



Scoil Ursula, Knappagh Road Safe Routes to School



Public Consultation

Sligo.

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Overview

Sligo County Council with the support of the National Transport Authority propose to implement Front-of-School works to improve the safety of students and vulnerable road users entering and exiting Scoil Ursula, on Knappagh Road in Sligo.

What are School Zones?

School Zones are built infrastructural upgrades that are designed to give priority to students at the school gate by freeing up footpaths and reducing vehicle drop-offs, pick-ups and parking. The aim is to increase safety at the front of school and prioritise active travel (walking, cycling, wheeling and scooting) to and from the school.



Figure 1: Example of School Zone at Star of The Sea School, Sandymount, D4

School Zones have been implemented around the Country to:

- Increase student safety.
- Reduce vehicle drop-offs, pick-ups and parking outside the school gate.
- Reduce congestion and prioritise active travel (walking, cycling and scooting) to and from school.
- Encourage slow, safe driving in the area of the school.
- Promote considerate parking.
- Reduce emissions and pollution and improve air quality and noise quality by reducing the volume of traffic at schools and vehicles with engines idling.

Why are we implementing this, School Zone?

Traffic related safety concerns have been reported and observed by the school, parents, neighbours, parking enforcement and Scoil Ursula, including:

- The high volume of vehicular traffic at school times outside the school gate and coming and along Knappagh Road.
- Safer Crossing points for school children
- Improved footpath and cycling facilities.
- Parents perceive outside the school gate as "the most dangerous part of the school journey" with vehicular parking dropping off in the middle of the road and reversing and U-turns.
- Vehicular parking either fully or partially on the footpath on Knappagh Road
- Speeding and high volume of traffic on Knappagh Road
- Pedestrian congestion when a high volume of people at school times are travelling down the narrow paths in the school vicinity.



Figure 2: Green Schools Parents survey illustrating the fundamental issues in relation to School Safety

The results of the Green Schools Parent Travel Survey for Scoil Ursula indicate that most students are travelling to the School from within a 1km radius. The analysis of the survey demonstrates that 54.7% of students are travelling to Scoil Ursula from within a 1km radius of the school. Refer to figure 3 below.

