



**DRAFT**  
**BLESSINGTON**  
**LOCAL AREA PLAN 2025**  
**LOCAL TRANSPORT ASSESSMENT**







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## 1.0 Introduction

Integrating land use planning with transportation is key to addressing climate change, supporting economic prosperity and improving quality of life. Reducing the need to travel, especially long distances, by private car, and increasing the use of sustainable and healthy travel alternatives, can bring multiple benefits to our climate, local environment and communities.

With reference to the **National, Regional and County Objectives** set out in the Wicklow County Development Plan, delivery of more sustainable transportations options will contribute to numerous goals across the three pillars of 'sustainable healthy communities', 'climate action' and 'economic opportunity' by:

- Enhancing the built environment by fostering more sustainable and compact development patterns, reducing car and car parking dominance, and improving safety for pedestrians and cyclists;
- Improving access for all to employment, services and amenities, such as education, healthcare, shops, parks, leisure and social interactions;
- Improved health and wellbeing via increased opportunities for walking and cycling;
- Reduction in the need to use motorised vehicles, reduction in transport related emissions;
- Development and increased usage of alternative vehicle fuel sources, such as electricity, hydrogen and biofuels.

**Chapter 12** of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022 addresses Sustainable Transportation; the Blessington LAP will be subsidiary to the County Development Plan and therefore any County policies or objectives with regard to transportation and movement will apply in the plan area (the relevant objectives are set out at the end of this document). The purpose of this transport assessment is not to repeat these higher level goals or objectives, but to translate them to the local level, utilising local knowledge and data, to ensure that transportation is fully considered in the crafting of land-use objectives of the plan, in particular in the zoning for new development and to identify more localised transportation actions or objectives that will be necessary to support existing and future development in Blessington.

The key aims of this local transport assessment are to:

- Ensure that transport and settlement patterns mutually support each other;
- To assist plan makers to deliver land use policies and objectives to produce a settlement of such form and layout that facilitates and encourages sustainable forms of movement and transport, prioritising active travel modes of walking and cycling and use of public transport;
- Minimise the need for travel and reduce the length of journeys by maximising the proximity of people, business and the services they require;
- Promote greater investment in, and usage of, public transport modes the support of complementary land use policies;
- Protect the capacity, efficiency and safety of national roads and associated junctions;
- Ensure that zoning strategies are consistent with value for money considerations applying to the provision of public infrastructure, including roads and public transport.



### It will do this by:

- Identifying the existing transportation infrastructure, networks and services in the settlement;
- Identifying existing infrastructure and services shortfalls that are inhibiting more sustainable movements, in order to ensure that (a) all transport infrastructure and services delivery agencies have a clear programme of action and (b) development strategies set out in the LAP do not reinforce or exacerbate unsustainable transport patterns;
- Identifying future transportation infrastructure improvements that are either underway and / or committed (i.e. consent and funding in place and timeline for delivery fixed), as well as projects impacting the settlement that are not as yet commenced and / or committed but are identified in higher level plans / programmes are due to be delivered in the short, medium or long term;
- Setting out clear criteria as to how future development will be integrated with the existing or future transportation and movement networks.

This assessment has been informed and guided by the following:

- Project Ireland 2040 (the National Planning Framework and the National Development Plan 2021-2030)
- National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland NIFTI (DoT 2021)
- National Sustainable Mobility Policy (DoT 2022)
- Climate Action Plan (DoECC 2023)
- Section 28 Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DoECLG 2012)
- Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 (NTA 2022)
- Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (NTA 2022)
- Cycle Design Manual (NTA 2023)
- Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midlands Region 2019-2031
- Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) Guidance Notes (TII 2018)
- ABTA 'How To' Guide Pilot Methodology (NTA / TII 2021)

In addition, a significant number of previous reports have examined transport in Blessington. These can provide a background and evidence base on which to proceed with this assessment. Such documents include the following:

