Sligo Local Transport Plan 2024 - 2030

Sligo County Council
Sligo ABTA

4 November 2024

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Acronyms and abbreviations

DMURS	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
LTP	Local Transport Plan
MCA	Multi Criteria Analysis
NDP	National Development Plan
NIFTI	National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland
NPF	National Planning Framework
NPO	National Policy Objectives
NSO	National Strategic Outcome
NSO	National Strategic Outcomes
NTA	National Transport Authority
RGC	Regional Growth Centre
RPO	Regional Policy Objective
RSES	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy
SCC	Sligo County Council
SCDP	Sligo County Development Plan
SLTP	Sligo Local Transport Plan
TII	Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Glossary of Terms

Advisory Cycle Lane	Advisory Cycle Lanes flow with road traffic and are delineated by a broken white line which allows motorised traffic to enter or cross the lane. They are used where a Mandatory Cycle Lane leaves insufficient residual road space for traffic, and at junctions where traffic needs to turn across the cycle lane. Parking is not permitted on advisory cycle lanes other than for set down and loading. Advisory cycle lanes are intended for full time operation (24 hour) unless time plated.
Advance Stacking Location (ASL)	ASLs are red coloured areas at signalised junctions ahead of stopped vehicular traffic. They permit higher volumes of cyclists to stop and wait in a forward position. They facilitate cyclists moving off before other traffic. (*Cycle Design Manual*)
Controlled Crossing	A pedestrian crossing that is signal controlled, such as a Pelican, Puffin, and Toucan crossings - or a zebra crossing.
Cycle Track	Cycle facility that is physically segregated from vehicular traffic by a level change or other physical means such as bollards. *(Cycle Design Manual)*
Dropped Kerb	A reduction in the kerb height – so that the kerb is level with the road - to provide level access for pedestrian crossing points.
Kiss & Ride Facility	Drop-off facility for car passengers.
Mandatory Cycle Lane	Mandatory Cycle Lanes flow with road traffic and are marked by a continuous white line which prohibits motorised traffic from entering the lane, except for access. Parking is not permitted on mandatory cycle lanes. *(Cycle Design Manual)*
Mobility Hub	Mobility hubs are strategically selected locations where people can change between different transport modes. They typically have associated facilities and amenities to support an integrated use of the transport network such as locker facilities and secure cycle storage.
Modal Shift	A change in the method of transportation used by people. (*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*)
Raised Tables	Raised tables are a form of traffic calming measure and may be used to slow traffic at key points such as pedestrian crossings. The height of a raised table should match the footway, thus improving pedestrian accessibility/permeability at crossing points.
Segregated Cycling	Cycling on dedicated cycle tracks or cycle ways that are separated from the general traffic by a physical barrier.
Sense of Place	The character or characteristics of an area in relation to how it is perceived by a user. (*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*)

Severance	Where the provision of road infrastructure (e.g. a distributor style road) bisects an area, making people movement within the area more difficult. (*Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*)
Shared Active Travel Facility	A space shared between pedestrians and cyclists. Shared facilities should always have pedestrian priority.
Shared/Mixed Street	Street where cyclists share the same space with traffic. *(Cycle Design Manual)*
Traffic Calming	Measures which restrict or control the speed or movement of motor vehicles and measures which facilitate the safe use of public roads by different classes of traffic. The measures include the provision of traffic signs, road markings, bollards, posts, poles, chicanes, rumble areas, raised, lowered, and modified road surfaces, ramps, speed cushions, speed tables, traffic islands, modified junctions or roundabouts and similar works or devices. (Paraphrased from *Road Traffic Act 1994*)
Uncontrolled Crossing	Uncontrolled crossings include informal types such as courtesy crossings (defined by a change in material and/or vertical deflection) and/or those identified by a drop kerb. (*DMURS*)

1. Introduction

This document presents the Sligo Local Transport Plan (SLTP), for the Sligo Regional Growth Centre Strategic Plan Area, accompanying the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030. It sets out Sligo County Council's (SCC) vision for Sligo Town and Environs in terms of how its sustainable transport network will be developed to accommodate targeted population and employment growth to 2030.

The SLTP supports the requirement for an evidence-based approach to planning, as set out in the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). The SLTP has been prepared following an Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) process, which was undertaken in accordance with the *ABTA 'How To' Guide – Pilot Methodology* from the National Transport Authority (NTA) and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII).

Through the Principles & Objectives developed during the ABTA process (see Chapter 5), the SLTP is directly linked to national, regional, and local level policy, as is outlined in further detail in Chapter 2.

Sligo is designated as a 'Regional Growth Centre' in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the North-Western Region as well as the population and employment growth projected in the Sligo County Settlement Strategy. Sligo's future development is based upon this designation and the growth targets set by the National Planning Framework 2040 (NPF).

The SLTP aims to facilitate projected growth from 2024 – 2030 through the provision of a wide range of high-quality, sustainable transport proposals. Sustainable transport presents an opportunity to improve health, boost the quality of lives, meet Sligo's growth needs, and enhance connections between the town, its environs, and rural areas.

A review of the SLTP will be undertaken in 2030 to ensure that future iterations of the Plan align with emerging relevant policies and targets at that time. This is discussed further in the Monitoring and Review Section of this report.

1.1 Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Methodology

The SLTP has been developed in line with the ABTA Guidance and Advice Notes produced by TII and the NTA. The overarching aim of the ABTA process is to place the integration of land use and transport planning at the centre of the plan preparation process. The preparation of the SLTP followed the steps outlined in Figure 1-1 and involved the creation of four supporting technical documents: The Baseline Assessment Report, the Context Report, the Options Summary Report, and the Options Assessment Report.

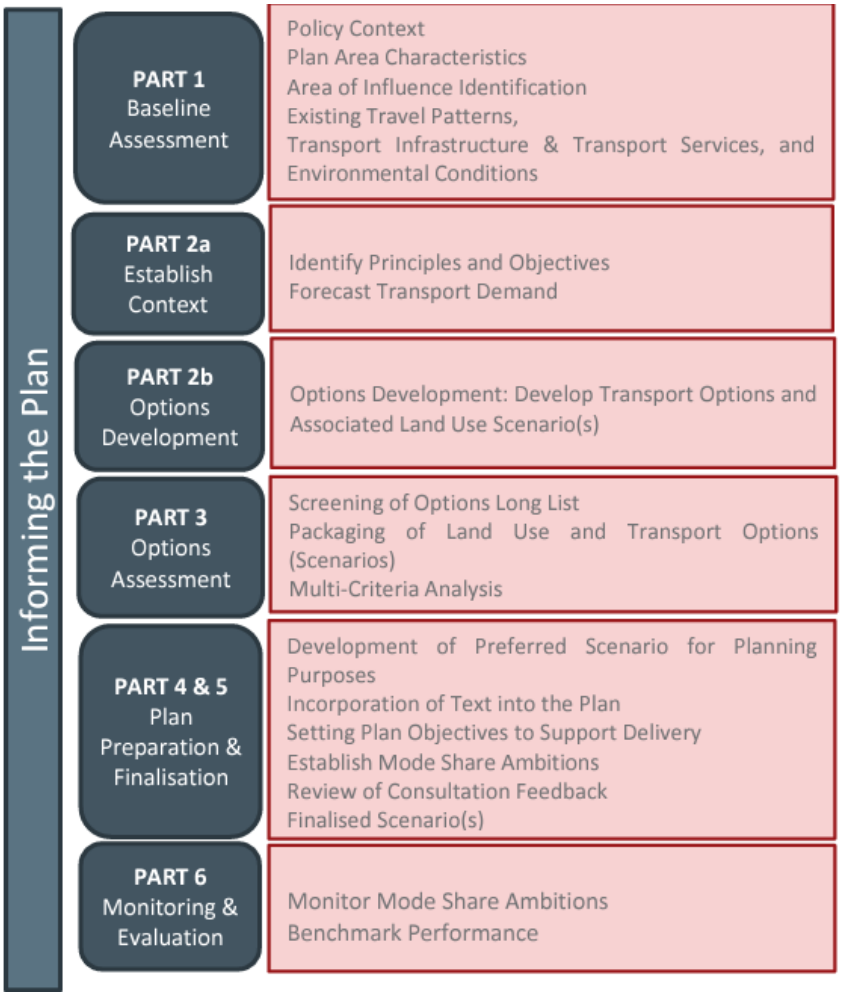

Figure 1-1: The ABTA Methodology

Part 1 of the ABTA process focused on identifying and understanding the existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the study area (Figure 1-2). The Baseline Assessment was informed by a review of datasets, relevant policy, and site walkover audits. The analysis of the baseline conditions was collated and presented in a Stage 1 Baseline Assessment Report.

Part 2a applied the information gathered from the Baseline Assessment (including the SWOT analysis) to establish the Principles & Objectives to guide the development of the SLTP. The Context Report outlines this process in detail and forms the basis for Chapter 5 - Sligo Vision and Objectives of the SLTP.

Part 2b developed a long list of options in line with the principles and objectives established in Part 2a. An iterative gap analysis of the long list of options was undertaken against the SWOT from Stage 1. This analysis allowed the development of a comprehensive list of options for the Study Area (Figure 1-2). A series of collaboration workshops with SCC established a full list of options that could be assessed and that addressed the sustainable transport needs of Sligo. The resulting long list of options was geographically grouped into preliminary packages for presentation in the 2b Options Summary Report.

Part 3 analyses and refines the options developed within the Options Summary Report. This Part of the ABTA process reviewed the potential impact of options in a Multi-Criteria Assessment (MCA) and used transport modelling to establish a proof of concept in relation to the impact of the options on the transport network. The options taken forward from the options assessment formed the basis of the proposals the SLTP make across the

study area. The assessment process and methodology are explained in greater detail in the Options Assessment Report.

The remaining parts of the ABTA Methodology (Parts 4-6) are developed through the preparation of the SLTP and Monitoring Plan.

1.2 The Study Area

The study area for the SLTP defines the area across which transport interventions and proposals are made. It covers Sligo Town and surrounding areas as shown in Figure 1-2, extending for 181.4 km^2 to include Sligo Town and the settlements of Collooney, Coolaney, Strandhill, Rosses Point, and Ballysadare. According to the 2016 Census, 19,199 people live in Sligo Town and Environs and the Study Area has a total population of 32,264 people.

For the purposes of the SLTP "Sligo Town" relates to the Sligo and Environs boundary from the 2016 Census highlighted in pink in Figure 1-2 and term "Study Area" relates to the wider area highlighted in orange. The term "Town Centre" refers to the core streets within Sligo Town, extending from the Train Station in the west to Abbey Street in the east, and from Temple Street in the south to Connaughton Road in the north.

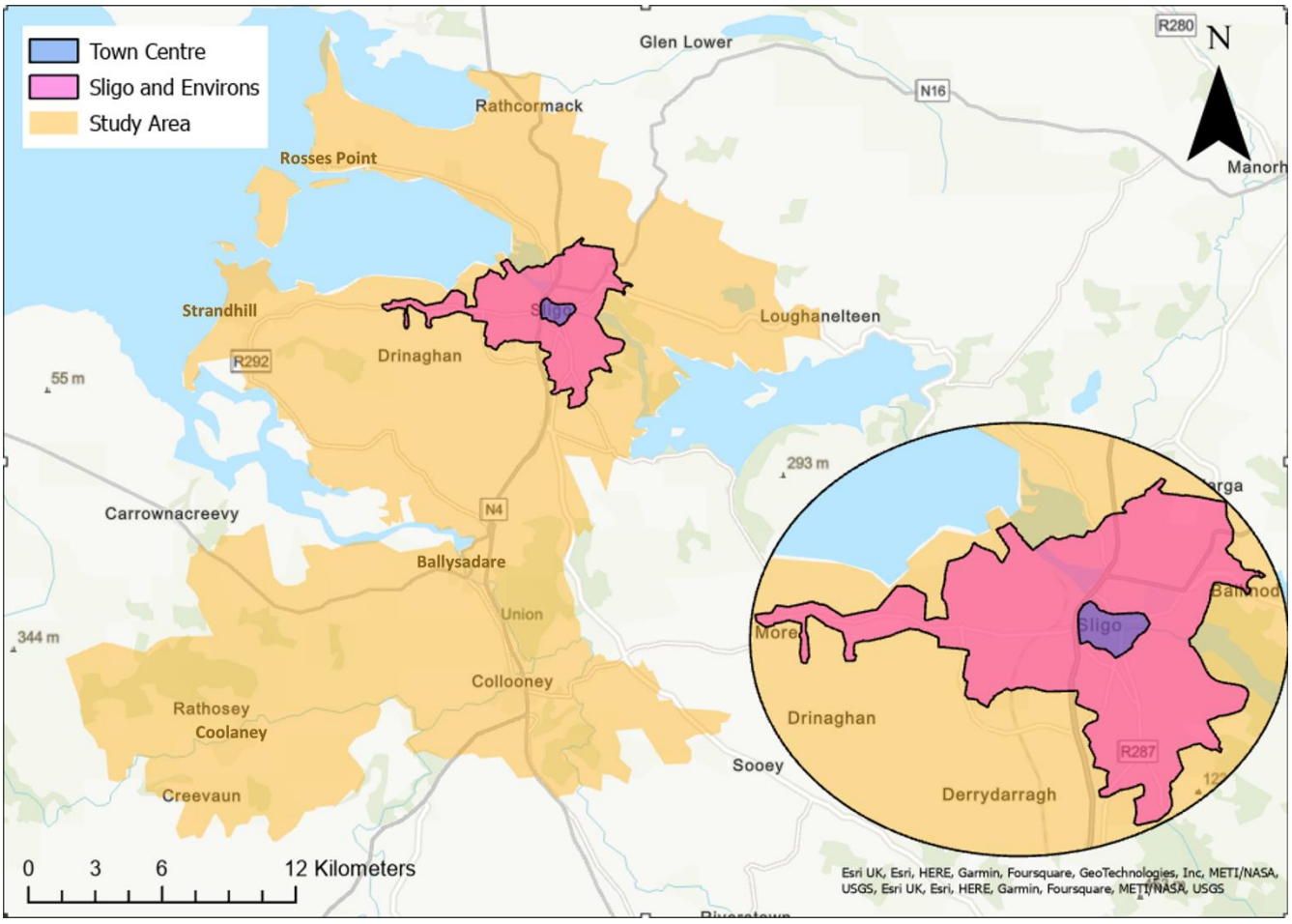

Figure 1-2: Study Area

1.3 Report Structure

This SLTP presents SCC's preferred transport infrastructure improvements and proposals over the next six years (2024-2030), along with the policy guidance and data that informed its preparation.

The SLTP is presented as follows:

- **Chapter 1 Introduction –** The SLTP, the ABTA process, and how the document has been developed.
- **Chapter 2 Policy Context** – Summary of the relevant National, Regional and Local policies from the Baseline Assessment Report that have informed the development of the SLTP.
- **Chapter 3 Introducing Sligo** – Exploration of the existing conditions within the study area as identified in the Baseline Assessment Report, highlighting its regional role, demographics, and the characteristics of its transport system.
- **Chapter 4 The Need for Change** - Outlines the need for change in Sligo and how is has informed the development of this SLTP.
- **Chapter 5 Sligo Vision and Objectives –** Outlines the Principles & Objectives from the Context Report which have underpinned and informed the development of the proposed transport interventions, as well as the County Development Plan (CDP) (2024-2030) Vision for the County.
- **Chapter 6 Proposed Transport Network –** Presents the proposed measures that have been developed to accommodate the population growth target, achieve National Climate Policy goals, and realise the CDP's Vision.
- **Chapter 7 SLTP Monitoring and Review** – The monitoring and review process for the implementation of the SLTP.
- **Chapter 8 Summary and Conclusions** – Reiteration of the main contents of the SLTP and the changes that are envisaged to result from its implementation.

2. Policy Context

2.1 Overview

The alignment of local transport plans with local, regional, and national policy is required by Regional Policy Objective 6.27 within the RSES which states that:

"Local Transport Plans (LTP) will represent the lowest tier of the NPF's framework for the integration of land use and transport planning and the achievement of the NPF's objective of 'compact smart growth'" and *"LTPs will be based on a clear set of objectives and the most recent demographic and travel information taking into account the policies and objectives of the local authorities, insofar as they align with those of National and Regional Policy."*

It is important that the SLTP aligns with and ultimately contributes to the aspirations and targets contained in relevant policy. This chapter provides an overview of policy, guidance, and studies relevant to the development of the SLTP. A more detailed review of policy that has underpinned this ABTA Process can be found in the Baseline Assessment Report. Table 2-1 provides a summary of the National, Regional and Local policy documents, as well as relevant guidance documents.

Table 2-1: Policy & Guidance Summary Relevant to the Development of the SLTP

Policy Type	Policy Name
National Level	Project Ireland 2040
	National Planning Framework 2040
	National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (2021)
	Climate Action Plan (2023)
	Sustainable Mobility Policy (2022-2030)
	Report of the Night-Time Economy Taskforce (2021)
	Transport Infrastructure Ireland Publication Standards (2024)
	Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)
Regional Level	Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (2020 – 2032)
Local Level	Sligo Public Realm Action Plan (2018)
	Sligo Local Authority Climate Action Plan (2024-2029)
	Local Economic & Community Plan for Sligo (2023)
	CycleConnects: Ireland's Cycle Network – Sligo (2023)
Guidance Documents	Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)
	Cycle Design Manual (2023)

2.2 National Level

2.2.1 Project Ireland 2040

Project Ireland 2040 was launched by the Government in February 2018 to establish a shared vision for coordinated planning and investment and to ensure the State's readiness for the forecasted 1-million-people increase in population by 2040. This population increase figure premises the population targets set for Sligo in the RSES, which in turn premise the need for many of the interventions and proposals to the transport network presented in Chapter 6 of the SLTP.

Project Ireland 2040 is made up of two elements: the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2021 – 2030 (NDP). Both are built around the same 10 National Strategic Outcomes (NSO) (shown in Figure 2-1).

Figure 2-1: NSOs and Strategic Investment Priorities (NPF)

2.2.1.1 National Planning Framework 2040

The National Planning Framework succeeded the previous National Spatial Strategy (NSS) and, unlike its predecessor, has a statutory basis in the Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2018. It is the high-level strategic plan for shaping the future growth and development of Ireland to the year 2040 and is directly integrated with an investment plan – the NDP. Figure 2-2 shows Ireland's Regional Assembly Areas set out in the National Planning Framework 2040; Sligo sits within the Northern and Western Regional Assembly and relevant regional policy for this area is reviewed below in 2.2.4.

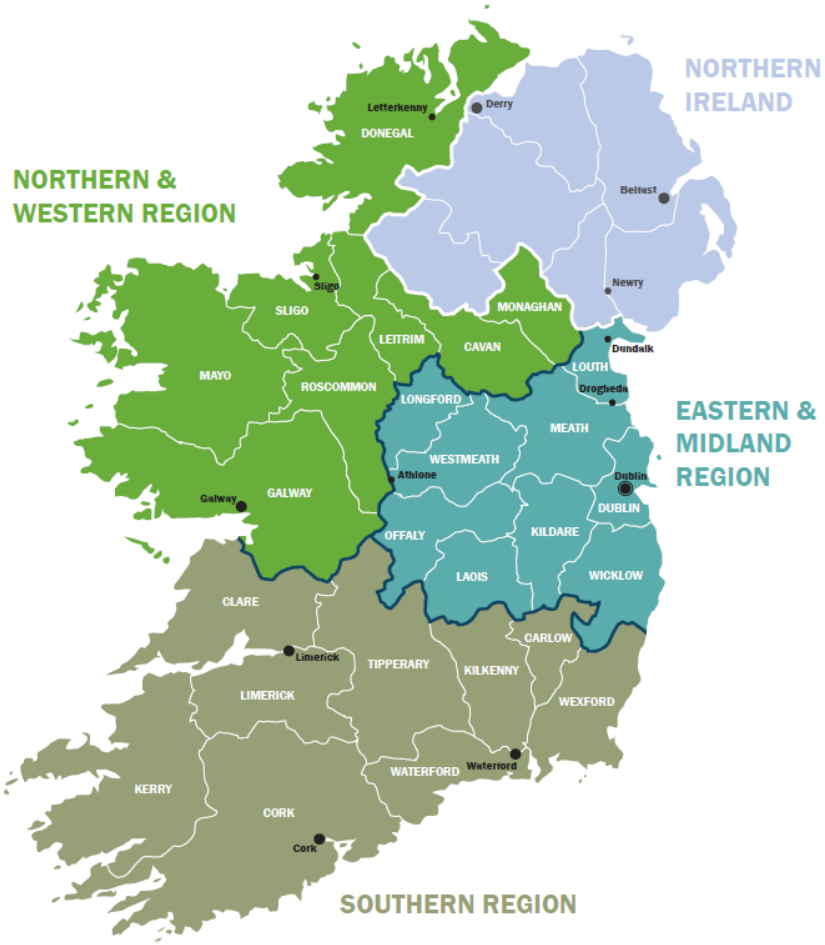

Figure 2-2: Ireland's Regional Assembly Areas (NPF)

The ambition of the NPF is to create a single vision and a shared set of goals for every community across the country. These goals are expressed in the Framework as National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) and a range of multi-sectoral National Policy Objectives (NPOs). The NPOs with particular importance for the SLTP and its Principles & Objectives have been included in Table 2-2.

Table 2-2: National Policy Objectives Relevant to the Development of the SLTP

NPO Reference	Objective
NPO 4	Ensure the creation of attractive, liveable, well designed, high quality urban places that are home to diverse and integrated communities that enjoy a high quality of life and well-being.
NPO 7	Apply a tailored approach to urban development, that will be linked to the Rural and Urban Regeneration and Development Fund, with a particular focus on: • Reversing the stagnation or decline of many smaller urban centres, by identifying and establishing new roles and functions and enhancement of local infrastructure and amenities; • Addressing the legacy of rapid unplanned growth, by facilitating amenities and services catch-up, jobs and/or improved sustainable transport links to the cities, together with a slower rate of population growth in recently expanded commuter settlements of all sizes.
NPO 27	Ensure the integration of safe and convenient alternatives to the car into the design of our communities, by prioritising walking and cycling accessibility to both existing and proposed development and integrating physical activity facilities for all ages.

Through its Principles and Objectives, the SLTP supports the delivery of national, regional, and local policy at a local level. Policies that are particularly relevant to the SLTP include NSO 1 – Compact Growth, NSO 2 – Enhanced Regional Accessibility, and NSO4-Sustainable Mobility as shown in Figure 2-3.

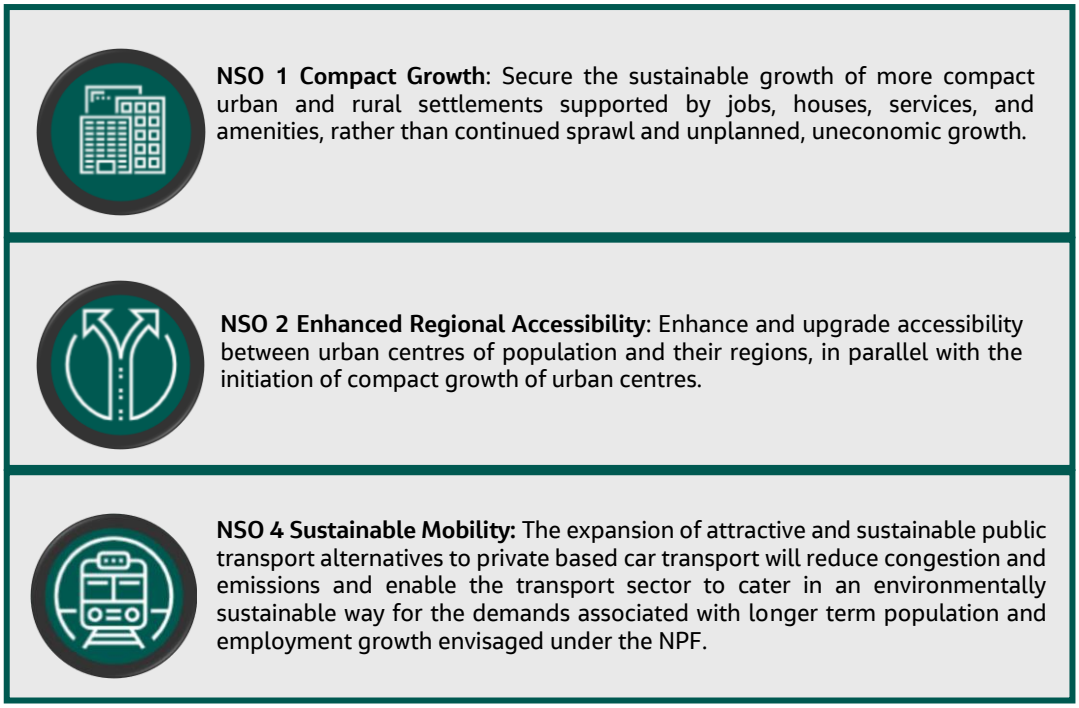

Figure 2-3: National Strategic Outcomes Relevant to the Development of the SLTP

2.2.2 National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland 2021

The National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI), published in December 2021, replaces the 2015 Strategic Investment Framework for Land Transport. Its purpose is to "*support the delivery of the National Planning Framework*" and enable the delivery of the 10 NSOs under Project Ireland 2040 by guiding the appropriate investment in Ireland's roads, active travel, and public transport infrastructure.

NIFTI does not put forward specific projects or prioritise regions but provides a set of principles and guidance which sponsoring agencies will demonstrate adherence with before receiving project funding. Specifically, NIFTI will direct the Department's spending through the four Investment Priorities in Figure 2-4, which will entail a balancing act between the maintenance of existing infrastructure and strong investment in measures that will enable the achievement of Irelands climate goals.

Figure 2-4: NIFTI Investment Priorities

The NIFTI modal hierarchy in Figure 2-5 represents the Departments commitment to move away from an excessive reliance on private cars and to enable the compact, sustainable development of Ireland's urbanisations. This hierarchy is followed in the Option Generation and Option Assessment Reports by considering intervention options in the order required by NIFTI. This resulted in the proposals and interventions put forward in the SLTP being focused on giving active travel the greatest priority, followed by public transport and private vehicles.

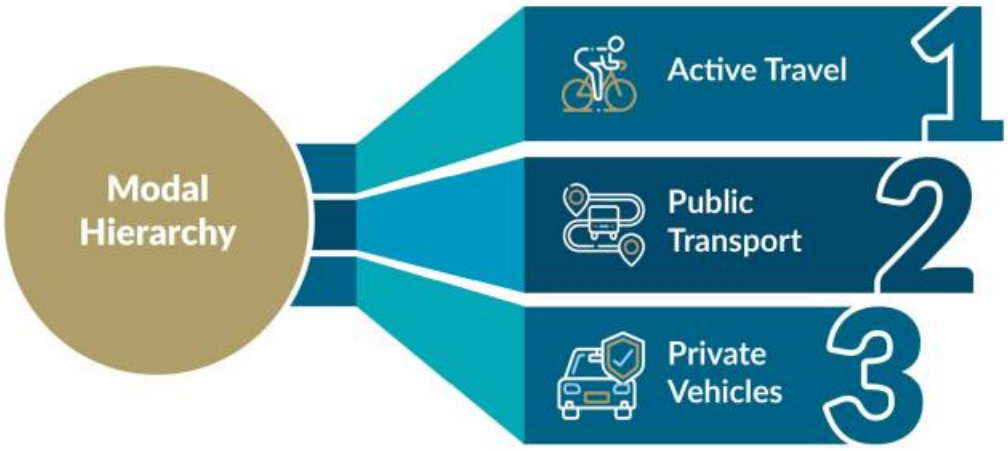

Figure 2-5: Modal Hierarchy (NIFTI)

In parallel to NIFTI's development the Department of Transport is reviewing its Sustainable Mobility Policy. In line with government targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030, the new policy will be centred around the three principles of Safe and Green Mobility, People Focused Mobility and Better Integrated Mobility.

In line with the NFP, NIFTI aims to funnel money into transport projects which enable compact growth and achieve the national population growth and settlement targets. As part of this approach, the Framework highlights approaches such as transit-oriented development and the integration of land use planning with transport planning: the same principles that underpin the NTA's and TII's methodology for ABTAs.

2.2.3 Climate Action Plan 2023

The new Climate Action Plan follows the passing of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 which sets legally binding greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 51% by 2030 and net zero no later than 2050. These targets set the premise for the SLTP's effort to improve sustainable and less carbon intensive transport options.

In accordance with the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development Act 2015, the Climate Action Plan is a dynamic policy which is updated regularly, with the next planned iteration due to take place in 2022. Each iteration reflects technological, research, policy and economic changes that have occurred since the previous plan's publication.

The 2021 Plan recognises that some regions, people, and sectors of the economy will be more affected than others and established a Just Transition Commission to ameliorate these effects. The 9.5 billion Euro expected to be raised by 2030 in carbon tax revenue are earmarked to, among other things, favour a just transition and for the construction of social housing.

The plan has sector-specific policy objectives. In transport, the Plan calls for a 42-50% reduction in emissions by 2030 through measures including:

- 500,000 extra walking, cycling and public transport journeys per day by 2030;
- Increasing the proportion of kilometres driven by passenger electric cars to between 40 and 45% by 2030, in addition to a reduction of 10% in kilometres driven by the remaining internal combustion engine cars;
- All replacements for bus and commuter rail vehicles and carriages to be low or zero carbon by 2030; and
- Increased rollout of rural public transport through Connecting Ireland.

The sector-specific goals for Land Use focus on rural land use including forestry, bogs, and agriculture, with the aim of reducing net carbon emissions by 37-58% by 2030.

In terms of enforcement, the Climate Action Delivery Board will hold each Department and public body accountable for the delivery of actions set out in the Climate Action Plan and present quarterly reports to the government.

2.2.4 Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022-2030

In parallel to NIFTI's development the Department of Transport reviewed its Sustainable Mobility Policy, resulting in its latest issue in April 2022. In line with government targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51% by 2030, the new policy is centred around the three principles of Safe and Green Mobility, People Focused Mobility and Better Integrated Mobility.

The shift towards these three principles is reflected in the hierarchy of road users shown in Figure 2-6. During the ABTA process, the Options Development (Part 2b) and the Options Assessment (Part 3) considered the hierarchy. The Hierarchy of Road Users here is aligned with the NIFIT Investment hierarchy for different modes (Figure 2-5) which was equally considered during the ABTA process.

The Policy includes a target to deliver at least half a million additional daily active travel and public transport journeys and a 10% reduction in kilometres driven by fossil fuelled cars by 2030. The SLTP translates these sustainable mobility targets into mode share targets for the study area.

Both the 2009 National Cycle Policy Framework and the 2009-2020 Smarter Travel: A Sustainable Transport Future documents are further developed and replaced by this Policy.

The Policy adopts the "Avoid-Shift-Improve" approach to trips, which is also used in the ABTA Pilot Methodology. Hence in the context of rural transport and the environs of Sligo 'Shift' and 'Improve' are applicable to promoting efficiency and achieving climate targets.

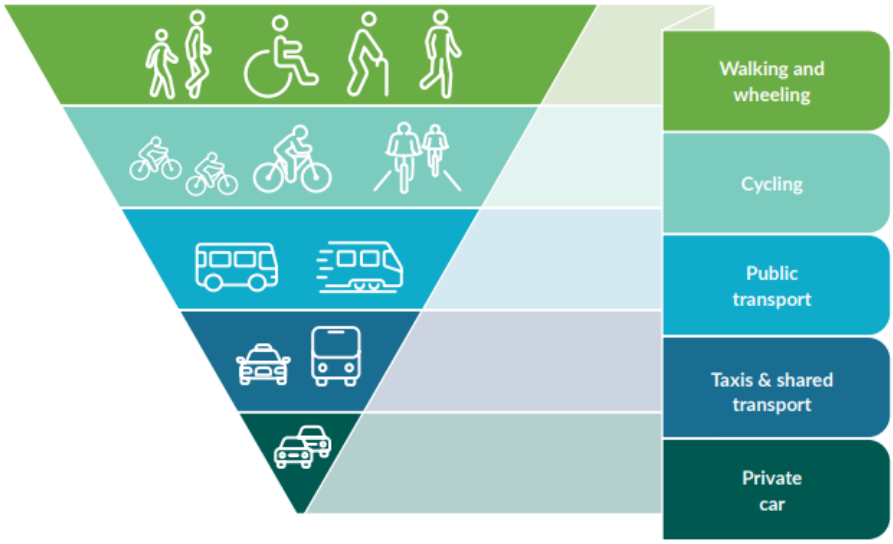

Figure 2-6: Hierarchy of Road Users Model

Organised around the three principles mentioned in the first paragraph of this subsection, there are 10 Policy Goals giving more specific directions. These relate only to sustainable forms of mobility and so do not address National Roads or Motorways.

Key recommendations include:

- Better Integrated Mobility support by adopting a transport-oriented housing development approach;
- Identifying housing delivery areas within a 1km distance of PT stops with the best potential to grow; and
- Better Integrate land use and transport planning at all levels.

The Sustainable Mobility Policy envisages the Pathfinder Programme, to "*provide a template of people-focused development which can be replicated and scaled up*". This Programme has a wide array of initiatives, including a north-south cycling corridor on Sligo connecting Pearse Road – City Centre – ATU Sligo, as well as the CycleConnects: Ireland's Cycle Network which is summarised below in Section 2.4.4.

2.2.5 Draft TII National Cycle Network (2023)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland's National Cycle Network integrates with and complements other cycling networks – such as CycleConnects (outlined in 2.4.4) – as well as existing cycling infrastructure. It has been published in draft in June of 2023 for public consultation and is expected to be published in its final version. The proposed Network – shown in Figure 2-7 - is around 3,500km in length and will connect over 200 cities, towns, and villages.

Figure 2-7: Draft TII National Cycle Network

2.2.6 Report of the Night-Time Economy Taskforce (2021)

The Night-Time Economy Taskforce was established by the Minister for Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport, and Media to provide recommendations on how to support the growth and development of the night-time economy. The taskforce consulted with a range of stakeholders and developed a set of recommendations across four key themes:

- Enhancing the vibrancy of town and city centres at night;
- Promoting a safe and secure night-time environment;
- Facilitating late-night transportation options; and
- Supporting innovation and collaboration in the night-time economy.

