

Draft Mayo
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 County Mayo. 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 plan 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 Mayo. 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. Mayo Population and Settlements

County Mayo is located in the west of Ireland in the province of Connacht and is bordered by the Atlantic Ocean to the north and west and counties Sligo and Roscommon to the east. It is also bordered to the south by County Galway.

According to the CSO 2016, the county has a population of 130,507 inhabitants. Table 2.1 below shows the shows the population of towns within Mayo. Ballina, Castlebar and Westport are the only settlements with over 5,000 people with all other towns having a population of less than 5,000.

Table 2.1: Population Settlements in Mayo

City/Town	Population (2016)
Castlebar	12,068
Ballina	10,171
Westport	6,198
Claremorris	3,687
Ballinrobe	2,786
Ballyhaunis	2,366
Swinford	1,394
Foxford	1,315
Kiltimagh	1,069
Crossmolina	1,044
Charlestown – Bellahy	1,033
Béal an Mhuirthead (Belmullet)	1,019

3. Existing Mayo Policies and Plans

Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028

The Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 sets out the roadmap for the overall proper planning and sustainable development of County Mayo over the plan period. While the Plan is in place for a six-year period, it is framed having regard to the long-term development objectives of the county up until 2040, to align with national and regional spatial plans.

This plan provides for, and manages, the physical, economic, and social development of the county, in the interests of the overall common good, and in compliance with environmental legislation.

It is the vision of County Mayo to 'create a sustainable and competitive county that supports the health and well-being of the people of Mayo, providing an attractive destination, as a place in which to live, work, invest, do business and visit, offering high quality employment and educational opportunities within strong and vibrant sustainable communities, whilst ensuring a transition to a low carbon and climate resilient county that supports high environmental quality.'

The following strategic aim as detailed within the development plan relates to the development of infrastructure to support a modal shift from private car use to more sustainable transport methods such as cycling.

The following strategic objectives set out below are underpinned by the above aims. As such the following strategic objectives (SO) have been extracted due to their relevance to the development of a cycle network throughout the county.

SO 4 - Low Carbon and Climate Resilient County

To transition to a low carbon and climate resilient county, by promoting sustainable settlement patterns, the integration of land-use and sustainable modes of transport, encourage walking, cycling and public transport, increasing reliance on green energy sources, encouraging urban and rural communities to facilitate effective change and by building climate change resilience and climate action into all services and functions of Mayo County Council.

SO 12 - Integrated Land Use and Transportation Planning

Integrate land use planning and sustainable transportation planning, promote the consolidation of development, encourage sustainable travel patterns by reducing the need to travel particularly by private transport, while prioritising walking, cycling and public transport.

Chapter 6 of the development plan relates to movement and transport throughout the county, with the strategic aim of increasing the use of sustainable modes of transport. This chapter has been guided by the key strategic aim to support the transition to a low carbon future, through use of sustainable modes of transport in County Mayo.

This plan seeks to encourage walking and cycling as the primary modes of transports within settlement communities. Improved street design in settlements will encourage more people to choose to walk, cycle or use public transport, by making the experience safer and more pleasant. It will help lower traffic speeds, reduce unnecessary car use and create a built environment that promotes healthy lifestyles and responds more sympathetically to the distinctive nature of individual communities and places.

The following transport policies (MTP) and objectives (MTO) relate to cycling network development and also how developing a cycle network can help meet some of these policies and objectives:

MTP 3 - To support and facilitate any 'Smarter Travel' initiatives that will improve sustainable transportation within the county, including public transport, electric and hybrid vehicles, car clubs, public bike schemes, improved pedestrian and cycling facilities, as appropriate.

MTP 5 – To ensure new development areas and employment land-uses are permeable for walking and cycling and are laid out in such a way as to facilitate the operation of and access to public transport by residents and employees.

MTP 11 - To support safer cycling/walking routes to encourage people to be more physically active for transport and leisure purposes.

MTP 12 - To promote the design and construction of new developments to create a low carbon, walkable neighbourhoods and workplaces containing high quality green and blue infrastructure.

MTP 29 – To implement the recommendations of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) in relation to urban streets and roads within the 50/60 kph zone.



Figure 3.1: Proposed County Mayo Greenway Plan

The following are key objectives

MTO 1 - To prepare and commence implementation of, Local Transport Plans (LTP), in conjunction with the National Transport Authority and relevant stakeholders, for Ballina, Castlebar and Westport, and other settlements, where appropriate.

