the pedestrianised core. One key advantage is that this enables the retro-fitting of streets for HGV-free traffic, including the reduction of junction corner radii (see Issue 6 of this submission).

Last mile delivery systems, using smaller vehicles, including e-cargo bikes, as are used elsewhere, should be investigated to ensure no disruption to supply chains for businesses within the area of the Strategy.

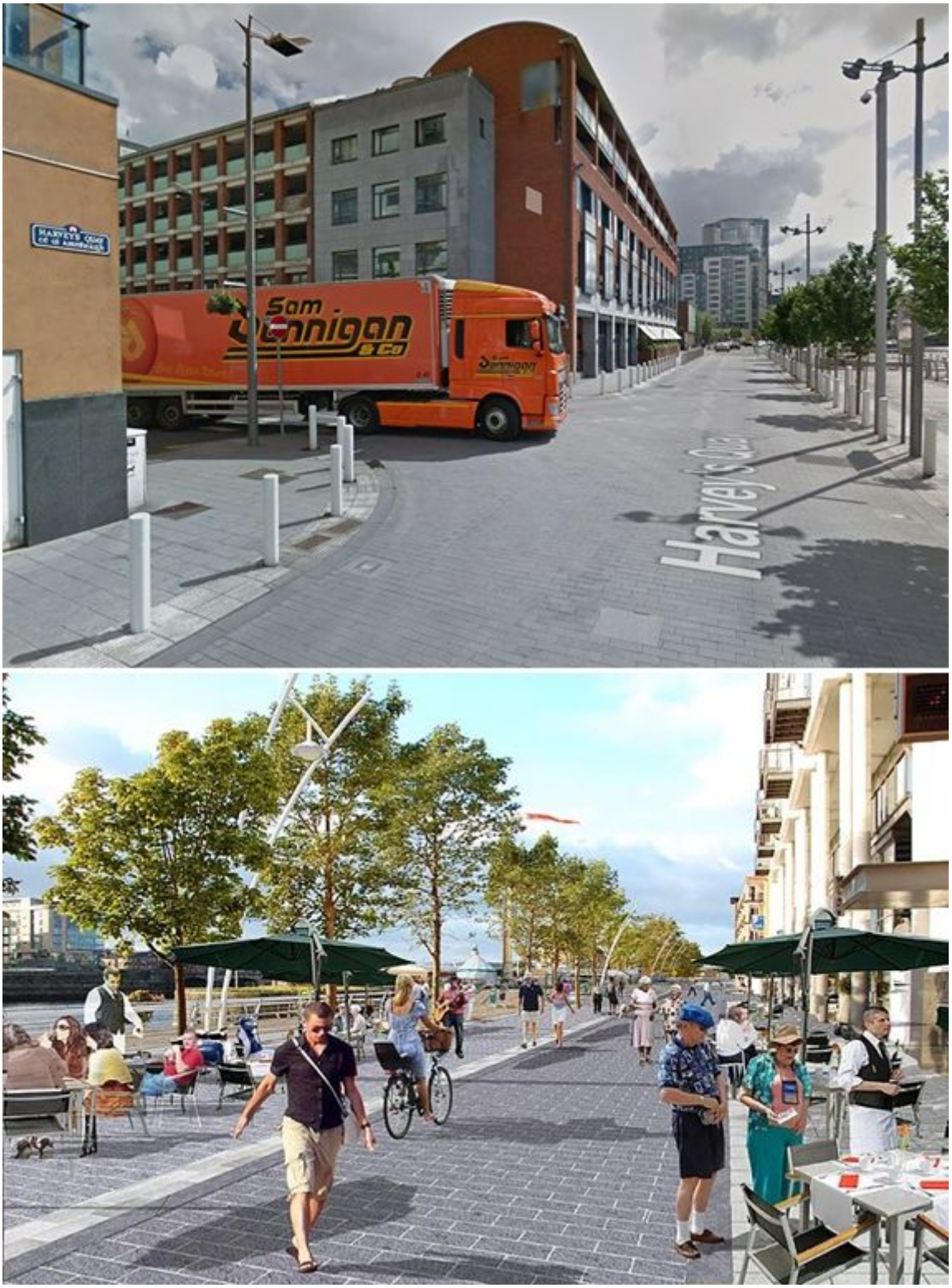


Figure 3.1 *Howley's Quay, Limerick. This followed a design principle of shared streets in the proposal, but the failure to restrict the access to through motor traffic, including HGVs has led to a very different reality (above panel) to the design streetscapes in the original plan (below panel). This should be considered a failure of an attempt at public realm improvement.*

Restrictions on through motor-traffic

The expectation that cyclists should share of narrow roadways with motor-traffic is only acceptable when motor traffic is dramatically reduced. This can generally only be achieved by the removal of any through motor-traffic, restricting these streets to local-access only.

We note key areas which are suitable for such local access gateways, including Market Street, and Bowling Green. Here retractable bollards would prevent through traffic at a vibrant and vital section of Market Street and on quiet residential street. This arrangement would still permit access to the St. Pat's School car park from Bridge Street with a view that Market Street Carpark would be the location for future residential, commercial or mixed-use development.