Recognising the need for each city, town, and village to have their own vision for the local night-time economy, the report recommends the appointment of Night-Time Economy Advisors and the creation of a Night-Time Economy Committee by local authorities. The report emphasises the importance of the night-time economy to Ireland's overall economic and cultural vitality and recommends a coordinated and strategic approach to supporting future growth.

In line with this report, the SLTP takes the significant potential of the nigh-time economy into account by recommending measures that better enable people to move during later hours. These measures are presented in Chapter 6.

2.2.7 Transport Infrastructure Ireland Publication Standards (2024)

TII Publications (Standards) are crucial for the design, construction, and maintenance of national roads in Ireland, ensuring consistency, safety, and efficiency. These standards complement the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS), which focuses on urban areas, ensuring a seamless transition between urban and national road networks.
A key aspect of TII Publications is the integration of land use and transport planning. This approach supports sustainable development and efficient land use, reducing congestion and promoting accessibility. Additionally, the standards include guidelines for minimising environmental impacts, such as noise and air pollution, and protecting natural habitats.
Area-Based Transport Assessments (ABTAs) are an essential component of this integrated planning. They evaluate the transport needs of specific areas, considering current and future land use, to plan road networks that support sustainable growth and efficient transport systems. Together, TII Publications and DMURS provide a robust framework for the design and maintenance of road networks in Ireland.

2.2.8 Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012)

The Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012) stress the importance of integrating land use and transport planning from the early stages of development. This involves proactive collaboration between local councils, the Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), and other stakeholders to ensure that transport infrastructure aligns with land use plans. Area Based Transport Assessments (ABTAs) play a crucial role in this process, as they evaluate the transport impacts of development proposals, assess the capacity of existing infrastructure, and identify necessary improvements. The guidelines also promote sustainable development by encouraging the use of walking, cycling, and public transport, thereby reducing reliance on private cars.

Additionally, the guidelines aim to maintain a safe and efficient road network that supports economic growth while minimising adverse impacts on the environment and communities. By promoting a consistent and well-informed approach to planning, the guidelines help balance development needs with the preservation and enhancement of

transport infrastructure. This integrated approach ensures that transport and land use planning work together to create cohesive and sustainable development patterns.

2.3 Regional Level

2.3.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Northern and Western Regions (RSES) 2020-2032

2.3.1.1 Overview

The RSES for the Northern & Western Region is a 12-year high-level development framework which supports the implementation of the NPF and NDP and other relevant governmental objectives within the area of the Northern & Western Regional Assembly. Strategies, plans, and programmes of public bodies defined in the Planning and Development Acts 2000 to 2010, including those of Sligo County Council, must be consistent with the Regional Policy Objectives of the RSES.

The RSES requires the collaborative preparation of Local Transport Plans based on Area Based Transport Assessment guidance to support the NPF objective of compact smart growth and sustainable mobility. RPO 6.27 within the RSES states:

"Local Transport Plans will represent the lowest tier of the NPF's framework for the integration of land use and transport planning and the achievement of the NPF's objective of 'compact smart growth'" and *"Local Transport Plans will be based on a clear set of objectives and the most recent demographic and travel information taking into account the policies and objectives of the local authorities, insofar as they align with those of National and Regional Policy."*

Regional Policy Objectives (RPO) relevant to the Sligo ABTA are shown in Table 2-3. During the ABTA process and the development of the SLTP, these were applied through the creation of the Principles & Objectives for the Context Report as well as the Option Generation and Option Assessment Reports. They are reflected in the transport interventions and proposals brought forward in Chapter 6.

Table 2-3: Regional Policy Objectives Underpinning the SLTP

RPO Reference	Objective
3.7.39	Ensure that at least 40% of new residential and employment-related development in the Regional Growth Centre occurs within Sligo's existing built-up urban area, through regeneration and consolidation on infill and brownfield sites.
3.7.42	Prioritise new residential and employment related development on greenfield sites in the areas served by the Western Distributor Road at Caltragh and Oakfield, and at Ballinode, which will be served by the Eastern Garvogue Bridge and Approach Roads Scheme.
3.7.43	Improve urban circulation by increasing junction capacity along Sligo's Inner Relief Road (N4/N15) and provide new link roads, as necessary, to complete the "ring route" around the Town Centre.
3.7.46	Facilitate the development of a new IDA Business Park at Oakfield, to the south-west of the urban core.
3.7.48	Upgrade the Town Centre environment through focused interventions in O'Connell Street, Stephen Street and car park, Rockwood Parade, Market Cross, Old Market Street and Quay Street car park, followed by gradual improvements of streets adjoining the centre.
3.7.51	Continue the expansion of cycleways and walking routes throughout the urban area and outwards to the satellite villages of Ballysadare, Strandhill and Rosses Point, linking into established and planned recreational trails such as Union Wood, Knocknarea etc.
6.2	Undertake network reviews for city, regional centres, and support towns across the region, to provide local bus services.

RPO Reference	Objective
6.3	Planning at the local level should promote walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their neighbourhood or district centres, public transport services and other services at the local level such as schools.
6.13	(a) It shall be an objective to deliver the Athenry - Tuam - Claremorris - Sligo Rail to an appropriate level of service and to a standard capable of facilitating passenger and freight transport. (b) It shall be an objective to progress through pre-appraisal and early planning the extension of the railway from Athenry - Tuam - Claremorris - Sligo
6.14	Support provision of Smarter Travel infrastructure.
6.15	Promote enhancement of the capacity of the Sligo to Dublin rail line
6.22	Provide new interchange facilities and enhanced bus waiting facilities together with enhanced passenger information, utilising smart technology in appropriate circumstances.
6.23	To provide sustainable travel which will be supported by providing walking and cycling facilities (including Greenway and Blueway projects) as a priority across the region.
6.28	Policies, objectives, and measures which emerge from Local Transport Plans shall be incorporated into Development Plans, Local Area Plans, Strategic Development Zone Planning Schemes. Urban Area Plans and other relevant planning framework documents.
6.29	The management of space in town and village centres should deliver a high level of priority and permeability for walking, cycling and public transport modes to create accessible, attractive, vibrant, and safe, places to work, live, shop and engage in community life.
6.31	New development areas should be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to give a competitive advantage to these modes. Prioritisation should be given to schools and areas of high employment density.
6.34	Promote deployment of targeted, convenient, and safe recharging infrastructure across the region to meet the changing needs of the electric vehicle with particular emphasis in public parking areas and employment locations.

2.3.1.2 Sligo Regional Growth Centre Strategic Plan

Regional Growth Centres (RGCs) are significant towns which operate similarly to cities but at a smaller scale. The RSES identifies Sligo as RGCs and develops a supporting Regional Centre Strategic Plan (RGCSP).

These Plans are designed to guide the sustainable development of the RGCs up to 2040, by which point each is expected to have grown in population by at least 40%. The RGCSP area for Sligo Town, shown in Figure 2-8, supports population growth to at least 27,200 persons by 2040 in the Sligo principal urban area, with intermediate targets of growth to 23,600 persons by 2026 and to 25,800 by 2031. The population targets form the basis of the SCDP's settlement strategy and underpin the Need for Change in Chapter 3 of the SLTP.

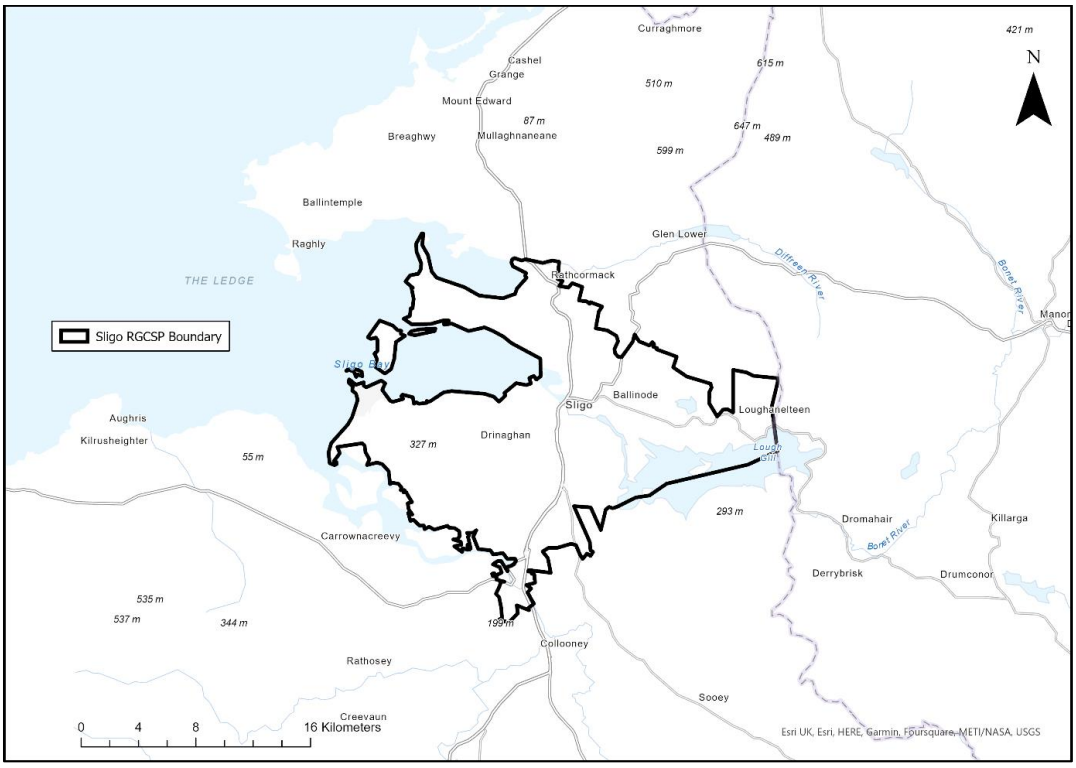

Figure 2-8: RGCSP Boundary

The RGCSP's Vision for Sligo Town is that it be "An enterprising, inclusive, resilient and environmentally sustainable place, which values and celebrates its unique landscape and rich culture and heritage, and where the wellbeing of future generations is central to everything we do".

Within the RGCSP, the RSES plans for the following developments to be completed in Sligo, which have informed the Options Development and Options Assessment Reports, therefore influencing the interventions and proposals put forward in the SLTP:

- A new IDA Business Park at Oakfield;
- Encourage additional industrial use at Ballytivnan/Rathbraughan;
- Create a redevelopment framework and renewed investment in the Docklands;
- A new residential development at Ballinode;
- A new residential development at Caltragh; and
- Public realm and pedestrian improvements in the Quay Quarter, including the conversion of Quay Street Car Park to a public Square.

Compact Growth

Mixed-use developments constructed at appropriate densities and sensitive to Sligo's historic urban fabric should form compact urban quarters. The town centre and new and existing neighbourhoods should be linked by a range of transport options. New developments should maximise regeneration, consolidation, and the redevelopment of brownfield sites– for example, at The Docklands, an industrial brownfield area which is suitable for redevelopment and is capable of accommodating over 1,000 new homes.

Further, sustainable communities in Caltragh and Ballinode should be created on greenfield lands and host over 7,000 new homes. Their creation should be supported through improved mobility by way of the Eastern Garvogue Bridge, Western Distributor Road, and new urban traffic control systems.

Enterprising Sligo

Innovation and entrepreneurship, along with expanded educational opportunities and workforce skills, should be fostered through new business and enterprise zones. These should be supported by investment in transport infrastructure, such as the enhancement of national roads N15, N17, N4 and N16 to strengthen connections to other major settlements and the rest of the region.

Liveable Sligo

Sligo should put people at the forefront of its placemaking, with welcoming, attractive, and safe streets and areas which operate at human scales inclusive of people of all ages and backgrounds. This includes traffic-free walking and cycling routes across Sligo town as well as the implementation of the Sligo Public Realm Plan 2018, on O'Connell Street to enhance active travel provision, developing a cultural plaza on Stephen Street and developing proposals for a green link from Collooney to Sligo.

2.4 Local Policy

2.4.1 Sligo Public Realm Action Plan 2018

The Public Realm Plan establishes the vision for the built environment of Sligo Town Centre. Its aim is to "Enhance the image and setting of this historic city through the enhancement of its streets and spaces, conservation of its built heritage, encouraging people to explore, businesses to flourish and creating a vibrant street scene".

The plan also acts as a design manual for creating an urban landscape that is consistent with the plan's guiding principles, which are:

- Put people first. Design spaces for people;
- Simplify the streetscape;
- Ensure consistency in design and use of materials;
- Create memorable and identifiable spaces where people want to be;
- Protect and enhance Sligo's character and heritage;
- Design spaces to be flexible and suitable for multiple uses;
- Resist overdesign;
- Ensure that all public realm improvement projects/works support the proper functioning of the city centre.

An aspect of the plan that is particularly relevant to the SLTP is the categorisation of the centre into three hierarchical zones, as shown in Figure 2-9. The Core streets (in red) are "*a defined heart of the city centre*" and should have a "*pedestrian focus*" as well as "*minimal car parking with car-free areas*". The Integral streets to the central core (in orange) create "*a natural progression from the city core*" and should have "*an even balance between cars and pedestrians*". Finally, the adjoining streets (in yellow), found in the outer parts of the centre, should provide "*continuity through wayfinding*" and the plan proposes an "*acceptance of on-street parking and vehicle priority*".

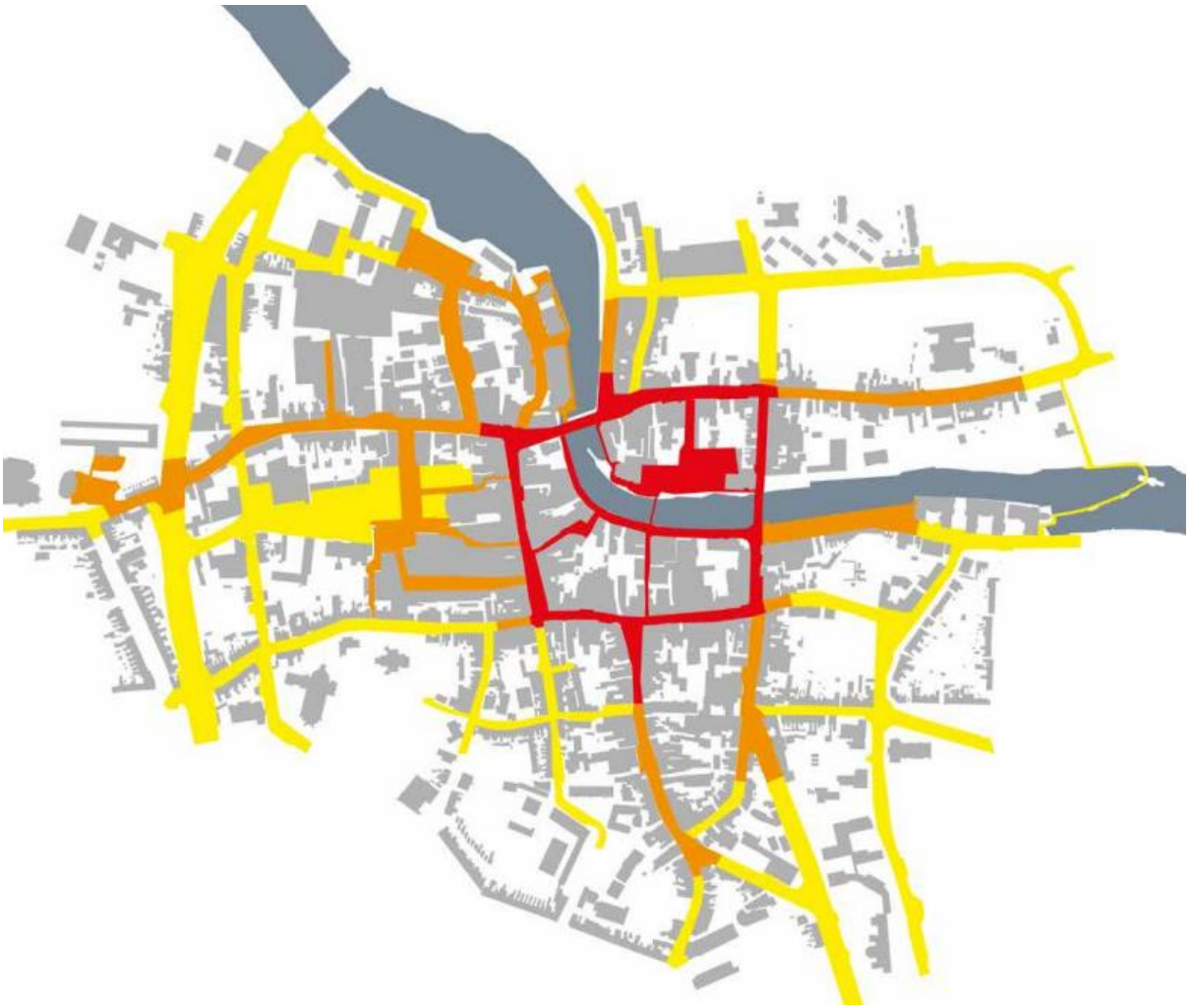

Figure 2-9: Public Realm Action Plan Zones

The plan also identifies the need to replace on-street car parking in the town centre with of dedicated car parks in the periphery of the town centre. It states that *"In order to enhance the public realm of Sligo, key interventions in the townscape are proposed. This will necessitate the displacement of car parking. A supporting strategy to improve connections to car parking must be formulated and implemented."*

2.4.2 Sligo Local Authority Climate Action Plan (2024-2029)

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act, 2021 requires local authorities to produce and adopt a Local Authority Climate Action Plan (LACAP) before February 2024; SCC's Draft LACAP is currently undergoing public engagement until the 18th of August 2023. In December of the same year, the Draft LACAP will undergo public consultation, after which it is expected to be adopted.

Local authorities are envisaged to play a key role in achieving the country's Climate Targets. In support of this, the Plan is being developed through the following framework:

- **Fully accountable**: Targeted actions for areas where Sligo County Council has full accountability for climate action within their own operations.
- **Influence:** Actions for where Sligo County Council can influence businesses, communities, and individuals in the delivery of local climate action through the functions and services they provide.

- **Coordination:** Actions for where Sligo County Council can coordinate and facilitate local and community action bringing together stakeholders in partnership to achieve climate action related projects.
- **Advocate:** Actions aligned to Sligo County Council role as advocate on climate action through raising awareness, communicating, informing, and engaging in open dialogue on the topic.

As part of the ongoing public engagement process a Climate Change Risk Assessment and an Emissions Inventory have been made available to the public. The Climate Change Risk Assessment identifies how the impact and frequency of climate events is likely to change in the future. This is summarised in the climate risk matrix reproduced in Figure 2-10.

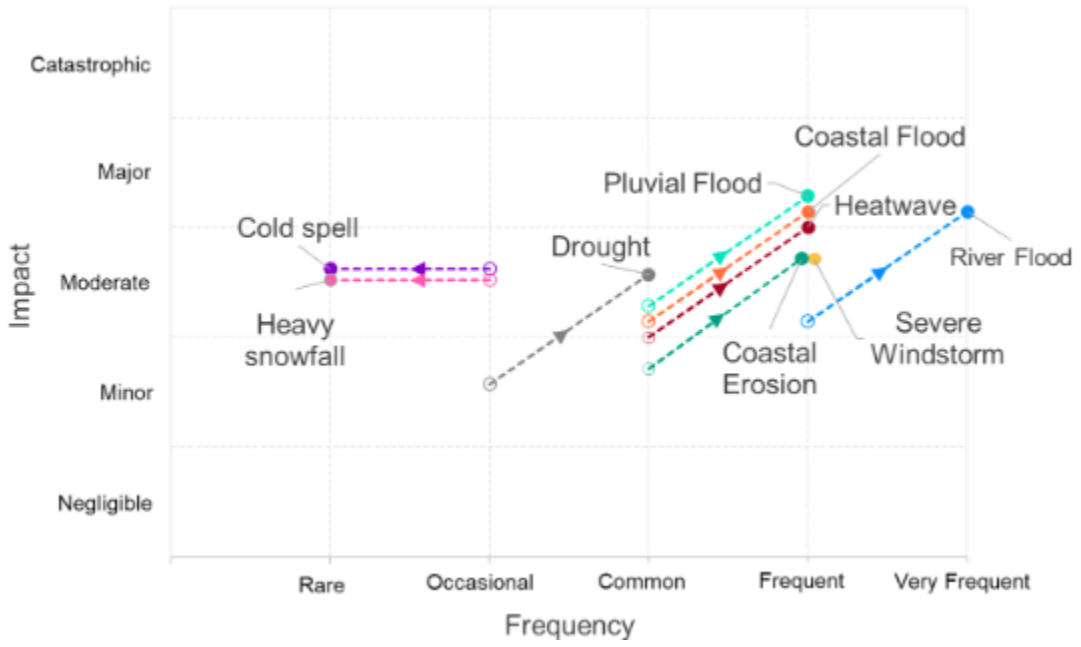

Figure 2-10: Climate Risk Matrix for Sligo

The LACAP is accompanied by an emissions inventory, which reports emissions by sector in the County and gives an overview of transport emissions. The calculations in the inventory show that the County's emissions in 2019 added up to 943 kilotons of CO_2 equivalent, which is 1.4% of the national total. Within the County, the transport sector made up 14% of total emissions, compared to the national level where transport makes up 19% of emissions.

In light of the car dependency which is reflected in the high car mode share the County, the Emissions Inventory recognises that *"Behavioural change and promoting cleaner, safer and more sustainable mobility is critical for climate policy"*.

2.4.3 Local Economic & Community Plan for Sligo (2023)

The Local Economic & Community Plan (LECP) for Sligo sets out a Vision for 2030 "*for a smart, sustainable, and socially inclusive Sligo; one that cherishes its vibrant communities, protects and celebrates its unique environment and rich culture, and is a champion of innovative growth and development.*"

Through the LECP, Sligo is "*targeting the development of a cutting edge, innovative and forward-thinking county that is smart and sustainable"*. By embracing Sligo Town' status as a Regional Growth Centre (as designated in the RSES), the LECP will drive sustainable economic development.

Sligo is targeting the development of a cutting edge, innovative and forward-thinking county that is smart and sustainable. Sligo Town's status as a Regional Growth Centre will be embraced to drive sustainable economic development across the county. For this purpose, the Plan builds on the following six Smart Pillars:

1. **Sustainable Economy:** Sustainable employment (jobs of the future), industry-academia linkages and data for enterprises (identification of needs)
2. **Sustainable Environment:** Community sustainability initiatives, renewables, circular economy, and biodiversity protection
3. **Smart Mobility:** A data led approach to public transport enhancement, active mobility, and electric vehicles.
4. **Smart Living:** Connected communities (high speed mobile and broadband, open public Wi-Fi) energy efficiency and a data led approach to service and amenity development.
5. **Smart People:** Skills development, and public participation in Sligo's development.
6. **Smart Governance:** Knowledge sharing, data collection for decision making (including IoT sensors and public data), eservices and community engagement.

Among the various objectives set out by the LECP, Objective 1.3 is concerned with transport and targets an *"Increase connectivity and public transport across Sligo*". The following actions are recommended in the Plan to support this objective:

- Invest in critical transport infrastructure to maximise the opportunities and build future transport needs of the county across road, rail and smart travel including:
    - (A) Continuing to support upgrades and improvements to Sligo's road networks including the N15 to Letterkenny, N17 to Galway, as well as the N4 to Dublin and the N16 to Enniskillen and Belfast
    - (B) Exploring further options to reduce traffic congestion in Sligo Town including construction of the Eastern Garvogue Bridge
    - (C) Explore how Sligo's rail service could be enhanced to support growth (e.g. journey times, frequency, Wi-Fi) and feed ideas into the All-Island Railway Strategy.
- Increase the number of EV charging points across the county and develop an Electric Vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure map for County Sligo to identify new areas where specific infrastructure should be supported.
- Develop a working group on transport to include key stakeholders and decision makers that can drive change including representatives from National Transport Authority (NTA), Transport for Ireland (TFI) and Local Link.
- Develop a relevant model to achieve sustainable transport in Sligo's rural-urban setting and use data analytics to assess need and demand and drive targeted investment to expand Public Transport services to rural and urban areas both in relation to areas served and frequency.

2.4.4 CycleConnects: Ireland's Cycle Network – Sligo (2023)

The CycleConnects plan *"aims to improve sustainable travel by providing the potential for more trips on a safe, accessible and convenient cycling network, connecting more people to more places"*. It consists of a network plan for each County in the country; in the case of Sligo it is divided into an Urban Cycling Network, which covers the Town of Sligo (Figure 2-11), and a wider County Cycling Network, which provides a series of inter-urban links, connecting towns and settlements (Figure 2-12).

The draft versions of the CycleConnects networks for Sligo were used in the development of the SLTP cycling network. However, they do not overlap fully, and are not intended to. The CycleConnects Technical Note states

that: "*This [CycleConnects Plan] 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*". Therefore, the development of Sligo's cycling network in the future will be based on both CycleConnects and the SLTP, with these two documents playing complimentary roles.

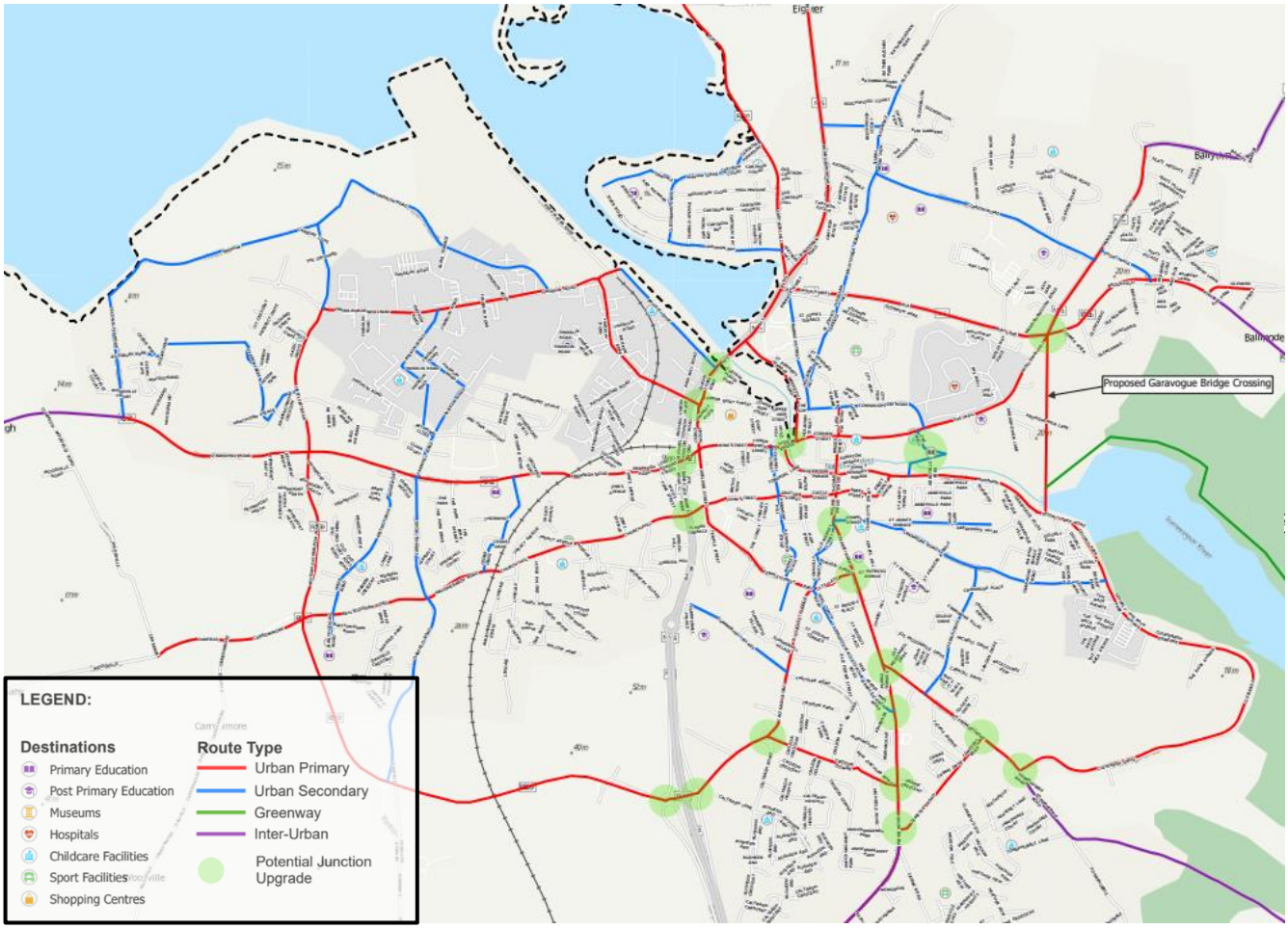

Figure 2-11: CycleConnects Urban Network for Sligo

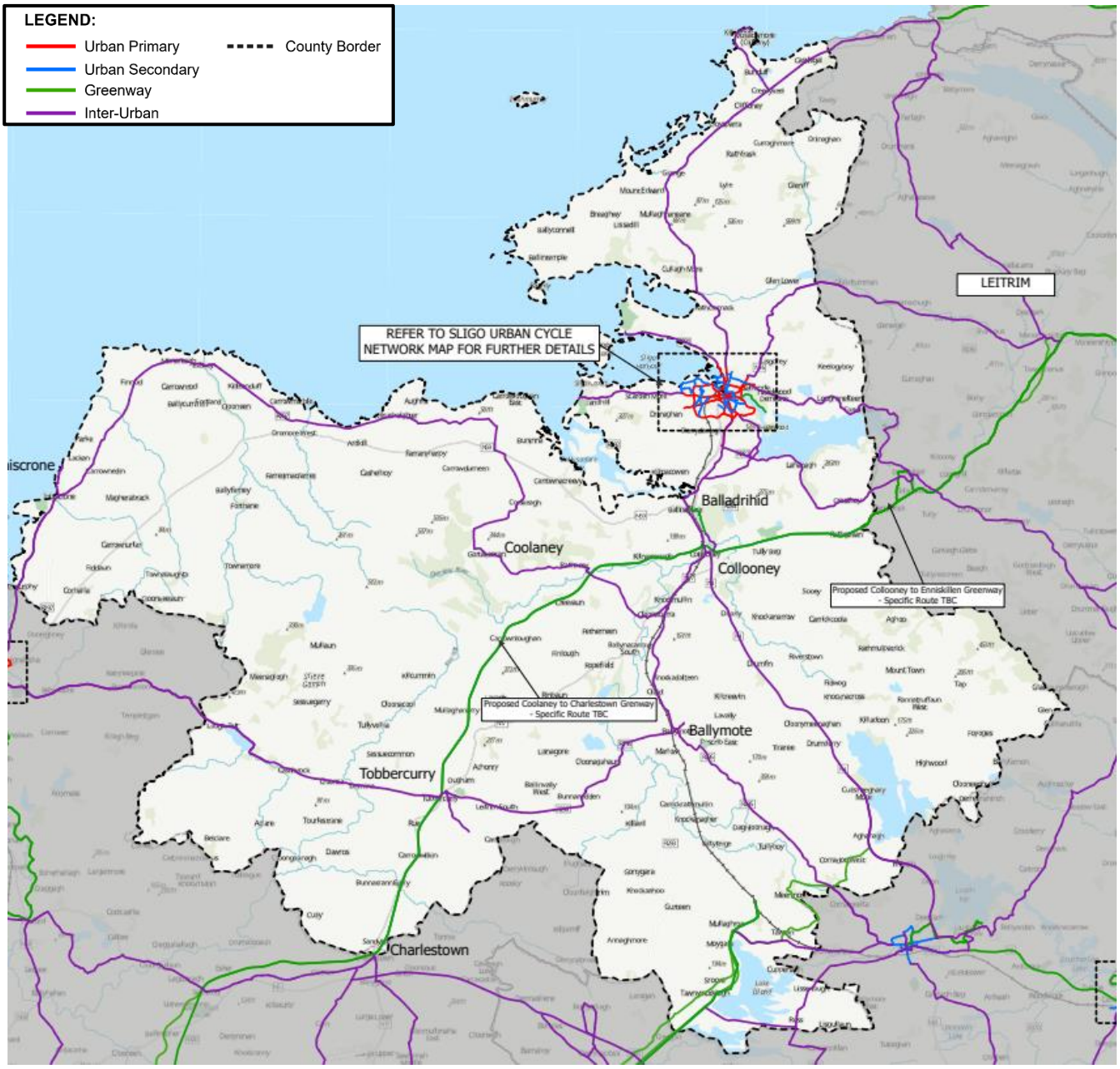

Figure 2-12: CycleConnects Interurban Network for Sligo

2.5 Guidance Documents

2.5.1 Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)

The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) promotes an integrated street design approach within urban areas (i.e. cities, towns, and villages) focused on:

- Influence by the type of place in which the street is located; and
- Balancing the needs of all users.

The manual aims to create well designed streets at the heart of sustainable communities to promote access by walking, cycling and public transport. The interventions and proposals made by the SLTP should be realised in accordance with the guidance set out in DMURS to ensure that the infrastructure delivered in the study area is of high quality.

The principles, approaches and standards set out in this Manual apply to the design of all urban roads and streets (with a speed limit of 60 km/h or less), except: (a) Motorways (b) In exceptional circumstances, certain urban roads, and streets with the written consent of Sanctioning Authorities.

All other national design standards are replaced by DMURS, while The Urban Design Manual: Best Practice, the Urban Design Manual, and Planning Guidelines: Local Area Plans remain in force and this suite of documents should be understood in conjunction.

The Manual is underpinned by a holistic design-led approach, predicated on a collaborative and consultative design process. There is specific recognition of the importance of creating secure and connected places that work for all, characterised by creating new and existing streets as attractive places with high priority afforded to pedestrians and cyclists while balancing the need for appropriate vehicular access and movement.

To achieve a more place-based/integrated approach to road and street design, the following four core principles are promoted within the manual:

- Connected Networks - To support the creation of integrated street networks which promote higher levels of permeability and legibility for all users, and with emphasis on more sustainable forms of transport;
- Multi-Functional Streets - The promotion of multi-functional, place-based streets that balance the needs of all users within a self-regulating environment;
- Pedestrian Focus - The quality of the street is measured by the quality of the environment for the user hierarchy as shown Figure 2-13 below in with pedestrians considered first; and
- Multi-disciplinary Approach - Greater communication and co-operation between design professionals through the promotion of a plan-led, multidisciplinary approach to design.