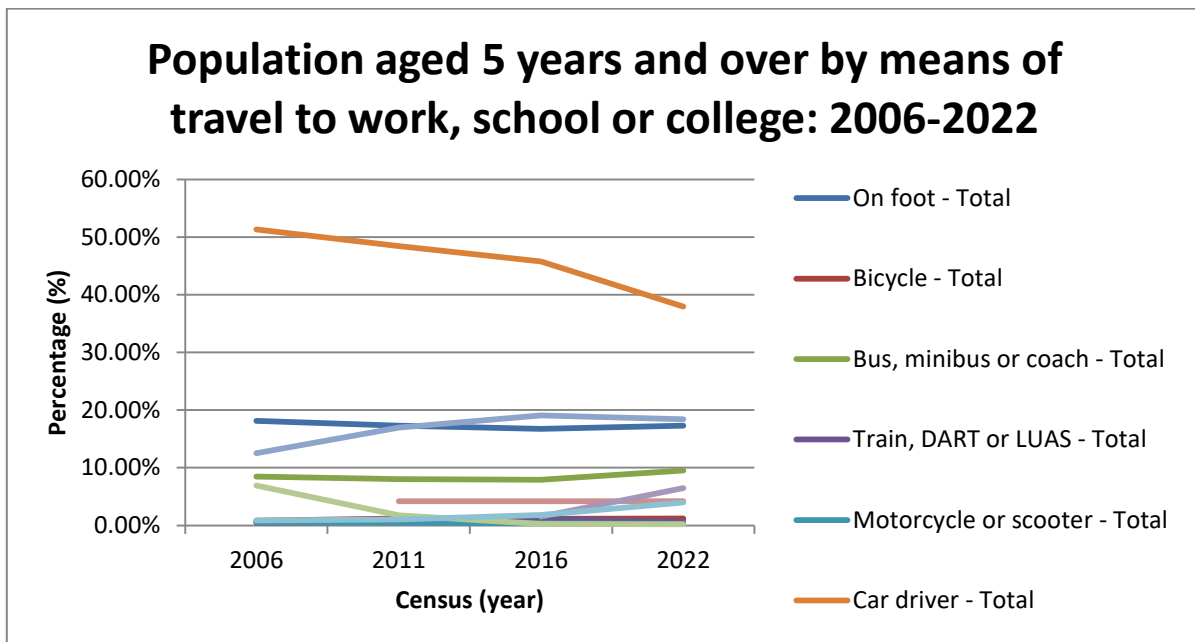
- Greater Dublin Area Transport Study West Wicklow-East Kildare 2021
- Blessington & District Forum: Blessington Street Route Accessibility Audit
- Blessington Town Centre Health Check Phase 1
- Blessington Town Centre Health Check Phase 2
- Blessington Town Centre First Plan

## 1.1 Travel Habits in Blessington

The 2006, 2011, 2016 and 2022 Census Small Area Population Statistics give the following data on the travel habits of the total population of the settlement (as defined by the CSO for those census periods):

Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college (No. of Persons)				
Means of Travel	2006	2011	2016	2022
On foot	523	559	648	735
Bicycle	23	38	45	50
Bus, minibus or coach	244	259	307	404
Train, DART or LUAS	13	23	47	26
Motorcycle or scooter	16	15	13	10
Car driver	1481	1568	1,774	1614
Car passenger	361	549	740	782
Van		136	163	179
Other (incl. lorry)	199	57	9	8
Work mainly at or from home			59	275
Not stated	25	33	70	168
<b>Total</b>	<b>2885</b>	<b>3237</b>	<b>3,875</b>	<b>4251</b>

Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college (Percentage %)				
	2006	2011	2016	2022
On foot	18.13%	17.27%	16.72%	17.29%
Bicycle	0.80%	1.17%	1.16%	1.18%
Bus, minibus or coach	8.46%	8.00%	7.92%	9.50%
Train, DART or LUAS	0.45%	0.71%	1.21%	0.61%
Motorcycle or scooter	0.55%	0.46%	0.34%	0.24%
Car driver	51.33%	48.44%	45.78%	37.97%
Car passenger	12.51%	16.96%	19.10%	18.40%
Van		4.20%	4.21%	4.21%
Other (incl. lorry)	6.90%	1.76%	0.23%	0.19%
Work mainly at or from home			1.52%	6.47%
Not stated	0.87%	1.02%	1.81%	3.95%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>100.00%</b>



**Figure 1: Population aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school, or college (Percentage) 2006-2-22.**  
**Source: CSO.**

The data revealed the following:

- There has been a clear decrease in the modal share of those driving their own private cars to work school or college, with the sharpest decrease seen between the 2016 and 2022 Censuses. This decrease can be explained by the increase in travelling as car passengers (e.g. carpooling/parents dropping off children to school) and the sharp rise in those working mainly at or from home since the 2016 Census. The rise in those travelling as passengers in private cars is generally positive, although this may not necessarily result in a significant reduction of traffic volumes if a large proportion of those respondents are children who would otherwise be walking or cycling to school, rather than commuters carpooling.
- Other modes remain largely stable, with the steep decline in the 'Other' category likely reflecting the introduction of a separate category for 'Van' rather than any significant modal shift.
- Travel on foot does remain a significant proportion of journeys at 17.29%, perhaps reflecting the generally walkable physical extent of the settlement.
- In contrast, cycling represents only 1.18% of those travelling, with the slight increase between 2006 and 2011 perhaps representing the introduction of cycling infrastructure during the construction of the existing segments of the BIRR.

In 2022, the breakdown of modes of travel in terms of active travel, public transport, and private vehicle can be derived from the above tables:

Modal Split in Blessington 2022*		
Active Travel	Public Transport	Private Vehicle
20.66%	11.32%	60.03%

\*omits respondents who answered 'Other', 'Not Stated', or 'Work mainly at or from home'



### **Travel to Childcare:**

The 2022 Census was the first to provide a breakdown of the travel patterns of the population aged 0-4 years attending childcare. Their means of travel in 2022 was as follows:

<b>Means of Travel of those aged 0 to 4 attending Childcare</b>		
<b><u>Means of Travel</u></b>	<b><u>Percentage (%)</u></b>	<b><u>No. (Persons)</u></b>
Active (walking and cycling)	22	c. 35
Public Transport (bus or train)	0.6	c. 1
Motor cycle or scooter	0	c. 0
Car (driver or passenger)	71.4	c. 114
Other means including lorry and van	0	c. 0
Not stated	6	c. 10
All Means of Travel	<b>100</b>	<b>159</b>

Source: CSO Census 2022 Dataset F7145 and 2022 SAPS data.

### **Travel to School (Primary):**

The population attending school from ages 5 to 12 has the following travel habits:

<b>Means of Travel of those in School aged 5 to 12 years</b>						
<b><u>Means of Travel</u></b>	<b>2011*</b>		<b>2016**</b>		<b>2022***</b>	
	<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>	<b><u>No.</u></b>	<b><u>%</u></b>
On foot	201	31.16%	271	29.42%	365	33.89%
Bicycle	20	3.10%	24	2.61%		
Bus, minibus or coach	23	3.57%	44	4.78%	78	7.24%
Train, DART or LUAS	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Motorcycle or scooter	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Motor car: Driver	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	581	53.95%
Motor car: Passenger	396	61.40%	555	60.26%		
Van	1	0.16%	0	0.00%	2	0.19%
Other, incl. lorry	1	0.16%	0	0.00%		
Work mainly at or from home	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Not stated	3	0.47%	27	2.93%	52	4.83%
<b>All means of travel</b>	<b>645</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>921</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>1077</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

\* CSO Census 2011 Dataset CD010.

\*\* CSO Census 2016 Dataset E6013.

\*\*\*CSO Census 2022 Dataset F7145 and 2022 SAPS data.