Figure 3.3 *Example of Public Realm "Improvement" scheme in Stamford New Road, Altrincham, UK. Here, it is evident, that despite extensive changes to surfaces and the level-street aesthetic, the failure to curb the dominance of motor traffic has resulted in a superficial change with little improvement in the function or feel of the street.*

Figure 3.3 *Footpath on Middle Street highlighting the poor provision for movement for people walking. There is no means to create additional space for people walking here, without removing through-access to motor vehicles, and creating streets where drivers are visitors with the lowest level of priority. Continuing to allow unrestricted car access here, and redressing the balance for pedestrians (and cyclists) is like trying to square the circle.*

Recommendations

- HGV traffic should be restricted and limited to a permit only system for necessary access within all areas covered by the Strategy.
- Local access for motor traffic at key points should be integral to any improvement of the public realm.

Issue 4. One-way streets and cycling

Observations

One-way streets and one-way street systems demonstrate an attitude to traffic management that is hostile to vulnerable road users and emphasises “flow” for cars. One-way streets are associated with speeding, reduced quality of life and increased danger to child pedestrians. An attractive project for the city would be to eliminate one-way streets wherever possible. Where one-way streets remain, they should be made two-way for cyclists. There is rarely any traffic management reason for applying one-way streets to cyclists.

The provision of two-way cycling on suitable one-way streets has a good safety record abroad and is provided for under Irish law (SI273/98, SI274/98). The German city of Bremen started providing two-way cycling in 1980. In Belgium, all one-way streets in 50kph zones can be made two-way for cyclists where conditions allow. A similar situation applies in France for 30kph zones.

Provision for one-way cycling in Ireland

In 1979 a report published by An Foras Forbartha (The National Institute for Physical Planning and Construction Research) recommended the provision of contra-flow cycling on the one-way streets in Galway city . The 1999 Galway City Development Plan had an objective of providing a contraflow cycle lane on a one-way street in the city. In 2004, Galway's elected city council put specific objective into the 2005–2011 city development plan to provide two-way cycling on one-way streets where feasible. This objective was restated in the 2011 city development plan. In 2011, the National Transport Authority commissioned a report on the possibility of a Bikeshare scheme for Galway and other cities. This report makes several references to a need for two-way cycling arrangements on one-way streets, it states “Recommendations are made on the complementary measures which would be needed as a new scheme is introduced. Perhaps the most important one would be an increase in permeability for cycle traffic in the city centres through the provision of two-way cycling on one-way streets, and by opening up pedestrianised areas to cycling where conditions allow.”

There is a 35 year history of official proposals for two-way cycling on Galway’s one-way streets. Despite this nothing has been done. A bike share scheme for Galway has been put in with state funds without also bringing in one of the key supporting measures.

The National Cycle Policy Framework contains multiple references to the need to address the problems caused by one-way streets.

Page 7 Interventions

> *making junctions safe for cyclists and removing the cyclist-unfriendly multi-lane one-way street systems.*

Page 18 Objective 2: Discussion

> *The current design of many urban roads is still focused on motor powered vehicles, often at the expense of cyclists and pedestrians. Examples include multi-lane one-way streets,*

Page 18 Objective 2 (2) Traffic Calming

> *The concept of "traffic calming" should also be broadened to include physical measures to revise the perceived design speeds of roads, and other measures, such as the removal of one-way street systems. Multi-lane one-way street systems require cyclists to take detours rather than direct routes*

Page 18 Objective 2 (3) Junction treatment and traffic management

This includes:

- *contra-flow cycle lanes on one-way streets / making two-way streets for cyclists;*

Page 19 Policy 2.3 Through Traffic

> *We will support local authorities in removing through-traffic [...] other measures to make the town centre more bicycle friendly should be introduced: environmental traffic cells, bridge / road closures, removal of spare lanes at signalised junctions, dismantling of one-way street systems, removal / modifications of roundabouts etc.*

Illustration of the severance and diversions caused by one-way streets

The images below illustrate some examples in Galway of severance and diversions imposed on cyclists by one-way streets.