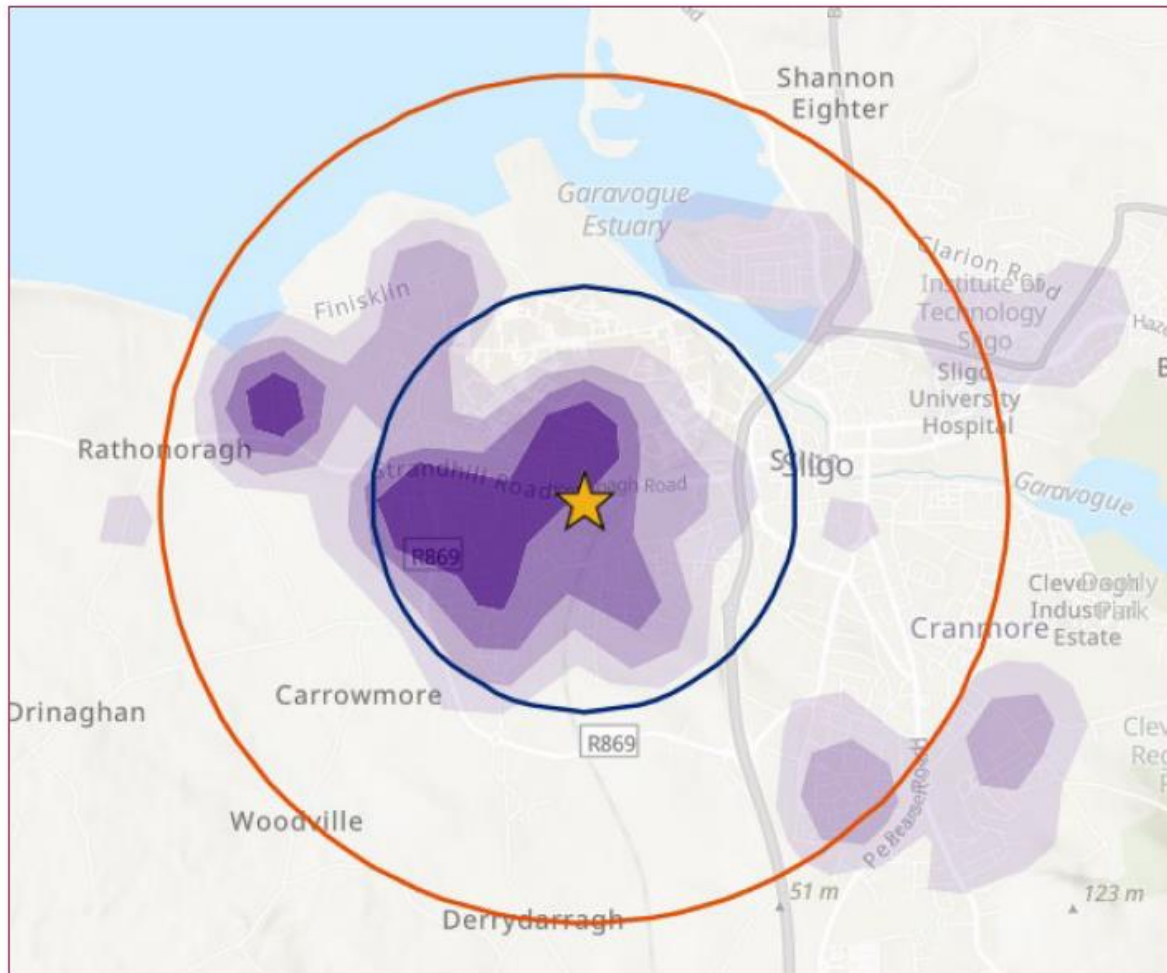


Figure 3: Green Schools travel survey illustrating the population density within 1km of the school.

Project Information

Sligo County Council have secured funding under the Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme in 2023 for a significant project at Scoil Ursula, on Knappagh Road. The project will implement significant road changes along the R292 Knappagh Road. The works will commence to the west of the existing junction of the R292 with the Park estate and will finish to the east of the existing junction of the R292 with Orchard Road. The project will encompass the following works.

- The creation of a dedicated school zone at Scoil Ursula (front of school), with the provision of different coloured road surface with associated signage.

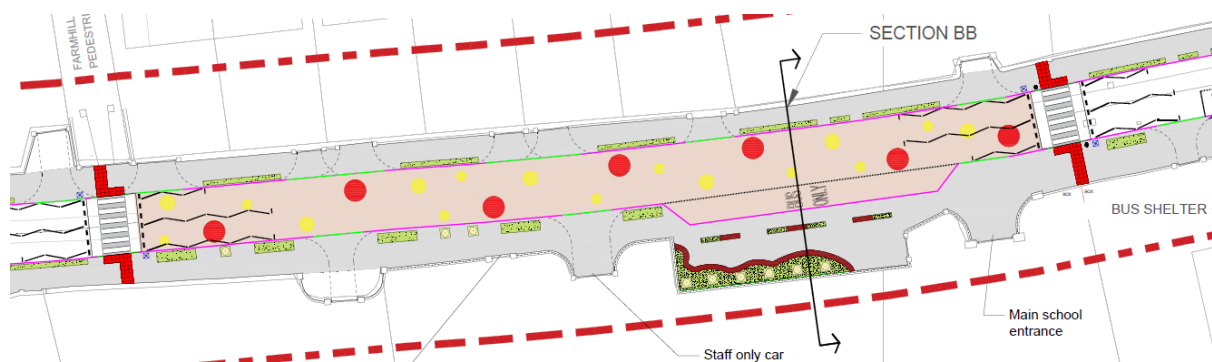


Figure 4: Indicative layout of new school Zone at Scoil Ursula

- Reduction of carriageway widths, with residual space attributed to pedestrians.
- Provision of two new pedestrian crossing facilities.



Figure 5: Indicative Layout of new pedestrian Crossings

- Provision of junction tightening measures and raised crossing facilities at Thornhill, Orchard Road, and The Park.



Figure 6: Indicative layout of Junction tightening measures.