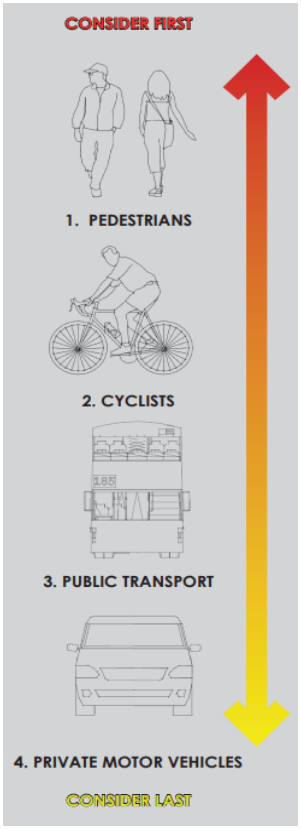

Figure 2-13: DMURS Hierarchy of Road Users

DMURS was updated in 2019 to take into consideration changes to government agencies, initiatives such as BusConnects and four new Advice notes relating to Transition Zones and Gateways, Geometric Standards, Materials and Specifications, and Quality Audits.

2.5.2 Cycle Design Manual 2023

The Cycle Design Manual promotes safe traffic environments for all road users including cyclists. It underlines the importance of integrating cycle travel opportunities in the planning and designing of new developments at all levels of the network including the strategic level, the route planning level and at design level. It provides technical information on the design of junctions, roundabouts, crossings and so on to ensure the optimum balance between the various modes and road functions is reached. All upgrades to the cycling network in the study area should be aligned with the design principles and guidance contained in the Manual.

The manual states that for cycle infrastructure to cater for the needs of people who currently cycle and to attract new users, there are five main requirements for design:

- Safety;
- Coherence;
- Directness;
- Comfort;
- Attractiveness.

The Manual also outlines six Key Design Principles which should be adhered to when designing cycle facilities. These are as follows:

- **Safe system approach** – This is a key component of Ireland's Road Safety Strategy 2021-2030 and aims to reduce the likelihood of a collusion occurring, as well as ensuring that if one does occur, those involved will not be killed or seriously injured.
- **Promoters of cycle facilities should cycle** – To have a greater understanding of the main needs of cyclists, it is strongly recommended that those who are involved in the promotion and delivery of cycle infrastructure should have recent experience of utility cycling, particularly along each route they are designing whilst also gaining first-hand experience of new types of cycle infrastructure e.g., protected junctions.
- **Network approach** – Focus on the delivery of coherent and connected cycle networks i.e., a series of interconnected routes joining main origins and destinations without gaps or interruptions in provision.
- **Segregation** – Pedestrian and cycle facilities on roads and streets should be segregated from traffic and from each other. This is crucial to attract people to switch to cycling as a regular mode of transport.
- **Everyday mobility** – focus on delivering cycle infrastructure that caters for everyday cycle trips to schools, shops, services, etc. as well as commuting trips. Some rural cycle facilities e.g. greenways, may be more focused on recreational cycling, however such facilities can also provide important transport corridors, so it is important that this is factored into such scheme designs.
- **Universal Design and Inclusive Mobility** – Cycle facilities should be designed to be useable by people of all ages and abilities using a variety of different types of cycles and wheeling equipment. In recent years, the use of non-standard cycle equipment such as cargo bikes tricycles, electric bicycles, and electric scooters has increased, and this should be catered for in future design of cycling infrastructure. It is also important to note that the use of motorised wheelchairs and mobility scooters is also permitted on cycle tracks and so should be considered as cycle networks are further developed.

2.6 Summary

The policy context within which the SLTP was developed sets clear environmental and population growth targets that Sligo must achieve. Along with the wider policy ambitions, these have been used to guide the development of this document. The SLTP supports:

- The 40% population growth target for Sligo Town set out in the RSES for the Northern and Western Regions;
- The achievement of net zero carbon dioxide emissions by no later than 2050 set out in the Climate Action Plan;
- The 500,000 additional, nationwide sustainable trips by 2030 set by the Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Mobility Policy;
- A reduction of 10% in fossil-fuelled car kilometres driven by 2030 set by the Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Mobility Policy;
- The development of a thriving night-time economy as supported in the Report of the Night Time Economy Taskforce; and
- The implementation of design principles and guidelines put forward in DMURS and the Cycle Design Manual.

3. Introducing Sligo

3.1 Overview

This chapter explores the existing conditions within the study area as defined in Chapter 1, highlighting Sligo's regional role, demographics, and the characteristics of its transport system. The analysis of the transport network's Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT) from the Baseline Assessment Report is presented here.

3.2 Background

The town of Sligo is designated as a Regional Growth Centre in the RSES, serving as a regional hub for commercial, leisure, culture, and education in the largely rural north-western region. The study area's population of 32,264 (2016 Census) with the majority of the population focused within Sligo Town (19,199 in 2016; 20,608 in 2022).

As the main focal point for the majority of jobs within the Study Area, Sligo town serves as an important centre for retail and employment within the region. The historical town centre features compact streets, lively character, architectural heritage for example the Courthouse, and historic sites like Sligo Abbey and Sligo Gaol which greatly enhance visitor experiences. However, the presence of cars greatly reduces the amenity of the Town Centre as a considerable number of vehicles traverse and park in the Town Centre's narrow streets. This reduces the amount of space available for people and diminishes the level of safety in these core streets.

Two characteristics of Sligo town which create severance are: the River Garvogue which flows through the centre of the town; and the N4 located to the west of the town centre. However, the severance effect of the river is mitigated by several bridges which support multi-modal permeability. The public realm adjacent to the river also creates an attractive environment encouraging pedestrians and cyclists to utilise these areas.

Similar to the river, the N4 also acts a physical barrier, negatively impacting pedestrian and cycle access to the town. For active travel users, the N4 can only be traversed at a series of pedestrian crossings, which suffer from insufficient footway widths and long signal timings. This causes a degree of separation between the town centre to the east, the train station, and Finisklin Business Park to its west.

Beyond the town centre, Sligo consists of mainly residential areas built around a street network that has formed around the major radial arteries leading into town. The lack of connection between the streets provides a quiet but poorly connected residential environment.

The Study Area also contains many significant attractors for local, national, and international tourism. The natural beauty of the area, historical buildings in Sligo Town, recreational potential for surfing, cycling and other outdoor sports, as well as the rich archaeological heritage on the Coolera Peninsula are notable attractors for trips within, as well as into the Study Area.

In the wider study area outside the Town there are a few settlements which are economically reliant on Sligo Town. Their population is much smaller than that of Sligo with 1,982 people living in Strandhill, 1,797 in Collooney, 1,747 in Ballysadare, 1,155 in Coolaney, 883 in Rosses Point and 423 in Ballincar according to the latest 2022 Census. This leaves just over 6,000 people living in non-urban areas, which make up almost 20% of the total study area population.

Transport connectivity in the wider study area is defined by its rural nature and lack of active travel infrastructure. Existing public transport provision is not accessible for many residents in rural locations and has limited provision for large sections of dispersed population of this rural environment. In this sense also, Sligo Town serves as a regional hub for public transport, with the MacDiarmada Train station providing services to and from Dublin, and the adjacent coach station that provides services to many Irish towns and cities.

The longer travel distances required to access vital services and the limited access to sustainable transport networks has led to a reliance of the private car in rural areas. The level of reliance in rural areas on the private car is supported by Figure 3-1 which shows the higher levels of car ownership in more rural areas.

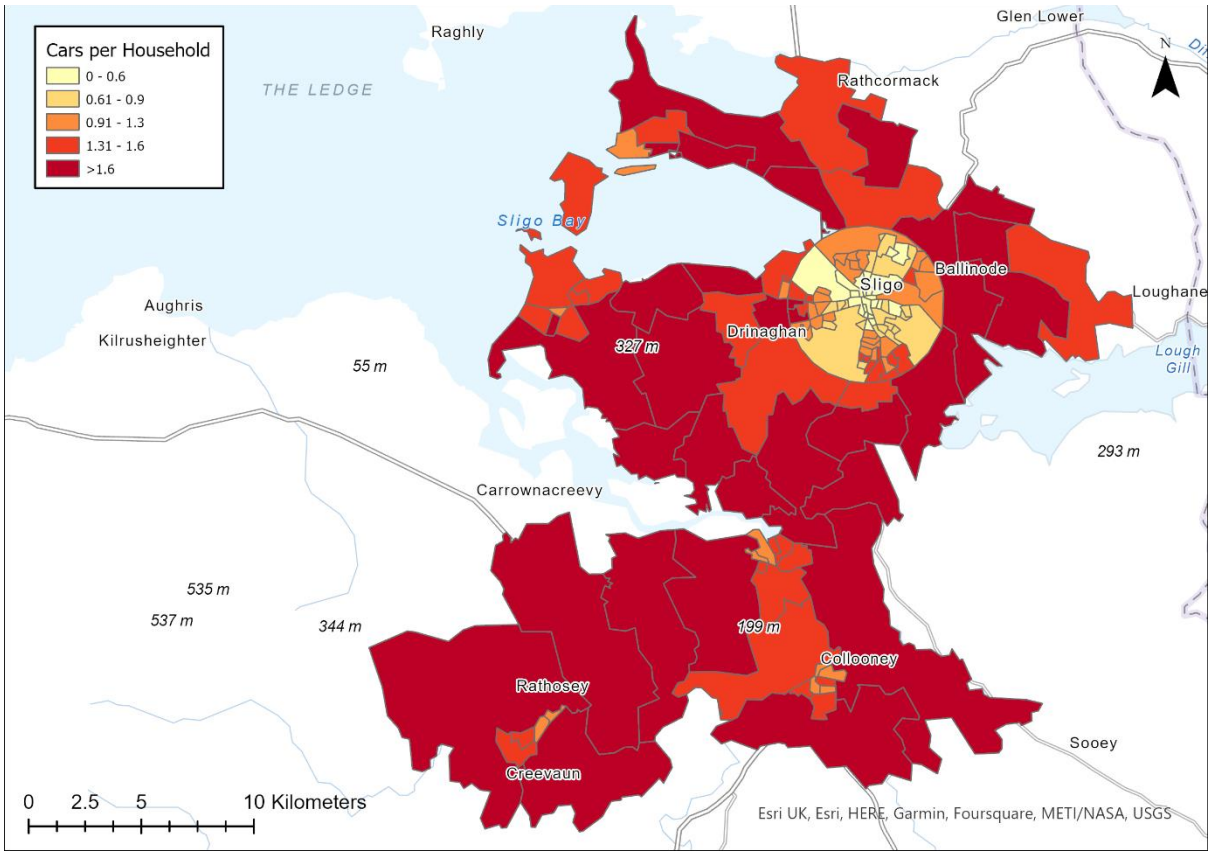

Figure 3-1: Car Ownership per Household Across the Study Area (2016 Census)

3.3 Development Patterns and Travel Demand in the Study Area

Development patterns in Sligo Town are defined by the three types of areas below. Each of these serves distinct functions and is located in a separate part of the town:

- **Retail -** The retail and commercial focussed town centre, where some examples of mixed land use can be found in the inclusion of some residential and office buildings in this area;
- **Employment -** The business parks including Finisklin and Rathbraghan/Ballytivnan Parks, which are occupied by offices as well as industrial units and therefore attract a significant number of commuting trips; and
- **Residential -** The wider residential areas of the Town are interspersed with a low number of commercial locations such as corner shops and few job locations.

Also important for Sligo's spatial make up is ATU Sligo in the north-east, serving as a hub for students and employment. In the wider study area, the Strandhill and Rosses point settlements play a significant leisure and tourism role.

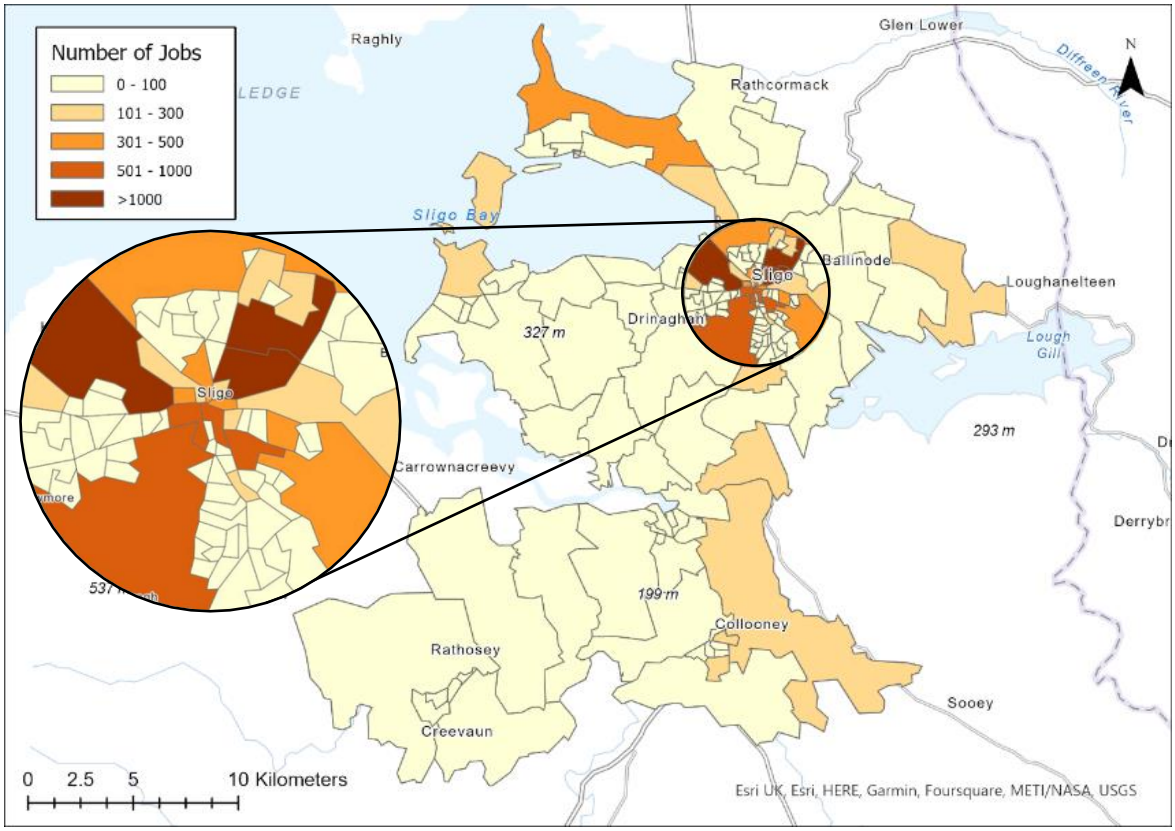

Figure 3-2: Job Distribution in the Study Area (2016 Census)

The predominance of single land uses in the study area offers limited local destinations for residents to access. Whether it be for work, groceries, or leisure activities, a large portion of the population needs to access the same areas of the town at the same time. During commuting hours, the transport links into the business parks are disproportionately busy compared to the rest of the transport network. The concentration of jobs in a few areas is shown in Figure 3-2. More mixed land uses, creating local destinations spread throughout the Town, would reduce the peak-hour strain on the road network.

The population distribution in Figure 3-3 shows the satellite settlements around Sligo and the population within the town itself. Residential areas in the town are largely concentrated along radial roads to the south (Pearse Road) and the west (Knappagh Road and Maugheraboy Road). This distribution of neighbourhoods reflects the ease of movement that these radial corridors provide. However, it is also underpinned by the need to travel far from home for daily needs, which is a result of the single land use prevalent in these residential areas.

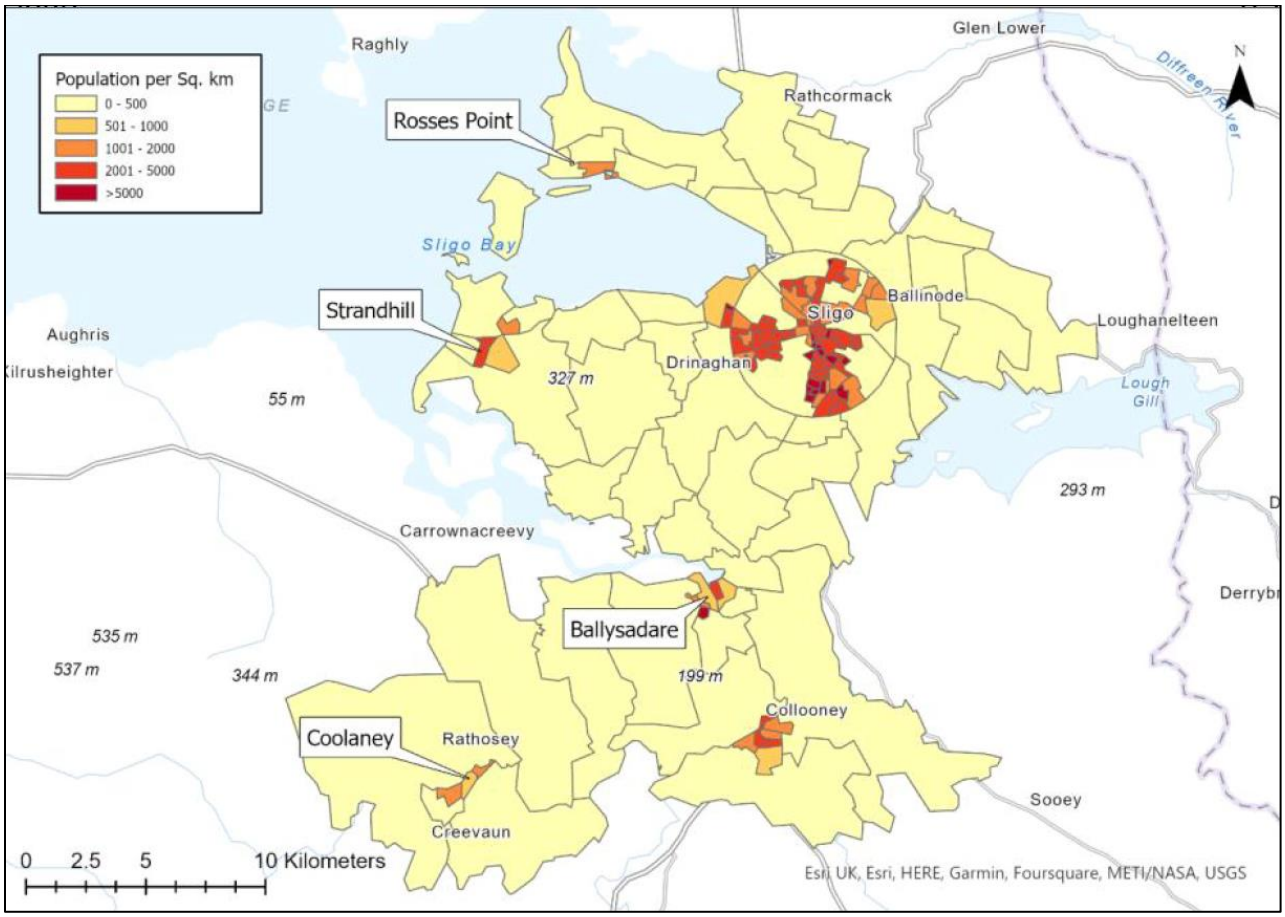

Figure 3-3: Population Density in the Study Area (2016 Census)

Whereas the satellite settlements have significant resident populations, the job distribution map in Figure 3-2 shows that there are few jobs in these locations. Because of this, residents of the satellite settlements often rely on trips into Sligo Town to access employment opportunities, giving the connections into the town centre a special economic importance.

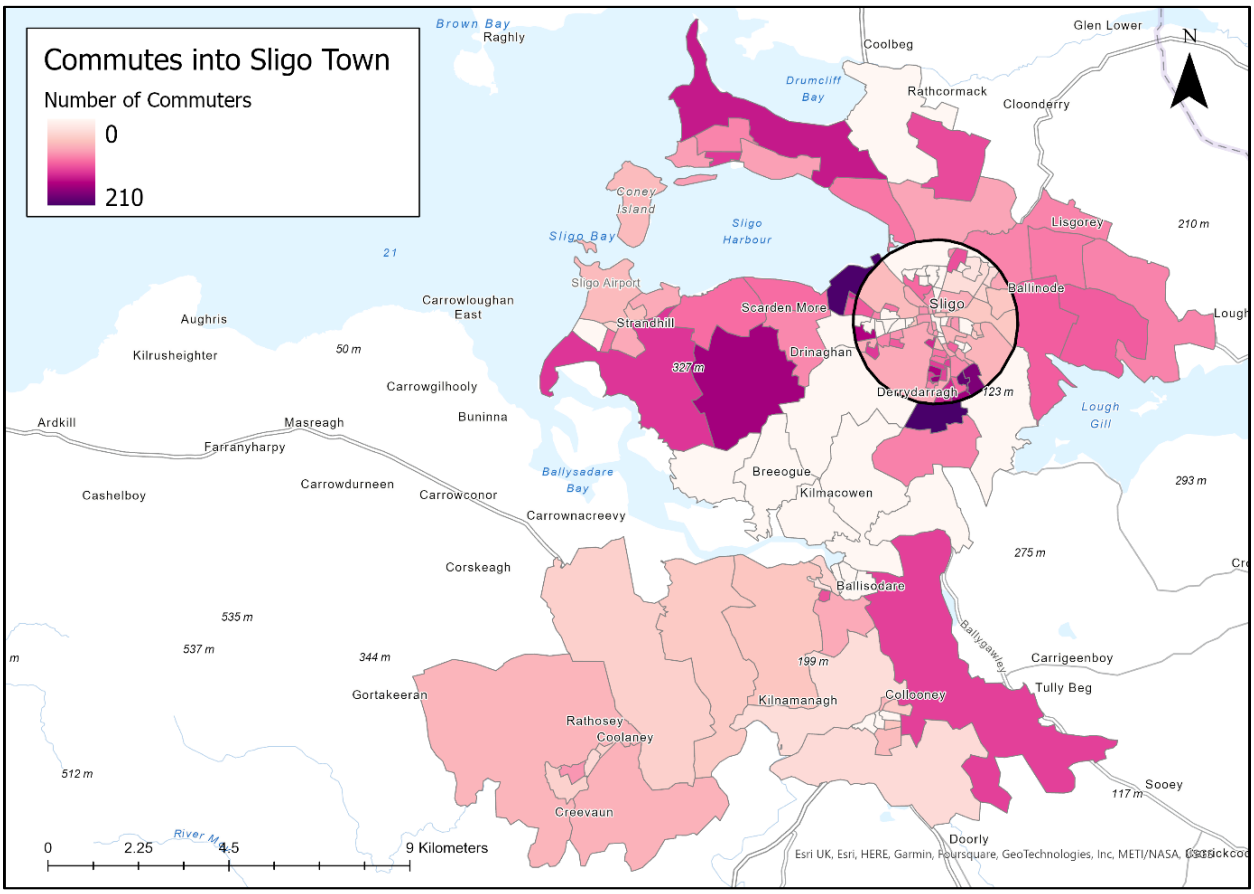

Figure 3-4: Origins of Commuting Trips into Sligo Town (POWSCAR 2016)

The commuter origins into Sligo Town are shown in Figure 3-4. As expected, the origins are concentrated around the satellite settlements.

The commuting movements within the town are visualised in Figure 3-5, which shows people from across the town accessing the Finisklin Business Park. Many of these commutes within the town are orbital movements and the existing transport network, which is laid out radially around the town centre, does not cater for these movements very well; the major red lines that show connections from people's homes to their workplaces are not closely aligned with any transport corridors.

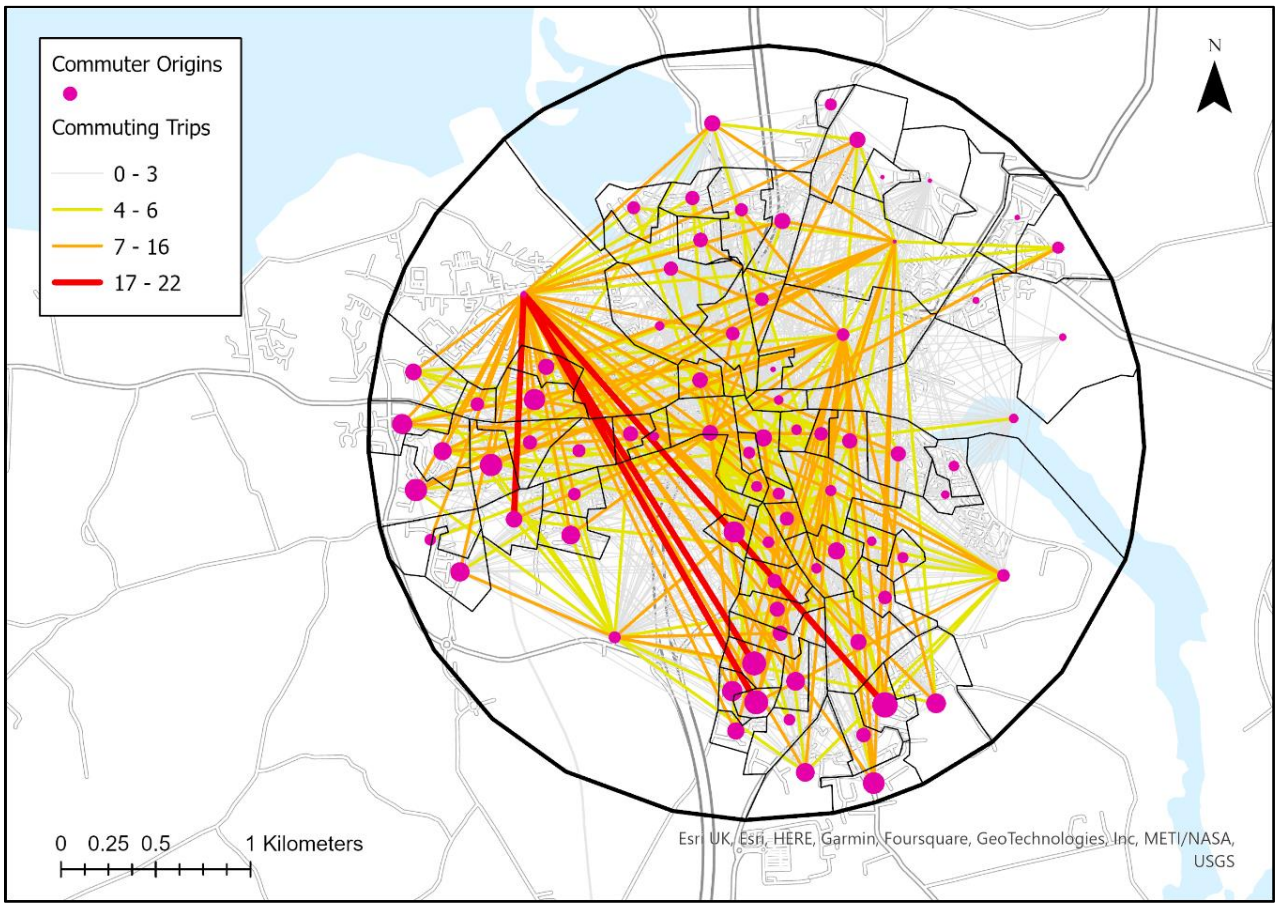

Figure 3-5: Commuting Trips within Sligo Town (POWSCAR 2016)

3.4 Existing Transport Network

This section summarises the existing walking, cycling, public transport and road networks within the study area and presents an analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of these modes.

3.4.1 Walking Network (active mode)

Pedestrians in Sligo can mainly utilise footways along the road network, but also along a small number of pedestrianised spaces in the town centre of Sligo. Fully pedestrianised spaces include Tobergal Lane, Water Lane, John Fallon Bridge, the Bridge of Light and a portion of Rockwood Parade. Much of JFK Parade and Riverside have wide footways facing the river, which play a crucial role in activating the Garvogue's potential to enhance the Town's public realm.

O'Connell Street and Hyde Bridge have recently undergone public realm improvements, enhancing the pedestrian environment. However, both remain open to all vehicle traffic. Works to develop Stephen Street Car Park into a fully pedestrianised public square are currently underway, showcasing the ongoing positive change towards optimising public realm and placing a focus on people in the town centre.

Pedestrians generally benefit from a high-quality public realm in the town centre, which is enhanced by the Garvogue River and the Town's historical architecture. However, the quality and width of existing footways and across junctions in the wider town is often varied, and there are significant severance impacts due to poor crossings points over the N4.

Residential areas in Sligo offer quiet streets with low traffic levels, but poor permeability. The large number of dead-end streets prevents through traffic from entering these streets, but also causes a significant level of severance. Pedestrians in the residential areas often walk routes that are much longer than the "as the crow flies" distance, taking detours around the dead-end streets. The Town would benefit from more interconnected streets that offer direct walking links.

The strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats for the walking network in the study are shown in Table 3-1.

3.4.2 Cycling Network (active mode)

Cycling as attractive mode of travel has significant potential in Sligo. The relatively short distances needed to make trips around the town, and the relatively flat topography make cycling a viable mode of transport, however current infrastructure provision is limited.

The Urban Cycle Sligo Project which SCC pursued in conjunction with the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport developed six cycle corridors as shown in Figure 3-6. Along these routes, the quality of infrastructure provision is variable, with junctions affording limited priority to cyclists.

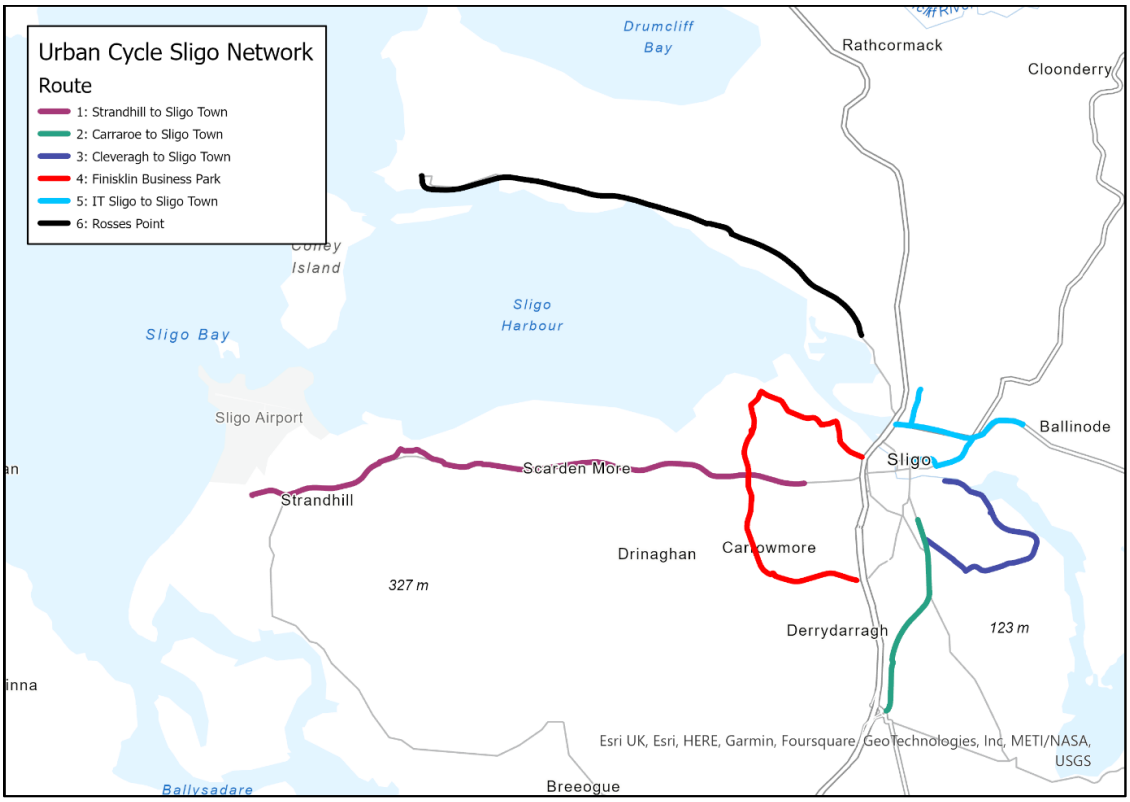

Figure 3-6: Cycling Routes in the Study Area

Mandatory cycle lanes (solid line on the road to separate cyclists from general traffic) exist along Pearse Road, and the Strandhill/Knappagh Road. There is fully segregated cycle track along the Western Distributor Road, a section of the N4 south of the town centre, Cleveragh Drive, a portion of the N15 up to the Hughes Bridge, and along the Ash Lane. A series of road sections across the town provide advisory cycle lanes (dashed line on the road to separate cyclists from general traffic) and shared streets with motor vehicles. These can be found along sections of The Mall, Cleveragh Drive, the First Sea Road and Finisklin Road.

A notable strength for cycling in Sligo is the presence of an e-bike sharing scheme, which gives people both the opportunity and incentive to cycle. The existing scheme provides access to bikes through a smartphone app, where the location and battery charge of available bikes are shown. After unlocking a bike through the app, it can be used within a defined boundary that includes the entirety of the town shown within the red boundary in Figure 3-7. Cycle trips must be terminated at a designated cycle parking zone which is marked on the ground. The opportunities for the cycling network, along with its strengths, weaknesses and threats is presented in Table 3-1.

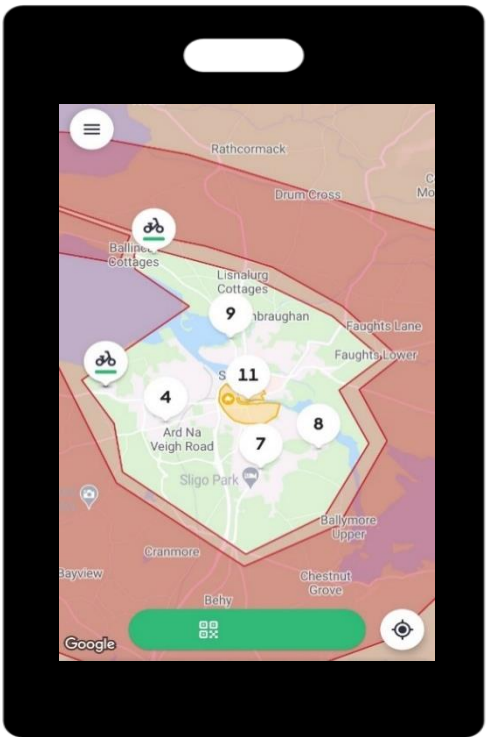

Figure 3-7: Smartphone Screenshot from E-Bike Sharing App

3.4.2.1 Walking and Cycling Network SWOT

A SWOT analysis of existing walking and cycling infrastructure is presented below in Table 3-1.