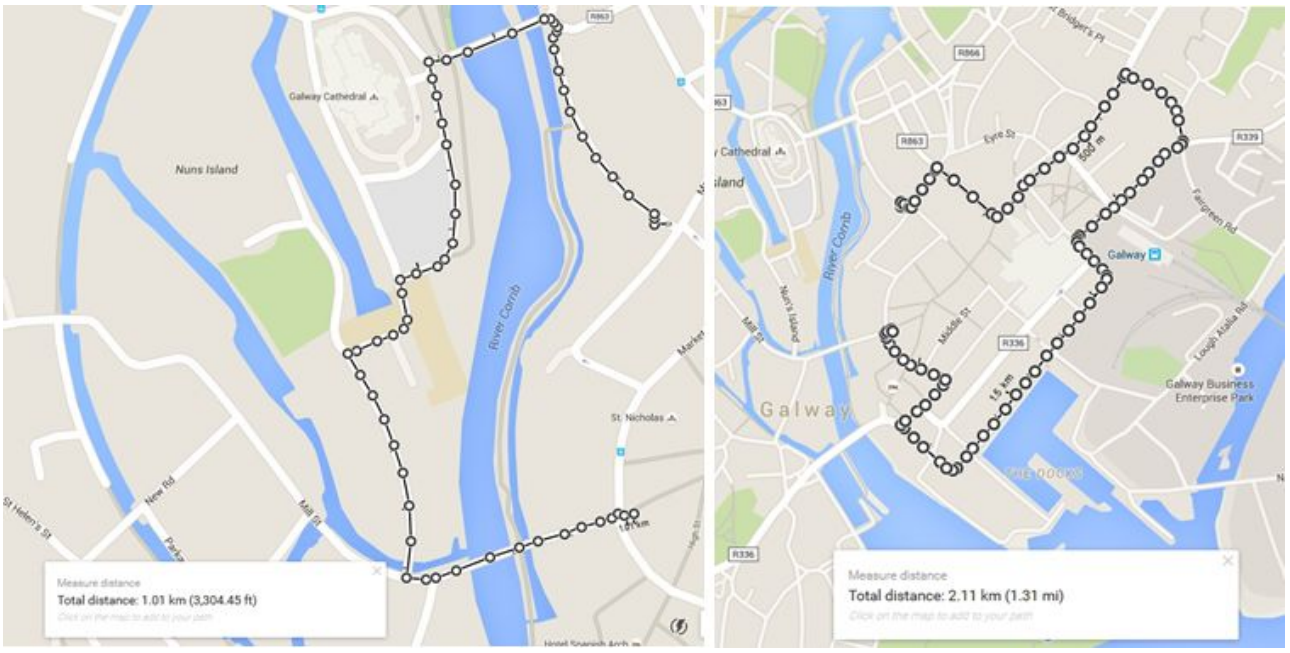


Figure 4.1 *The nominal distance from Newtownsmith to Mainguard St is 340m. Because of the one-way restrictions in the city the actual distances required to reach Mainguard St are 1) 1km if travelling via Salmon Weir Bridge and Nuns Island 2) 2.11km if going via Eyre Square, Forster St and the hostile multilane one-way system around the docks.*

The pictures below show examples of existing Irish situations where two-way cycling has been restored on one-way streets. There are a range of options from simply providing an exemption, providing some kind of gateway (sometimes called a false one-way street) or providing a formal cycle-facility for the length of the road.

Figure 4.2 *Examples of contra-flow cycling in an Irish setting without and with specific infrastructure.*

Recommendations

- Provision should be made for two-way cycling on all one-way streets.

Issue 5. Space to cycle safely and conveniently

Observations

Reduction in width of carriageway

We note that the treatment of many streets in the Part 2 document of the Strategy indicate a lane widths of 3.0m or less. But no separate space is provided for cycling. This does not comply with long established best practice.

The issue of the negative effects of narrow lanes and engineered pinch points has long been a concern for people who use bicycles and has been raised repeatedly in various submissions to Galway City Council. The National Cycle Policy Framework defines road narrowing schemes as a cycling unfriendly intervention that requires remedial treatment.

> NCPF Page 20
> Policy 2.6 Remedial Measures
> We will carry out remedial measures on existing cyclist-unfriendly urban roads with a special focus on roundabouts, multi-lane one way streets and road narrowing schemes.

In effect in narrow lanes with heavy traffic unprotected people on bicycles are being used as a form of mobile traffic calming. When queues of vehicles form cyclists are similarly obstructed from maintaining progress and may take to the footpaths. Examples of this in Galway can be found on Bishop O'Donnel Road and on Fr. Griffin Road at the fire station where the city council has chosen to remove road space from cyclists so as to store queueing cars. It was also tried previously on the Old Dublin Road at Renmore when, despite warnings from the Galway Cycling Campaign, the outbound lane was narrowed to provide an inbound bus lane. As predicted, outbound traffic could not pass cyclists and a second scheme was required to widen the road.

Parkin 2005 (Lancashire the Cyclists' County) discusses the matter as follows;

> A "tight" cross-section is too narrow for a motor vehicle to overtake a bicycle within the lane. Motor vehicles following cycle traffic within a tight cross-section, or suddenly braking to do so, can be very intimidating. Cycle traffic can operate comfortably in a tight cross-section only if the speeds and volumes are low and overtaking by using the outside or oncoming lane is easy. The creation of a tight cross-section, for example by footway widening, may be considered in urban central locations, but can be intimidating for cyclists being followed by motor vehicles.

Guidance on cycling infrastructure is starkly simply here: mixed or shared street cycling on narrow lanes should only be allowed where there is little or no through traffic and traffic speeds are low. Thus unless meaningful and systematic reductions in through traffic, traffic speed, and removal of HGVs is ensured, then this is entirely incompatible with best practice to ensure the safety and appeal of cycling on these streets.

Table 4.1.1 Cross-section comments and mitigation

	Spacious	Critical	Tight
Definition	Sufficient room to safely overtake cycle traffic	Dangerous close overtaking	No room within the lane for overtaking of cycle traffic
Dimensions	At 30 mph: 4.20m (cars only) or 5.05m (HGVs) At 20mph: 3.75m (cars only) or 4.60m (HGVs)	3.10 to 3.75 metres	3.10 metres or less (cars) or 3.60 metres or less (with HGV traffic)
Comment	• acceptable at most speeds but more space or separation needed as speed increases.	• not advised as it encourages dangerous overtaking; • more acceptable if it is easy to overtake (e.g. little oncoming traffic, no central island).	• only normally acceptable for short distances; • speeds lower than 20mph; • good visibility; • more acceptable if next to lanes that allow easy overtaking (e.g. no barrier, little traffic).
Mitigation		• reduce speeds; • an advisory cycle lane or cycle logos within the main carriageway may help to boost cyclists' confidence and keep traffic to the right.	• reduce speeds; • wide advisory cycle lane to alert drivers to cycle traffic presence and lack of overtaking space.
Application	Main roads, distributor roads with cycle lanes	Not recommended without off-carriageway cycle path	Residential roads