MTO 4 - To increase cycling usage in Tier I and Tier II settlements in line with the national average (2016).

MTO 5 - To retrospectively provide public transport, walking and cycling infrastructure and facilities in existing development areas to achieve growth in sustainable mobility.

MTO 7 – To establish modal shift targets and a monitoring regime to increase the usage of sustainable modes of transport in the towns of Ballina, Castlebar and Westport, as informed by local transport plans.

MTO 8 - To encourage and facilitate the maintenance and further development of the public footpath network, walking and cycling routes and associated infrastructure and where possible the retrofitting of cycle and pedestrian routes into the existing urban road network.

MTO 9 - To support the establishment of a network of interlinked cycle ways and walk ways in the county and the adjoining counties, having regard to best practice standards including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the NTA Cycle Manual or any amending/superseding national guidance or manuals.

MTO 11 - To encourage, where appropriate, the incorporation of safe and efficient cycleways, accessible footpaths, and pedestrian routes into the design schemes for town centres/neighbourhood centres, residential, educational, employment, recreational developments, and other uses, with the design informed by published design manuals, including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the NTA Cycle Manual or any amending/superseding national guidance or manuals.

MTO 12 - To continue the development of a network of Greenways in the county in accordance with best practice and where it can be demonstrated that the development will not have significant adverse effects on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

MTO 13 - To investigate the potential of providing looped Greenways / Walkways for the Tier I, II and III Settlements of the county, where it can be demonstrated that such schemes will not have a significant adverse effect on the environment including the integrity of the Natura 2000 network.

MTO 15 - To seek to advance the walking/ cycling projects listed in Table 3.1 of the Mayo County Development Plan 2022-2028 reproduced below.

Table 3.1: Mayo Walking and Cycling Projects

Walking and Cycling Projects
CLEWBAY GREENWAY WPORT/LBURGH/ROONAGH/CLARE ISLAND/KILLARY
CLEWBAY GREENWAY ACHILL SOUND / KEEL
CLEWBAY GREENWAY ACHILL SOUND / CLOUGHMORE
CASTLEBAR URBAN GREENWAY LINK PHASE 1 & PHASE 2
TRAILS DEVELOPMENT
GWG IMPROVEMENTS, IMPROVED TOWN LINKAGES INCLUDING NEWPORT TUNNELS
BANGOR TRAIL & ERRIS ADVENTURE BRIDGE
TURLOUGH/PONTOON/FOXFORD (INCLUDING RIVERSIDE TRAIL AT TURLOUGH RIVER FALLS)
IMPROVEMENTS TO TOCHAR PADRAIG
BOWERS WALK BALLINROBE
MONASTERIES ON THE MOY/ATLANTIC CYCLE NETWORK
WESTPORT CONG LOST TREASURES TRAIL
MOUNTAIN BIKE CENTRE AND MAYO/SLIGO BIJE TRAIL
MOOREHALL MASTERPLAN (INCLUDING TRAILS)
SLIEVEMORE TRAIL
IMPROVEMENTS TO WESTERN WAY
SPIRITUAL TRAIL (CROAGH PATRICK, CONG AND KNOCK)
LONG DISTANCE COASTAL GREENWAY (MAP 6.1)
LONG DISTANCE INTERURBAN GREENWAY (MAP 6.1)
TOWN GREENWAYS (MAP 6.1)
NATIONAL COASTAL PATH, INCLUDING CÉIDE COAST
IMPROVEMENTS TO KEEM BAY SIGNATURE DISCOVERY POINT, INCLUDING TRIAL AND VIEWING PLATFORM
FALCON TRAIL FROM CANALSIDE BALLINA TO MOUNT FALCON ESTATE

Table 6.4 – List of Walking and Cycling Projects

Chapter 5 of the Development Plan relates to the development of a tourist strategy. In addition to this a number of established walking and cycling routes have also been developed which allow local communities to access and enjoy the natural environmental assets, such as the Turlough Greenway and cycle network in Castlebar and the Railwalk walking and cycle route in Westport. The following tourism policies have been included within the plan that relate to cycling infrastructure development.

TRP 10 - To promote Mayo as a premier walking/cycling destination in the country and support the further development of walking routes and trails within the county and the integration and linkage of these with other existing / proposed routes and trails both within and outside of County Mayo, in accordance with national walking strategy guidance and in conjunction with the Tourism Section of Mayo County Council, Fáilte Ireland and other relevant stakeholders.