Table 3-1: Walking and Cycling Network SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
• Existing network of pedestrianised streets such as Rockwood Parade and Tobergal Lane • Relatively high number of crossing points over the Garvogue River in town centre reduces its severance impact on active travel • Compact, flat and vibrant town centre conducive to active travel modes (walking, cycling and wheeling) • Existing network of electric public hire bikes encourages cycling as a mode of travel within the Town Centre.	• Location of large trip attractors such as ATU Sligo and Sligo University Hospital on the periphery of Sligo Town Centre make walking and cycling to these less desirable • Fractured nature of walking and cycling links and prioritisation of vehicle movements at junctions in the town centre can lead to a poor user experience for active travellers • Many sections of cycling infrastructure are unprotected with mandatory cycle lanes or shared cycle footways.	• Improve walking and cycling links in the wider Study Area both for commuter and leisure purposes • Extension of the dockless e-bike scheme to cover a larger area further outside Sligo town and around the Study Area • Improve segregation of existing cycle lanes from general traffic and other conflicts • Improve walking and cycling connectivity from bus and rail stations to Sligo town centre	• Compact nature of street network in Sligo Town Centre may limit opportunities for reallocation of road space to active travel uses • Location of large trip attractors such as ATU Sligo and Sligo University Hospital on the periphery of Sligo Town centre, as well as the current extensive parking provision at each may limit the effectiveness of active travel interventions related to these sites

3.4.3 Public Transport Network

The study area accommodates bus and rail public transport services. Regional services are based around the MacDiarmada Train and Coach Station in the west of the town centre, while the S1 town bus service connects the north and south of Sligo. A SWOT analysis of existing public transport infrastructure is presented in Table 3-2.

The local public transport network in the study area is limited, with the S1 town bus service operating at a 30-minute frequency between 07:30 and 18:00. The imminent introduction of a new town bus service – the S3 – running between Finisklin, the town centre and Sligo Retail Park on the Pearse Road – will be a significant improvement in the provision of local public transport for the Town.

Regional connectivity is provided by 31 bus services shown in Figure 3-8, the majority of which are operated by Bus Eireann. Many of these stop multiple times within Sligo Town, essentially providing local-type services. The regional bus network provides connections into the surrounding cities and regional centres including Enniskillen, Ballina, Longford, Derry, Galway, Donegal, and Limerick. However, many of these services run only once per day and in general the frequency of regional bus services is very low.

Among the local bus services, the S2 service plays an important role. It connects Rosses Point to Strandhill via Sligo Town stopping at various locations in Sligo, including ATU Sligo, the University Hospital, the Town Centre and MacDiarmada Station. A recent service upgrade has increased the frequency of the S2 from hourly to half-hourly between 07:30 and 00:00.

In addition to the regional bus services, eight daily train services run on the Sligo to Dublin Rail Line. Five Local Link services operate from Sligo Town to Dromahair (563), Dowra (566), Ballinamore (572), Ballaghaderreen (977), Coolaney (981) and Ballyshannon (982).

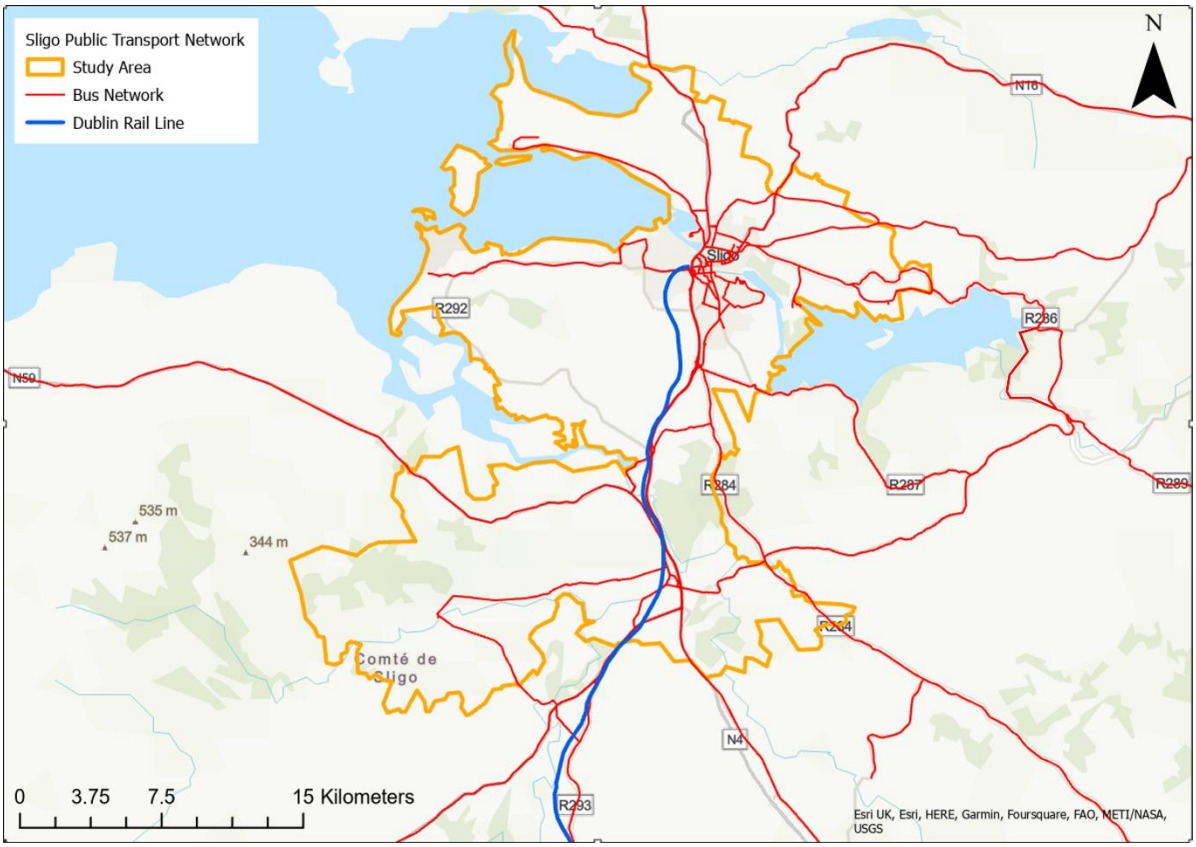

Figure 3-8: Existing Public Transport Network

3.4.3.1 Public Transport Network SWOT

A SWOT analysis of the existing public transport infrastructure is presented in Table 3-2.

Table 3-2: Public Transport Network SWOT Analysis

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
•Comprehensive network of existing and planned town and regional bus services •Served by the Iarnród Éireann inter-city Dublin–Sligo rail line	•Bus and rail stations located on periphery of town centre and segregated by N4 corridor •Lack of accessible integration between bus and rail stations discourages integrated public transport use •Some regional bus services operate with extremely low frequencies •Lack of bus service to Finisklin Business Park encourages private car trips	•Improve public transport patronage through increased frequencies where appropriate and improved provision at key trip attractors such as Finisklin Business Park •Upgrades to existing public transport infrastructure, e.g. covered bus stops, to increase patronage	•Dispersed population in wider Study Area and low population density may limit the feasibility of extensive public transport upgrades •Location of bus and rail stations will continue to suffer from peripherality to town centre and severance caused by N4 corridor.

3.4.4 Existing Road Network

The vehicular road network represents the majority of the transport network in the study area and with the private vehicle consequently playing a significant role in the movement of people.

The regional and national road connectivity is provided by the four national roads in the study area shown in Figure 3-9, which are the following:

- N4 Sligo – Dublin;
- N15 Sligo to Derry;
- N16 Sligo – Belfast;
- N-59 Sligo – Ballina – Galway; and
- N17 Sligo – Tuam – Galway.

The N4, which bisects the town centre, has a particularly significant role in the study area, providing a direct connection for trips travelling north-south through Sligo Town. There are several major junctions in the town centre located along the N4 which contribute to delays for drivers, pedestrians, and cyclists, highlighting the intensity of multi-modal transport uses across this space.

The proposed Eastern Garvogue Bridge will provide a critical piece of infrastructure, offering an alternative north-south route for traffic and active travel. The Bridge is proposed in national, regional, and local policy and there is an expectation that the Bridge will be constructed during the lifetime of the plan.

Local and regional connections are provided by a system of regional roads, listed below, and shown in Figure 3-9. This system of local and regional links connects settlements within the study area and beyond. For much of the rural population in the study area, taking a car on the regional and local road system is currently the only way of travelling long distances.

- R278 - Sligo - Cornalaghta, County Leitrim
- R286 - Sligo - Pollboy, County Leitrim;
- R287 - Sligo - Killarga, County Leitrim;
- R291 - Sligo - Rosses Point;
- R292 - Sligo-Strandhill-Belladrihid;
- R869 - Western Distributor Road; and
- R870 - Pearse Road and Markievicz Road, Sligo.

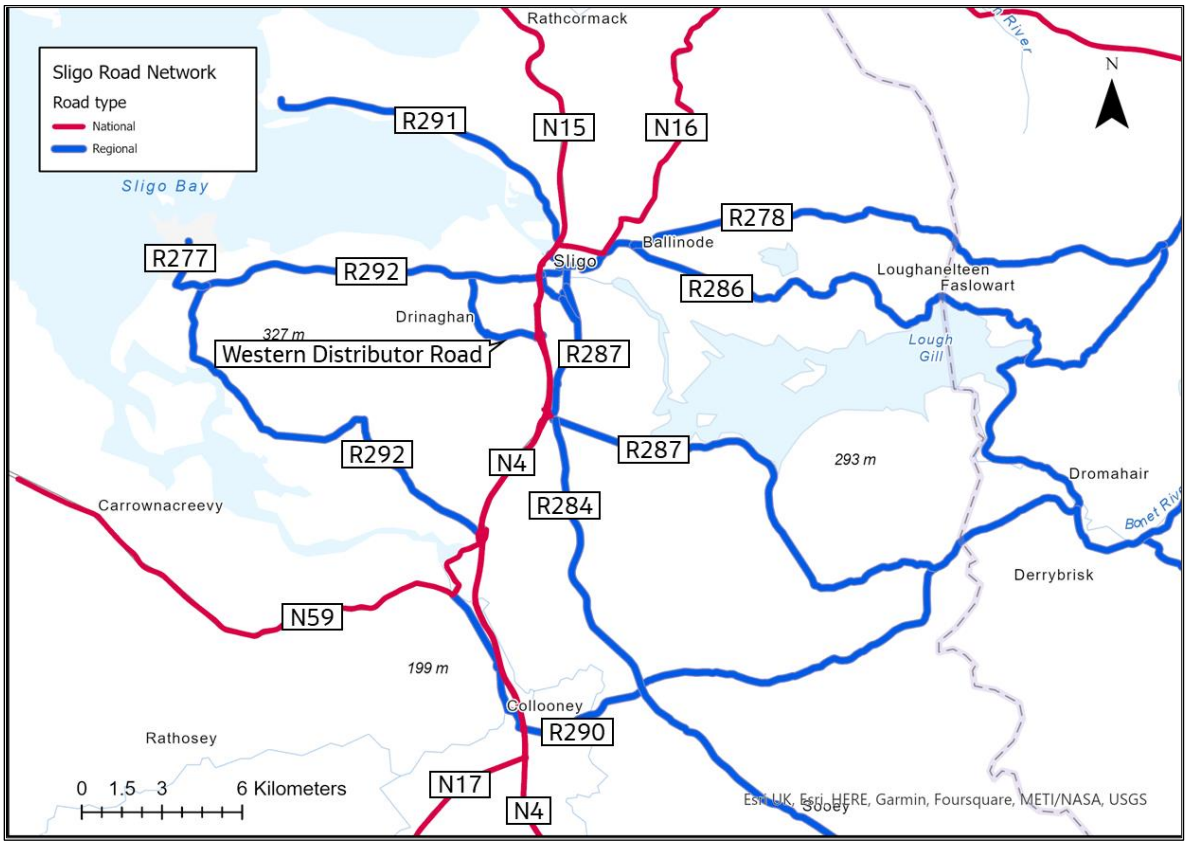

Figure 3-9 Existing Road Network

The Western Distributor Road forms a 2.5km link from the Caltragh interchange into the Finisklin Business Park. It encloses land zoned for development and is earmarked to stimulate greenfield development in these areas.

Within the town, radial roads (as shown in Figure 3-10) provide links for trips originating further afield. Trips within the town are facilitated by a network of local roads. The residential town network has a large number of dead-ends, which keep residential streets quiet but often lead to more circuitous routes.

The compact urban grain in the town centre limits the space available for all modes of transport to be accommodated on every street, with many streets only able to accommodate a single lane of traffic. As Figure 3-10 shows, there is an existing one-way system in the town centre that directs and distributes traffic through this limited space.

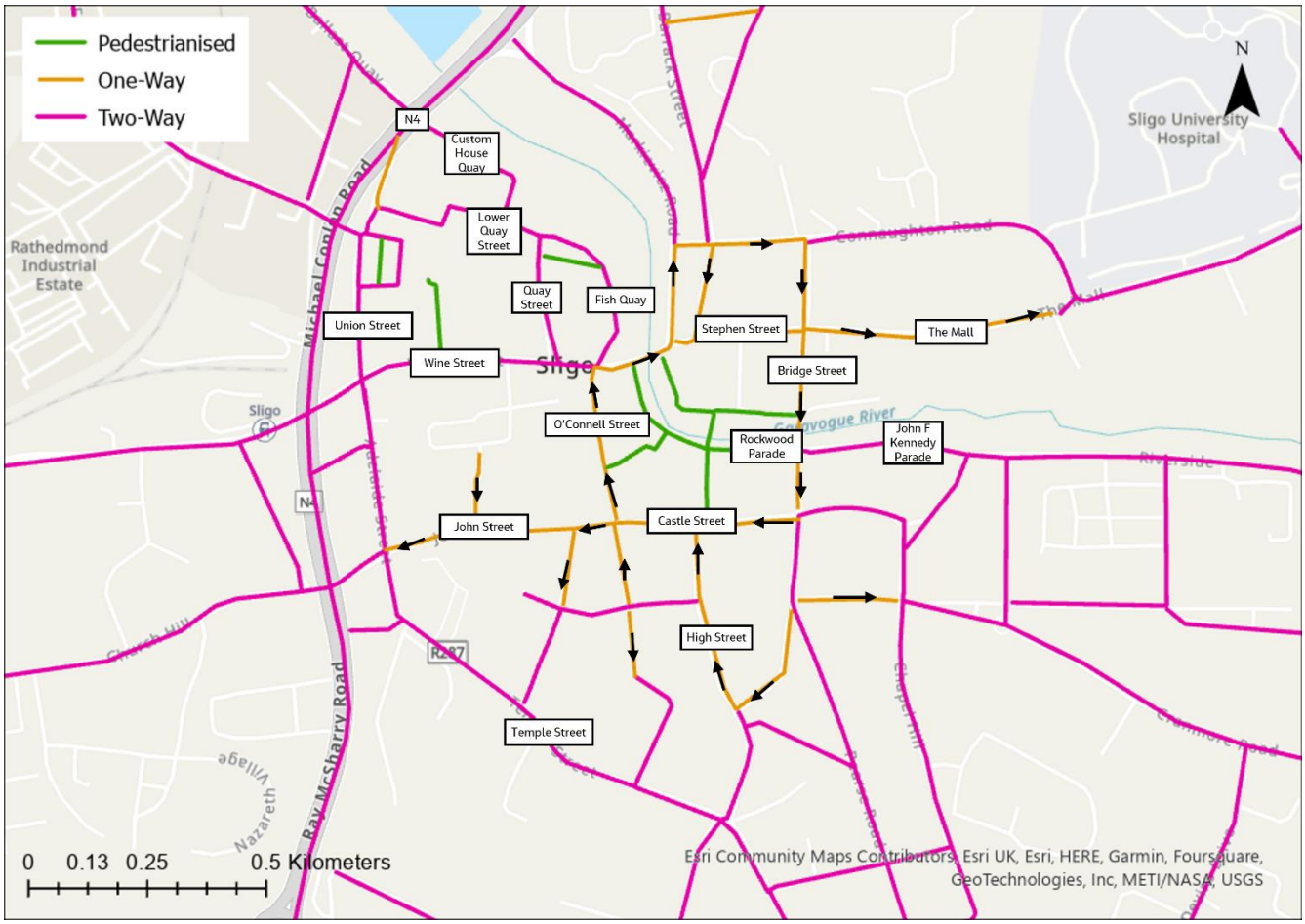

Figure 3-10: Existing Town Centre Road Network Configuration

There is a significant amount of car parking in the town centre, the locations of which are shown in Figure 3-11.

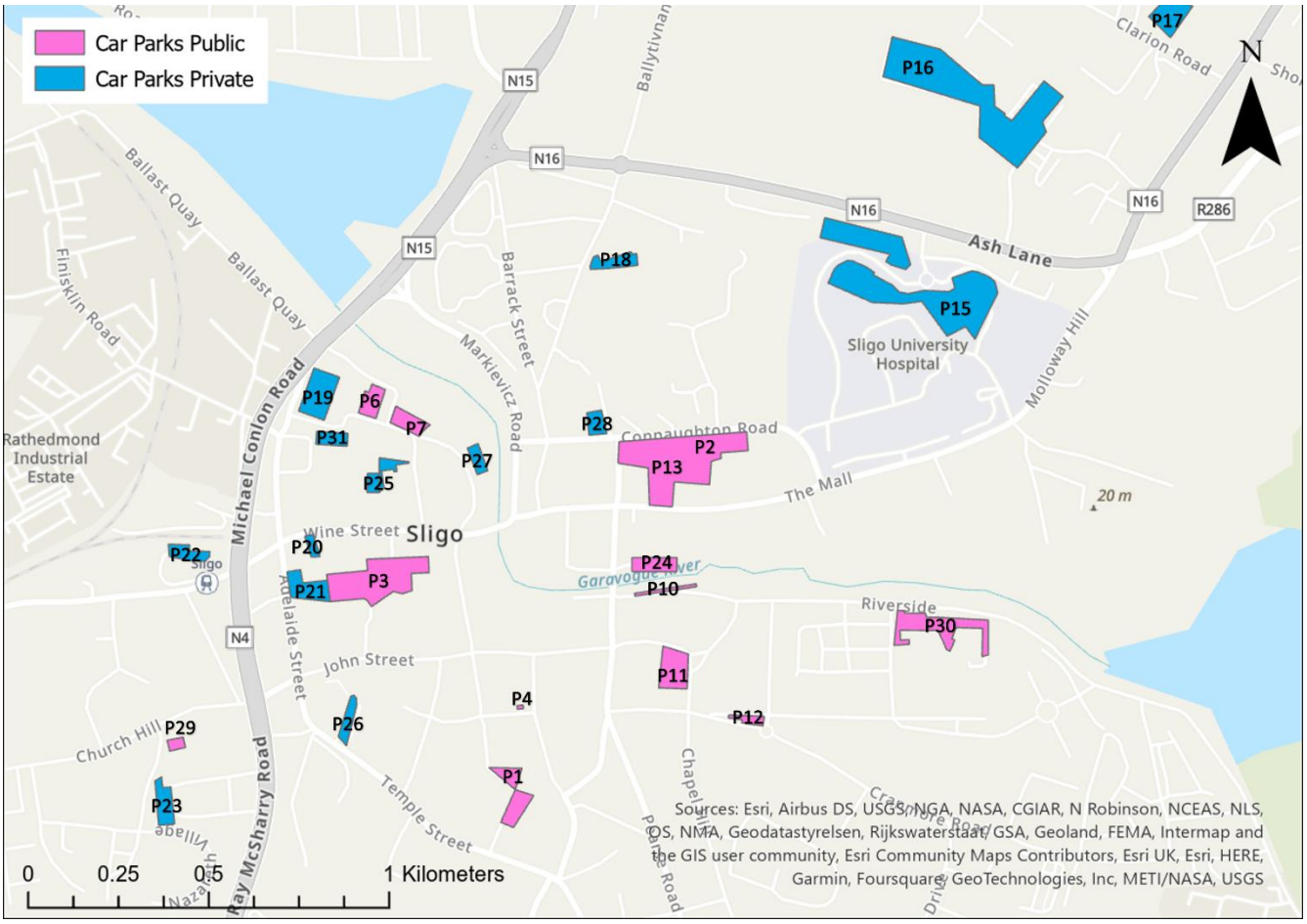

Figure 3-11: Car Park Locations in Sligo Town

Table 3-3 shows the number of spaces at each location as well as the price rates. In total over 3,000 cars can park at these locations. The significant provision of car parking is a key enabler for car-based travel to the town centre, shown in Figure 3-11.

Table 3-3: Car Parking Spaces and Rates in Sligo Town

Name	Number of Spaces	Hourly Rate	Map Reference
Market Yard	92	Daily - €3.00	P1
Upper Connaughton Road	275	Hourly €1.20	P2
Wine Street	225	Hourly - €1.20	P3
West Gardens	10	Hourly - €1.20	P4
Quay Street	57 + 2 Bus	Hourly - €1.20	P6
Lower Quay Street	10	Hourly - €1.20	P7
John F Kennedy Parade	48	Hourly - €1.20	P10
Abbey Street	92	Hourly - €0.90	P11
St Annes	64	Daily - €3.00	P12
The Mall	100	Hourly - €0.90	P13
Sligo University Hospital	715	Daily - €6.28	P15
Sligo Institute of Technology	950	Daily - €3.50	P16
Clarion Road Car Park	-	Daily - €2.50	P17
Northside Community Centre	26	Daily - €3.00	P18
Parkes Yard	80	Hourly - €3.00	P19
Dunnes Stores	15	Hourly - €1.20	P20
Dunnes Stores	81	Hourly - €1.20	P21
Sligo MacDiarmada Train Station	39	Hourly - €4.50	P22
Kingsbridge Private Hospital	70	-	P23
Kempten Promenade	6	-	P24
ETB College	30	-	P25
Sligo Cathedral	114	Daily - €3.00	P26
The Glasshouse Hotel	240	Daily - €4.00	P27
Milligan Court	58	Daily - €3.00	P28
Church Hill	16	-	P29
Riverside	172	-	P30
Quayside Shopping Centre	388	Hourly - €1.20	P31

3.4.4.1 Road Network SWOT

An analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of the road network is shown in Table 3-4.

Table 3-4: SWOT Analysis for Road Network

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
•Good regional connectivity via the N4 to Dublin, N16 to Belfast, N15 to Derry, and N17 to Galway •N4/N16 corridor runs adjacent to the town centre ensuring that strategic through traffic does not penetrate the town centre and exacerbate existing congestion levels, or negatively impact its operational efficiency, air quality and safety	•High car dependency due to dispersed nature of population in wider Study Area leads to car being the prevalent mode of travel to work and school •Inexpensive daily parking rates in town centre encourage car use and long stay commuter parking	•Opportunities for implementation of Travel Demand Management measures and initiatives to reduce the need and demand for private car trips in the Study Area •Opportunities for the provision of commuter parking/park-and-ride at Sligo Town entrance points from the national/regional roads	•Low population density outside of Sligo Town means that private car use is likely to remain dominant mode of travel •The Study Area's location in a regional context means that car ownership levels are likely to remain high

3.5 Summary

The review of existing transport conditions assessed for the Baseline Assessment Report as part of Stage 1 of the ABTA process informed this chapter. The Baseline review evaluated development patterns, existing transport demand in the study area, the reliance of the private car and the current provision for walking, cycling and public transport. It is noted that the reliance on the private car is underpinned by the high-quality provision of road infrastructure and the rural nature of the study area. Existing policy identifies the construction of the Eastern Garvogue Bridge as an expansion to the existing road network, and it is expected to be completed during the duration of the SLTP.

Walking links in the Study Area are found to be of high quality in some areas, particularly in the town centre, but face significant issues in terms of continuity, areas of severance and accessibility particularly for those with reduced mobility or the visually impaired.

In the residential parts of the Town a large number of cul-de-sacs with limited pedestrian connectivity results in circuitous walking trips. The cycling network is currently under-developed, with limited cycle priority at existing junctions and inconsistent levels of provision. The introduction of the successful e-bike sharing scheme creates an opportunity to provide a high-quality cycle network to build upon the uptake of cycling within the town.

Public transport provision faces challenges due to the rural nature of the study area, including service frequency and stop accessibility. The S1 town bus service is complemented by a wider network of regional and local link services. However, there are a number of key areas within the town that do not have sufficient public transport provision, including Finisklin Business Park and residential developments to the south and to the east.

4. The Need for Change in Sligo

4.1 Overview

The main need for upgrading the existing transport network stems from the population growth targets contained within national and regional policy. In addition to this, the national goals for reduction in emissions highlight the shortcomings in the current transport provision in Sligo to achieve these goals.

4.1.1 Achieving Policy Targets for the Study Area

National and regional policies set targets for climate action, transport, population growth and urban growth. The SLTP is the first step for Sligo to achieve these goals as it sets out a transport network that will enable the policy targets to be achieved. This section outlines how the SLTP addresses the policies summarised in Chapter 2 to work towards achieving them. The Monitoring and Review Plan, presented in Chapter 7, provides a mechanism to track progress made against the SLTP and the policy targets.

4.1.1.1 National Planning Framework

Compact Growth (NSO 1) would result in increased population density which would enable a reduction in trip lengths. To provide for trips in this future environment, modes that make more efficient use of space will be needed. High quality urban spaces will be required to ensure Sligo develops a Compact Growth approach that creates a balance of high quality of life and well-being, whilst also facilitating a sustainable transport network.

On streets where space is limited, it is key to maximise space for the more efficient modes of transport such as walking, cycling and public transport. Prioritising such modes of transport will, by default, enable the enhancement of streets and public spaces and create pleasant and attractive town centres. Figure 4-1 provides a high-level indication of the different capacities of a 3.5m wide lane when it is used to cater for different transport modes. In more compact towns such as Sligo, it is therefore crucial to give the available space to those modes first that can transport the greatest amount of people. The large amounts of land currently dedicated to parking in the Town also hinder the achievement of Compact Growth.

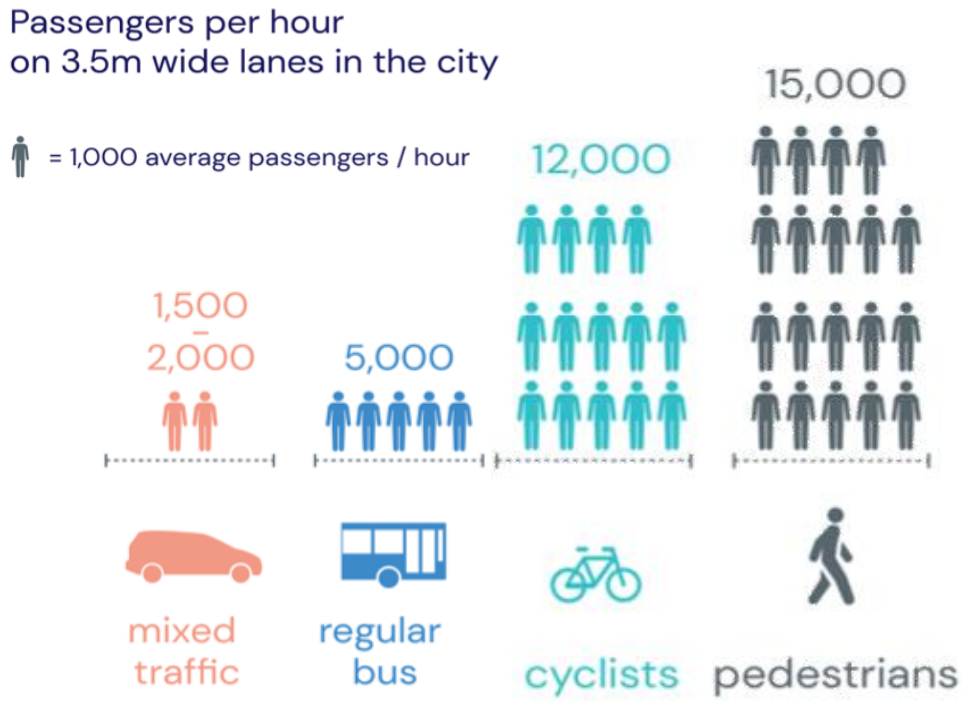

Figure 4-1 Effective Use of Space by Mode

The NIFTI investment hierarchy (as previously shown in Figure 2-5) coincides with the approach of prioritising pedestrians and cyclists needed to facilitate the NSO of Compact Growth. This guides both the development of the SLTP and the priority with which different elements it brings forward should be implemented.

Supporting the NSOs of Enhanced Regional Accessibility and Sustainable Mobility requires upgrading the sustainable transport connections from the wider study area into Sligo Town. The SLTP puts forward measures that enable sustainable trips, in line with the NIFTI modal hierarchy. Measures include improved pedestrian spaces, new cycle paths connecting into outlying settlements, support for the Connecting Ireland improvements in regional bus services, and the provision of Park & Rides facilities.

Facilitating alternatives to the private car for rural populations accessing the town centre is also important to maintain its primary role as a people focussed place. This is in support of Compact Growth and National Policy Objective 4.

A key objective for Sligo is NPO 7, which is shown in Figure 4-2: the population of the Study area has grown only by 0.7% from 2011-2016, while that of the former Sligo Borough Council area decreased by 0.7% over the same period. Encouraging population growth in the study area in line the NPF's and the RSES' population targets will require ambitious changes in the provision of transport infrastructure and high-quality public spaces. A very positive example of this being set in motion already is the Rural Regeneration and Development Fund project which proposes the upgrade of public spaces and active travel infrastructure in both Rosses Point and Strandhill.

Figure 4-2: National Policy Objective 7

4.1.1.2 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the North-West

As summarised in Section 2.3.1, the RSES designates Sligo as a Regional Growth Centre (RGC), recognising its important role for the surrounding rural population as a centre for leisure, retail, economic and educational activity. The measures brought forward in the SLTP aim to strengthen Sligo's regional role in line with regional policy.

The RSES sets out important targets for compact population growth, which demonstrate a need for the proposals made in the SLTP. As an RGC, Sligo Town is assigned an ambitious population growth target of 40%, or 8,000 people by 2040 and an interim target of 11%, or 2,000 people by the interim year of 2031.

Another key objective is RPO 3.7.39, which in support of the NSO for Compact Growth, sets a target for Sligo Town to accommodate 40% of all new housing - an additional 3,200 people - within the existing settlement footprint. This will create additional pressure on the Town's transport network, which the SLTP needs to cater for by ensuring that transport corridors are used efficiently in line with Figure 4-1. The RSES states:

"These [population] targets need to be matched by the delivery of critical enabling infrastructure and services, thus ensuring that these places grow as successful significant employment centres and service locations not only for the urban areas themselves but, importantly, for their extensive hinterlands that include smaller towns, villages and rural areas".

4.1.1.3 Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030

The SLTP aligns with the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 (SCDP), with RPO 6.28 and the approach to integrate land use and transport planning. The SLTP and SCDP adopt an iterative approach in their preparation stages and work together to create a more sustainable future for Sligo.

4.1.1.4 Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Mobility Policy

The key climate target for the SLTP is to contribute to the achievement of the national greenhouse gas emission reduction of 51% by 2030 and net zero no later than 2050. With Ireland's transport sector accounting for 17.9% of emissions in 2020 and being the fastest growing source of emissions since 1990, the sector plays a crucial role in the achievement of this target.

The Sustainable Mobility Policy is aligned with the Climate Action Plan and aims to make using sustainable transport modes more attractive. To realise the required reduction in emissions the Mobility Policy sets the targets up to 2030, shown in Figure 4-3.

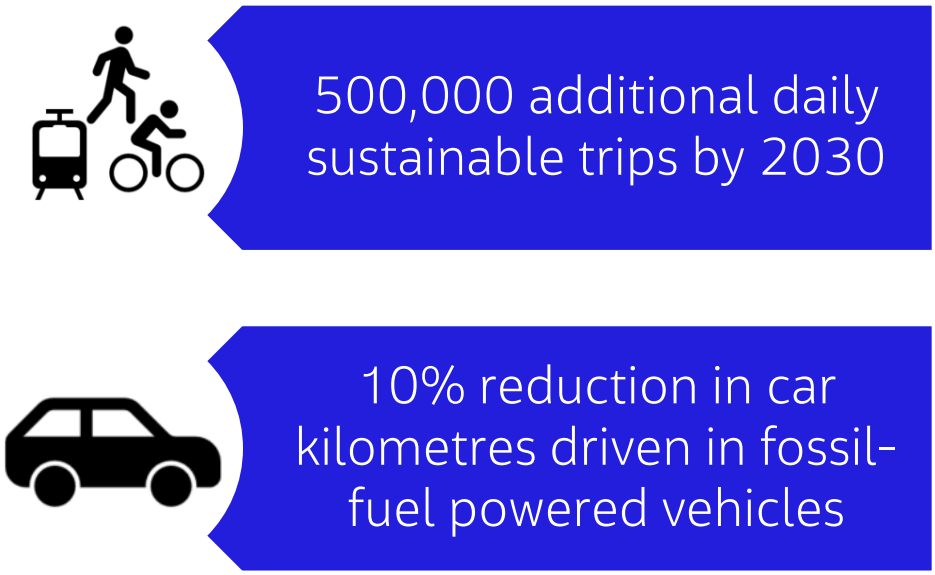

Figure 4-3: National Sustainable Mobility Policy Targets

The SLTP supports the Climate Change Action Plan and Sustainable Mobility Policy by bringing forward a balanced transport network that will promote sustainable modes and therefore help decrease the transport related greenhouse gas emissions in the study area.

4.1.1.5 SLTP Mode Share Aspirations

The SLTP puts forward mode share aspirations that are in line with the Sustainable Mobility Policy Goals for 2030. The total study area population of 32,264 represents 0.68% of the total population of Ireland (in the 2016 Census). Relative to the national population, the study area is responsible for 3,392 additional sustainable trips, which corresponds to 0.68% of the nationwide target of 500,000.

