

Draft Kilkenny
CYCLE
Network



1. Introduction

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle plans for counties outside the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), including Kilkenny County Council. CycleConnects is intended to form a comprehensive cycle network for all cycle user types across each county in Ireland and to develop on from the cycle network proposed for the counties in the GDA.

This will include existing cycle networks such as urban cycle routes, greenways and interurban routes. This will be supplemented by proposed cycle routes/links outlined in latest development and transport plans, and other networks required to maximise the connection of the network to communities. It should be noted that this network does not specify any infrastructure types on any route and is focused on highlight the key links required to form a comprehensive cycle network connecting all major communities and destinations.

This note will briefly summarise the proposed cycle network for Kilkenny. For details of methodology, national policy and the overall aspirations for the CycleConnects networks, please refer to the main report of which this technical note is an appendix of.

2. Kilkenny Population and Settlements

County Kilkenny is located the south-east of the country in the province of Leinster. It borders counties Carlow and Wexford to the east, counties Tipperary and Waterford to the west, and county Laois to the north.

According to the CSO Census 2016, the county has a population of 99,232 inhabitants. Table 2.1 below shows the population of towns within Kilkenny. Kilkenny City is the only settlement with over 5,000 people, with all other towns having a population of less than 5,000.

Table 2.1: Population Settlements in Kilkenny

City/Town	Population (2016)
Kilkenny	26,512
Callan	2,475
Thomastown	2,445
Castlecomer	1,502
Graiguenamanagh	1,475
Piltown	1,220
Mooncoin	1,175
Ballyragget	1,082
Urlingford	1,038

3. Existing Kilkenny Policies and Plans

Kilkenny City and County Development Plan 2021-2027

The Kilkenny City and County Development Plan (KCCDP) was published by Kilkenny County Council to outline the strategy and objectives for the planning of the County for the years 2021-2027.

Throughout the plan, a number of objectives relating to cycling and the provision of cycle infrastructure have been listed under the following headings.

Transport and Movement

Within the transport section of the Development Plan, the following Strategic Aim is outlined:

“To co-ordinate transport and land use planning, reducing the demand for travel and the reliance on the private car in favour of public transport, cycling and walking by providing for a greater mix of suitable uses and by promoting and facilitating the transition to electrification of our transport modes moving away carbon intensive modes to new technologies such as electric vehicles.”

The county has a significant rural population, therefore there is a high number of trips that must be made by private car and vehicles. The aim is to reduce the overall demand for transport by promoting a more efficient land use pattern where suitable land uses are located closer together where possible. This should allow the population to avail of alternative methods of transport. As of 2016, only 1.2% of the county cycle for trips to work or school. The development Plan has set a target to increase this figure to 15% by 2040. In order to achieve this target, the following objectives were listed within the plan. This includes the following Land Use and Transport objectives:

- **12A:** To plan for and progressively implement a sustainable, integrated and low carbon transport system by enhancing the existing transport infrastructure in terms of road, bus, rail, cycling and pedestrian facilities and interfacing different modes as the opportunity arises.
- **12B:** To plan for a transition towards sustainable and low carbon transport modes, through the promotion of alternative modes of transport, and ‘walkable communities’ together with promotion of compact urban forms close to public transport corridors to encourage more sustainable patterns of movements in all settlements
- **12C:** To undertake appropriate traffic management measures within the City and County to reduce congestion and minimise travel times
- **12D:** To develop a 10-minute city framework for Kilkenny City to map and identify infrastructure requirements to support the ‘10 minute’ city.

The following are modal shift objectives outlined in the KCCDP:

- **12E:** To deliver on sustainable mobility with an accompanying investment in infrastructure to provide for integration between all modes of transport to support the use of sustainable travel choices.
- **12F:** Implement strategies to meet the mode share targets during the lifetime of the plan and develop, in conjunction with the NTA, an effective monitoring regime for the implementation and where required, adjustment of the Council’s sustainable transport strategy in order to ensure the achievement of the modal share targets referred to under objective 12G.

- **12G:** To achieve a modal shift from the private car to walking or cycling in accordance with the targets in Table 12.1 for County Kilkenny.
 - **12Ga:** To prepare mobility management plans incorporating mobility objectives of the local area plans for Thomastown, Castlecomer and Piltown.
 - **12Gb:** To undertake a mobility study for Bennettsbridge.

