



**IRISH LANDSCAPE INSTITUTE**  
Institiúid Tírdhreacha na hÉireann

**National Transport Agency (NTA)\_Cycle Network Plan**

**Submission to Consultation Papers**

**October 2013**



## 1.0. Introduction

The Irish Landscape Institute (ILI) was formed in 1992. The Institute, as the professional body representing landscape architects in Ireland, has a Constitution and a Code of Professional Conduct. ILI is recognised by the European Federation of Landscape Architects (EFLA) and affiliated to the International Federation of Landscape Architects and landscape architecture is a recognised professional service by the European Union in procurement legislation. The Institute has a membership of 160, made up of full members, graduate members, student members, and well as honorary members and Fellows. The ILI aims to:

- Set standards of excellence in the fields of landscape planning, landscape architecture and landscape management.
- Encourage and facilitate the Continued Professional Development of its members.
- Increase public awareness of landscape professionals and their work.
- Support the interaction of landscape architecture with related disciplines such as engineering, architecture and planning.
- Support the development of landscape education at all levels in Ireland, including accreditation of a degree course at NUI on behalf of IFLA Europe.

The Irish Landscape Institute (ILI) is responding to the on line invitation for submissions in response to the Draft NTA Cycle Network Plan

Our comments on the submission are as follows:

Document: A3 Cycle Network Plan LOW RES

Page Reference	Comment	Note
Page 10.	Some alternatives to control of access such as kissing gates should be provided in this strategy. This would be expected but perhaps will be available at the detailed design stage. However some form of alternative should be provided at this point in view of the involvement of local authorities.	Discuss the provision of standard details throughout the cycle network. Discussions should include user groups as well as the local authorities
Page 11. Section 1.3.	The contrast between the outer ring road and the Firhouse road may show a 'more pleasant environment' but in general, there is little connectivity to the adjacent residential areas as shown on the photographs of distributor roads. Thus both display a poor cycling (and	Alternatives should be provided to include principles of connectivity to residential areas.  The development of such connectivity should form part



Page Reference	Comment	Note
	<p>pedestrian) environment due to the lack of connectivity.</p> <p>Many more cyclists would presumably use these cycle lanes if connectivity was improved</p> <p>Cycle lane shown in Templeogue, though beside the traffic, is more connected.</p> <p>As a general point, grade separated cycle lanes are the 'next step up' and to be promoted.</p>	<p>of the overall strategy to ensure good access from the home or workplace to the cycle network.</p>
Page 12.	<p>An alternative to the barriers shown in the photograph should be developed and agreed. This could be in the form of a series of alternatives depending on the situation.</p>	<p>Design guidance must be the starting point and would then inform any detailed design carried out prior to any proposed works.</p>
Page 12	<p>Connectivity across motorways or M50 as shown would be best if grade separated. The current arrangement is hazardous to say the least.</p>	<p>Design Risk Assessment should be carried out on the current arrangement and serious risks mitigated.</p>
Page 16. Section 1.4.	<p>The use of the advisory lane is a great assistance to the cyclist as it creates a designated zone. Its absence would create a much less desirable cycling route.</p>	<p>Where a fully designated separated cycle lane is not possible, the use of the advisory lanes should be provided as a standard alternative.</p>
Page 16. Section 1.4.	<p>The use of the fully segregated cycle lane provides the best cycling experience and may also be used for pedestrian traffic with little modification.</p> <p>Careful planning and construction of the route would minimise any possible negative environmental impacts (ecological in the main).</p>	
Page 29. Reference to N59 at Newport, Co Mayo	<p>The provision of this route can be assumed to have removed all vestiges of established hedgerows and so in contradiction to the EU Green</p>	