It has been assumed that the increase in sustainable trips will be as a result of modal shift from private car. Therefore, the mode share aspirations for 2030 shown in Figure 4-4 have been derived by reducing the number of private car trips 3,392 and redistributing these trips across the sustainable modes.

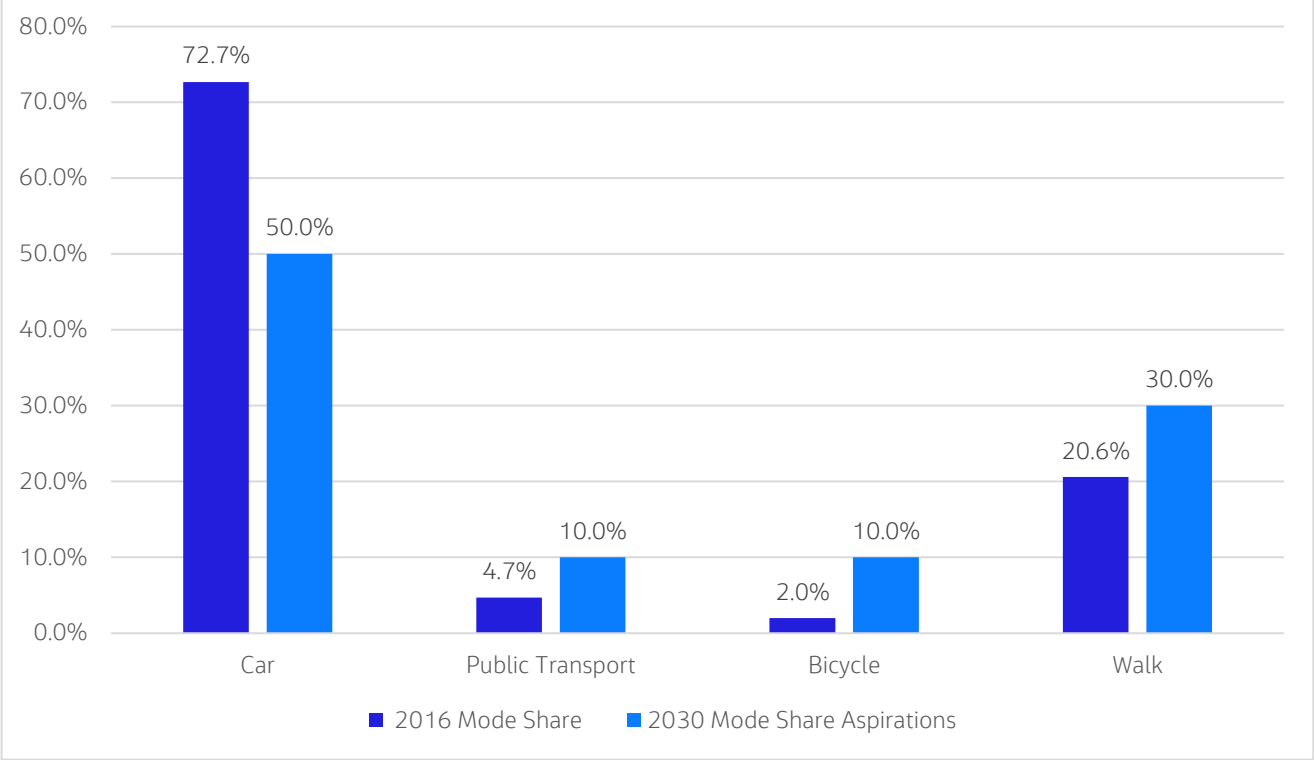

Figure 4-4: Future Mode Share Aspirations Comparison

4.1.2 Sligo's Transport Network

Chapter 3 identifies how high-quality road infrastructure and an oversupply of car parking has facilitated the dominance of the private car as a means of transport in Sligo. To accommodate future growth targets it is important that this network is rebalanced to allow a greater number of trips and a more efficient use of infrastructure through provision of sustainable modes. Achieving the climate targets and accommodating the population growth objectives will require ambitious change.

The development of the proposed transport network was informed in consultation with SCC, stakeholders and the general public which identified a number of barriers to sustainable travel shown Figure 4-5.

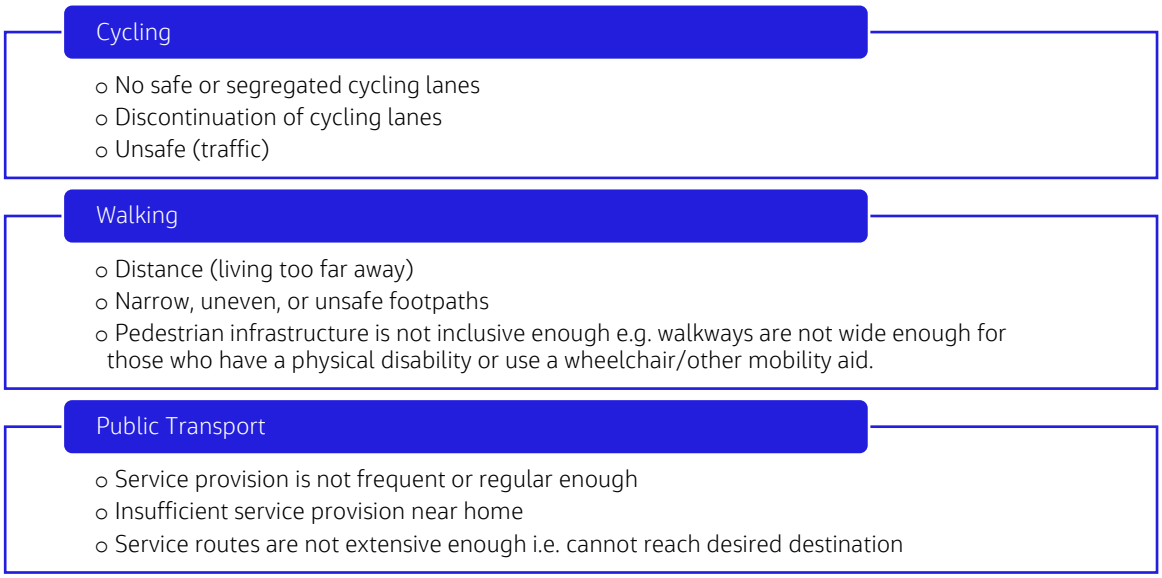

Figure 4-5: Barriers to Using Sustainable Transport Modes

To remove these barriers, it is necessary to make fundamental improvements in walking, cycling and public transport infrastructure to create a positive transport future across the Study Area.

5. Sligo Vision and Objectives

5.1 Principles & Objectives

In order to enhance the transport offer within the study area (as reviewed in Chapter 3) the Context Report from ABTA Stage 2a developed the six SLTP Principles, which are shown below in Figure 5-1. The principles encapsulate the desired transport planning practice and incorporate key themes from existing national, regional, and local policy.

Figure 5-1: SLTP Principles

The SLTP identifies the transport proposals that support the six Principles by following an objectives-led approach for generating interventions. The Context Report from ABTA Stage 2a developed these objectives based on the information gathered in the Baseline Assessment Report and in line with the Common Appraisal Framework (CAF) criteria. The objectives are listed in Figure 5-2.

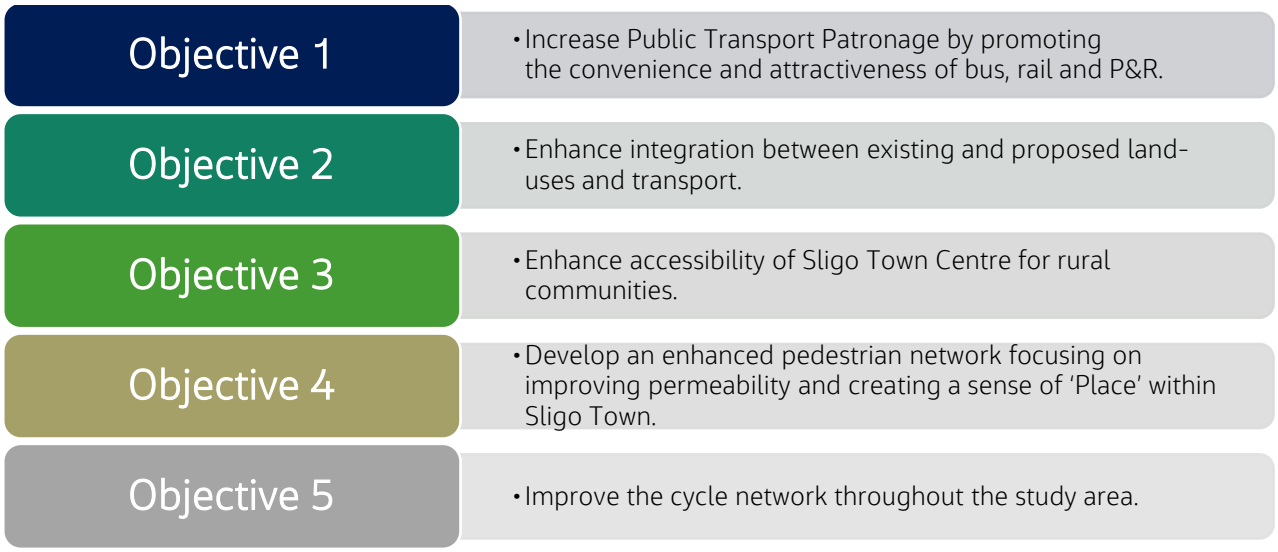

Figure 5-2: SLTP Objectives

In the following chapters, this report outlines the interventions and proposals to the transport networks for each mode as they are envisaged by the SLTP.

6. Proposed Transport Network for Sligo

This chapter presents the proposed transport network for 2024-2030 guided by the SLTP Principles & Objectives. The proposed network has been developed to promote the adoption of sustainable modes, accommodate population growth, and achieve emissions targets.

As part of the ABTA process, the intervention options taken forward to the SLTP from the Options Assessment Report, were assessed via a Multi-Criteria Assessment and a strategic modelling exercise utilising the NTA's Western Regional Model.

Each mode in the network is supported by measures which aim to deliver the proposed networks and achieve the SLTP Objectives. The SLPT Measures, summarised in Table 6-1 comprise both "soft measures" that relate to land use, planning policy, behavioural change and "hard measures" that require the detailed infrastructure improvements.

The following sections of this chapter present the transport networks separately for each mode, as follows:

- The Walking Network – including the primary and secondary walking networks;
- The Cycling Network – including the primary and secondary networks, as well as support for e-bike sharing and the SLNCR Greenway (currently under development).
- The Public Transport Network – including the local and regional bus networks, rail services and park & ride facilities; and
- The Road Network – including the role of town centre streets, streets in the wider urban area of the Town, and regional roads.

Table 6-1: Network Supporting SLTP Measures

Reference	SLTP Measure
Walking Measure 01	Upgrade links identified in Table 6-2 to create a high-quality Primary Walking Network within the Town Centre, focused on pedestrian safety, accessibility, and permeability.
Walking Measure 02	Support mixed-use development in residential areas. Support land use measures that make walking trips more accessible by reducing distances to shops and other amenities for residential areas.
Walking Measure 03	Upgrade links identified in Table 6-3 to create a high-quality Secondary Walking Network within the Town Centre, focused on pedestrian safety, accessibility, and permeability.
Walking Measure 04	Improve public realm areas within close proximity to the River. Improve street lighting along the river from Queen Maeve Square to Doorly Park, Lower Quay Street, and John Street to ensure higher levels of safety and support engagement with the night-time economy.
Walking Measure 05	Introduce filtered permeability in the wider urban area by creating new pedestrian links between cul-de-sacs. Creating a more interconnected pedestrian network in the Wider Urban Area will incentivise walking.
Walking Measure 06	Enforcement of parking rules to keep footways safe and free of illegally parked vehicles.
Walking Measure 07	Improved wayfinding in the town centre to enhance the pedestrian experience of the town and highlight key attractions.
Walking Measure 08	Discourage the development of large, single use trip attractors such as retail or business parks outside the Sligo town centre: Make walking trips more accessible by reducing distances between home and the workplace, or between home and retail locations.
Walking Measure 09	Introduce traffic calming and speed limit reductions in proximity to schools.
Walking Measure 10	Introduce filtered permeability in the wider urban area by creating new pedestrian links between cul-de-sacs. Creating a more interconnected pedestrian network in the Wider Urban Area will incentivise walking.
Cycling Measure 01	Improved wayfinding and signage to facilitate a seamless use of the cycling network.
Cycling Measure 02	Develop primary cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-4.
Cycling Measure 03	Develop secondary cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-5.
Cycling Measure 04	Support the continued rollout of mobility sharing schemes in Sligo including shared bikes, e-bikes, scooters, and other forms of micro-mobility.
Cycling Measure 05	Support the creation of two new mobility hubs: • At North Quay Street aligning with the riverside park proposed in the Public Realm Plan; and • North of MacDiarmada Station. And continue to explore opportunities to create further mobility hubs in the east and south of Sligo Town.
Cycling Measure 06	Develop inter-urban cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-6.
Cycling Measure 07	Support the development and delivery of the SLNCR Greenway.
Cycling Measure 08	Require significant new office development to include sheltered cycle parking and changing/shower facilities for cyclists.

Reference	SLTP Measure
Cycling Measure 09	Require developer contributions towards active travel infrastructure as part of the Development Contribution Scheme.
Public Transport 01	Improved night-time mobility: Introduce extended operational hours for bus services (in particular for town services) and convert loading bays at key night-time economy destinations into night-time taxi ranks.
Public Transport 02	Improved Lighting in Public Spaces: Make bus stop environments safer in the dark by improving visibility of the stops' surroundings.
Public Transport 03	Enhance and protect the provision of bus services in the town centre by: • Maintaining a two-way system on Abbey Street; • Maintaining bus access on O'Connell Street; • Maintaining the westbound movement of buses on Stephen Street; • The addition of a bus stop on Wine Street to facilitate trips into this key town centre area; • Supporting and improving the bus interchange at Markievicz Street through the provision of wider footways and hardstands; • Supporting measures that enhance orbital connectivity for buses in the wider urban area of Sligo; and • Ensuring new developments provide appropriate connectivity to allow high quality bus operations through them.
Public Transport 04	Support the provision of an additional Town Bus Service – the S3 - connecting the south of Sligo Town, Finisklin Business Park, and the town centre.
Public Transport 05	Support the roll-out of Connecting Ireland, including upgrades to the S2, 23, 64, 458, 462, and 981 services.
Public Transport 06	Provide new bus stops at the following locations illustrated in Figure 6-11: • Wine Street • Along the R291 between the existing Rosses Point and Creggs Corner Stops • 2 new stops along the R292 between the existing Dorrin's Strand and Woodville Court/Aylesbury Park stops.
Public Transport 07	Upgrade bus stop infrastructure including the addition of shelters, hardstands and bus cages at the locations shown in Figure 6-11 and listed in Table 6-7.
Public Transport 08	Add real time bus stop information displays at the bus stops shown in Figure 6-12 and listed in Table 6-7.
Public Transport 09	Upgrade MacDiarmada Train Station in line with the proposals in Figure 6-14.
Public Transport 10	Upgrade Collooney Train Station in line with the proposals listed in Table 6-9.
Public Transport 11	Support rail upgrades for the Sligo-Dublin Rail Line and the currently disused Sligo-Athenry Rail Line as described in RPOs 6.13 and 6.15.
Public Transport 12	Provide Park & Rides at the following key locations: • Collooney Train Station; • The N15; and • In the proximity of Sligo Retail Park.

Reference	SLTP Measure
	Each Park & Ride should have electric vehicle charging and be integrated with high-quality public transport connections to the town centre.
Road Measure 01	Reduce speed limits in the town centre from 50km/h to 30 km/h in line with the indicative extent shown in Figure 6-16.
Road Measure 02	Expand existing one-way system in line with Table 6-11.
Road Measure 03	Reduce existing carriageway from two lanes to one lane in line with proposals in Table 6-11.
Road Measure 04	Support new road link between Pearse Road and Temple Street
Road Measure 05	Support Safe Routes to School through the introduction of traffic calming measures in line with proposals presented in Table 6-12.
Road Measure 06	Improve road safety at the Castle Street/Abbey St/Thomas St junction through the full signalisation of the junction.
Road Measure 07	Construction of new link between Rusheen Crescent to the Pearse Road
Road Measure 08	Construction of new link between Sligo Retail Park and The Hawthorns and the Laurels.
Road Measure 09	Maintain the existing inter-urban road network shown in Figure 6-18.
Parking Measure 01	Produce a Parking Strategy to assess and support an appropriate level of car parking in the Town Centre.
Parking Measure 02	Expand existing digital parking occupancy infrastructure on the N15, N16 and N4 to include real-time information for a larger number of town centre car parks.

6.1 Walking and Public Realm Network

6.1.1 Overview

The proposed enhancement of the existing streets in Sligo Town aims to achieve the SLTP objective to *"Develop an enhanced pedestrian network focusing on improving permeability and creating a sense of 'Place' within Sligo Town."*

Walking is a valuable and beneficial mode of transport, especially for short distances, promoting health, environmental sustainability, and community interaction. However, it might not be suitable for all situations, and its practicality can vary depending on factors such as distance, weather conditions, and personal physical capabilities.

The reference to "walking" and "pedestrians" in the SLTP refers to all footway users including wheelchair users and people with reduced mobility. To create a high-quality pedestrian environment that truly benefits the people of Sligo Town, it must be safe, accessible, coherent, attractive, and inclusive.

High levels of walkability and provision of quality public realm amenities contribute to a connected and attractive public space. Improving air quality, reducing noise pollution, and improving safety through limiting the effects of private vehicles all make walking a more appealing transport option. Walkable towns are therefore considered to be more attractive, equitable, healthy, and sustainable. As such the enhancement of walking infrastructure is both key to achieving the Principles and Objectives of the SLTP which will in turn help to achieve Climate Targets and all the other Policy directives that have been considered when developing the Principles and Objectives.

The SLTP recognises the many roles of walking infrastructure which include facilitating interchanges between modes, contributing to the quality of public spaces, and as a mode of transport in its own right. With respect to this, the proposed pedestrian network in the study area is classed into "primary" and "secondary" networks shown in Figure 6-1.

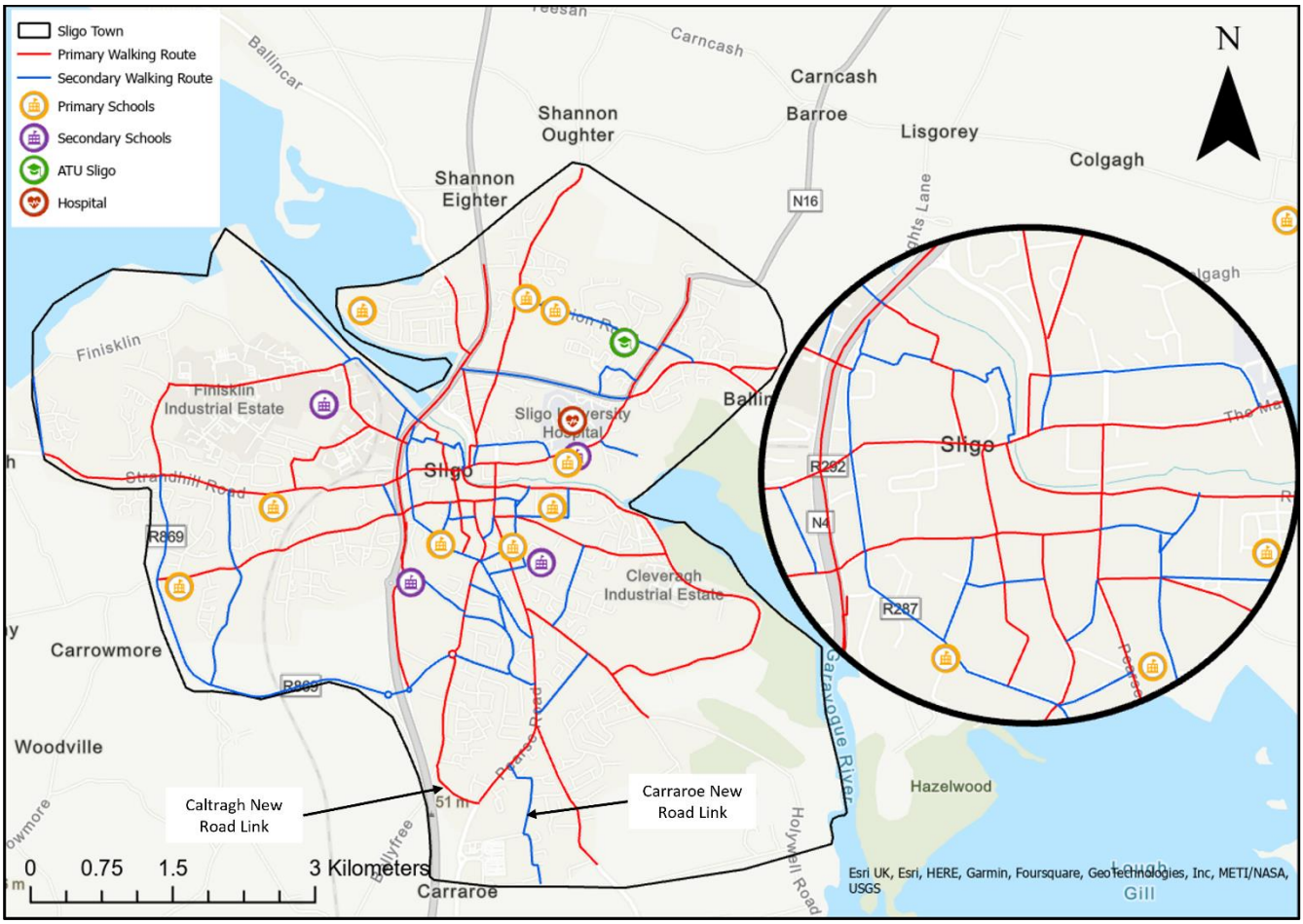

Figure 6-1: SLTP Town Walking Network

6.1.2 Primary Walking Network

The main routes connecting key trip attractors, including places of work, retail, town centre, education, and leisure areas are categorised as primary. In Sligo Town they form a radial network leading into the town centre, and within the centre they comprise the streets that see the highest levels of activity. In the town centre in particular, primary pedestrian streets fulfil a key role in creating a sense of place and in contributing towards a more people-focussed and attractive public realm.

Walking Measure 01: Upgrade links identified Table 6-2 to create a high-quality Primary Walking Network within the Town Centre, focused on pedestrian safety, accessibility, and permeability.

Pedestrian links on the primary network should comply with DMURS design guidance, provide high levels of accessibility and ease of movement for people particularly those with reduced mobility, have sufficient crossing points to allow for the safe and comfortable crossing of roads, and provide an attractive public realm for people to walk through. The primary pedestrian network and pedestrian crossings should be as closely aligned with pedestrian desire lines as possible.

The proposed enhancements to the primary walking network are presented in Table 6-2.

Table 6-2: Primary Walking Network Proposals

Location	Proposals
Markievicz Road	▪ Widen the footway and arrange bus stop infrastructure to better accommodate both pedestrian movements and waiting bus passengers. ▪ Provide a controlled toucan crossing to connect to pedestrian improvements on Hyde Bridge, Stephen St, and the proposed cycle network.
John F Kennedy Parade	▪ Rationalise and relocate street furniture along JFK parade to improve the accessibility of the pedestrian environment.
Riverside/Cleveragh Drive	▪ Segregate pedestrian and cycling spaces along Riverside. ▪ Reallocate space for the private car where necessary to prioritise pedestrians and cyclists.
Bridge Street	▪ Introduce raise tables to increase accessibility. ▪ Improve pedestrian facilities at Markievicz Bridge to increase space available for pedestrians.
Lower Quay Street	▪ Widen footways. ▪ Improve public realm quality by introducing elements such as street furniture, planting and taking advantage of the site's riverside location.
Rockwood Parade	▪ Introduce shared active travel facility and improve public realm quality by introducing elements such as street furniture and planting. Taking advantage of the site's riverside location.
Stephen Street	▪ Create shared active travel facilities connecting to Queen Maeve Square and the surrounding public realm enhancements.
The Mall	▪ Improve pedestrian facilities.
Wine Street	▪ Enhance the pedestrian environment by widening footways from the junction of Quay Street to the N4. ▪ Provide additional uncontrolled pedestrian crossings. ▪ Improve accessibility and pedestrian permeability through the rationalisation of street furniture, signage, and bollards.
O'Connell Street	▪ Only allow bus and access traffic, thus improving pedestrian safety and enhancing the public realm.
Thomas Street	▪ Introduce raise tables and new uncontrolled pedestrian crossings to increase accessibility.
Teeling Street	▪ Widen footways to provide additional pedestrian space. ▪ Introduce raise tables and new uncontrolled pedestrian crossings to increase accessibility.
John Street - Grattan Street-Castle Street	▪ Introduce uncontrolled crossings on John St near the junction with Charles Street and near the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception.
Abbey Street	▪ Widen footways by reducing on-street parking provision.
Quay Street	▪ improve pedestrian facilities. ▪ Rationalise street furniture including signs and bollards to improve pedestrian permeability and accessibility.
New walking link at Glasshouse	▪ Create new walking link along the Garvogue and the Glasshouse, connecting the western end of Hyde Bridge to Lower New Street.

6.1.3 Secondary Walking Network

Streets designated as secondary are smaller links that feed into the primary walking network or provide a supporting function. They may also include links that connect to trip attractors of secondary importance. In the town centre they comprise streets with lower footfall and reduced public realm potential.

Pedestrian links on the secondary network should follow DMURS design guidance, be accessible for people with reduced mobility and aim to improve the local public realm. It is important that an adequate footway width and sufficient pedestrian crossings reflecting pedestrian desire lines be provided at secondary pedestrian links.

Walking Measure 02: Support mixed-use development in residential areas. Support land use measures that make walking trips more accessible by reducing distances to shops and other amenities for residential areas.

Walking Measure 03: Upgrade links identified in Table 6-3 to create a high-quality Secondary Walking Network within the Town Centre, focused on pedestrian safety, accessibility, and permeability.

The proposals to enhance the secondary walking network are proposed in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3: Secondary Walking Network Proposals

Location	Proposals
Temple Street	▪ Widen footways along Temple Street as part of Safe Routes to School scheme.
N16	▪ Improve pedestrian accessibility through the provision of additional controlled crossings at Sligo ATU and Yeats Heights. ▪ Introduce controlled pedestrian crossings on all approaches of the Ash Lane/The Mall Junction.
Clarion Road	▪ Widen footways, introduce raise tables and controlled pedestrian crossing between Clayton Hotel and Clarion Village bus stop; and between Holy Family Pre-School and car park.
Pearse Road	▪ Rationalise street furniture where possible to improve pedestrian accessibility.
Finisklin Road	▪ Define and signpost shared cycle and pedestrian route under railway bridge.
Union Street	▪ Improve pedestrian facilities. ▪ Improve pedestrian permeability with the provision of additional uncontrolled pedestrian crossings along Union Street.
Caltragh New Road Link	▪ Introduce new link between Rusheen Crescent and Caltragh Road (as shown in Figure 6-1) to improve pedestrian permeability in this residential area defined by cul-de-sacs.
Newtownholmes Road	▪ Increase footway widths.
Carraroe New Road Link	▪ Introduce new link between Carraroe and Cairns Hill (as shown in Figure 6-1) to improve pedestrian permeability in these residential areas defined by cul-de-sacs.
Rosses Point	▪ Provide pedestrian footways for increased walkability to the beach and existing bus stops. Provide uncontrolled crossings along this new footway.
Strandhill	▪ Widen existing footways along Shore Road west of the Strandhill car park.

6.1.4 Walking Focus Areas

In addition to the different connectivity roles of primary and secondary walking links, they also are related to the placemaking function within the Town and wider transport network. The SLTP considers the Town Centre Area, Riverbanks, and Wider Urban areas, which are shown in Figure 6-2. The design and purpose of pedestrian links in each of these should consider their specific environment in the way outlined below.

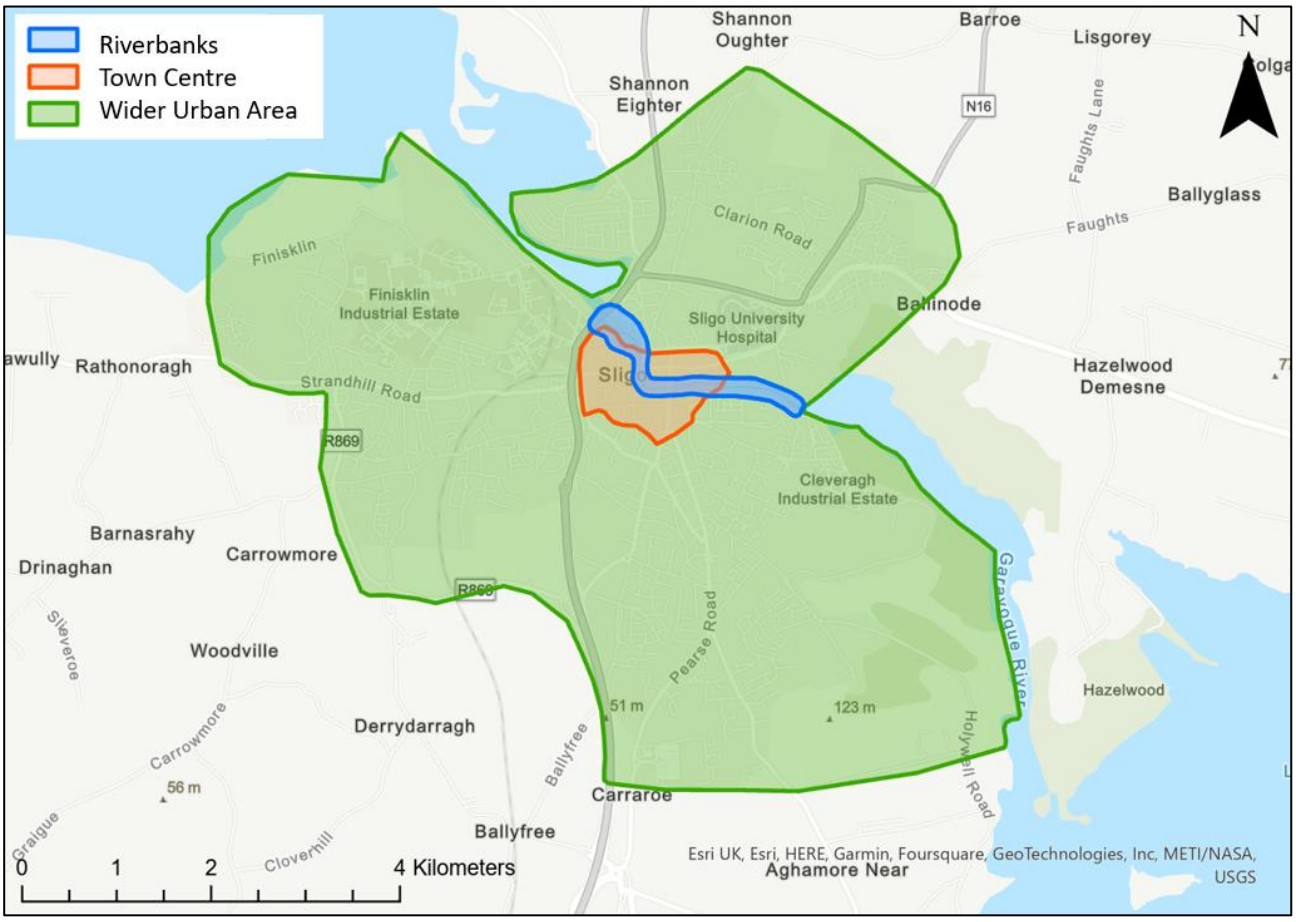

Figure 6-2: Sligo Town Centre Zones for the Walking Network

6.1.4.1 Riverbanks

The Riverbanks focus area encompasses the streets in the town centre that are directly adjacent to the Garvogue River, these are: Markievicz Road, Custom House Quay, Lower Quay Street, Fish Quay, the proposed Glasshouse Walking Link, Rockwood Parade, Queen Maeve Square, JFK Parade and Riverside, as well as all the bridges in this area. It aligns with the "River Side" Character Area set out in the Sligo Public Realm Plan.

Walking Measure 04: Improve of the public realm areas within close proximity to the River. Improve street lighting along the river from Queen Maeve Square to Doorly Park, Lower Quay Street, and John Street to ensure higher levels of safety and support engagement with the night-time economy.

All streets in the Riverbanks area form part of the primary walking network. In addition to the retail, commercial and urban role that they share with other town centre areas, their proximity to the water makes them particularly important for realising Sligo's placemaking potential. For this reason, the walking network in this area should have a particular focus on placemaking to create a high-quality public realm.

6.1.4.2 Town Centre

The town centre is the most diverse in terms of its mix of land uses, transport connections and activities. The area identified in Figure 6-2 aligns with the area covered by the Sligo Public Realm plan. Its purpose as a centre for leisure, commercial, retail, and cultural activities for the local population, students at ATU Sligo and the surrounding rural communities is supported by this Plan, and the walking network seeks to enhance this highly valuable space.

Walking Measure 05: Upgrade the junctions identified in Figure 6-3 to create safer, accessible crossing points for pedestrians across the walking network.

Most streets in this focus area are part of the primary network, except for a few smaller streets such as Emmet Place. Their central location implies a key role in supporting the town centre's businesses, cultural, and leisure activities. The walking network in the Town Centre should be developed to optimise these key functions.

The upgrade of streets in the town centre are mandated by RPO 3.7.48 which states:

> *"Upgrade the town centre environment through focused interventions in O'Connell Street, Stephen Street and car park, Rockwood Parade, Market Cross, Old Market Street and Quay Street carpark, followed by gradual improvements of streets adjoining the centre."*

Walking Measure 06: Enforcement of parking rules to keep footways safe and free of illegally parked vehicles.

Walking Measure 07: Improved wayfinding in the town centre to enhance the pedestrian experience of the town and highlight key attractions.

6.1.4.3 Wider Urban Area

The wider urban area of Sligo primarily consists of residential living spaces which have a minor commercial role (e.g. for corner shops) and are broadly organised around the main road corridors running towards the town centre. The walking network aims to support the facilitation of safe and sustainable movement. With this in mind, the walking links are focused on access to public transport services, routes into the town centre, and routes running between residential locations. Most of Sligo's primary and secondary schools are in this area, making safety of pupils on their way to school, and back home, a major priority for the walking network here.