Cycling and Greenways

The KCCDP aims to promote cycling and walking as efficient, fast, and relatively inexpensive forms of transport. Land use and design will be focused to create urban areas that are more conducive to the provision of infrastructure for public transport, walking and cycling. It is important to provide a public transport and a network of safe, well-lit, and convenient footpaths and cycleways within residential areas with links to schools, local neighbourhood centres, public transport stops, and workplaces will encourage walking and cycling.

The following cycling specific objectives were listed within the plan.

- **12H:** To compile a Cycling Strategy for the County
- **12I:** To develop a network of cycling and pedestrian routes within Kilkenny City to provide connectivity and provide an alternative to car-based transport.
- **12J:** To develop a cycle route between the Eastern Environs and the Breagagh Valley.
- **12K:** To investigate the provision of a cycle route along the River Nore Linear Park connecting north of the City with the east and south of the City.
- **12L:** To improve cycling infrastructure throughout the city in accordance with the recommendations of the Kilkenny Local Area Transport Plan as resources permit.
- **12M:** To reduce the Council's carbon footprint through the implementation of the Council's own cycle scheme, which will encourage staff members to discharge their official duties in a more sustainable way.
- **12N:** To carry out an appraisal of each of the District Towns to determine measures to facilitate cycling and walking and improve connectivity within the town particularly from an age friendly perspective.
- **12O:** To invest in cycling and other smarter travel projects in support of the compact '10-minute city' concept.
- **12P:** To provide connections to the Kilkenny Greenway to settlements along its route as the need arises and resources permit.

Outlined in the plan is the aim to development of greenways. It aims to promote and facilitate a comprehensive network of greenways, linking parks and public open spaces to the Regional and National Greenway Networks and work with the NTA and adjoining local authorities and communities in this regard.

There are two specific greenways under development in the county; Waterford to New Ross Greenway, known as the Southeast Greenway and incorporates the Kilkenny Greenway, and the Rosslare to Waterford Greenway. There are a number of objectives that relate to the development of greenways outlined in the Plan.

- **5F:** Development of the Kilkenny Greenway as part of the Southeast Greenway in South Kilkenny.
- **8J:** To complete the construction of the Kilkenny Greenway, connecting New Ross to Waterford.
- **8K:** To promote and develop the Waterford to Rosslare Greenway in association with Waterford City and County Council and Wexford County Council.

- **8Ka:** The Council will investigate the potential of developing a Greenway from Kilkenny to Castlecomer and Ballyragget and onwards to Co. Laois as part of the development of Greenways and Blueways within the County.
- **8Kb:** To undertake a metropolitan-wide Open Space, Recreation and Greenbelt Strategy to include the identification of a location for a regional scale park within the Waterford Metropolitan Area as well as the development of neighbourhood parks and open space.

Within the plan the Council have indicated they will support the progression of long-distance linear greenways and greenway town networks, and the further development and improvements of cycling and walking trails. It will also seek to incorporate the provision of pedestrian and cycle ways as a condition of planning permission to link amenities, facilities, and points of interest.

Kilkenny City

Within the plan the following strategic aims for Kilkenny City were listed with the aim of aligning transport and land use to reduce demand for travel and promoting the use of public transport, such as walking, and cycling is promoted. Since the 2014 Plan, Kilkenny has begun to develop the concept of the ten-minute city which has been supported by the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES).

As part of the development of the City and County Development Plan the County Council commissioned the preparation of a Local Transport Plan (KLTP). It is to act as a short to medium term plan to cover the period 2020-2026 and beyond to support the development of a comprehensive, sustainable transport network for the City.

The plan outlines mobility objectives that relate to the promotion of cycling:

- **C5A:** To prepare a comprehensive Local Transport Plan for Kilkenny City in accordance with the Area Based Transport Assessment Guidelines (TII, 2018) within the concept of a 10-minute City addressing:
 - Walking,
 - Cycling,
 - Public transport
 - Motorised transport
 - Carparking strategy/Car parking demand management
- **C5B:** To implement the recommendations of the Local Transport Plan for Kilkenny city once adopted.
- **C3C:** Improve Trails, Greenways and Walkways, (see Vol. 1 Chapter 8 Open Space), including the construction of a Boardwalk at Greensbridge to link the River Nore Riverside Walk with the new Riverside Linear Park in the Abbey Quarter and onwards to the Canal Walk, and New urban park in Abbey Quarter.