Figure 5.1 *Derived from Dutch guidance issued in 1993 this extract from Lancashire the Cyclists County explains why using narrow lanes is only acceptable in particular circumstances.*

"Principal Streets"

Most concerning is the treatment on so-called "Principal Streets". Stated design principles for these streets in the Strategy are to:

"*• Improve balance of pedestrian and vehicular space*

• Where not already pedestrianised, create pedestrian priority or shared surface"

We note no mention of cycling on these streets in the Strategy, despite the clear hierarchy in DMURS of cyclists above private motorists; a principle which the design of these streets should follow.

No space is indicated for cyclists in the design drawings for these streets, and it is telling that cyclists are not included in these drawings.It is as if cyclists have been airbrushed from the picture.

We note also the consistent trend in the design drawings for these streets: to continue to provide on-street parking, loading bays or narrow drop-off strips, even on the narrowest (7m) of these streets.

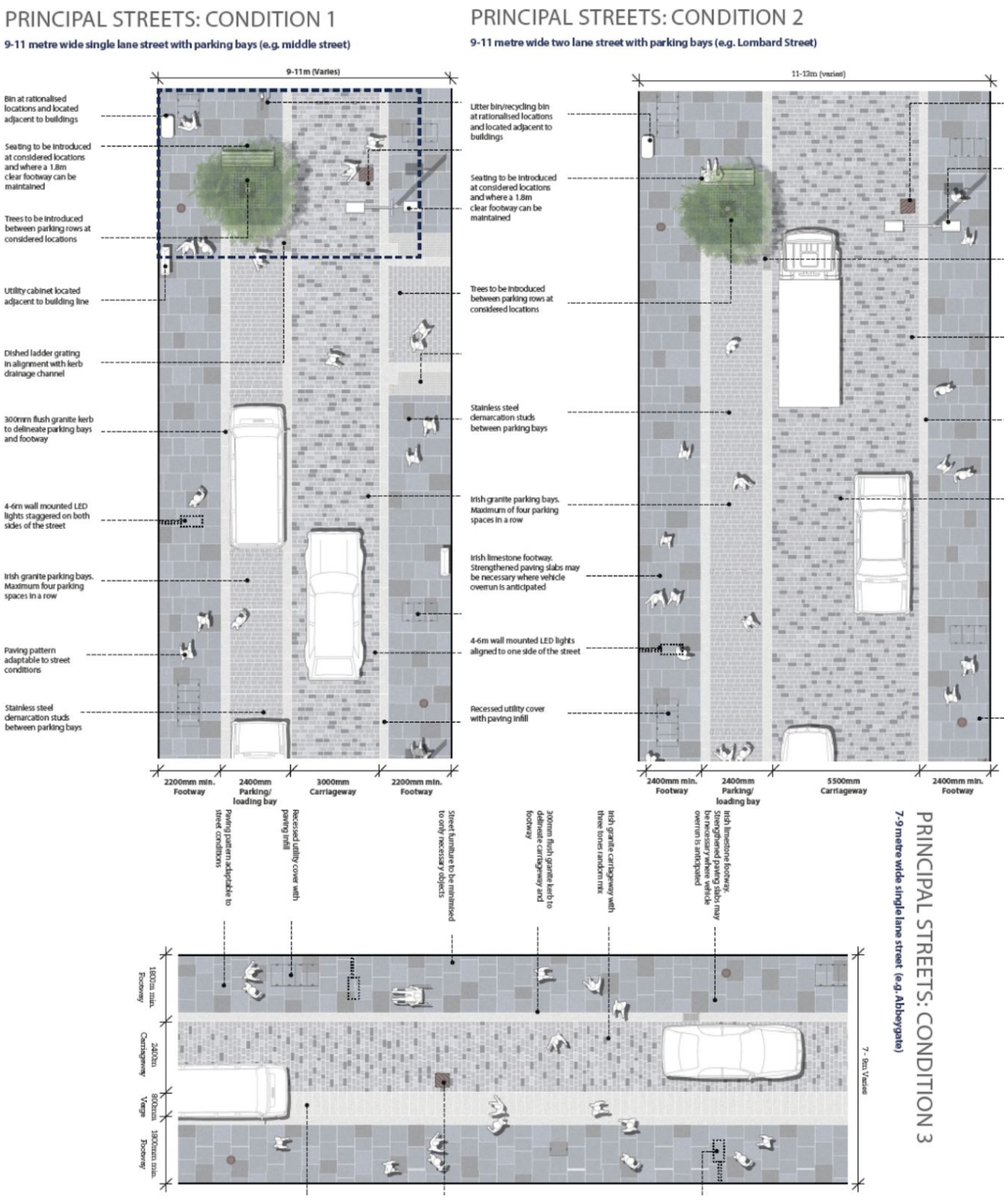


Figure 5.2 *Design plans for "**Principal Streets**" "Condition 1, 2 and 3" for streets which are 9-11m, 9-11m and 7-9m wide respectively from the Strategy. No space is indicated for cyclists, and it is telling that cyclists are not included in these drawings. All of these streets appear to have provision for on-street parking, loading or drop-off, even on a street as narrow as 7m (Condition 3).*