Currently the wider urban area of Sligo is dominated by cul-de-sacs, which reduce pedestrian permeability and thus reduce the attractiveness of walking. Creating a more interconnected walking network to reduce severance should therefore be a priority, as is described in RPO 6.31:

> *"New development areas should be permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods, to give a competitive advantage to these modes. Prioritisation should be given to schools and areas of high employment density."*

Walking Measure 08: Discourage the development of large, single use trip attractors such as retail or business parks outside the Sligo town centre: Make walking trips more accessible by reducing distances between home and the workplace, or between home and retail locations.

Walking Measure 09: Introduce traffic calming and speed limit reductions in proximity to schools.

Walking Measure 10: Introduce filtered permeability in the wider urban area by creating new pedestrian links between cul-de-sacs. Creating a more interconnected pedestrian network in the Wider Urban Area will incentivise walking. Ensure new developments have a high-quality, well connected walking network.

6.1.5 Pedestrian Junctions and Crossings

Pedestrian crossings are the physical interfaces between space allocated for cars and people. They serve a key role in ensuring that pedestrians can safely navigate environments with vehicles. This is particularly important for

vulnerable road users and those with reduced mobility. There are numerous existing crossing points in Sligo Town, but many are not well designed or have insufficient capacity. Figure 6-3 shows the locations to be considered for improvements in accordance DMURS and the complementary TII Publication 'The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads' (DN-GEO-03084).

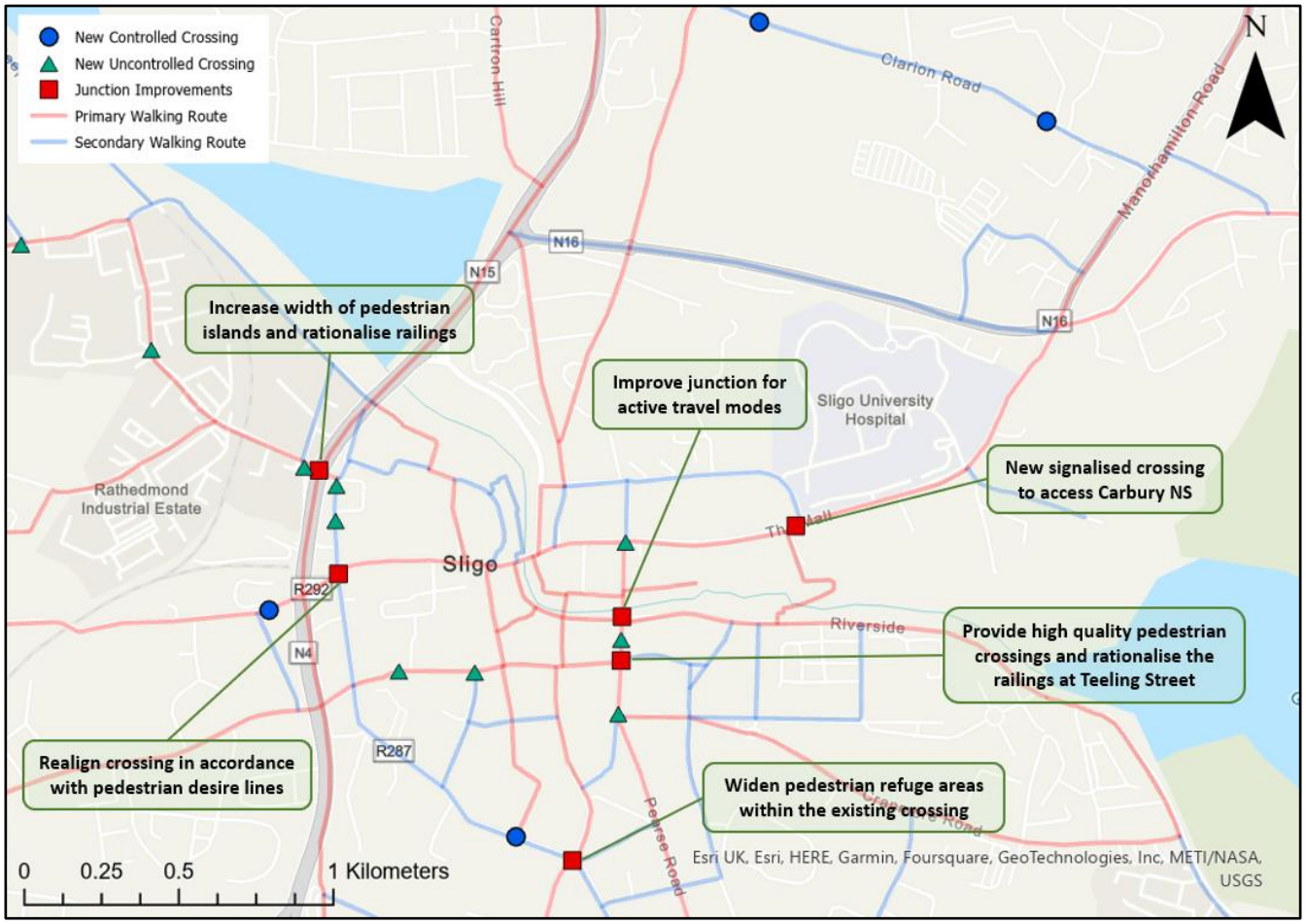

Figure 6-3 Locations for Improvements at Pedestrian Crossings and Junctions

6.2 Cycling Network

6.2.1 Overview

Cycling is a low cost and efficient mode of transport, with significant potential in the study area as the largely flat topography of the town and its compact nature make cycling trips shorter. Cycling is often cited for its significant environmental benefits including reduced carbon emissions, lower noise pollution and cleaner air.

National efforts are being made to promote cycling as a sustainable mode of transport. This includes improving cycling infrastructure, implementing bike-sharing programs, and raising awareness about the benefits of cycling. As more individuals recognise the advantages of cycling for both personal well-being and environmental sustainability, it is likely that cycling will play a significant role in the overall transportation landscape across Ireland.

Cycling also has the potential to reduce congestion, limit the need for large amounts of car parking space in the town centre and has positive health outcomes for its users. Improvements to the cycling network are supported throughout national and regional policy as summarised in Chapter 2.

The existing cycling network in the study area is limited and is often discontinuous or obstructed by parking within the cycle lanes. The travel survey conducted on study area residents (Figure 6-4) revealed that the most significant perceived current barriers to cycling include the lack of safe or segregated cycling lanes, discontinued cycle lanes and the safety risk posed by traffic.

The lack of proper cycling infrastructure, such as dedicated cycle lanes, secure parking facilities, and cyclist-friendly road design, can pose challenges to cycling as a mode of transport. Improving cycling infrastructure can enhance safety and encourage more people to choose cycling.

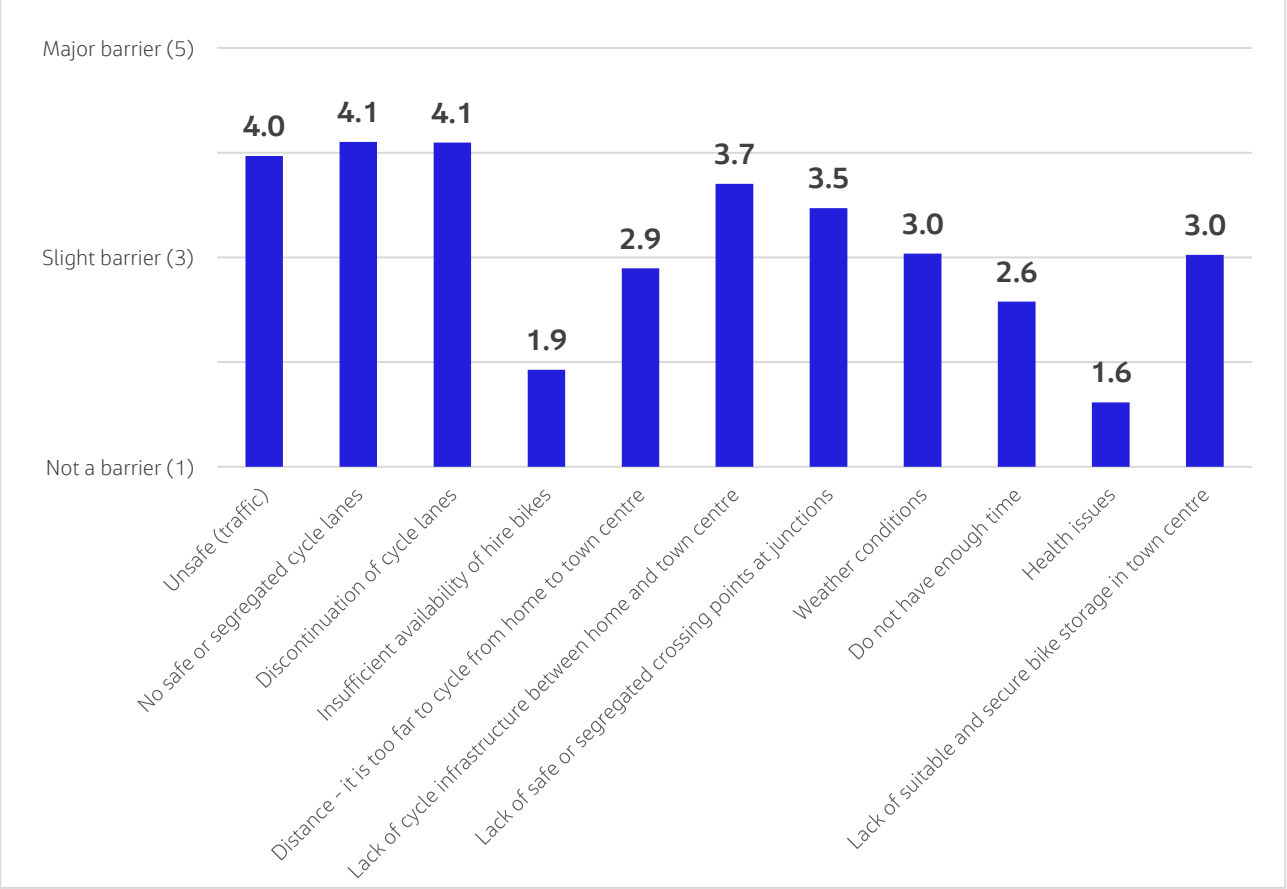

Figure 6-4: Significance of Different Barriers to Cycling

The SLTP proposes a high-quality network of cycle infrastructure that will reduce many of the barriers to cycling identified in the travel survey. This will allow Sligo to realise its full potential and promote cycling as an inclusive, sustainable, and healthy transport mode. Implementation of cycling infrastructure in the study area will also be complemented by the CycleConnects network, as outlined in Section 2.4.4.

The level of cycling provision should align with guidance from the NTA Cycle Design Manual and be at least of the standard suggested for each set of street conditions shown in Figure 6-5. This will ensure a high quality of cycling provision and, most importantly, ensure the safety of all.

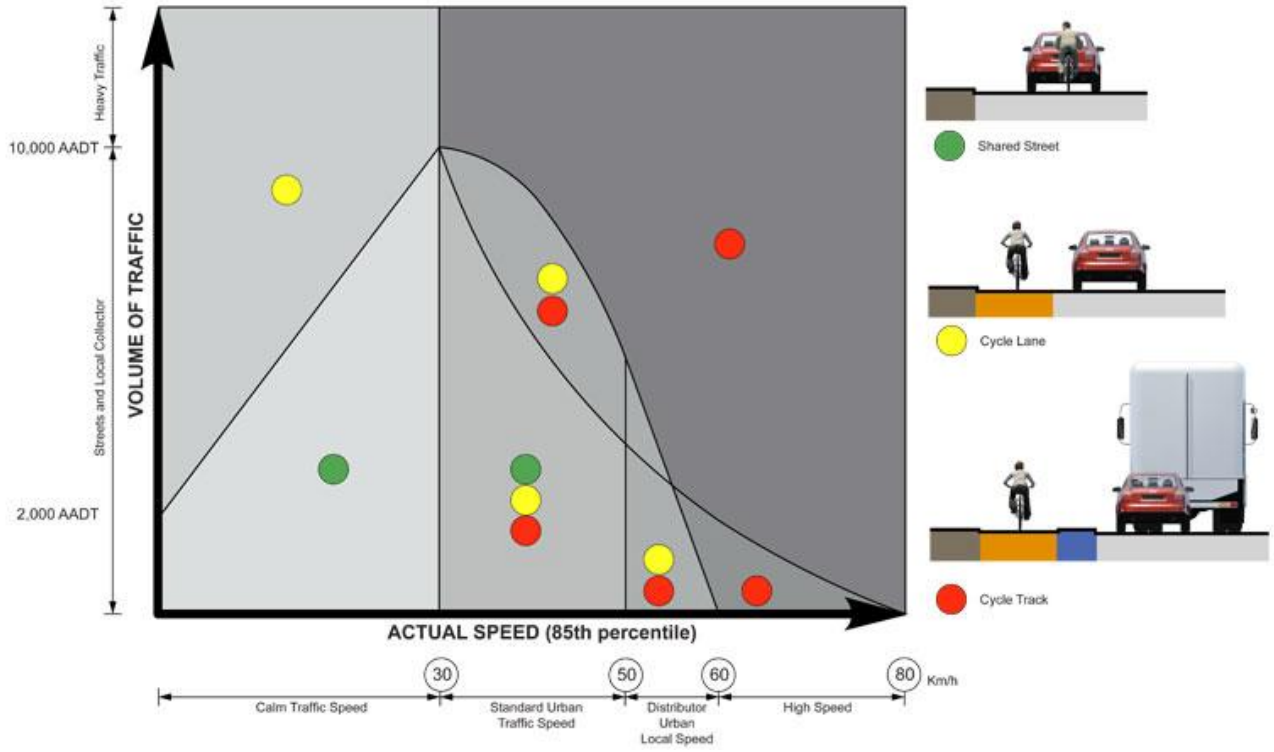

Figure 6-5: Cycling Infrastructure Requirements Based on Road Conditions

For some road conditions, various levels of cycle infrastructure are recommended within the NTA Cycle Design Manual. The scheme designs should aim to provide the highest level of segregation that can be accommodated. Consideration should be given to the primary network when determining the level of segregation cycle provision.

6.2.2 Sligo Town Cycling Network

The proposed cycling network for Sligo Town presented in Figure 6-6 has been developed to provide consistent, continuous cycle links between the town centre, residential areas, and key trip attractors. This includes the future provision of a continuous two-way cycle corridor from ATU Sligo in the east to the Bus and Train Station in the west of the town.

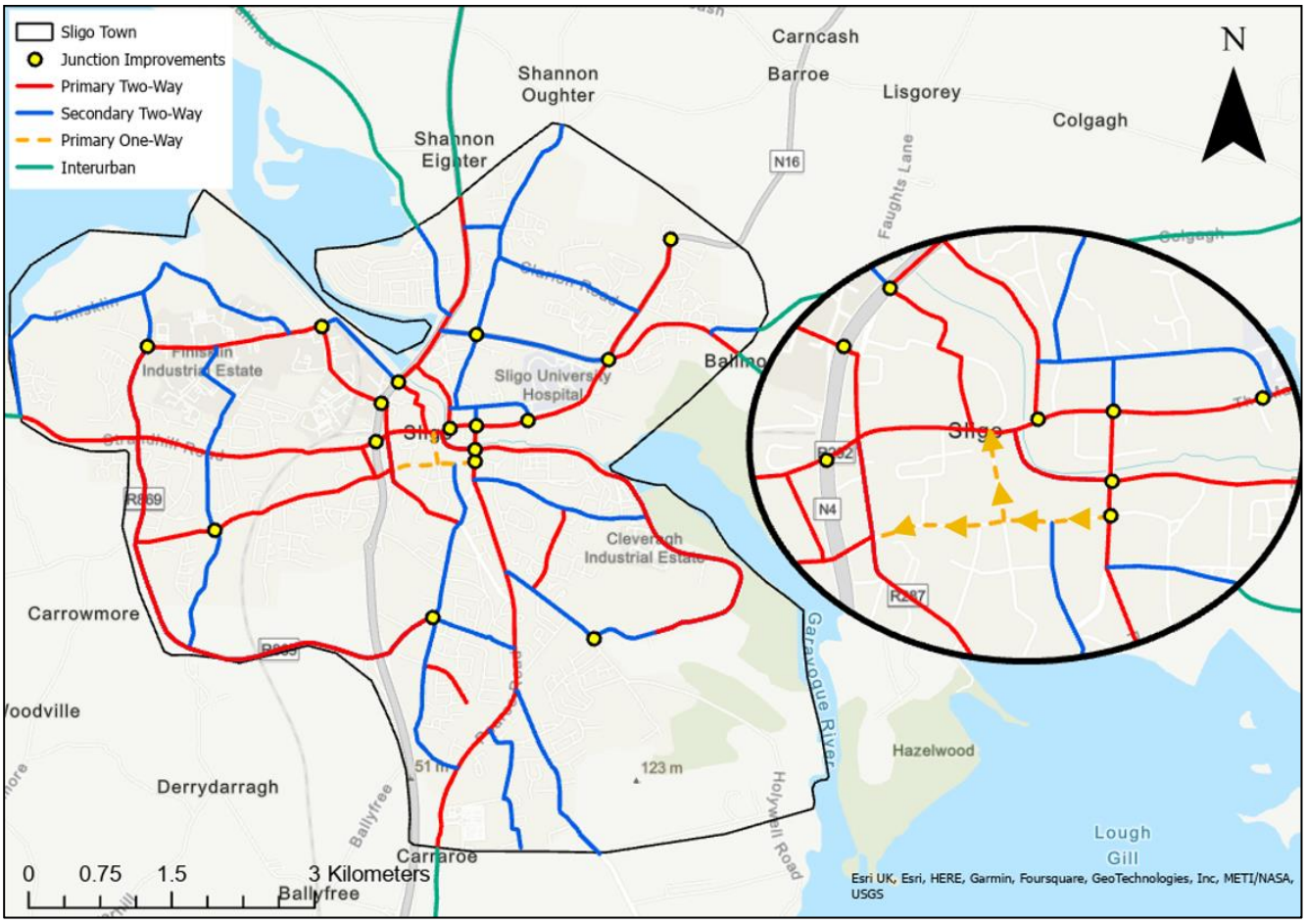

Figure 6-6: SLTP Town Cycling Network

Cycling Measure 01: Improved wayfinding and signage to facilitate a seamless use of the cycling network.

The proposed network includes the development of primary and secondary urban cycle networks and improvements to prioritise cycle movements at junction locations. These junctions are critical to ensure safe cycle connectivity throughout the proposed network. All improvements to the cycle network should be undertaken in accordance with DMURS and the complementary TII Publication 'The Treatment of Transition Zones to Towns and Villages on National Roads' (DN-GEO-03084). Where proposed, some links may allow cycling in one direction only, this is indicated by arrows in Figure 6-6. The improvement to wayfinding across the proposed cycle network through the provision of additional route signage and road markings will provide a more consistent, connected cycle network.

6.2.3 Primary Cycling Network

Cycling Measure 02: Develop primary cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-4.

The primary cycle network highlighted in red in Figure 6-6 connects key trip attractors within the town including the Bus and Train station, Finisklin Business Park and ATU Sligo. This primary network should provide the highest quality of service (QoS) achievable and be no lower than QoS Level B for cyclists as set out in the Cycle Design Manual and summarised in Section **Error! Reference source not found.**. Links designated as primary should take priority for implementation and provide the highest level of cycle infrastructure that the local environment can accommodate. Where this is not achievable, traffic calming, and vehicle flow reduction measures may be put in place to achieve the necessary traffic flow and speed thresholds given in the NCM (Figure 6-5). Proposed improvements to create the primary cycling network are presented in Table 6-4.

Table 6-4: Primary Cycling Network Proposals

Location	Proposals
Markievicz Road	▪ Provide two-way on carriageway cycle lanes from the Connaughton Road junction to the junction with the N4. ▪ Provide northbound cycling facilities between Stephen Street junction and Connaughton Road. ▪ Provision of a toucan crossing near junction with Stephen St to direct eastbound cyclists towards Connaughton Road cycle link.
Stephen Street	▪ Introduce a two-way cycle link connecting to the proposed cycle improvements on Markievicz Road and the Mall. ▪ Provide cycle paths through the Bridge Street/Stephen Street junction with additional road marking and signage. ▪ Provide cycle parking.
The Mall	▪ Provide 2-way cycle tracks from the junction with Stephen Street to ATU as part of the Pathfinder scheme.
Pearse Road	▪ Provide segregated cycle lanes along both sides of Pearse Road linking Sligo Retail Park to the town centre and connecting the proposed Sligo to Enniskillen (SLNCR) Greenway which is under development. ▪ Improve cycle routes through the junctions along Pearse Road. ▪ Improve wayfinding through additional signage to the town centre and additional key points of interest.
Wine Street	▪ Introduce a two-way cycle link along Wine Street providing a cycle link from the N4 to Stephen Street and Markievicz Road. ▪ Provide clear cycle paths through the N4-Lord Edward Street junction.
John F Kennedy Parade	▪ Reallocate road space to provide segregated two-way cycle track connecting with the existing cycle link along Riverside. ▪ Introduce additional signage and road markings. ▪ Provision of additional shared e-bike parking station and cycle parking.
Bridge Street	▪ Introduce segregated two-way cycle lane as part of the primary cycle network in line with Pathfinder proposals.
Thomas Street	▪ Introduce segregated two-way cycle lane as part of the primary cycle network. ▪ The junction should accommodate cycling movements to Castle Street, Rockwood Parade, and Teeling Street as part of primary cycle network.
Teeling Street	▪ Introduce active travel improvements in line with Carraroe to City Centre Pathfinder Scheme.
Abbey St / Teeling St / Thomas St / Castle St Junction	▪ Upgrade the junction to facilitate cycling movements and support the Pathfinder Scheme currently under development.
Finisklin Road	▪ Upgrade the existing cycle lane to fully segregated between the N4 junction and the roundabout connecting to Ballast Quay. This will improve the N4 permeability for cyclists and connect the cycle lane to the town centre. ▪ Provide a shared street along Finisklin Road to link into the existing cycle infrastructure on First Sea Road. ▪ Upgrade the First Sea Road/Finisklin Road Roundabout to provide clear cycle paths through the junction. ▪ Upgrade cycle infrastructure at the Finisklin Road/Ballast Quay Roundabout to provide clear cycle paths through the junction. ▪ Upgrade the Finisklin Road Junction at the GPT site to facilitate safe right turns for westbound cyclists
Rockwood Parade	▪ Create a shared active travel facility along Rockwood Parade with additional signage and markings.

Location	Proposals
	▪ Accommodate cycling movements at junctions with Hyde Bridge and Markievicz Bridge.
Riverside/Cleveragh Drive	▪ Upgrade the existing cycle footpath to provide a segregated two-way cycle track. ▪ Upgrade existing advisory cycle lanes along Cleveragh Drive, utilising existing verge to provide an at grade segregated cycle track in both directions. ▪ Provide additional signage and road marking to assist way finding.
Cleveragh Road	▪ Extend existing advisory cycle lanes along Cleveragh Road to join proposed cycle links on Pearse Road. ▪ Provide additional signage and road marking to assist wayfinding. ▪ Reconfigure Cleveragh Road/Riverside junction to provide segregated cycle movements.
John St - Grattan St - Castle St	▪ Provide shared street through the introduction of road markings and street signage.
Quay Street	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity
Lower Quay Street	▪ Remove on street parking between the junctions with Custom House Quay and Quay Street to provide two-way segregate cycle lanes. ▪ Improve wayfinding with additional signage and road markings. ▪ Integrate this cycling link with PRP proposals to create a public park here.
Custom House Quay	▪ Reallocate road space and rationalise of parking to provide segregated two-way cycle lanes from the junction with Lower Quay Street to the N4, tying into the existing shared active travel facility on the N4 Hughes Bridge. ▪ Formalise cycle movements at the Lower Quay Street/Custom House Quay Junction. ▪ Improve the Custom House Quay/N4 Junction for cyclists crossing onto Ballast Quay. ▪ Improve wayfinding with additional road markings and signage.
Caltragh New Road Link	▪ Provide segregated cycling lanes on new link between Pearse Road and Rusheen Crescent.
Newtownholmes Road	▪ Introduce cycle lanes along the road to link into new cycling infrastructure on new road link.
Bridge of Light	▪ Introduce shared surface with additional marking and signage on existing footbridge connecting Rockwood Parade to Queen Maeve Square.
Ballydoogan Road	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity.
Maugheraboy Road Roundabout	▪ Formalisation of cycling movements through junction with the provision of additional road markings.
Maugheraboy Road and Upper John Street	▪ Rationalise parking to provide segregated cycle lane.
Knappagh Road	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity and reduce speed limit for general traffic.
N16	▪ Provide segregated cycle tracks along the N16 from the roundabout at AbbVie Ireland to the Mall. ▪ Improve cycle safety through the introduction of cycle protected junction at The Mall/Ash Lane junction. ▪ Upgrade cycle infrastructure at the N16 Manorhamilton Road roundabout to provide clear cycle paths through the junction.
Union Street	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity

6.2.4 Secondary Cycling Network

Cycling Measure 03: Develop secondary cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-5.

The secondary cycle network highlighted in blue in Figure 6-6 provides cycle links that feed into the primary network or provide a supporting function connecting residential areas to the primary network. Secondary links should provide consistent, safe and levels of infrastructure in line with NTA Cycle Design Manual.

Detailed upgrades to the secondary cycling network are presented in Table 6-5.

Table 6-5: Secondary Cycling Network Proposals

Location	Proposals
Connaughton Road	▪ Provide on carriageway cycle lane eastbound to facilitate cycle movements from Markievicz Road to the junction of Lake Isle Road.
Temple Street	▪ Reduce speed limit in proximity to school to 30 kph in line with existing Safe Routes to School proposals.
Ballast Quay	▪ Provide a shared street.
Larkhill Road	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity
Oakfield Road	▪ Introduce improvements for active travel connectivity in line with schemes currently under development.
Wolfe Tone Street	▪ Provide a shared street, connecting the proposed cycle links on Knappagh Road and Church Hill.
Lower Quay Street	▪ Provide a shared street.
Crozon Park	▪ Rationalise on street parking to provide two-way advisory cycle lanes linking Pearse Rd to Caltragh Rd Roundabout as part of the secondary cycle network.
Carraroe New Road Link	▪ Provide segregated cycling on the new link between Carraroe and Cairns Hill.
Clarion Road	▪ Introduce a 2-way cycle track from the junction with the N16 to the second entrance to ATU Sligo. ▪ Introduce a 2-way shared active travel facility from the second entrance to ATU to the roundabout at the Ballytivnan and Avondale Roads, in line with cycling design guidance in the NCM.

6.2.5 E-Bike Sharing

The existing shared e-bike system in Sligo Town enables the uptake of cycling and encourages people to make fewer car trips. Since a user only requires a smartphone to make a trip, the shared bikes improve the general ease of mobility within the town. The SLTP supports the continued rollout of shared mobility systems, and the realisation of the SLTP cycle network will complement and enhance their positive effect on mobility.

Cycling Measure 04: Support the continued rollout of mobility sharing schemes in Sligo including shared bikes, e-bikes, scooters, and other forms of micro-mobility.

6.2.6 Mobility Hubs

Mobility Hubs concentrate sustainable transport infrastructure including cycle parking, wayfinding, bike repair points, public transport stops, and shared cycle stations. They may also interface with cars in the form of a taxi rank or a kiss & ride facility to enable people to make a larger portion of their trip by a sustainable mode. The SLTP proposes the creation of two new mobility hubs at North Quay Street and north of MacDiarmada Station as is shown in Figure 6-7. Any improvements to MacDiarmada station should be aligned with the Multi-Modal Interchanges project currently under development by Irish Rail.

Cycling Measure 05: Support the creation of two new mobility hubs:

- At North Quay Street, aligning with the Riverside Park proposed in the Public Realm Plan; and
- North of MacDiarmada Station.

And continue to explore opportunities to create further mobility hubs in the east and south of Sligo Town.

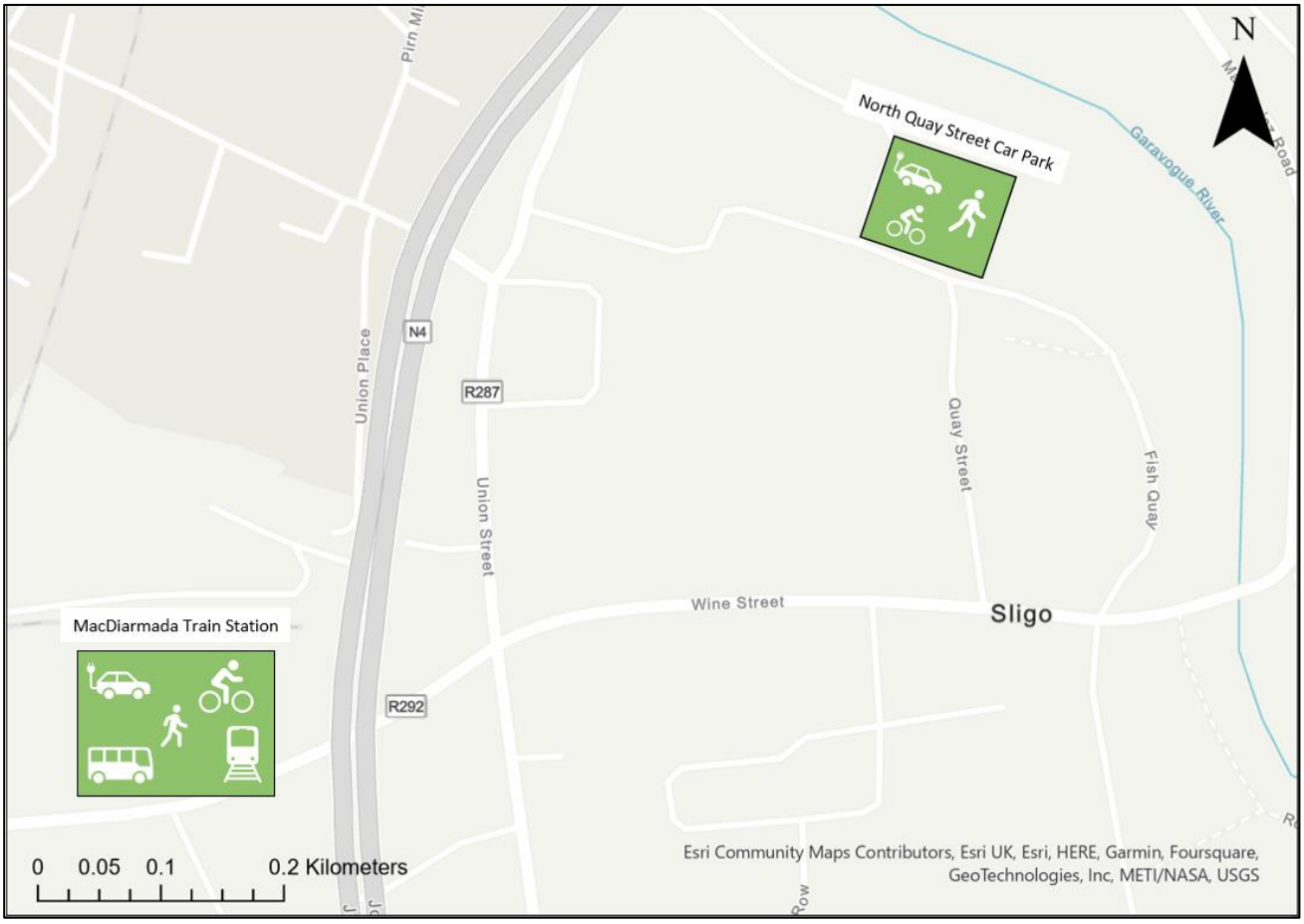

Figure 6-7: Mobility Hub Locations

To fulfil their potential to encourage sustainable movement, the H=hub locations should be readily accessible, well branded and contribute to enhancing the surrounding public realm. A successful mobility hub should aim for the following characteristics, which have been informed by Como UK and the Irish Rail Multi-Modal Interchange Project:

- Boost appeal of multi-modal trips by providing a variety of sustainable travel modes to choose from;
- Enable better first or last mile trips;
- Provide a safe and comfortable space and waiting facilities;

- Raise the profile and visibility of sustainable travel models on offer;
- Be accessible to all users and follow Universal Design Principles;
- Reduce the need for parking provision allowing space to be reallocated for other developments;
- Be located in proximity to practical facilities such as shops, cafes, parcel lockers etc.;
- Improve the public realm; and
- Concentrate all physical elements in one area to decrease street clutter.

6.2.7 Inter-urban Cycling Network

The inter-urban network shown in Figure 6-8 extends beyond the Sligo Town boundary to provide connections into key towns in the study area. These routes may also serve a leisure and amenity role due to their rural nature. Since they run along major roads, they should consist entirely of fully segregated cycle tracks to ensure adequate safety levels for its users. Figure 6-8 shows the inter-urban cycle connections and how they feed into the town centre network.

Cycling Measure 06: Develop inter-urban cycle network in line with the proposals presented in Table 6-6.