TRO 3 - To explore a feasibility study, including the development of route options, for the creation of a coastal walking/cycling route along the western seaboard, in collaboration and partnership with the NWRA, other relevant local authorities and stakeholders.

TRP 28 - To support the implementation of the NWRA Regional Outdoor Recreation Strategy, through the extension of greenways, walking routes, tracks and trails within the county and the integration and linkage of them with other existing / proposed greenways, walking routes, tracks and trails, both within and outside County Mayo.

TRP 29 - To support the progression of long-distance linear greenways and greenway town networks, and the further development and improvements of the following walking trails and coastal paths in County Mayo - Westport/Cong Walking Trail; Croagh Patrick Trail upgrade; Tourmakeady Trail; Bangor trail; Céide /Downpatrick Coastal Path; and Slievemore Trail, in conjunction with the Tourism Section and other relevant stakeholders.

Future Local Transport Plans

Mayo County Council are required to develop Local Transport Plans as part of their Development Plan process. While the cycle network outlined in this plan 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 Mayo Cycle Network

Introduction

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

Prior to developing the Mayo 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 Mayo 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 Mayo that are available to as many people as possible. It has also allowed for the servicing of key destinations within County Mayo.

Methodology

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

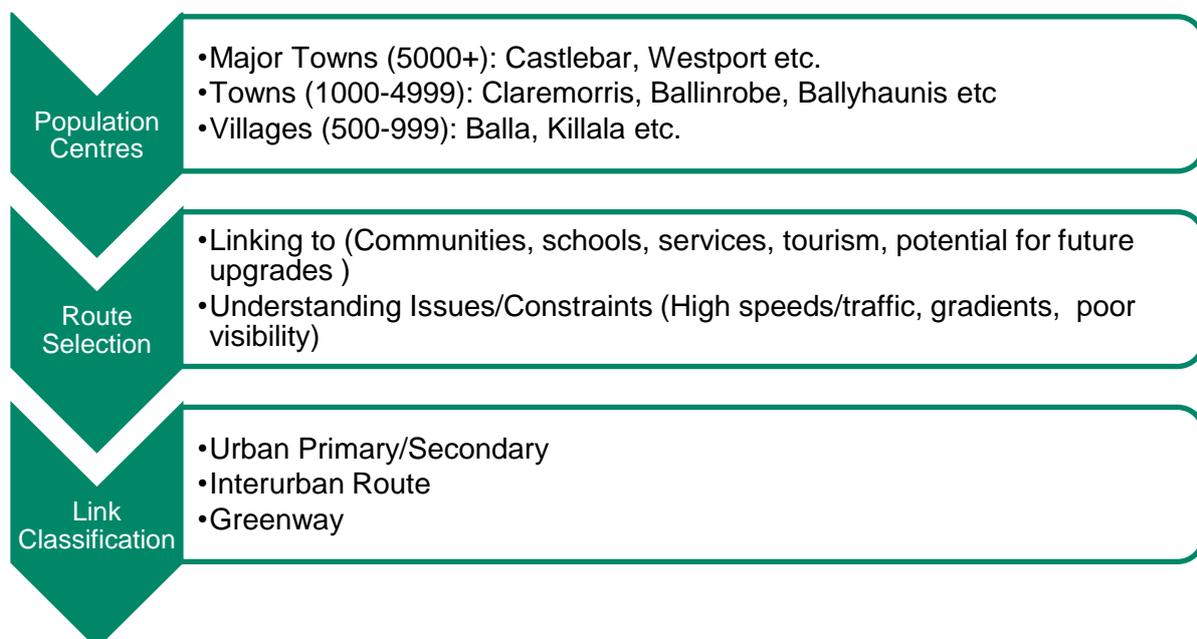


Figure 4.1: Cycle Network Development Methodology

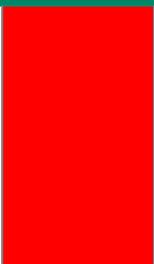
Population Centres: The Mayo CycleConnects Network will look to link towns and villages together as part of a fully connected network. Thus, all towns were mapped with the larger

towns such as Westport, Castlebar and Ballina noted. By mapping all towns and villages, a profile emerged of where most people in Mayo 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 into 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. 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 blueways (routes along rivers, lakes and canals) with cyclists sharing the route with pedestrians.

Proposed Mayo County Network

Following the methodology outlined above, the Mayo 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 Mayo in the NTA consultation page.