“Approach Roads”

Figure 5.4 *Design plan for “Principle Streets - Condition 1” for streets which are 12-14m wide from the Strategy. Note the absence of space for cyclists, but ample space for car-parking.*

Walworth Road, London - Integrated parking bays with concrete pavers matching the adjacent footway

Figure 5.5 *An extract from the Strategy (Part 2, page 43), with a "streetscape precedent" from London, listed as something to aspire to. Is the design legible here? Is the verge a parking bay, a loading bay, or is it a footway? Observe where the cyclist is forced to cycle in order to feel safe and make progress while trying to legally filter.*

Provision of acceptable roadside segregated cycle facilities

We note also that, where roadside segregated cycle lanes are indicated in proposed street designs in the Strategy, these are often of ambiguous specification, and inadequate widths. The NCM supports the principle of two-abreast cycling on all cycle lanes. All single-direction cycle lanes should be 2.5m and two-way cycle lanes should be at least 3.0m.

It is also not clear how any bidirectional cycle lanes will operate, how do cyclists access them, and what happens at junctions.

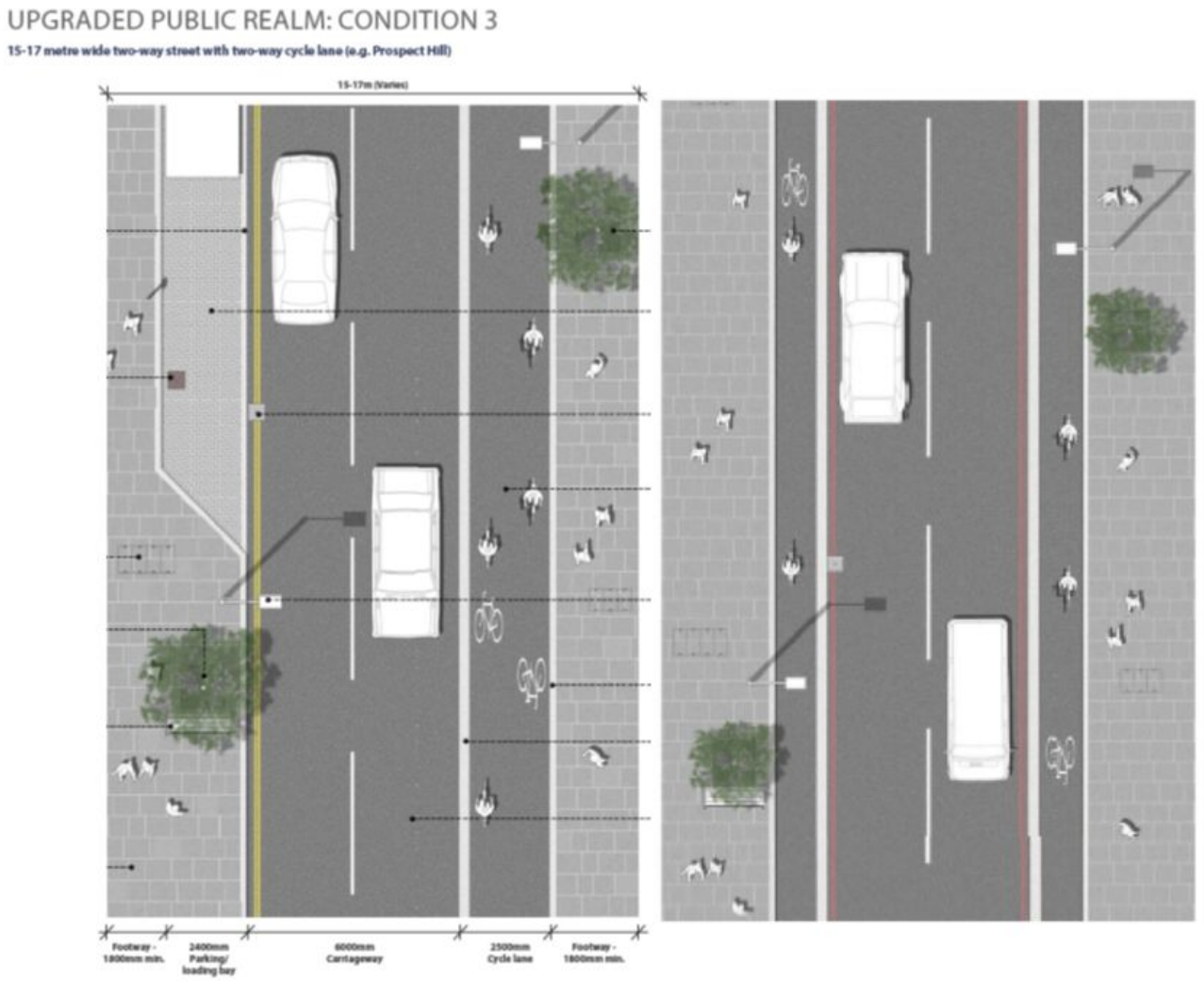


Figure 5.5 *Street design in Strategy giving specifications for roadside segregated cycle lanes. The left panel indicates a bidirectional cycle lane of width 2.5m. It is unclear if the raised kerb is included in this width. The panel on the right indicates cycle lanes on either side of the roadway, of an unspecified width.*