### Travel to School (Secondary):

The population attending school from ages 13 to 18 has the following travel habits (data sources as above):

<b>Means of Travel of those in School aged 13 to 18 years</b>						
<b>Means of Travel</b>	<b>2011</b>		<b>2016</b>		<b>2022</b>	
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
On foot	161	46.26%	202	51.14%	291	48.26%
Bicycle	3	0.86%	3	0.76%		
Bus, minibus or coach	116	33.33%	93	23.54%	167	27.69%
Train, DART or LUAS	1	0.29%	2	0.51%		
Motorcycle or scooter		0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Motor car: Driver	5	1.44%	4	1.01%	128	21.23%
Motor car: Passenger	59	16.95%	88	22.28%		
Van	1	0.29%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Other, incl. lorry	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Work mainly at or from home	0	0.00%	1	0.25%		
Not stated	2	0.57%	2	0.51%	17	2.82%
<b>All means of travel</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>395</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>603</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

### Travel to School or College (Tertiary):

The population aged over 19 and attending school or college has the following travel habits (data sources as above):

<b>Means of Travel of those aged 19 years or over in School or College</b>						
<b>Means of Travel</b>	<b>2011</b>		<b>2016</b>		<b>2022</b>	
	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
On foot	12	9.16%	16	9.04%	9	6.47%
Bicycle	0	0.00%	3	1.69%		
Bus, minibus or coach	52	39.69%	75	42.37%	72	51.80%
Train, DART or LUAS	6	4.58%	6	3.39%		
Motorcycle or scooter	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%
Motor car: Driver	46	35.11%	58	32.77%	47	33.81%
Motor car: Passenger	13	9.92%	17	9.60%		
Van	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	1	0.72%
Other, incl. lorry	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Work mainly at or from home	0	0.00%	0	0.00%		
Not stated	2	1.53%	2	1.13%	9	6.47%
<b>All means of travel</b>	<b>131</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

## Travel to Work:

The population aged 15 years or older at work have the following means of travel (data sources as above):

Means of Travel of those aged 15 and over at Work						
Means of Travel	2011		2016		2022	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
On foot	182	8.84%	159	6.61%	208	8.21%
Bicycle	15	0.73%	17	0.71%		
Bus, minibus or coach	65	3.16%	98	4.07%	139	5.48%
Train, DART or LUAS	13	0.63%	38	1.58%		
Motorcycle or scooter	14	0.68%	13	0.54%	10	0.39%
Motor car: Driver	1494	72.56%	1728	71.82%	1861	73.41%
Motor car: Passenger	75	3.64%	83	3.45%		
Van	133	6.46%	163	6.77%	208	8.21%
Other, incl. lorry	12	0.58%	9	0.37%		
Work mainly at or from home	36	1.75%	59	2.45%		
Not stated	20	0.97%	39	1.62%	104	4.10%
<b>All means of travel</b>	<b>2059</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2406</b>	<b>100.00%</b>	<b>2535</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Note that the 2022 census data does not perfectly match the categories for the previous two Censuses. In the relevant 2022 Dataset, 'on foot' and 'bicycle' were grouped together, as were all forms of public transport. The categories 'other', 'van', and 'working from home' were also amalgamated in the 2022 data.

The data for means of travel by group reveals the following:

- Active travel among primary school children declined slightly between 2011 and 2016, but has recovered to approximately the 2011 level since. In contrast, active travel for secondary school children has fallen by almost 4% of the total student body since 2016. Overall, active travel remains strong among the student population, with almost half of secondary students and one third of primary school students walking or cycling to school.
- Private vehicles remain the most popular means of travel for primary school children; however the percentage of students that travel by car has fallen significantly from 61.4% to 53.95% since 2011, alongside a slight increase in the use of public transport from 3.57% to 7.24%
- Private vehicular transport among secondary school students is comparatively much lower than among primary school children, at 21.23% in 2022. However, that percentage represents an increase of 2.84% of the total number of secondary students since 2011.
- Those attending school or college and aged 19 years or over are found to use public transport more than any other mode of transport, with just over half of those respondents doing so in 2022. This follows a trend of a gradual increase in the proportion using public transport since 2011, where only 44.27% did so.
- Private vehicular travel remains the next most popular option for those attending college, but has declined by 11.22% of the total since 2011 to 33.81%.
- Among those at work aged 15 years or older, private vehicles remain the dominant means of travel, at 73.41% in 2022. This does represent a decrease of 2.79% of the working population since 2011. Rather than a significant modal shift to other forms of transport, this decrease is likely representative of the significant increase of those working from home since 2016, from 2.45% to 8.21%.
- After those at the work, the group with the highest levels of private vehicular travel were those attending childcare and aged between 0 and 4 years. This could represent the predominant use of private vehicles by their parents/guardians, who may make drop-offs to childcare facilities as part of their commute. 22% of those attending childcare otherwise travelled by active travel modes.



- In comparison to the mode share of the overall population, it is clear that those commuting to work present the greater challenge in moving toward sustainable transport modes.

## **2.0 Transport Infrastructure & Networks**

### **2.1 Context**

The historic footprint of the settlement and road network of Blessington can be seen in the maps below. Prior to the establishment of the modern town of Blessington, Burgage More (a short distance to the south and within the local area plan area) was a notable centre of settlement in the area. This was indicated on the Down Survey of 1658 as a settlement on the banks of the Liffey between Ballymore Eustace and Threecastles.

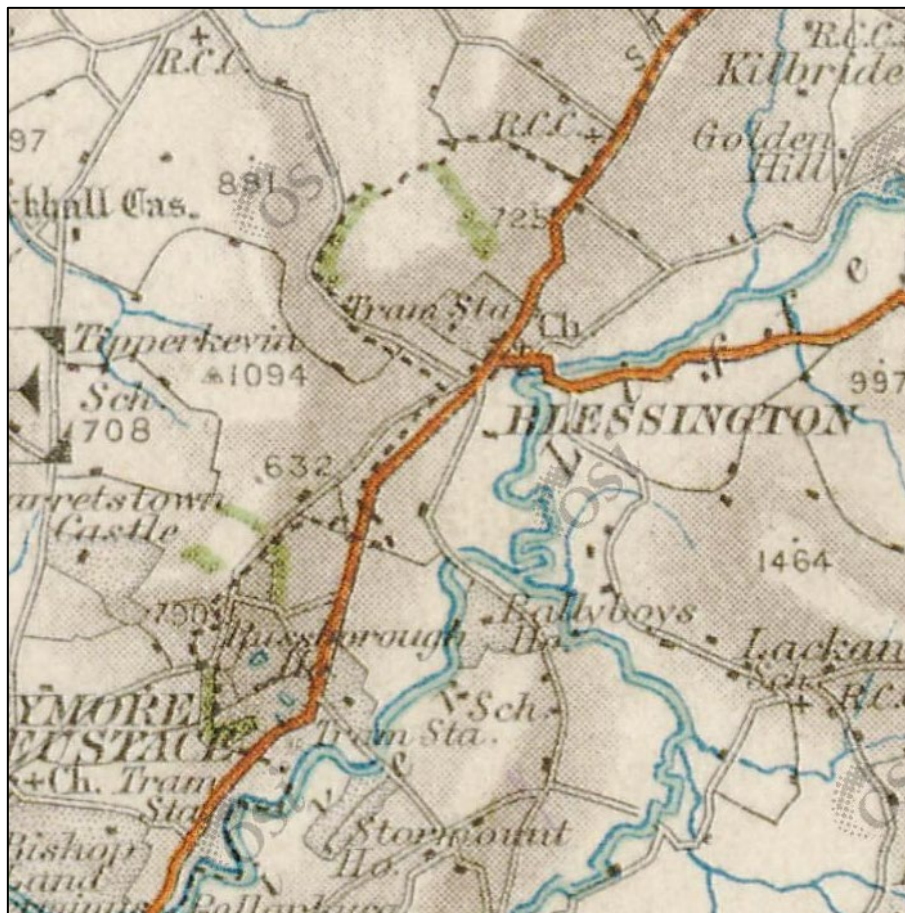
Blessington was developed as an estate town by Archbishop Michael Boyle from 1667 onwards, a short distance from the now-deserted medieval settlement at Burgage More. Blessington developed around the junction between the Dublin-Baltinglass road (now the N81) and the Naas and Kilbride Roads, the latter of which would eventually lead to the road through the Sally Gap (now the R759).