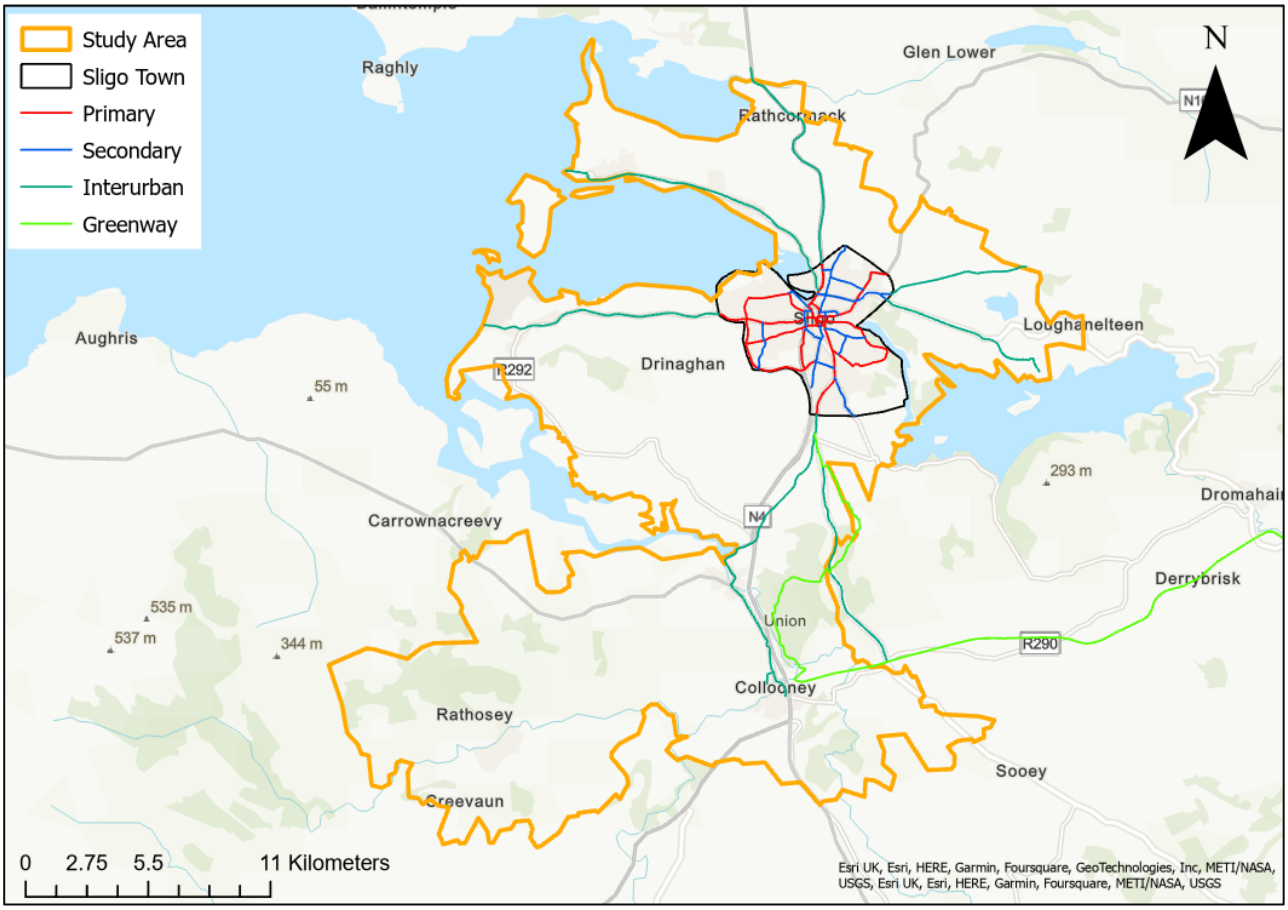

Figure 6-8 Inter-Urban Cycle Network

Details of the inter-urban cycling network proposals are presented in Table 6-6.

Table 6-6 Inter-Urban Cycle Network Proposals

Location	Proposals
Cycle Link from Sligo Town to Drumcliffe:	Extend the existing cycling infrastructure northwards to provide cycle tracks along the N15 up to Drumcliffe.
Cycle Link from Sligo Town to St Angela's College along Hazelwood	Provide cycle tracks to connect Hazelwood and St Angela's College into ATU and the east of the Town along the R286.
Cycling Link from Sligo Town to Calry:	Provide cycle tracks to connect residents at Calry and along the R278 to ATU and into the east of the Town.
Cycle Link from Sligo Town to Ballysadare and Collooney:	Provide cycle tracks along the R287, feeding into the Pathfinder Project proposals on Pearse Road. This link will run through the Ballysadare town centre and into Collooney along the R290.
Cycle Link from Sligo Town to Ballygawley	Provide cycle tracks along the R284, feeding into the proposed Pathfinder Project schemes on Pearse Road.
Cycle link from Sligo Town to Rosses Point	Upgrade the existing cycle lanes to cycle tracks where possible and extend cycle tracks to reach Rosses Point Beach Car Park.
Cycle link to Strandhill upgrade	Upgrade existing cycle lanes along the R292 to cycle tracks and improve street lighting and signage along the route. Upgrade existing Shore Road/R227 junction in Strandhill to include clear cycle paths.

6.2.8 SLNCR Greenway

Cycling Measure 07: Support the development and delivery of the SLNCR Greenway.

A route selection process for a new Greenway connecting Sligo to Enniskillen is currently underway. This piece of future cycle infrastructure is named after the Sligo Leitrim Northern Counties Railway, the route of which is shown in Figure 6-8. The SLTP supports the delivery of the greenway as it would enhance the level of active travel provision in the study area by providing an attractive leisure route for cyclists and pedestrians, while also providing important connectivity from Collooney into Sligo.

6.2.9 New Developments

Cycling Measure 08: Require significant new office development to include sheltered cycle parking and changing/shower facilities for cyclists.

Cycling Measure 09: Require developer contributions towards active travel infrastructure as part of the Development Contribution Scheme.

Support the continuous improvement, and development of the of the cycling network within Sligo Town through developer contributions towards cycle infrastructure for new development and encourage cycling through the provision of shelter cycle parking, and shower and changing facilities within new developments.

6.3 Public Transport Network

6.3.1 Overview

The public transport network was developed to achieve the SLTP Objective to *"Increase Public Transport Patronage by promoting the convenience and attractiveness of bus, rail and P&R."*

Public transport is a sustainable and cost-effective way to travel and will be improved throughout the study area. Sligo can only reach its sustainability targets and support strong population growth if the role of public transport is expanded. By providing a sustainable option to make longer trips, public transport complements the sustainable transport offer of walking and cycling. The effectiveness and popularity of public transport depend on factors such as coverage, frequency, affordability, and the convenience it offers to passengers.

The study area is predominantly rural. This poses a challenge to public transport provision due to a lack of density of potential users and the road infrastructure in rural areas. Making public transport accessible in the rural parts of the study area requires additional measures to make it easier for people to reach stops which may be further away. Such measures include improvements to walking and cycling access to stops, the provision of better bus stop and train station infrastructure and more accessible public transport for people with reduced mobility.

As a regional hub, Sligo has significant potential to expand its role as a public transport hub, where people can interchange between local and regional trips. This will be key for the SLTP's objective to increase patronage: The SLTP supports the further development of Sligo Town, and in particular of MacDiarmada Station, as a sustainable transport hub for the region, as well as the addition of new bus services and increased frequencies on existing routes.

6.3.2 Bus Services

The local bus network in the study area is limited, with a single town bus service that runs half-hourly – the S1. Regional connectivity is provided by 31 bus services, the majority of which are operated by Bus Éireann. Many of these stop multiple times within Sligo Town, essentially providing local-type services. The S2 service plays a particularly important local role, with half-hourly services stopping at ATU, the University Hospital, the Town Centre and MacDiarmada Station. The regional bus network provides connections into the surrounding cities and regional centres including Enniskillen, Ballina, Longford, Derry, Galway, Donegal, and Limerick. However, many of these services run only once per day, and in general the frequency of regional bus services is very low.

Bus connectivity during the evening and night hours is currently limited, with only the S2 service running past 18:00. Access to the town centre during evening and night time could be improved by extending bus operational hours on existing and proposed town services. This will enable people in the study area to access leisure and work activities supporting the night-time economy. To invigorate the town during the evening and night-time, public transport should be safe to access and use in the dark. For this purpose, the SLTP encourages additional lighting in public spaces and at bus stops.

PT Measure 01: Improved night-time mobility: Extend operational hours for existing and proposed bus services (in particular for town services) and convert loading bays at key night-time economy destinations into night-time taxi ranks.

PT Measure 02: Improved Lighting in Public Spaces: Make bus stop environments safer in the dark by improving visibility of the stops' surroundings.

6.3.2.1 Town Bus Services

Town bus services rely on, and are constrained by, the street network to be able to get people to their destination. In the centre it is crucial to protect the streets that currently carry bus services, as well as those that are earmarked for potential route changes or future additional services.

PT Measure 03: Enhance and protect the provision of bus services in the town centre by:

- Maintaining a two-way system on Abbey Street;
- Maintaining bus access on O'Connell Street;
- Maintaining the westbound movement of buses on Stephen Street;
- The addition of a bus stop on Wine Street to facilitate trips into this key town centre area;
- Supporting and improving the bus interchange at Markievicz Road through the provision of wider footways and hardstands;
- Supporting measures that enhance connectivity for buses in the wider urban area of Sligo; and
- Ensuring new developments provide appropriate connectivity to allow high quality bus operations through them.

In the residential areas of the town, the lack of orbital connections and the large number of dead-end streets significantly constrain both where bus services can be provided and the directness of routes that are possible. The long-term development of the town should pursue improvements to the current high levels of severance to improve the street network's ability to provide for quality bus services. This may be achieved through the provision of new road links, or new bus gates.

The provision of a new S3 town bus service shown in Figure 6-9 operating at a 30-minute frequency will improve access to public transport to the south of the town centre and Finisklin Business Park.

PT Measure 04: Support the provision of an additional Town Bus Service – the S3 - connecting the south of Sligo Town, Finisklin Business Park, and the town centre.

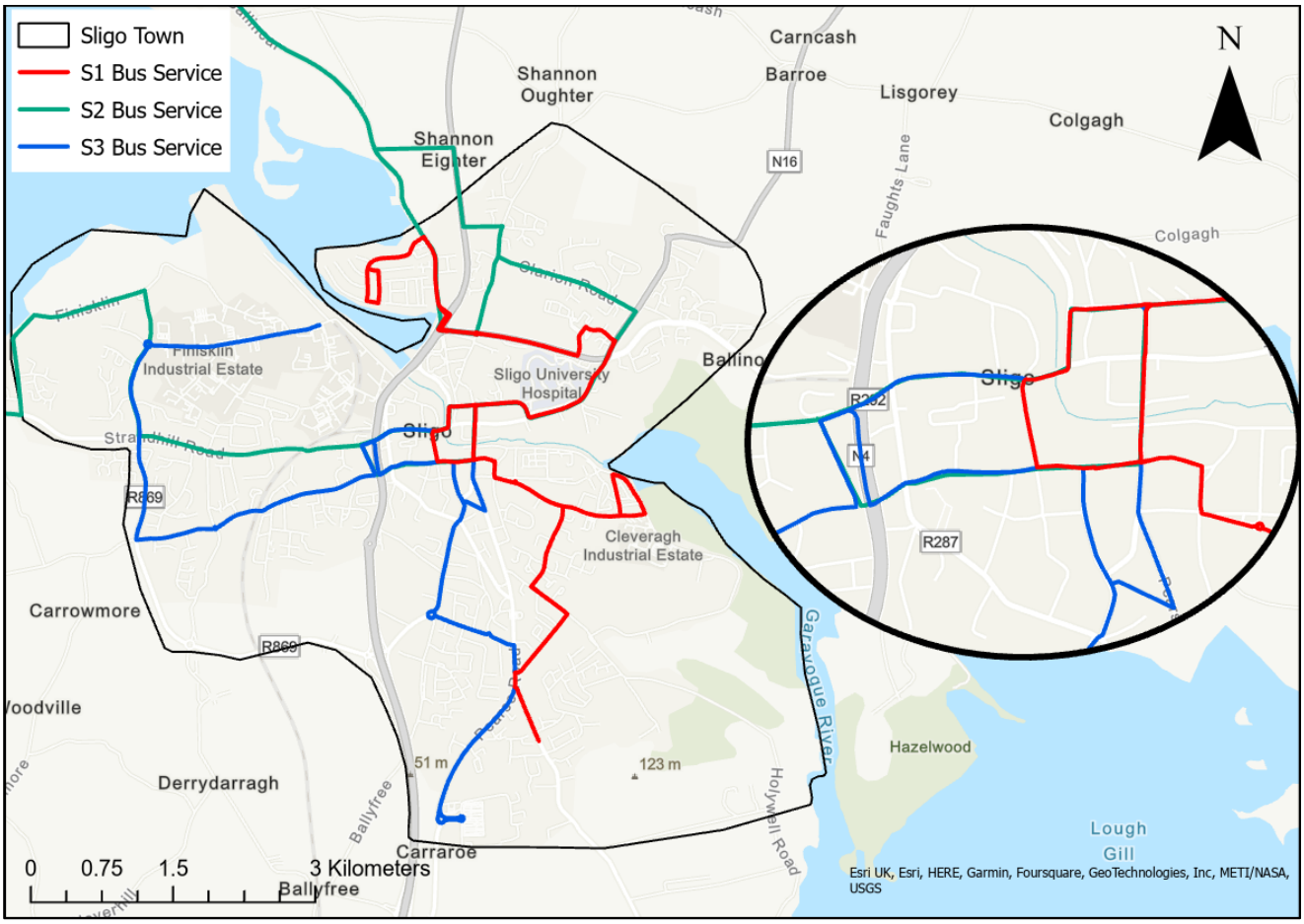

Figure 6-9: Existing and Proposed Town Bus Services

6.3.2.2 Connecting Ireland

The National Transport Authority is rolling out the Connecting Ireland Scheme which aims to increase transport connectivity for people living in rural Ireland. Among others, the Scheme seeks to add over 100 new connections between county towns and the settlements around them. It is estimated that when the Scheme is concluded, over 70% of people living outside the Cities will have access to a public transport service that provides at least three return services each weekday to a nearby town. A total of six bus routes that run through the study area (shown in Figure 6-10) are due to be improved by Connecting Ireland:

PT Measure 05: Support the roll-out of Connecting Ireland, including upgrades to the 23, 64, and 462 services.

- **Service 23**: Increase frequency to provide a two hourly service;
- **Service 64**: Increase service to hourly and adjust timetable to provide better service integration; and
- **Service 462**: Extend route from Dromahair to Manorhamilton and increase frequency to provide three return trips daily.

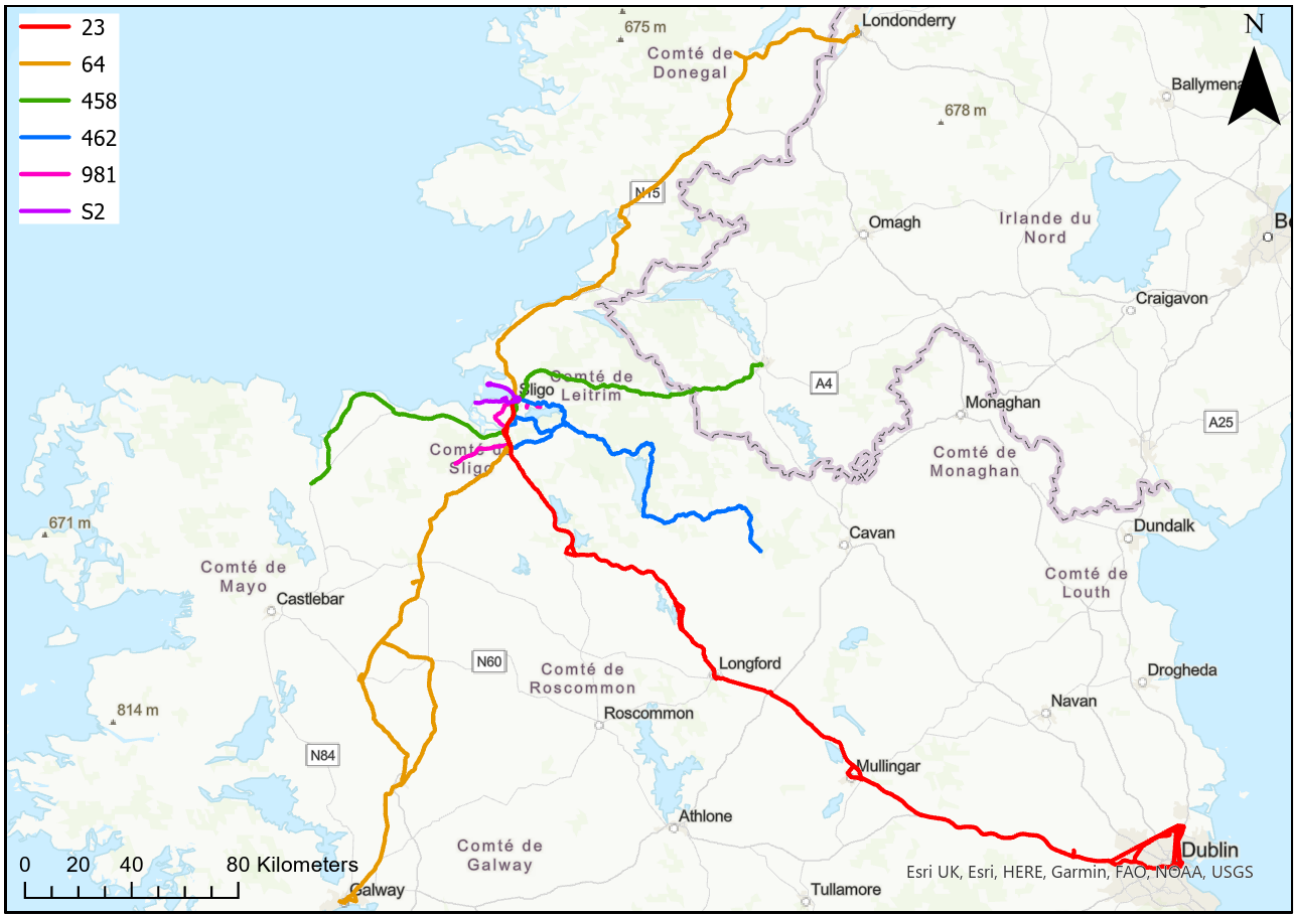

Figure 6-10: Connecting Ireland Bus Routes Due to be Increased in Frequency

6.3.2.3 Bus Stop Infrastructure

Accessible bus stops are a key element of public transport infrastructure to increase bus patronage. With the aim of making bus services more attractive, and enabling people with reduced mobility to use them, the SLTP recommends the addition and upgrade of the bus stops shown in Figure 6-11. A number of bus stops between Rosses Point and Sligo Town have been upgraded in the eastbound direction. Bus stop design should follow the NTA Bus Stop Guidance, be accessible by foot in all cases, have hardstands that reduce the gap between the footway and the bus floor, and, at busy locations, should provide a shelter.

PT Measure 06: Provide new bus stops at the following locations illustrated in Figure 6-11:

- Wine Street
- Along the R291 between the existing Rosses Point and Creggs Corner Stops (westbound).
- 2 new stops along the R292 between the existing Dorrin's Strand and Woodville Court/Aylesbury Park stops.

PT Measure 07: Upgrade bus stop infrastructure including the addition of shelters, hardstands and bus cages at the locations shown in Figure 6-11 and listed in Table 6-7.

PT Measure 08: Add real time bus stop information displays at the bus stops shown in Figure 6-12 and listed in Table 6-8.

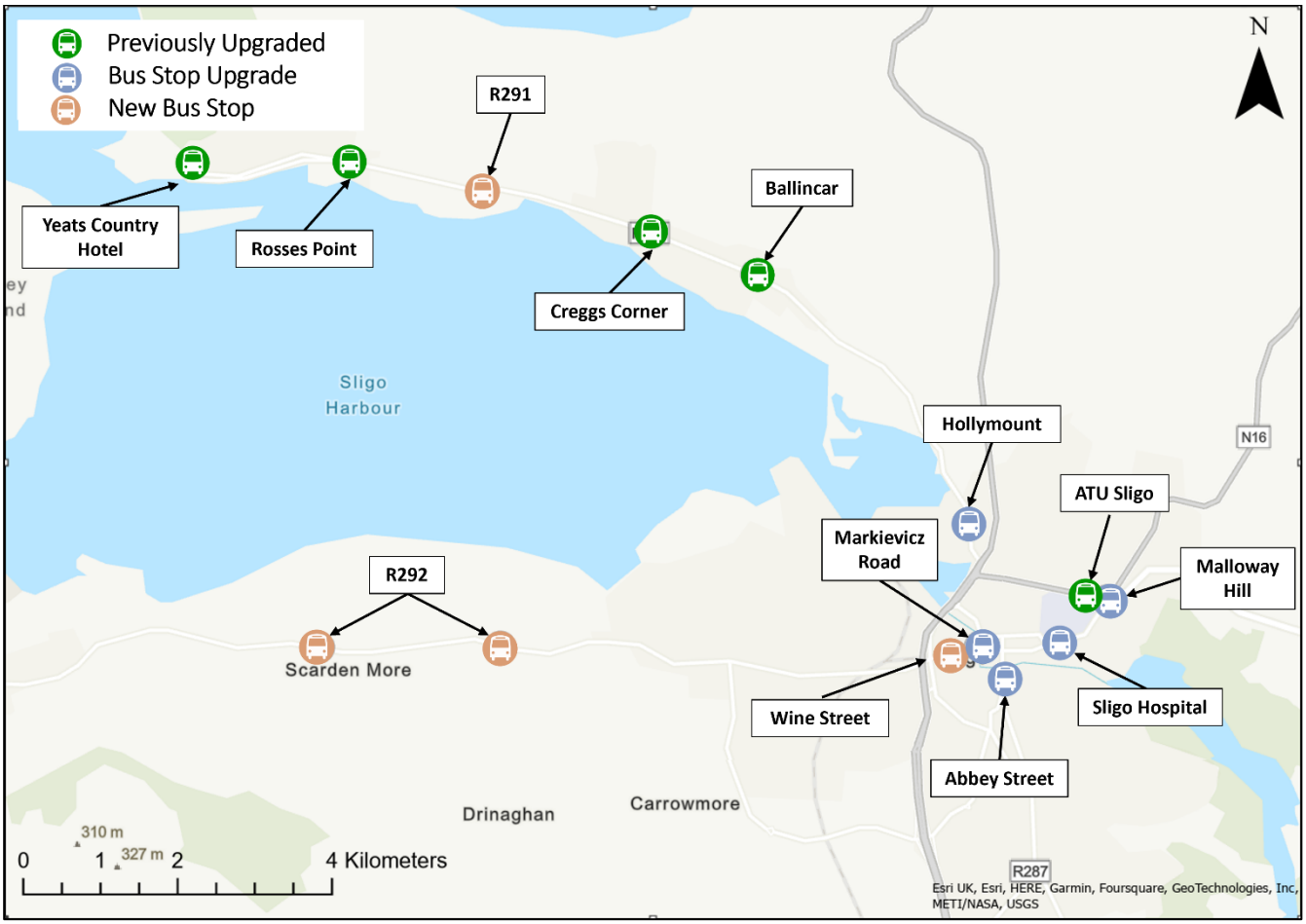

Figure 6-11: Previous and Planned Bus Stop Improvements

Table 6-7: Location of Bus Stops to be Upgraded.

Locations (Stop ID)	Proposals
Molloway Hill (554911)	Upgrade Bus Stop Accessibility
Sligo Hospital (558781 and 555291)	
ATU Sligo (524881)	
Markievicz Road (558421)	
Abbey Street (631391)	
Yeats Country Hotel (559311)	
Rosses Point (552211)	
Creggs Corner (559621)	
Ballincar (558331)	
Hollymount (552121)	

Table 6-8: New Locations for Real Time Bus Information Displays

Locations (Stop ID)	Proposals
Sligo Hospital (558781 and 555291)	Upgrade Real Time Bus Information at Bus Stops
ATU Sligo (524881)	
Markievicz Road (558421)	
Yeats Country Hotel (559311 and 559331)	
Knappagh Road (554311)	
John Street (520991)	
Ballysadare (558181 and 558191)	

Additionally, the bus stops shown in Figure 6-12 should be upgraded to include real time bus information on digital screens. These locations are key interchange and access points on the bus network and have been identified as areas where smarter travel infrastructure should be provided.

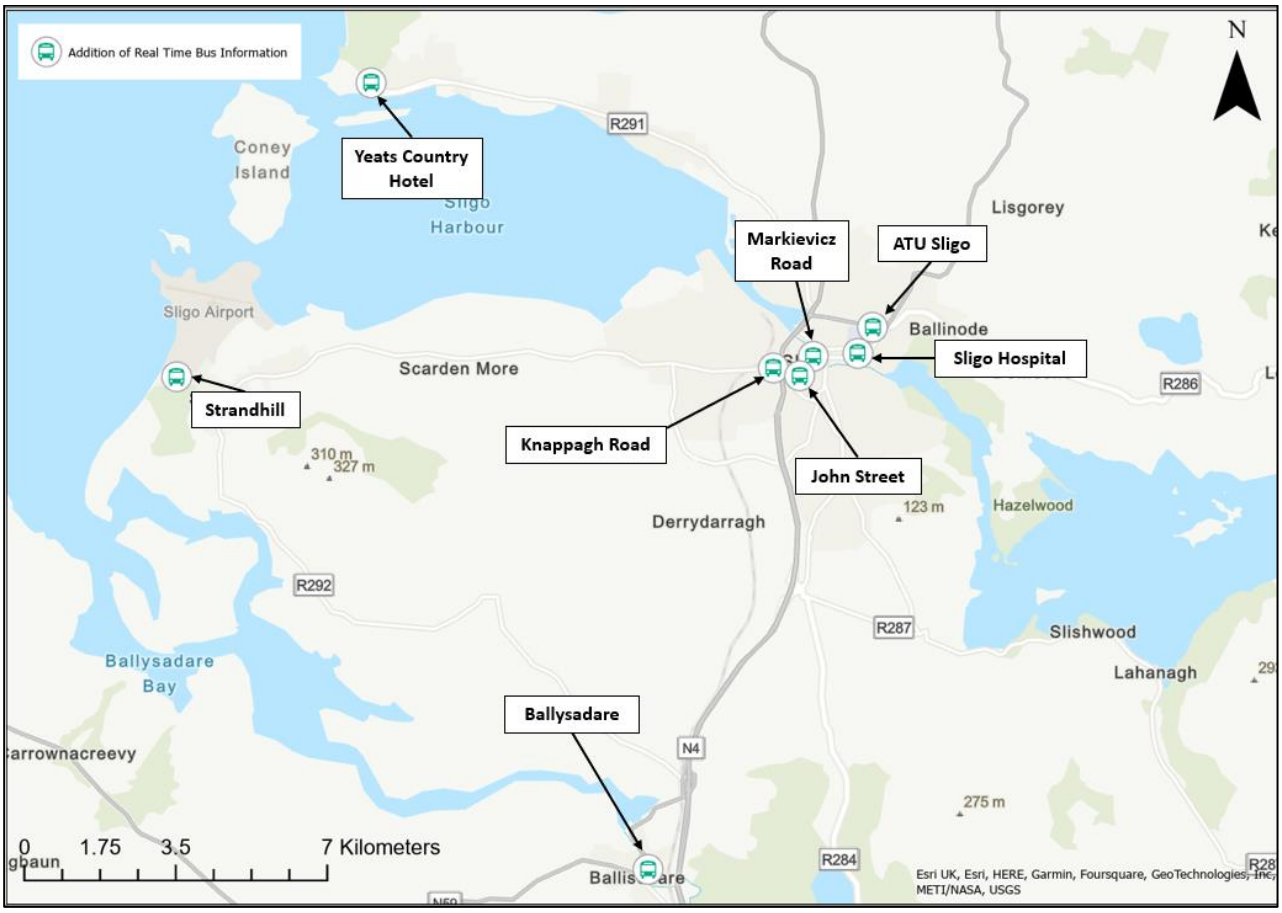

Figure 6-12: Bus Stop Locations to be Upgraded with Real Time Journey Data Displays

6.3.3 Rail

The existing rail network shown in Figure 6-13 provides connectivity between settlements within the study area – Sligo Town and Collooney – and serves as a connection to towns further afield in Sligo, Roscommon, Leitrim, Longford, Westmeath, and Meath, terminating Dublin's Connolly Station. Trains can carry a large volume of people, but only along a few corridors. In the study area, there is a single rail corridor, so the capacity of this vital piece of infrastructure can be better utilised by enabling more people to access the stations.

The SLTP introduces measures that aim to enhance the Collooney and MacDiarmada Train Stations in their role as key gateways for regional and national connectivity, but also to support the connection between Collooney and Sligo which can serve as a major sustainable transport corridor.

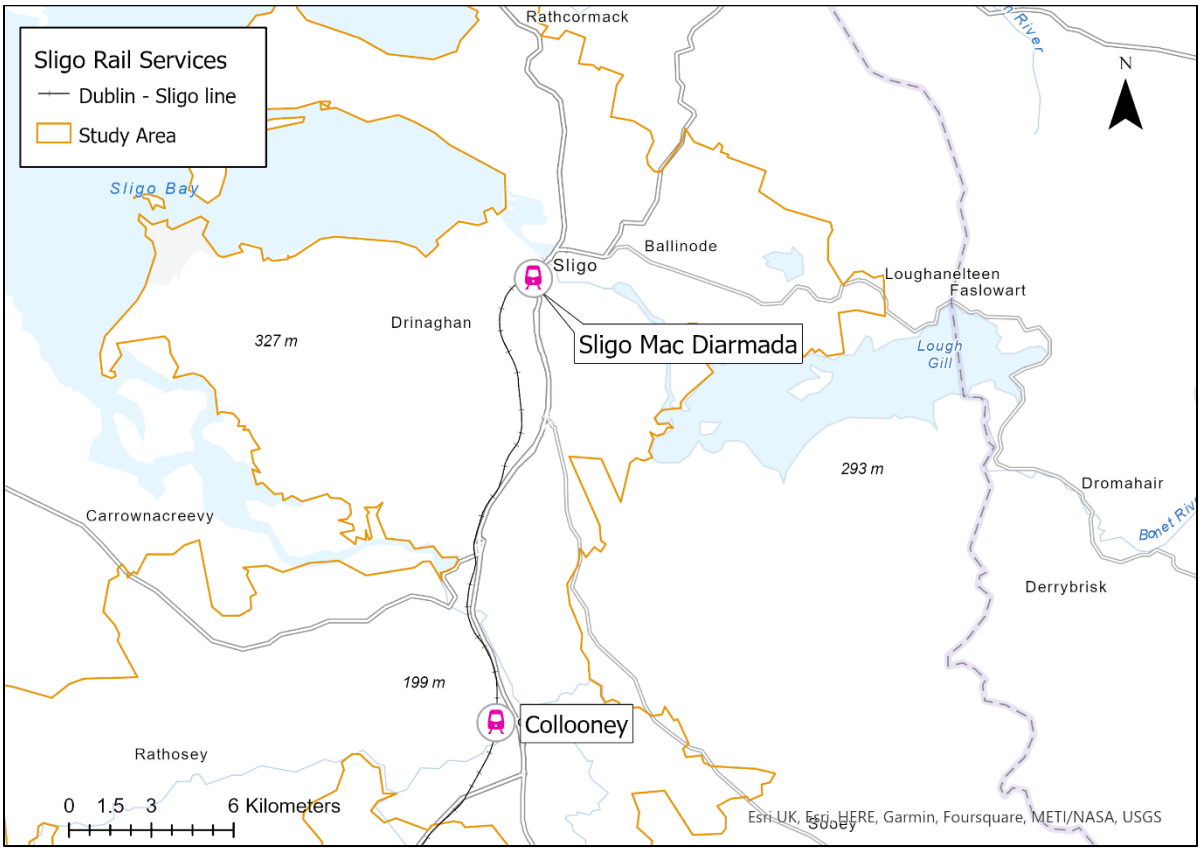

Figure 6-13: Sligo-Dublin Rail Line

MacDiarmada Station

To leverage the potential of the train station in Sligo, the way people access the station needs to be optimised. Locally at the station, the improvements in shown Figure 6-14 will make it easier for people to access train services.

PT Measure 09: Upgrade MacDiarmada Train Station in line with the proposals in Figure 6-14. Upgrades should be made in consultation with Irish Rail, taking any existing plans into account, including the National Car Park Programme Strategy and the Multi-Modal Interchange Programme.

Indicative Location	Proposals
1	Improve pedestrian accessibility by providing a wheelchair accessible connection between Lord Edward Street, the Coach Station, and the Train Station.
2	Provide sheltered long- and short-term cycle parking to enable people to access the station by bike.
3	Investigate the possibility of using the lands north of the train station to create an alternative pedestrian access point from the N4.

Figure 6-14: Upgrade Proposals for MacDiarmada Train Station

Collooney Train Station

Collooney Train Station serves fewer people than MacDiarmada and it does not benefit from any direct bus services or stops. Despite this, it gives Collooney a uniquely strong connectivity when compared to the other minor settlements in the study area. The station currently has very poor pedestrian and cycling connectivity with the town, making the car the only mode of transport by which the station is easily accessible.

PT Measure 10: Upgrade Collooney Train Station in line with the proposals listed in Table 6-9.

The improvements in Table 6-9 will make Collooney more accessible and attractive, thus supporting an increase in public transport use.

Table 6-9: Upgrade Proposals for Collooney Train Station

Location	Proposals
Collooney Train Station	Upgrade the link between the Station and Collooney to include a segregated cycle track and a footway;
Collooney Train Station	Explore whether an active travel bridge between the Station and Collooney is feasible;
Collooney Train Station	Provide sheltered short- and long-term cycle parking at the train station;
Collooney Train Station	Provide additional shelter for waiting passengers along the platform; and
Collooney Train Station	Liaise with Irish Rail to provide morning commuter service into Sligo to allow people to use the train to get to work in Sligo.

The RSES recommends capacity upgrades for the Sligo to Dublin Rail Line in RPO 6.15, which states:

"Promote enhancement of the capacity of the Sligo to Dublin rail line."

as well as a rehabilitation of the currently abandoned track between Athenry and Sligo in RPO 6.13 which states:

"(a) It shall be an objective to deliver the Athenry – Tuam – Claremorris – Sligo Rail to an appropriate level of service and to a standard capable of facilitating passenger and freight transport.

(b) It shall be an objective to progress through pre-appraisal and early planning the extension of the railway from Athenry – Tuam – Clarenmorris – Sligo"

PT Measure 11: Support rail upgrades for the Sligo-Dublin Rail Line and the currently disused Sligo-Athenry Rail Line as described in RPOs 6.13 and 6.15.

These connections are beyond the remit of the SLTP but would greatly benefit Sligo and enhance its role as a Regional Growth Centre. The SLTP supports both these RPOs.

6.3.4 Park & Ride

Some trips to Sligo that originate in remote areas are difficult to serve by public transport, and too far away from the town for active travel trips. In these cases, the private car offers the only viable transport option. As a result, many rural residents rely on their car for their mobility needs. Since Sligo serves as an urban hub for surrounding rural areas, there are many trips that terminate in the town centre. When these trips are made by car, this creates conflicts for parking and road space in the town centre.