Advanced stacking locations

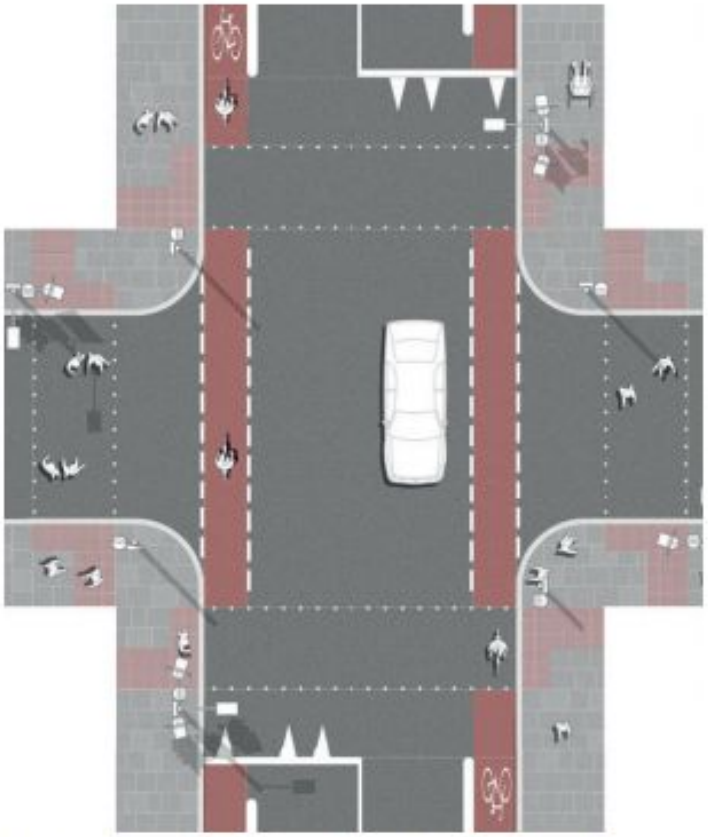
We note the absence of any advanced stacking locations or advanced stop lines (ASLs) in any of the junction design schematics.

The provision ASLs is recommended by the NCM in the following context:
"*ASLs are used at signalised junctions to facilitate stacking of higher volumes of straight ahead cycle movements, and also to accommodate right-turning cycle movements. They permit cyclists to stop and wait in a forward position, ahead of stopped vehicular traffic."*

It is important to provide these only in the presence of a cycle lane. The NCM gives the following condition:
"ASLs must always be "fed" by a cycle lane to ensure that cyclists can pass stationary traffic and get to them. If no feeder cycle lane can be provided, do not introduce an ASL on its own, as this will only frustrate cyclists and encourage them to mount the footpath etc. to access the ASL."

We note junction design drawings in the Strategy Part 2 do not contain such features, even when such junctions meet the above conditions.

Figure 5.6 *Image from NCM showing advanced stacking location/advanced stop line for cyclists.*



Typical controlled four arm crossing with segregated cycle lanes in two directions. Designs should adhere to National Cycle Manual guidelines

Figure 5.7 *possible junction design from Part 2 of the Strategy (page 67). These inclusion of ASLs on the lower and upper arms of this junction is recommended.*

Recommendations

- Reduced traffic lane widths are unacceptable without (1) provision of segregated space for cycling, or (2) reduction in the volume of motor traffic via removal of through motor-traffic.
- Any cycling facilities should be of a sufficient width and be part of a coherent network for cycling, including junction treatments.

Issue 6. Speed reductions through design and speed limits

Observations

Speed limits

Speed limits should be reduced on all streets to 30km/hr with commensurate changes to the design speed of roads. We contend that such a simple measure would would have the effect of improving the “feel” and “friendliness” of streets beyond what can be achieved by only changing surfaces, materials or aesthetic appearance.

If shared streets are to be introduced for walking, cycling and driving, then these should have lower speed limits still. For lower speed limits, DMURS states the following:
“*Local Authorities may introduce advisory speed limits of 10-20km/hr where it is proposed that vehicles, pedestrians and cyclists share the main carriageway.*”
In such circumstances, design and signage should clearly indicate that local access motor-traffic (assuming exclusion of through motor-traffic) must have lower priority to pedestrians and cyclists.

Reducing corner radii.

Wider corner radii encourage greater speed of drivers turning at junctions and create an unnecessary hazard in areas where there is heavy pedestrian and cyclist traffic. They also ensure that more space is required for the roadway and rob streets of vital space to serve their “function of place” rather than their “function of movement”.

As per DMURS guidance, all corner radii on junctions with the “Pedestrianised Core” and “Principal Streets” of the Strategy should be no more than 3m (and preferably less than 2m). This systematic approach should be enabled by the removal and restriction of HGV movements within the extent of the area of the Strategy.