Page Reference	Comment	Note
	Infrastructure Policy	
Page 30. Section 2.4.	Environmental assessment must ensure a focus on the landscape and visual impacts in tandem with the assessment of ecological impacts.	
Page 36. Light Rail Tram Lines	The sharing of cycling and tram routes in France is based on the responsibility of the user i.e. it is the responsibility of the user to ensure safe use of the facility. Cycling should be allowed on this basis rather than prevention.	This would require legislative changes along with public awareness scheme. Sharing cycling and tram routes is common in Europe.
Page 40. Bike and Ride.	Re. Bike and Ride. Provision of routes to and facilities at public transport nodes is a key element in encouraging cyclists to use such facilities. Secure cycle parking and ease of access are primary and require detailed design.	Cycle parking should be clearly designated and easy to use and available without charge. Covered cycle facilities are not necessarily required as cyclists generally 'dress for the weather'.  The use of cycle facilities should be regularly monitored and increased if required.
Page 53. Bike and Ride ....LUAS Lines	Cycle facilities at LUAS Stops are regularly monitored and numbers of stands and facilities improved as needed. Due to the open nature of LUAS stops, the use of the platform for cycling needs to be actively discouraged for safety and operational reasons.	
Page 59. Section 4.2.4.	In general rural routes should be designed so as to separate the cycle traffic and create a quiet zone. This would require the placing of the cycle route on the offside to the hedgerow and thus achieve both a quiet rural cycle route and retain/enhance the green corridor (from a green infrastructure viewpoint)	A series of standard details and cross sections should be developed which inform the detailed design process.



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Page Reference	Comment	Note
Page 78. Section 8.2.2	Statement is misleading and incomplete. The impact of providing cycle facilities by removal of the green verge (usually consisting of an established hedgerow, significant tree line or similar has the possible highly significant and negative landscape and visual impact. Alternative such as the creation of a cycle lane on the offside of the road would have the benefit of both separating the cycle traffic from the road traffic and retaining and enhancing the green infrastructure in keeping with current EU Policy. Refer to EU Communications including COM (2013) 249 Final.	Excerpt from 8.2.2. <i>'These facilities are generally on road cycle lanes or have been provided in place of the existing verge area. ....          However an increase in these types of facilities is likely to have significant positive effects on the environment,.....'</i>
Page 79. Section 8.2.3.	We would suggest that an alternative design may be that the green route could also parallel the existing road network and thus avoid removal of existing hedgerows etc as outlined above in relation to the comments on 8.2.2.  Mitigation of any likely impacts on sensitive areas would be dealt with on a case by case basis as part of the detailed assessment and design	Section 8.2.3. Refer paragraph beginning 'Green routes may also have negative impacts on the environment.....'
Page 79. Section 8.2.4.	The development of option 4 in tandem with other options must involve landscape architects to lead (or to at the very least be in the core disciplines) a multidisciplinary team, as the discipline most equipped to both design the detail of the route and to ensure the mitigation of any likely negative impacts along with the enhancement of	



Page Reference	Comment	Note
	the surface and green infrastructural elements.	
Page 83. Table 8.1. Row 6.	<p>The impact of the removal of hedgerows can be expected to have a significant high negative landscape and visual impact. When considered in tandem with the severance of the green corridor and the fracturing of green infrastructure this can be considered a profoundly negative impact.</p> <p>Such removal of the 'green verge', depending on the site and circumstance, is unlikely to be insignificant or minor negative impact.</p>	

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Page Reference	Comment	Note
Page 29. Section 5.2.	Works within the verges and realignment of roads must be done to ensure minimal disturbance of existing green infrastructure (roadway hedgerows, tree lines and etc.	

### 3.0. Recommendations / Suggestions for the Management Plan

We would suggest that the development of the cycle network and its insertion into the landscape is a core activity of landscape architects. Those landscape architects working in the public and private sector in Ireland are regularly involved in the design, management and care of the Irish Landscape including new landscapes, existing landscapes and heritage landscapes – and its constituent elements of geology and ecology, cultural patterns, built elements) and landscape uses.

We recommend that our profession be involved in the further development of these cycle networks as a part of a multidisciplinary team and that this be done in partnership with other public bodies and stakeholders. Though the reports and submissions to date are carefully considered and detailed, they lack input from landscape professionals. The reports are obviously thorough but they should be considered a first pass in relation to the issues and to be focused on engineering and transport planning viewpoint. They would thus benefit from further input and a more focused design in the impending and expected phases of development.



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Further input would include landscape architects and other landscape professionals given the nature of the schemes and their potential negative impacts and of course their possible positive enhancement of both the urban, suburban and rural landscapes.

The design development involving landscape architects should focus on both the overall scheme and route options in tandem with the development of

- material palettes,
- edge details,
- planting schemes including low grass verges, wild flower schemes, tree and verge planting,
- tree and hedgerow management

and other such details as may be required to inform the construction of the schemes.

We trust the above comments and observations are of use to you and would be delighted to meet with you to discuss some of the ideas further.

On behalf of the Landscape Policy Working Group  
Of the Irish Landscape Institute

Yours sincerely

Tim Austen

Vice President  
Convenor Landscape Policy Working Group

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