Waterford Metropolitan Transport Strategy 2022

Due to the northern area of Waterford City being within the county boundary of Kilkenny the Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy has been referenced within this note. Further information can be found within the Waterford technical note also.

The Waterford Metropolitan Area Draft Transport Strategy has been developed to aid the regeneration and transformation of Waterford. The development of a concentric city including north of the River Suir - the North Quays and other key locations will be supported by

integrated transport investment to create an attractive, liveable city, connecting city and suburbs, and building north-south linkages.

Current challenges detailed within the report include travel behaviours which include;

- An over-reliance on the private car for relatively short trips;
- Relatively low mode share of cycling and limited (through improving) dedicated cycle infrastructure;
- Low walking mode share outside of the city centre;
- A high level of car use for the school run, suppressing the use of public transport, walking and cycling and contributing to car-based congestion during the morning and afternoon inter-peak periods.

The strategic objectives of this strategy include the prioritisation of sustainable transport and active travel to reduce car dependency.

Chapter 7 within this strategy focuses on the development of cycling infrastructure and the cultivation of a cycling culture within the Waterford Metropolitan Area. The following measures have been identified to support the growth of cycling within the area;

- Identification of Primary, Secondary, Inter-Urban, Feeder and Greenway Routes;
- Facilities designed to National Cycle Manual standards including cycle parking;
- Full or light segregation from other modes to ensure safety and comfort for all road users;
- Local traffic calming, lower speed limits and junction treatments, particularly at complex junctions in an urban context; and
- Careful provision within pedestrian environments in central areas.

Further information can be found within the Waterford Urban Cycle Network plan on the NTA's consultation website.

Future Local Transport Plans

Kilkenny County Council are required to develop Local Transport Plans as part of their Development Plan process. While the cycle network outlined in this map has been created to reflect current transport arrangements, it may be subject to change based on the more detailed analysis and recommendations developed as part of the LTP process.

4. Proposed Kilkenny Cycle Network

Introduction

Following a review of existing data, policies and conducting workshops with Kilkenny County Council to review the draft cycle network, the following summarises the methodology and proposed cycle network development for Kilkenny. The full details of how all the CycleConnects networks were developed are available in the NTA Consultation website.

Prior to developing the Kilkenny County Network, a GIS model was established for the county. This model mapped all existing information made available for the county, supplied by various bodies including the NTA, CSO, Department for Transport, Transport Infrastructure Ireland, Department for Education and Kilkenny County Council. The data collected includes;

- Locations of major employment and job density
- Existing cycle infrastructure and routes
- Existing bus stops, rail lines and other public transport
- Location of schools and education centres
- Shopping centres, hospitals and other destinations that may attract cyclists

The collation of this data has aided the selection of cycle routes in Kilkenny that are available to as many people as possible. It has also allowed for the servicing of key destinations within County Kilkenny.

Methodology

Following the collation of existing data, the cycle network plan for Kilkenny was developed. This was based on a three-tier system outlined in Figure 4.1 below.