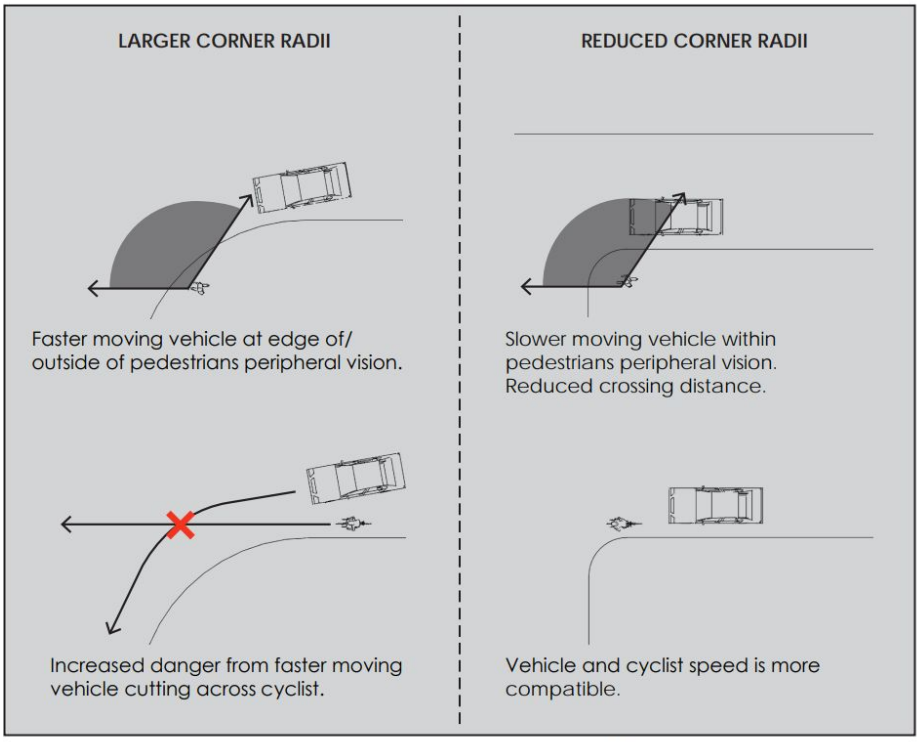


Figure 4.42: Illustration of the benefits of reduced corner radii on pedestrian and cyclist safety (images based on Figures 6.3 and 6.15 of the UK Manual for Streets (2007)).

***Figure 6.1** Image extract from DMURS illustrating the effects of corner radii on safe cycling.*

The key advantages of such a treatment in the context of Galway City centre core would be:

- Reduces driver speed at junctions
- Improves visibility for pedestrians at junctions
- Risk of “left-hook” collisions for cyclists reduced
- Allows reallocation of space from the carriageway to the footway or verge for better public realm use

An example of the feasibility and the transformative aspect of such a scheme is illustrated with a mock-up of the junction of Cross Street and Middle Street (both “Principle Streets” under the Strategy). This area could immediately benefit from a more pedestrian friendly design, with the additional verge and footway space used for a variety of purposes to improve its “function of place”, including increased cycle parking.

Figure 6.2 *Mock-up design of a corner radius reduction at the junction of Cross Street and Middle Street. Further improvements could increase the aesthetic aspect of the street, in line with the Strategy.*

Recommendations

- All corner radii within the extent of area of the Strategy should be no more than 3m (and preferably less than 2m) as per DMURS guidance.
- A universal speed limit of 30km/hr should apply to all streets within the area of the strategy, with lower speeds mandated on shared streets.

Issue 7. Street design near city centre schools

Observations

We note that there are several references to creating and improving “play zones” for children as part of the public realm. However no mention appears to be made of the fact that there are 6 schools or streets leading to them in the proposed Strategy area of extent (4 primary and 2 secondary).

It is necessary to acknowledge that hundreds of children will be walking and cycling to work in this area in any design considerations of these streets, and in accordance with the stated goal of the NCPF that every school should have have safe routes to school for walking and cycling.