Table 4.2: Mayo CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

Cycle Map List
Mayo County Cycle Network
Castlebar Urban Cycle Network
Ballina Urban Cycle Network
Westport Urban Cycle Network

The Mayo CycleConnects Network primarily extends the network beyond the key settlement areas of Castlebar, Ballina and Westport. In summary, it will consist of an urban cycle network for Castlebar, Ballina and Westport, with interurban connectors between these towns and other settlements. These then extend into adjoining counties forming a comprehensive and connecting cycle network nationally.

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 more comprehensive cycle network. 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 corridor routes into Galway, Sligo and Roscommon.

Greenway Route Integration

Great Western Greenway

The Great Western Greenway is a 44km long off-road cycle trail from Achill Island to Westport. The route is primarily developed along the now disused Achill to Westport railway line. The route opened in 2010 and is divided into three sections, Achill to Mulranny, Mulranny to Newport and Newport to Westport.

Westport to Louisburgh Greenway

The Westport to Louisburgh Greenway is a 70km long proposed greenway along the Wild Atlantic Way as part of the greater Clew Bay Trail from Achill to Louisburgh. This route carves its way through the mountains of Mweelrea past the lake at Doolough, through to the Sheeffry Pass, before joining the N59 road back to Westport. The route will have mostly flat terrain with some steep hills. Development of this project has currently been stalled and is awaiting funding.

Proposed Interurban Greenways

There are a number of planned interurban greenways throughout County Mayo, many of which are outlined in the Mayo County Development Plan. The plan outlines the ambition to create a liner long distance and Town Greenway Network. This network includes the following greenways:

- Westport to Belmullet
- Belmullet to Ballina
- Charlestown to Claremorris
- Claremorris to Ballinrobe
- Claremorris to Tuam
- Castlebar to Westport

The finalised routes for these greenways are still unknown at this stage so they are shown as being indicative only on the relevant maps and may be subject to change once the finalised routes is known.

Urban Network Development: Castlebar

With a population over 5,000, an urban cycle network was developed for Castlebar. The urban network is comprised of the Castlebar to Westport Greenway and Castlebar to Turlough Greenway which runs through the centre of the town, and subsequent orbital and radial primary routes within the town. To the south of the town, an orbital primary route is proposed along Lucan Street, Lawn Road, Humbert Way, Old Westport Road, Church Street and Main Street. This is supplemented by primary radial routes along streets such as Rathbawn Road, Castlegrove West, Breaffy Road, Station Road, and Westport Road.

Locations served by these routes include:

- Castlebar Train Station
- Mayo General Hospital
- Castlebar Shopping Centre
- St Anthony's Special School
- Castlebar Tennis Club
- Davitt College
- Castlebar Industrial Estate
- Golden Mile Industrial Estate
- St Patricks Boys National School
- St Gerald's College DLS

A number of secondary routes are also proposed along streets such as Snugboro, Rossmor, Turlough Road, Barcastle Retail Park, John Moore Road, Pavilion Road, Hopkins Road and Castle Street. These are intended to provide additional network density and options and to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on orbital or radial routes previously mentioned. These include:

- Castlebar Mitchels GAA Club
- Hasting Insurance MacHale Park
- St Joseph's Secondary School
- St Angela's National School
- Mayo County Library
- Castlebar Celtic Football Club

These link with other interurban routes at the edge of the town as part of a fully connected cycle network for Mayo

Urban Network Development: Ballina

With a population over 5,000, an urban cycle network was developed for Ballina. This urban network also consists of an orbital loop beginning from the interurban connection to the proposed Belmullet to Ballina greenway travelling east along Crossmolina Road and Lord Edward Street and onto Bury St. The route then travels north along O'Rahilly Street, then west

along Tone Street, Garden Street, Covent Hill and McDermott Street, through Ardoughan to complete the orbital route.

Locations served along this route include:

- Ballina District Hospital (St. Josephs)
- Ballina Stephenites GAA Club
- Ballina Town Centre (Various Shopping Destinations)
- Belmont Montessori School
- St Mary's Secondary School
- Gráinne Úaile Sub Aqua Club
- The Mulberry Tree Learning Centre

In addition to the orbital routes a number of radial routes are also included to provide connectors with interurban routes in addition to serving locations that were not picked up on the orbital loop roads.