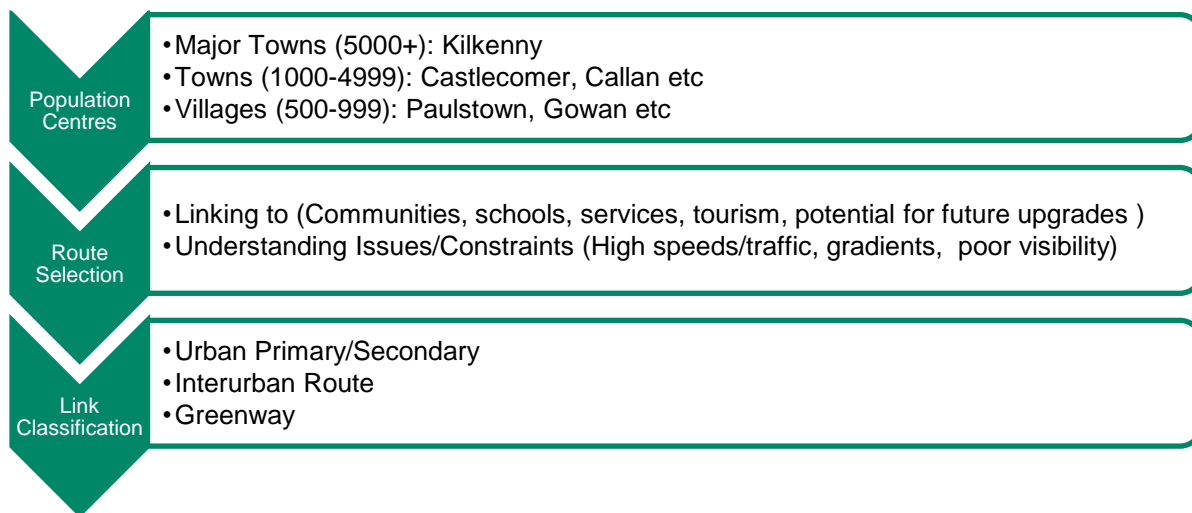


Figure 4.1: Cycle Network Development Methodology

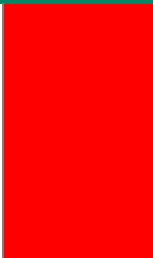

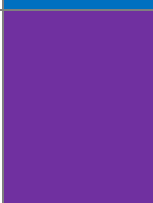

Population Centres: The Kilkenny CycleConnects Network will look to link towns and villages together as part of a fully connected network. Thus, all towns were mapped with the larger

towns such as Kilkenny City noted. By mapping all towns and villages, a profile emerged of where most people in Kilkenny were situated and where potential cycle routes should be provided. CSO Settlement data was also referenced to inform where people were located within the county.

Route Selection: Once the population areas were established, potential routes were then considered along strategic corridors. This allowed multiple communities to be linked along individual interurban routes both within the county and adjacent counties. Where possible, these routes were also located within TII National Cycle Network Corridors. This avoided too many parallel cycle routes being developed and for an integrated cycle network to be developed within the county.

Cycle Route Classification: The route classification for each route has been summarised below in Table 4.1. It should be noted that this link classification does not reflect the existing condition of roads for cycling but seeks to highlight their potential for various route classifications. For example, while there are many interurban routes that currently have no cycle infrastructure, the aspiration will be to target these over the next decade for appropriate upgrades.

Table 4.1: CycleConnects Route Classification

City/Town	Colour	Description
Urban Primary		High quality cycle route that can accommodate a high volume of cyclists typical in most urban areas. These will look to feature on major desire lines in town centres and form distinctive radial and orbital cycle routes in the major towns and cities. These primary routes should also form a cohesive and connected network within the urban area that will be simple for cyclists to navigate
Urban Secondary		Second tier cycle route in major urban areas to link with urban primary network to add greater route density and options on the network. These will typically be passing through residential areas, school and employment areas
Interurban		On-road cycle route to link all key settlements and destinations outside urban areas both within the county and into adjacent counties. These may have potential to provide off-road/segregated routes parallel to the existing road in later years.
Greenway		Off-road cycle route with no adjacent traffic for the majority of its route. These are typically located on old rail trails and existing/proposed blueways (routes alongside lakes, rivers and canals) with cyclists sharing the route with pedestrians.

Proposed Kilkenny County Network

Following the methodology outlined above, the Kilkenny CycleConnects Network has been outlined in a series of maps shown in Table 4.2 below. These are also available to view as an individual PDF when selecting county Kilkenny in the NTA consultation page.

Table 4.2: Kilkenny CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

Cycle Map List
Kilkenny County Cycle Network
Kilkenny Urban Cycle Network

Interurban Link Development

The primary towns with a population of over 1000 were connected via interurban links. Where possible, towns with a lower population that were located along the route were included in the routes. Connections were also made to larger cross border towns in order to create a comprehensive and connected cycle network nationwide. The selection of interurban routes was also influenced by the location of schools/sports grounds on various parallel routes.