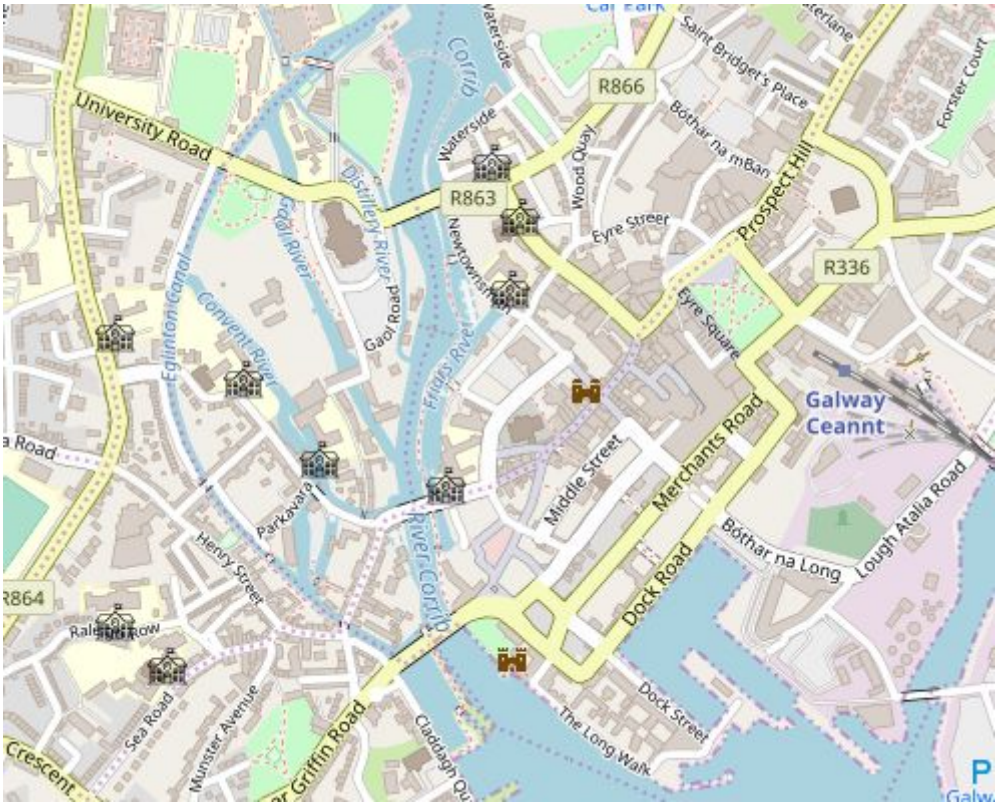


Figure 7.X Locations of schools indicated in the vicinity of the Strategy area of extent. Of these, 6 are located within the area.

Recommendations

Design considerations must be amended to reflect the presence of children on the approach to the schools within the area of the proposed Strategy.

Issue 8. Provision for cycling in pedestrianised zones

Observations

The Galway Cycling Campaign endorses the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights and accepts that people on foot are entitled to spaces for their exclusive use. However, the closure of key routes to cycle traffic in the name of creating pedestrian precincts is unworkable and is considered poor practice. At the time of the closure of Shop St in 1999 it had among the highest levels of cycling of roads in the city center. The closure of Shop St./Mainguard St was known by Galway Corporation at the time to be contrary to best practice. Galway Corporation had access to the following guidance before they closed the Shop St./Mainguard St. corridor to people on bikes.

- Local Transport Note 2/86 “Shared use by Cyclists and Pedestrians” UK DOT
- Local Transport Note 1/89 “Making Way for Cyclists” UK DOT
- Trevallian P., Morgan J. 1993 “Cycling in Pedestrian Areas” Transport Research Laboratory Report 15, Crowethorne

For an idea of the detours imposed by the Shop St/Mainguard St closure see the illustrations above regarding impact of the one-way restrictions at Market St. The manner of the conduct of the Shop St scheme was also a source of some embarrassment for the city in the eyes of visitors at the time. The Jacobs report on the proposed BikeShare scheme for Galway has also recommended restoring cyclist access through the pedestrian zone.

The National Cycle Policy Framework also proposes the following;

> Page 42 Section 15.7 Further Legal Changes
>
> (iii) providing default exemptions of cyclists from restrictions in pedestrianised streets;

We would observe that the effect of having roads open to only people on foot or on bikes does not require legal changes there are other ways to achieve the same thing.

Perhaps it is now time to fix the situation with Shop St, Mainguard St and Abbeygate St?

Tribune 5/6/98

Galway going against cycle trend!

Dear Sir,

Last weekend I visited Galway with four colleagues, three from Germany and one from the Netherlands. We were have a very nice time and I, being a local so to speak, was feeling proud, justly so, of our fine city. The idea of pedestrianising the centre of town was agreed by all to be an excellent idea.

Imagine my embarrasment, however, when my visitors, with a great deal of merriment, began taking photographs of a sign that read "NO CYCLING ALLOWED" in a street that up until two months ago allowed cars, vans, buses, articulated lorries and the like to drive on. I lamely tried to explain that maybe the sign was there for safety reasons.

I was told that almost every other city in Europe were doing their utmost to encourage cyclists and were providing cycle lanes to that end on all roads and pedestrian areas where at all possible. Surely the corporation could afford to paint a white line 600mm from and parallel to the existing line indicating a loading area. This plus a little logo painted on the street is all that is required to create a cycle lane.

Surely Corporation members, on their visits abroad have seen these cycle lanes. They work perfectly all over the continent and in the cities of North America and Canada. Is there any reason why they should not work in Galway.

Yours sincerely,

Colm F. Ridge
School of Engineering
Institute of Technologi. sligo
Ballinode, Sligo.

Figure 8.1 *Letter to City Tribune 1998 regarding prohibition of cycling on Shop Street.*

Recommendations

- Cycling access should be restored on pedestrian streets particularly if the one-way street restrictions are to be retained.

Summary of recommendations

While we commend a stated aim of the Strategy and the Galway Transport Strategy to reduce the dominance of motor-traffic and redress the balance in favour of walking and cycling, we contend (with evidence provided) that neither of these strategies address the systematic factors behind car dominance: ubiquitous and cheap car-parking on Galway City streets, the ability to travel almost anywhere via private motor vehicle without regard to the purpose of that journey.

We believe that the proposed Strategy, is destined to fail in this crucial goal, because approaches to tackle the above issues are ad-hoc and insufficient, and will result in only aesthetic but not functional changes to Galway City streets.

The proposed Strategy should be amended to reflect these considerations, with a summary of recommendations below:

- A formal strategy to systematically reduce car parking
- An evidence-based and target-based policy to provide sufficient quantity and appropriate location of cycle parking
- A formal strategy to systematically restrict vehicular movements appropriate to each street type and function.
- Reduce the speed on all streets within the Strategy through the reduction and enforcement of speed limits and through design measures.
- Allocating space for cyclists on streets where through motor-traffic is not removed.
- Cycling should be enable fully on one-way and pedestrianised streets.

Yours faithfully,

The committee, Galway Cycling Campaign