Park & Rides reduce the pressure on town centre spaces and provide a more sustainable alternative for the last few miles of the trip into town. Park & Rides are also key to improving public transport patronage, enabling greater flexibility in modal interchanges between the car and public transport.

The SLTP proposes new Park & Ride locations that are on main radial routes into the town and thus have the greatest potential to cater for people travelling towards the Town in their cars. The chosen location should be far

PT Measure 12: Provide Park & Rides at the following key locations:

- Collooney Train Station;
- The N15; and
- In the proximity of Sligo Retail Park.

Each Park & Ride should have electric vehicle charging and be integrated with high-quality public transport connections to the town centre.

enough outside the Town for parking space to be readily available and along an existing public transport connection. Additionally, the price of using the Park & Ride, including the bus ticket into town, should be cheaper than parking inside the town to reflect the higher scarcity of parking space in the town centre. To cater for the growing uptake in electric cars Park & Ride parking should include vehicle charging points in line with RPO 6.34:

> *"Promote deployment of targeted, convenient and safe recharging infrastructure across the region to meet the changing needs of the electric vehicle with particular emphasis in public parking areas and employment locations".*

The proposed Park & Rides are:

- In the vicinity of Sligo Retail Park, connecting into the proposed S3 town bus service and existing regional buses along Pearse Road;
- Along the N15, connecting into the S2 service along the R291 and the regional bus services along the N15; and
- At the Collooney Train Station to connect into existing train services and proposed new commuter services.

6.4 Road Network

6.4.1 Overview

The road network was developed to achieve the SLTP Objective to *"Enhance accessibility of Sligo Town Centre for rural communities."*

The study area road network is the most significantly developed of all transport networks providing local, regional, and national connectivity. The level of priority given to the road network encourages the dominance of the private car as the primary mode of transport, within the study area and in many sections creates severance issues for pedestrians and cyclists. This is particularly highlighted by the N4 which bisects the town centre, creating a significant barrier for pedestrian and cycle movements.

In accordance with NIFTI modal hierarchy shown in Figure 2-5 the road network proposals have been developed to prioritise sustainable modes of transport including active travel and public transport over the private car. As established in Chapter 2, there is a policy imperative to limit the use of the private car to where it is strictly necessary. In terms of the road network the SLTP prioritise improvements that take into consideration sustainability, social inclusion, or active travel.

The design and use of the road network should be aligned and complement the surrounding environment, which includes high-quality public realm in the town centre, quiet residential spaces within the wider urban network and serving as key transport corridors on the main access routes into town and on regional roads throughout the study area. To ensure roads are designed in consideration of the nature of their environment, the SLTP divides the road network in the study area into three focus areas. The areas encompassing town centre roads, and wider urban streets are shown in Figure 6-15 and, inter-urban streets, encompasses all other roads connecting Sligo to surrounding settlements.

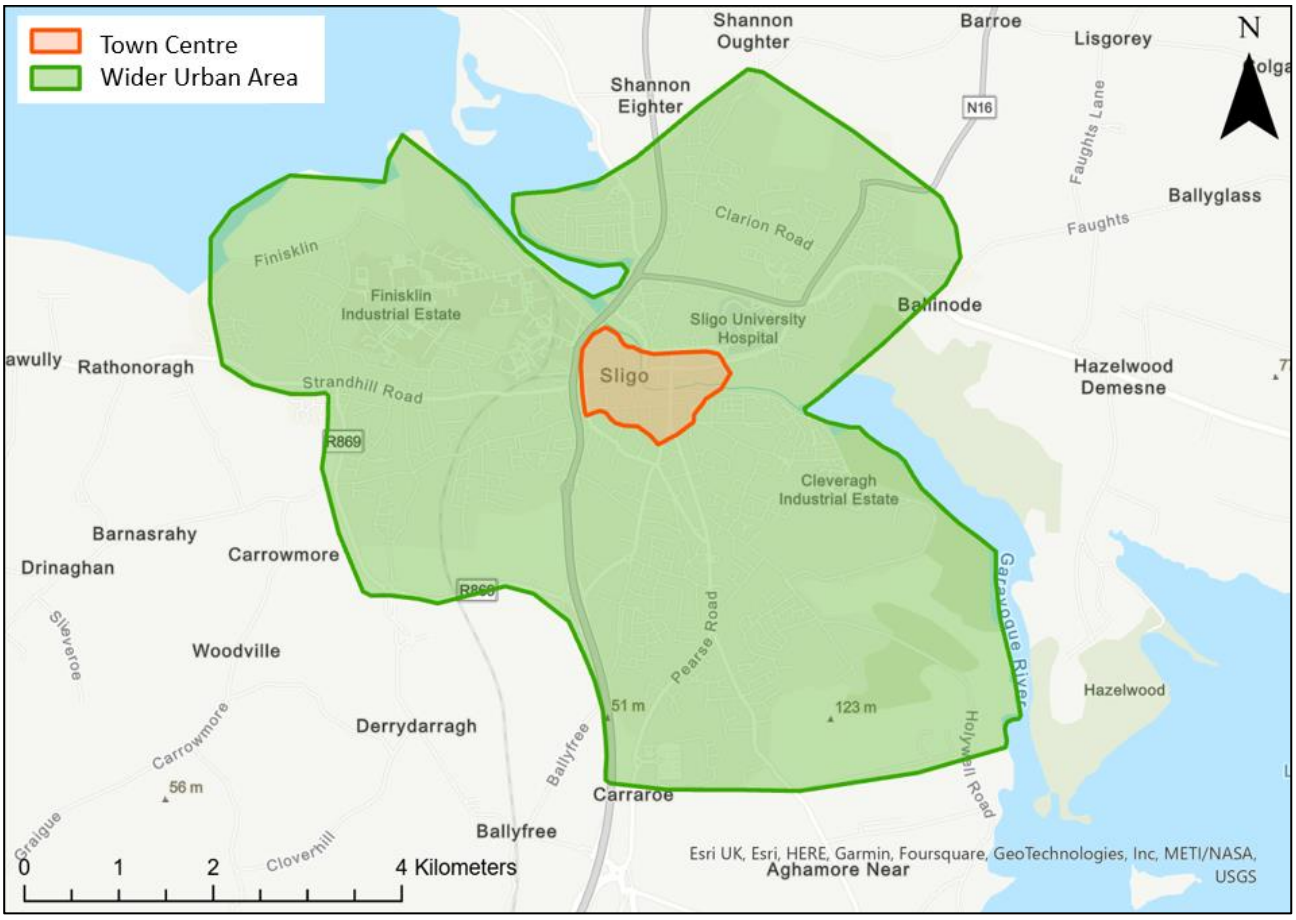

Figure 6-15: Street Network Focus Areas

6.4.2 Town Centre Road Network

Sligo town centre is a popular destination for the majority of trips originating the study area and beyond, resulting in a high demand for space in the town centre to accommodate this. This makes it particularly important to focus on the efficient uses of town centre space, ensuring that it can provide for as many trips as possible. The town centre boundary – as shown in orange in Figure 6-15 – is aligned with the area covered by Sligo's Public Realm Plan.

The town centre streets provide vital access for pedestrians, cyclists, blue badge holders and public transport users. The high levels of traffic that are currently present on these streets disrupt the enjoyability of this valuable space by creating pollution, noise, and severance. To get the most out of the town centre and create an attractive environment for all users, the street network must focus on the movement of people first and contribute to the creation of an attractive destination that reinforces Sligo's role as a Regional Growth Centre. This would be supported by the reduction in speed limit from 50km/h to 30km/h on key links within the town centre shown in Figure 6-16, thus reducing the risk of collisions, encouraging physical activity, and improving air quality.

Road Measure 01: Reduce speed limits in the town centre from 50km/h to 30 km/h in line with the indicative extent shown in Figure 6-16.

The introduction of the 30km/h zone within the area shown Figure 6-16 in will reduce the risk of collisions, improving safety for all users, and encouraging physical activity within the town centre. As is also recognised in the Public Realm Plan, these speed reductions will facilitate the integration of cycling within the Town Centre.

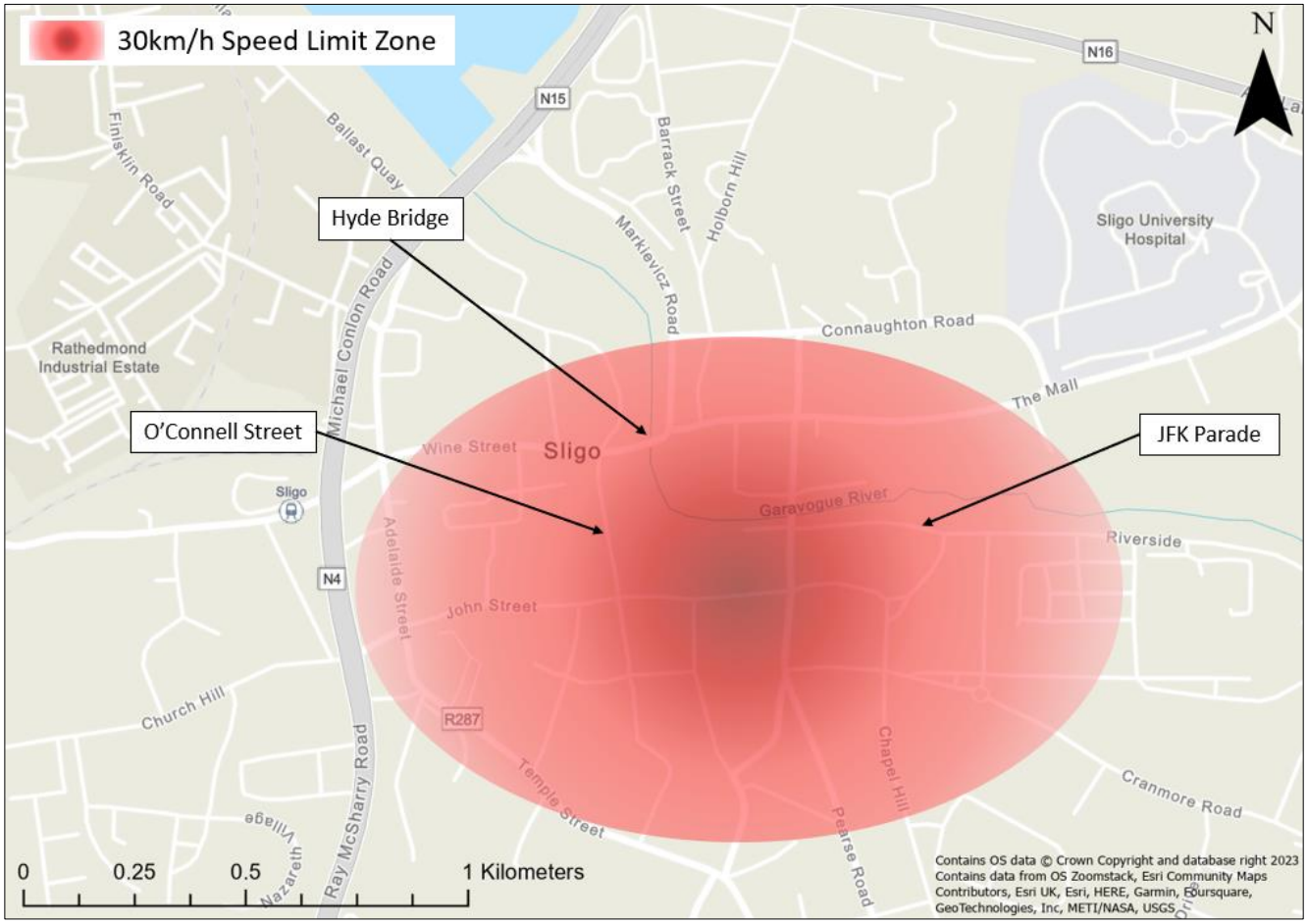

Figure 6-16 Indicative Extents of 30 km/h zone.

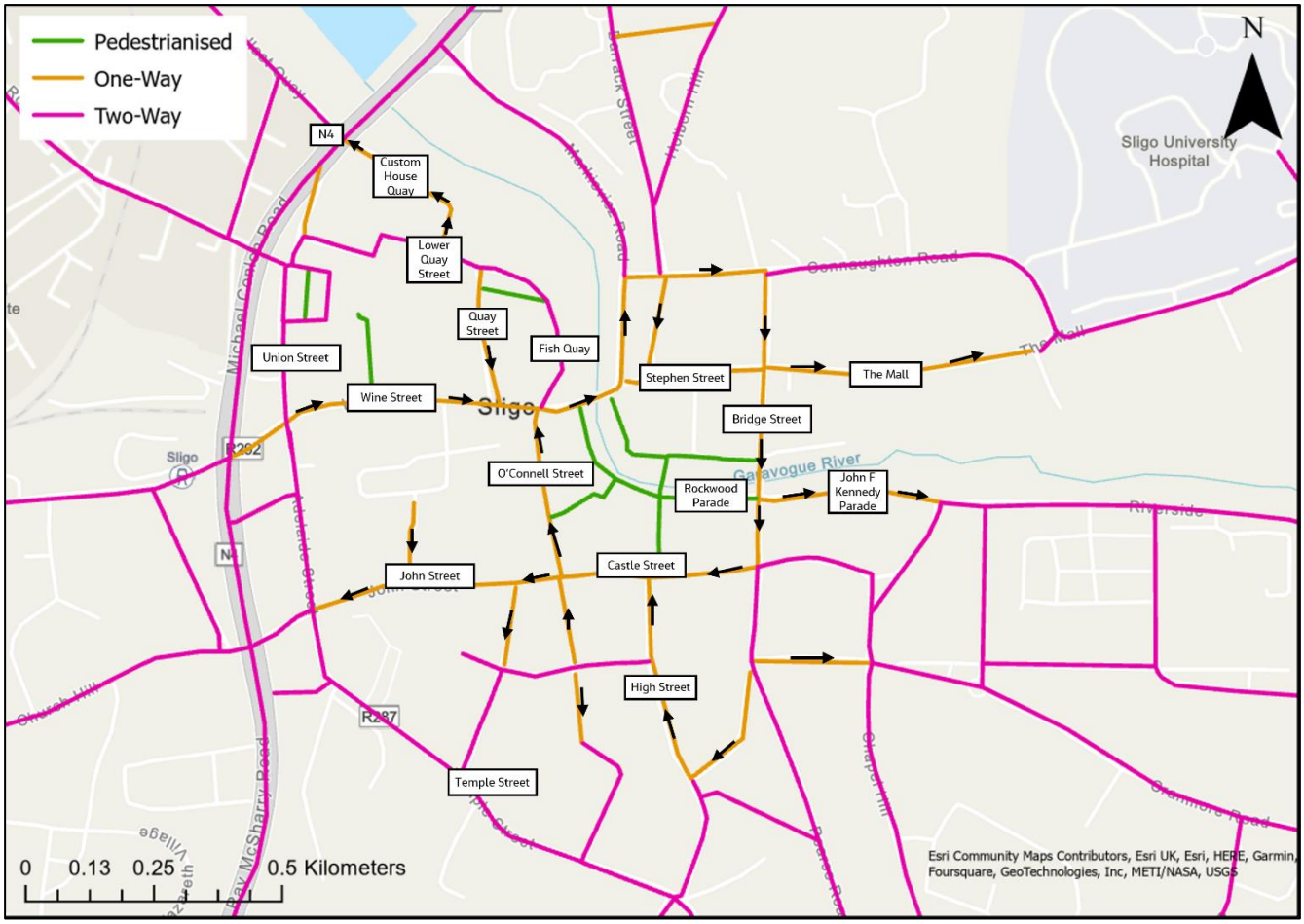

Figure 6-17: Proposed Town Centre One-Way System

Road Measure 02: Expand existing one-way system in line with Table 6-10.

Many of the narrow streets in the town centre area shown in Figure 6-17 are only wide enough to carry a single lane of traffic, which has necessitated the creation of a one-way street system to move cars around the centre. To further reduce the negative impacts of cars, the SLTP proposes an expansion of this one-way system, in addition to reducing a number of existing streets from two-lane to one-lane. The changes presented in Table 6-10 aim to create an efficient system of clockwise traffic flow in the vicinity of Wine Street Car Park.

Table 6-10 One-Way Street Proposals

Location	Proposals
Wine Street	Introduce one-way system eastbound from the N4 to Hyde Bridge. This will allow the reconfiguration of traffic signals at the N4/Lord Edward Street junction allowing for the optimisation of the signal cycle times.
John F Kennedy Parade	Creation of an eastbound one-way system.
Quay Street	Creation of a southbound one-way system.
Custom House Quay	Create a northbound one-way system from Lower Quay Street to the N4.

Reducing the number of vehicle lanes on a street facilitates improvements to pedestrian and cycle networks, making active travel a preferable option and further reducing levels of car dependency. Single lane streets also allow the optimisation of vehicle movements through the junctions.

Road Measure 03: Reduce existing carriageway from two lanes to one lane in line with proposals in Table 6-11.

Table 6-11 Lane Reduction Proposals

Location	Proposals
Markievicz Road	Reduce to a single northbound lane between Stephen St and Connaughton Rd;
Bridge Street	Reduce to a single southbound lane; and
Thomas Street	Reduce to a single southbound lane.

Reducing the number of vehicles within the town centre enables reallocation space to more efficient and sustainable transport modes. As discussed in Chapter 3, a car lane will carry less people than a footway or cycle lane of the same width. Some car trips that end in the town centre cannot be replaced by walking or cycling because they originate too far away. In these cases, the improvements in public transport and increase in parking spaces on the outskirts of the Town offered by the introduction of Park & Rides will provide suitable alternatives.

To provide more direct routes for orbital movements in the town, the SLTP proposes a new road link between the Temple Street/Gallows Hill junction to Pearse Road. This will benefit streets in the town centre providing alternative routes to through traffic around the centre.

Road Measure 04: Support new road link between Pearse Road and Temple Street.

Road Measure 05: Support Safe Routes to School through the introduction of traffic calming measures in line with proposals presented in Table 6-12.

Support Safe Routes to School Proposals at Scoil Ursula, Mercy NS, St Johns NS, and Realt Na Mara including the introduction of speed limit reductions and carriageway colour in proximity to schools. To reduce the negative safety impacts of car traffic on pedestrians, cyclists, and children walking to school, the SLTP recommends a number of traffic calming measures presented in Table 6-12.

Table 6-12 Traffic Calming Proposals

Location	Proposals
John Street - Grattan Street - Castle Street	Introduce soft traffic calming measures at John Street including raise tables to improve pedestrian and cyclists' safety.
Finisklin Road	Introduction of raised tables along the route and reduction in entry radii along Finisklin Road for cars crossing cycle lane into side streets/parking spaces to reduce vehicle speeds at conflict points.
Union Street	Introduce soft traffic calming measures such as raised tables and narrow lanes to ensure cyclists' safety.
Ballast Quay	Introduce soft traffic calming measures such as raised tables and narrow lanes to ensure cyclists' safety.

Road Measure 06: Improve road safety at the Castle Street/Abbey St/Thomas St junction through the full signalisation of the junction.

Improve road safety for vehicles, pedestrian, and cyclists the Castle Street/Abbey St/Thomas St by introducing full junction signalisation. This should clearly define vehicle priority and incorporate controlled pedestrian crossings and cycle provision linking into the Pathfinder proposals on Thomas Street.

6.4.3 Wider Urban Road Network

The residential road network should cater for local movement and provide a quiet, safe, and attractive environment. These streets are used for local access, local trips to schools and for leisure trips, to the local community centre or park. The development of these areas should promote the concept of filtered permeability, creating an interconnected street network that provides high levels of permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, while keeping through-traffic on the main roads.

The current residential street layout has poor permeability and therefore makes trip longer by requiring circuitous routes. The 2016 Cranmore Masterplan is an excellent example of measures being taken to improve access within the neighbourhood to sports facilities, schools, and open spaces. A similar approach of creating new pedestrian and cycling links between residential streets should be applied throughout the town.

Road Measure 07: Construction of new link between Rusheen Crescent to the Pearse Road.

Town bus routes are highly dependent on the street layout in residential areas and are currently constrained by the large number of cul-de-sacs that prevent them from traversing areas where potential users live. The residential street network development should create sufficient orbital links to allow for a high-quality town bus service provision that can be used by everyone in Sligo.

Road Measure 08: Construction of new link between Sligo Retail Park and The Hawthorns and the Laurels.

The SLTP proposes two new street links that aim to increase connectivity in residential areas. Both links should provide high quality infrastructure for cyclists and pedestrians and will potentially facilitate bus services in these areas by offering more direct routes through the residential areas. The proposed links are:

- Connect the south end of Rusheen Crescent to the Pearse Road as originally proposed in the SEDP (2010-2016).
- Connect The Hawthorns and the Laurels, providing additional connectivity for the residential development situated behind the Sligo Retail Park.

6.4.4 Inter-urban Road Network

The inter-urban road network shown in Figure 6-18 serves to connect the various settlements in the study area and provides the backbone rural mobility. In addition to providing connectivity for rural trips in cars, it serves the bus routes that traverse the region. Its role in providing rural connectivity must be maintained to ensure a continued livelihood for rural communities.

Road Measure 09: Maintain the existing inter-urban road network shown in Figure 6-18.

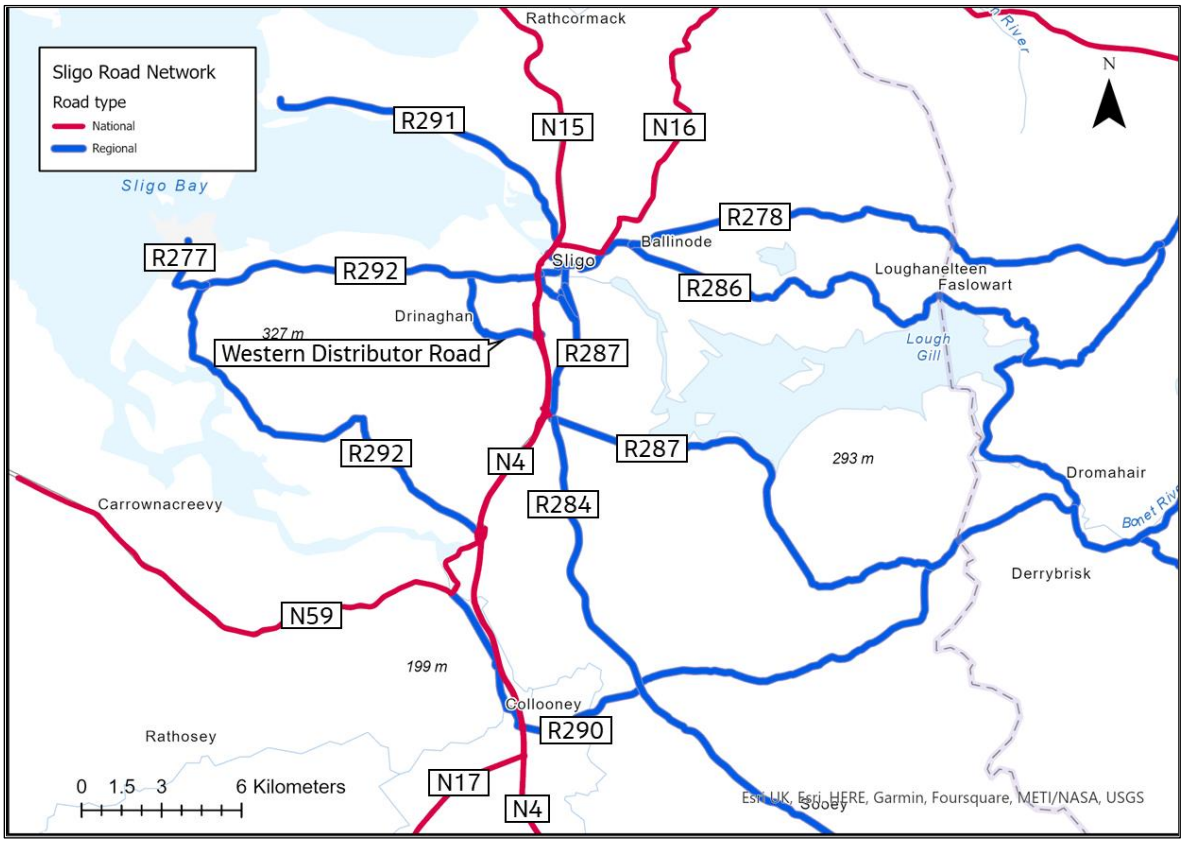

Figure 6-18 Existing Inter-Urban Road Network

6.5 Parking

There is currently a high level of car parking provision within Sligo Town Centre, as is outlined in Section 3.4.4. Current parking charges encourage and facilitate long-stay car parking with many car parks providing inexpensive daily rates. This incentivises private vehicle commuter traffic into the town Centre.

Parking Measure 01: Produce a Parking Strategy to assess and support an appropriate level of car parking in the Town Centre.

Parking Measure 02: Expand existing digital parking occupancy infrastructure on the N15, N16 and N4 to include real-time information for a larger number of town centre car parks.

The Public Realm Plan recommends a supporting strategy for car parking with the aim of displacing car parking from the town centre and thus free up space for an improved public realm. The SLTP supports the development of such a parking strategy. Additionally, the parking strategy should identify both an appropriate amount of car parking provision and a more efficient pricing structure. The pricing of car parking should more closely reflect the valuable nature of space in the town centre. Overall, the strategy should enhance and support the continued economic development of the town centre, promote active travel modes, and balance the needs of businesses, residents, commuters, and visitors.

The efficient management of the parking availability should be improved by expanding digital infrastructure at car parks and increase the number of parking locations shown on existing screens located on the N15, N16 and N4 approaches to Sligo Town. This would limit the number of vehicles circulating the one-way traffic system in search of an available parking space. Sligo's Public Realm Plan's *Smart Technology* Objectives are supported by this proposal, in particular to implement "Smart Parking".

7. SLTP Monitoring and Review

7.1 Introduction

The monitoring and evaluation chapter of the SLTP is a critical component that ensures the plan's effectiveness, tracks progress, and facilitates necessary adjustments. This chapter outlines the methods, metrics, and processes that will be used to assess the implementation and impact of the plan's initiatives. It will help SCC and strategic stakeholders gauge whether the goals and objectives set in the plan are being achieved and provides insights into areas that may require modification or improvement.

Sligo's future development is oriented towards ambitious growth targets set out in the NPF and the RSES for the Northern and Western Regions. Its role as a Regional Growth Centre will maintain and grow Sligo's role as a hub in the region, including for work, commercial, leisure, tourism, and cultural activities. Conscientious implementation of the SLTP will help ensure that the study area's transport network is prepared to meet the demands that will be placed on it.

To meet the needs of the future, in particular to achieve climate targets, population growth targets, and to create a mobility offer that is more inclusive for all, the reliance on the private car must be reduced. Without substantial upgrades to the offer of alternative transport modes, including active travel and public transport, people in the study area will continue to be constrained to using their cars.

Monitoring of progress towards the SLTP's implementation will ensure its timely delivery and full implementation, thus helping Sligo realise its potential. To create a systematic, measurable approach, it is important that a Monitoring Plan be developed to track implementation of the networks developed in the SLTP and ensure progress is made towards:

- The SLTP Principles & Objectives;
- The SLTP mode share targets;
- The RSES population growth targets of 11% by 2031 and 40% by 2040;
- The National GHG Emissions Target of 51% reduction by 2030 and net zero no later than 2050; and
- Creating a transport network that will enable Sligo to achieve the CDP Vision.

Progress may be monitored at any time during the Plan period, but it is recommended to do so at least once in 2026, when the first half of the Plan period has transpired.

7.2 Performance Indicators and Target Aspirations

Performance Indicators and target aspirations will be used to assess the SLTP progress. It is important that these indicators align with the plan's objectives. The indicators and targets are detailed below.

Theme	Performance Indicator	Target Aspiration
Traffic Congestion	Traffic counts during peak hours on key routes within the town centre	Reduce traffic volumes by 25% by 2030.
Public Transport Usage	Public transport ridership / passenger numbers	Increase public transport ridership by 20% over the next 6 years (2030)
Active Travel Rates	Percentage of trips made by walking and cycling within the town centre	Increase the share of walking and cycling trips within the town to 25% of all trips by 2030

Modal Shift	Percentage change in the share of private car trips compared to alternative modes (public transport, walking, cycling)	Shift 10% of private car trips to alternative modes by 2027 increasing to 20% by 2030.
Road Safety	Number of road traffic accidents and fatalities within the study area	Reduce road traffic accidents within the study area by 15% and fatalities by 20% by 2027.
Carbon Emissions	Total carbon emissions from transportation modes	Reduce fossil fuelled car kilometres by 10% by 2030.
Accessibility & Equity	Accessibility of public transport services within the town centre and across rural areas	Ensure that 90% of residents have access to a public transport stop within a 10-minute walk within the town centre and service frequency is increased to rural areas
Infrastructure Development	Completion of key infrastructure projects.	Review infrastructure provision to ensure alignment with design standards including DMURS and the National Cycling Manual. Completion of at least 3 key infrastructure projects by 2030
Parking Demand & Usage	Occupancy rate of parking facilities within the town centre	Reduce parking demand in line with reduced traffic congestion. Maintain 20-minute parking enforcement at key locations within the town centre

7.3 Data Collection

Data collection relates to the methods, sources, and procedures for gathering the necessary information to assess the progress and impact of the SLTP initiatives. Effective data collection is critical for making informed decisions about the progress of the implementation of the SLTP, identifying any trends, and ensuring the SLTP's objectives are being achieved.

The following points detail the data sources and collections methods that required as part of the monitoring process for the SLTP.

- **Traffic and active travel monitoring for vehicle counts and congestion data:**
  - Liaise with TII for strategic traffic figures.
  - Install part time automated Traffic Counters (ATCs) at key locations within the town centre and arterial routes every 2 years.
  - Consider use of mobile phone data, GPS tracking and Bluetooth to capture active travel numbers.
  - Undertake Manual Classified Counts (MCCs) every 2 years at key junctions around the town centre.
  - Undertake Non-motorised user (NMU) surveys every 2 years on key links to establish active travel utilisation of infrastructure.
  - Walkability audits using the NTA's Universal Walkability Audit tool.

- **Public transport agencies for ridership and service performance data.**
  - Undertake passenger counts within the MacDiarmada train station and review bus & train ticketing data.
- **Air quality monitoring stations for pollution levels.**
  - Utilise real-time air quality monitoring stations for continuous pollution measurements.
  - Deploy remote sensing equipment for environmental data collection at locations within the town centre.
- **Surveys conducted among residents to gather travel behaviour and satisfaction feedback.**
  - Undertake online surveys and questionnaires administered to Sligo residents and commuters.
- **Collision and road accident reports from An Garda Síochána and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)**
  - Work with An Garda Síochána and TII to gather annual collision statistics, categorise by severity from across the study area.

7.4 Reporting & Communication

As part of the SLTP Monitoring and Review, clear and effective reporting and communication is essential for ensuring that the progress, outcomes, and findings of the SLTP implementation are effectively communicated to relevant stakeholders and the general public from across the study area.

Reporting should be generated on a bi-annual basis and should present a consistent report structure for bi-annual comparative purposes. The report should be presented in an accessible format including translations (if required). The report should cover chapters and detail such as:

- Analysis of performance indicators and targets
- Ongoing comparison of data with baseline data or previous reporting period
- High level evaluation of effectiveness of specific initiatives
- Feedback from online stakeholder engagement sessions or questionnaires
- Summary of capital funding allocation

As updates and reviews are made to the policies that underpin the SLTP – as summarised in Chapter 2 – adjustments may be made to the SLTP to ensure it continues to drive positive change in Sligo. The 2022 census is due to be released during 2023 and 2024.

It is recommended that the SLTP should be updated in accordance with any changes that are found in the new data when compared with the 2016 data used to prepare the SLTP. At the end of the Plan period in 2030, this SLTP will be replaced by a newly developed plan which will build on the progress made under this SLTP.

8. Summary and Conclusions

The SLTP is a strategic document that outlines the transportation policies, priorities, and initiatives for Sligo County Council. The proposals within this plan have been developed to address the unique transportation needs and challenges of Sligo and support the Sligo County Development Plan 2024-2030 and the subsequent Local Area Plan for Sligo Town and its Environs.

The SLTP aims to improve the overall transportation network, promote sustainable travel options, reduce congestion, enhance air quality, and support the economic development of Sligo. The SLTP will enable the achievement of the population growth targets from the RSES, the transition to net zero, and strengthen Sligo's role as a Regional Growth Centre. In alignment with the six SLTP objectives below, a future transport network for each mode of travel has been developed:

- Increase public transport patronage by promoting the convenience and attractiveness of bus, rail, and P&R.
- Enhance integration between existing and proposed land-uses and transport.
- Enhance accessibility of Sligo Town Centre for rural communities.
- Develop an enhanced pedestrian network focusing on improving permeability and creating a sense of 'Place' within Sligo Town.
- Improve the cycle network throughout the study area.

The network development was informed by public feedback from survey responses collected between the 22nd of February and the 14th of March 2023. The interventions needed to create Sligo's future transport network were subjected to a rigorous assessment process, including a multi-criteria assessment process which allowed discerning which interventions best support the SLTP objectives and should thus be taken forward. Where proposals are made to modify existing arrangements at a National Road, the TII Publications will be followed, and a Design Report submitted in accordance with policy. As a proof of concept, the Western Regional Model was used to evaluate the overall impact of the new networks.

The SLTP's transport network for Sligo envisages, among others, an increased coverage in town and rural bus services, a substantial increase in cycling infrastructure, three new Park & Ride locations and a more people-friendly, economically active town centre.

The proactive approach proposed in the SLTP is needed to ensure Sligo is well positioned to achieve the mode share targets on its way to a net zero economy. The development of improved sustainable transport networks providing viable transport alternatives to the private car, will reduce demand of the road network and improve transport accessibility within the whole study area. The levels of urban space allocated to cars in the town centre can be repurposed to serve as high quality spaces for people, increasing the attractiveness within the town.

All proposals within this transport plan will be subject to a review and design process. It is the intention of SCC that the transport proposals are gradually implemented between 2024-2030, subject to funding and relevant approvals.

All proposals within this transport plan will be subject to a statutory public consultation as part of the County Development Plan consultation process. All feedback from the consultation will be reviewed and considered prior to the finalisation of the Transport Plan.