Historic 6-inch mapping of Blessington and its wider environs indicates the importance of the Kilbride road leading towards the Sally Gap, indicated as being the same status as the Dublin-Baltinglass road, perhaps reflecting the increased connectivity through the mountains provided by the construction of the Military Road in the preceding decades. A road to Naas is shown laid out towards Eadestown House via Athgarrett House. Russborough House is shown a short distance to the south of the town. By this time, Blessington provided a significant crossroads facilitating interchange between north-south and east-west travellers. Historic 6-inch mapping of the settlement itself shows its development as a series of narrow, long plots laid out in a linear fashion along both sides of the N81 around the junction with the Kilbride Road, with Blessington Demesne bordering the western side of the Main Street. At this point in time both the Troopersfield and Old Ballymore/Kilmalum roads have been laid out, connecting to Ballymore Eustace and Burgage More/Baltyboys respectively. The Naas Road at this point in time was further south than its current route and notably did not connect directly to the N81. Rather, the road terminated as a T-junction with the Old Ballymore Road, which then continued before merging into Blessington Main Street at a shallow angle, along what is now Dempsey's Lane.

Although the first edition 6 inch map of the wider environs shows the Kilbride Road continuing to Red Lane and on to Three Castles, the map of the settlement itself shows the Kilbride Road leading to Manor Kilbride over the bridge via Knockieran only, and not yet extending towards Red Lane.