- Provision of two new bus stops including widened footpaths and the provision of dedicated bus shelters.



Figure 7: Proposed location of new bus shelters

- Provision of dedicated landscaping scheme including provision of sustainable drainage system, new green areas, planters, and trees.
- Upgrading of the rear pedestrian entrance servicing the school

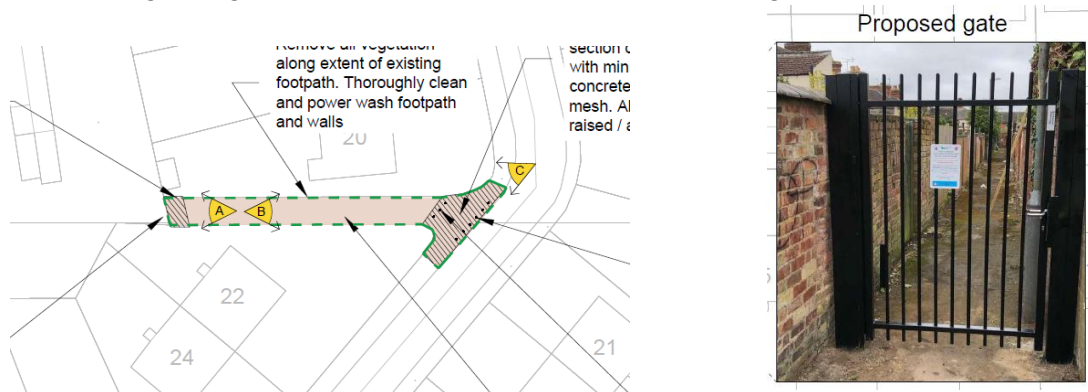


Figure 8: Indicative proposals for Scoil Ursula rear pedestrian entrance

- Provision of a new storm water drainage system
- Provision of new dedicated public lighting system

Project Benefits

School children will often be accompanied by an adult, and perhaps siblings, on the journey to school. Often children will be holding hands with a parent or scooting/cycling side by side. The provision of wider footpaths will allow children to develop their abilities and independence by giving them the space to be at a safe distance from their parents. Careful consideration was exercised in terms of the position of the pedestrian crossings, while still complying with relevant safety standards and legislation. These improved facilities will make walking and cycling to school easier and safer for school children.

The implementation of the project will make Knappagh Road safer. The design represents a significant improvement in terms of traffic regulation, junction definition, and traffic calming for Knappagh Road. The project will significantly reduce traffic speeds on Knappagh Road, reduce turning speeds at junctions, and increase intervisibility between motorists and other vulnerable road users (pedestrians, cyclists). The project will provide shorter crossing distance for pedestrians to walk on the roadway. It provides improved facilities for pedestrians and strengthens walking links to Scoil Ursula.

Detailed emphasis has been placed on public transport. The current locations of the bus stops have been changed and the new locations will encompass new bus shelters. This will make the bus stops more apparent and user friendly.

A new landscaping and public lighting scheme have been developed for the project. The landscaping will provide a softening of the new concrete footpaths. It will provide a sense of place and highlight to motorists that they are entering an urban area and school zone. The public lighting scheme will provide adequate lighting levels and ensure safety for walkers at night.

Considering all elements proposed in a global sense, the project will provide a significantly safer environment for all road users.

Scheme Drawings

The attached drawings outline the design and layout for the scheme. The scheme is at preliminary design and as such these drawings are subject to change and/or modifications.

Submission of Comments

Please submit any comments that you may have on the proposed scheme by 5pm on Friday 18th August 2023.

What happens next.

This is the initial consultation stage of the project. We will review all the comments and observations and consider where appropriate, changes to the design.

For the School Zone front-of-school treatment to work effectively, parents and guardians who need to drive must be willing to consider alternatives with a view towards changing their drop off and pick up habits. **Parents and guardians will be encouraged not to collect and drop off within the School Zone.** They must park respectfully and legally, outside of the dedicated School Zone by not blocking other entrances, mounting footpaths or double parking.

It is envisaged that a Part 8 Planning Application will be lodged with the Planning Department of Sligo County Council in Q4 of 2023 where further opportunities will be available to comment on the proposals.