The radial routes usually travel in a north/south and east/west direction and comprise of normally primary routes; however some secondary routes form part of these routes. The radial routes are described below:

- An orbital radial route is proposed along the north of the town which includes the streets of Slí Ectra, Bohernasup, Market Road, Garden Street, and Corcoran's Terrace.
- From the interurban connection to the proposed Belmullet to Ballina greenway the proposed radial route travels south along Corcoran's Terrace, Pound Street, Teeling Street, Kevin Barry Street and onto Station Road where it connects with the interurban route connecting to Castlebar.
- A radial route along Tone Street then following Tolan Street, Upper Bridge, Abbey Street and Healy Terrace the route then connects into the proposed interurban route travelling into County Sligo towards Carrick-On-Shannon.
- Connecting from the interurban route from Sligo Town on the east, the proposed radial route travels south along Riverslade, turning onto Clare Street through to Cathedral Road onto Ridge Pool Road where it then joins into a proposed greenroute travelling southwards towards Foxford.

Locations that are served by the north/south and east/west radial routes include:

- Ballina Bus and Train Stations
- Saint Dymphna's School
- Gaelscoil na gCaithre Maol
- Ballina Golf Course/Club
- Ardnaree Sarsfields GAA
- Moyne College
- Ballina Swimming Pool
- Ballina Sport Centre
- Guardian Angel Montessori

A number of secondary routes are also proposed along streets such as Garrankeel, Circular Road, Humbert Street, Nally Street, Pearse Street, Emmet Street, Church Road, Bunree Road, Mercy Road and Fenian Row. These are intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on orbital or radial routes previously mentioned. These include:

- St. Muredach's College
- Kilmoremoy LGFA Club

- Ballina Athletic Track
- Ballina Town FC Soccer Club
- Greenhills Childcare Centre

Urban Network Development: Westport

The town of Westport, with a population also over 5,000, an urban cycle network was developed for Westport. Similarly to Castlebar, this urban network was based around both existing and proposed greenways which run through the town. An orbital route is proposed in the town centre which includes streets such as James Street, North Mall, Mill Street and Shop Street. A second inner orbital route is located to the south west and includes streets such as Shop Street, High Street, Carrowbaun, Leenane Road, and Quay Street. These inner orbital routes are intended to provide a fully connected network within the town centre and provide access to various shops, services and the greenway to the south.

An orbital route is also proposed in the north-west of the town that begins at the interurban connector route from Inishgort eastwards along Golf Course Rd until it meets the N59. From there the route continues south along Newport Road and southwest via James Street. At the junction of Peter Street the route then turns onto Quay Street where it continues in a westerly direction along Quay Road. From the Junction of Quay Road the route then turns onto The Quay travelling northwards then turning onto The Farmyard to complete the orbital loop. This is supplemented by an inner radial route along New Road via Westport House and Gardens. However, it is understood Mayo County Council have to confirm access requirements on this link. A greenway link is also provided internally to link various schools and housing in this part of Westport.

Locations served by this northern orbital route include:

- Westport United FC
- Playground School
- Westport GAA Club
- Westport House
- Scoil Phádraig Primary School
- The Caravan and Camping Park at Westport House
- Gaelscoil na Cruaiche

In addition to the orbital routes a number of radial routes are also included to provide connectors with interurban routes in addition to serving locations that were not picked up on the orbital loop roads. The radial routes are described below:

- A radial route is proposed connecting into the Great Western Greenway which enters Westport to the north, then travelling south along Attireesh the proposed radial route then turns onto Newport Road continuing south along the N59 onto Newport Street and onto the N5 along James Street. The route then follows proposed secondary routes along Peter Street across onto Tober Hill where it then turns onto Leenane Road and continues south turning onto Carrowbaun where it then connects with the proposed interurban route linking into routes towards Louisburgh and into County Galway.
- The final radial route connects to the interurban route linking to Castlebar, where travelling in a southwest direction the route follows the N5 along Castlebar Road through onto Castlebar Street and Bridge Street. The route then turns onto Shop Street and continues southwards along High Street and onto Carrowbaun where it then connects with the proposed interurban route linking into routes towards Louisburgh and into County Galway.

Locations that are served by the north/south and east/west radial routes include:

- Westport Train Station
- Westport College of Further Education
- St Colmcille's National School
- Rice College Secondary School
- Sacred Heart Secondary School

A number of secondary routes are also proposed along streets such as Horkans Hill, John's Row, Tober Hill, Westlands, Springfield Drive and Cloonmonad. These are intended to act as interlinks to the orbital and radial routes in addition to serving locations that have not located on 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 Mayo and the towns of Ballina, Castlebar and Westport

The network design for Mayo 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: Mayo CycleConnects Network – List of Maps

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