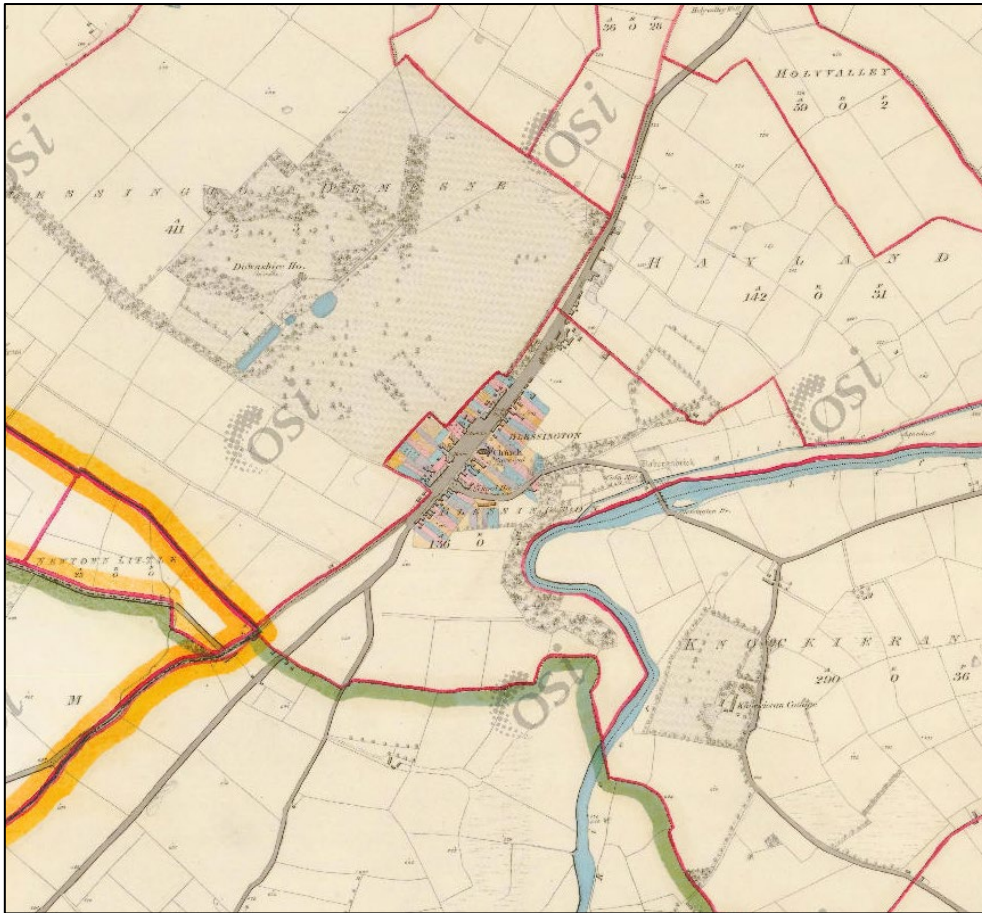


**Figure 2:** Down Survey Map of current location of Blessington & Wider Environs, c. 1658. Source: TCD Down Survey of Ireland Project. Blessington is not shown. 'Burdidge' [Burgage More] is indicated as a settlement along the banks of the Liffey between Threecastles and Ballymore Eustace.





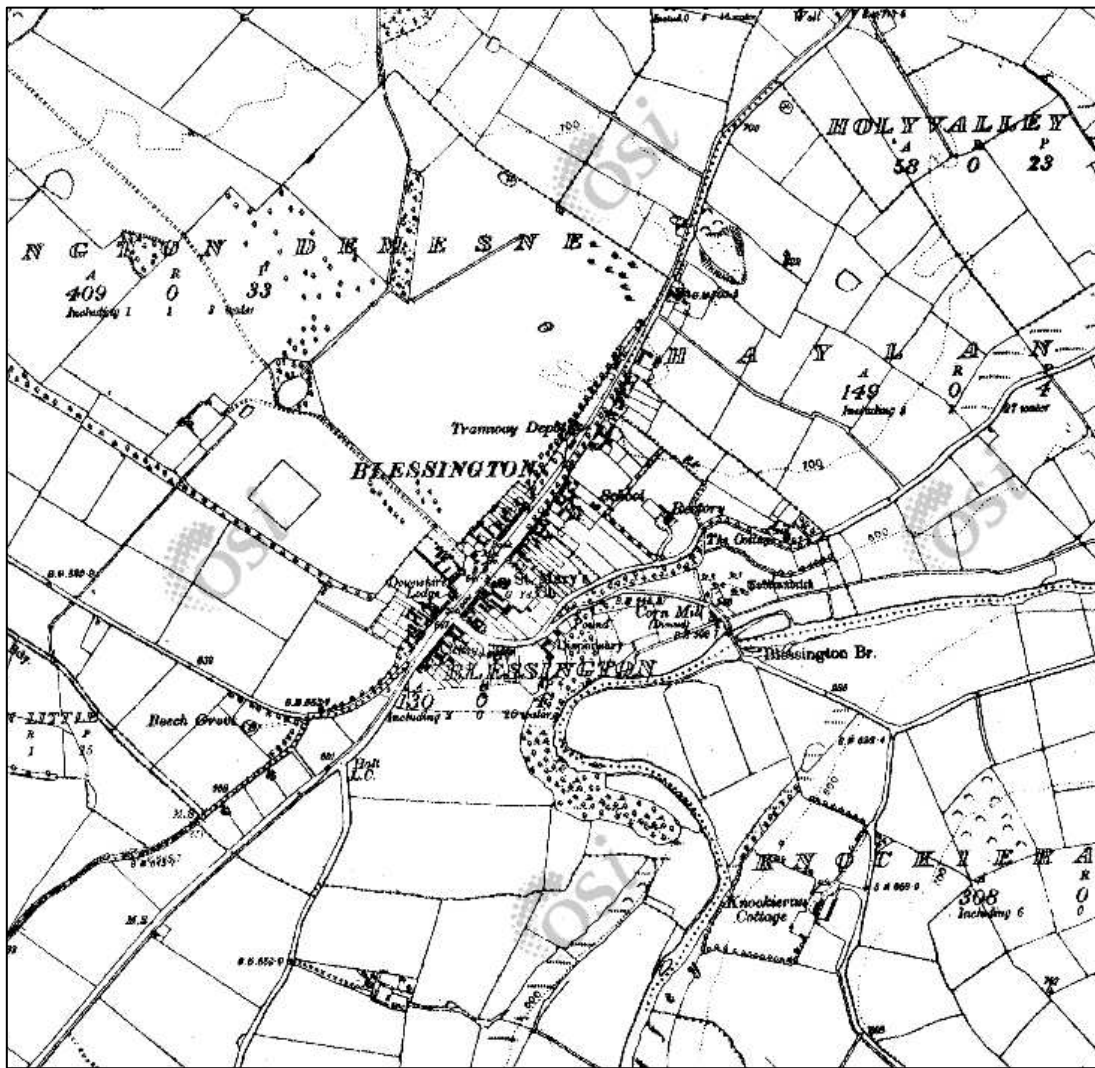
**Figure 3:** Historic 6-inch Map First Edition: Blessington & Wider Environs. Source: geohive.ie