As part of the development of the interurban network, the Google travel planning tool was utilised to assist in selecting the most appropriate route between the various settlements. This included avoiding routes/routes with excessive gradients. In some cases, selecting a sufficiently flat route was not available. Thus, the most available flattest route was selected. However, some routes were modified slightly to connect with adjacent towns/villages or key destinations such as schools, sports pitches or tourist attractions.

The TII National Cycle Network Corridors have also been used to overlap corridors. These include corridors and routes into counties Laois, Carlow, Wexford, Waterford and Tipperary.

Greenway Route Integration

As mentioned in the County Development Plan, the primary greenway in development in the County is the Kilkenny Greenway, which forms part of the South East Greenway.

South East Greenway

The South East Greenway will link the town of New Ross to Waterford City. The project is a joint venture between Kilkenny, Wexford, and Waterford County Councils. It is 24 km in length, primarily passing through south-east Kilkenny. It runs along the old rail line that links New Ross, County Kilkenny, and Waterford City.

The proposed Rosslare to Waterford City Greenway would also connect into the South East Greenway in the south of Kilkenny. The route is based on the Rosslare to Waterford rail line. However, the greenway development was suspended in 2021 due to renewed interest in the reopening of the rail line.

Abbeyleix to Kilkenny Greenway

The proposed route would use the old railway track, and would link north to Portlaoise in Laois and subsequently Abbeyleix. This proposed greenway is at early feasibility/planning stage so the route illustrated on relevant mapping may be subject to change once the route is finalised.

Urban Network Development: Kilkenny

With a population of over 10,000 inhabitants, an urban cycle network has been developed for Kilkenny City. The urban network is comprised of a primary orbital route and a larger amalgamation of both primary and secondary routes that encompasses the town.

In the centre of the city, a primary orbital route is proposed along streets such as Wolfe Tone Street, Castlecomer New Road, and Old Mart Road. A second larger orbital route is located along streets such as Vicar Street, New Road, Castlecomer Road, Pennefeather Way, O'Loughlin Road, and Wolfe Tone Street. This will be supplemented by additional primary radial routes linking other parts of the Kilkenny City with the city centre. These primary routes are proposed on streets such as Castlecomer Road, Golf Links Road, Johnswell Road,

Hebron Road, N77 Dublin Road, Bennettsbridge Road, Waterford Road, Corcoran Terrace, College Road, and Dunningstown Road. The primary network for Kilkenny is completed by an outer orbital route along the N77 Orbital Ring Road, along with Stephens Street, Granges Road and R693 Talbotsinch in the western extents of the city.

Locations that are served by these primary orbital routes include but not limited to:

- Kilkenny City Centre
- Kilkenny Train Station
- Kilkenny Castle Park
- Kilkenny College
- O'Loughlin Gaels GAA Club
- UPMC Nowlan Park
- Saint Canice's Hospital
- Starburst School of Speech and Drama
- St. Kieran's College
- Saint Canice's National School
- Presentation Secondary School
- Loreto Secondary School
- St. Luke's General Hospital
- St James's Park

In addition, a number of greenway routes are shown in Kilkenny City with the main urban greenway route starting in the south and runs adjacent to the River Nore, via Kilkenny Castle Grounds, and continues north until the N77 ring road. The proposed Kilkenny to Abbeyleix Greenway is also shown adjacent connecting into the N77. A number of secondary routes are also proposed along streets such as Greens Hill, Peace Park Walk, Circular Road, Coote's Lane, and Parnell Street. These are intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations not served by the orbital or radial routes previously mentioned.

5. Next Steps

AECOM, as part of the NTA Cycle Design Office, have been requested by the NTA to develop comprehensive cycle routes for County Kilkenny and the town of Kilkenny.

The network design for Kilkenny has now been made available for public consultation. This will allow for members of the public to submit their feedback. Individual maps are available to view on the National Transport Authority website and are available in the links below:

Table 5.1: Kilkenny CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

Cycle Map List
Kilkenny County Cycle Network
Kilkenny Urban Cycle Network

Following the public consultation, submissions will be reviewed, and the network maps updated as required.