**Figure 4:** Historic 6-inch Map First Edition: Settlement of Blessington. Source: geohive.ie

By the time of the last edition of Ordnance Survey 6-inch mapping, the Naas Road has been laid out in approximately its current configuration. The new alignment follows a more northerly route closer to Glen Ding and Blessington Demesne. Onward travel to Naas now bypasses Athgarret House and continues via Eadestown church, rather than the previous route directly to Eadestown House. However, the Naas Road still follows Old Ballymore Road/Dempsey's Lane onto Blessington Main Street, rather than directly meeting the N81 further south. The old alignment of the Naas Road is still visible on the map at this time and Kilbride Road now extends to meet Red Lane and onwards to Threecastles, providing an alternative route to Manor Kilbride on the western banks of the Liffey.

Notably, the last edition 6-inch historic mapping shows the location of a 'Tramway Depot'. This was the original terminus for the Dublin & Blessington Steam Tramway, which ran between Terenure and Blessington from 1888. This was later extended to Poulaphouca as the Blessington & Poulaphouca Steam Tramway. The Tramway ceased operations in December 1932.



**Figure 5:** Historic 6-inch Map Last Edition: Settlement of Blessington. Source: geohive.ie

Aerial Photography from 1995 shows significant changes in Blessington over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. By far the most significant change was the creation of the Poulaphuca Reservoir by the ESB during the 1930s and 1940s. Now a designated Special Protection Area, the Reservoir radically changed the landscape around Blessington, transforming the settlement from a town on the banks of the Liffey to a lakeside settlement. While many routes out from Blessington already comprised of bridges over the Liffey, some routes were either substantially changed or severed. The direct route from Troopersfield/Burgage More towards Baltyboys was severed, requiring a re-routing via the N81 to reach what is now referred to as Baltyboys Bridge. Further south, a direct route between Russborough and Tulfarris was severed. The reservoir will likely remain a barrier to additional eastward movements for the foreseeable future.



**Figure 6:** 1995 Aerial Photography: Settlement of Blessington. Source: geohive.ie

The expansion of quarrying activity in the area is also evident over the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There was significant spread of quarrying in an arc across the northern boundary of the town, including at Doran's Pit, Dillonsdown, and Newpaddocks. These quarrying areas present a barrier to north-south movements that do not follow either the N81 or Kilbride Road. For example, active travel movements from Blessington Main Street to the existing football club at Crosschapel is not currently possible without travelling north along the N81 and doubling back past Crosschapel church.

The road structure in the town remains largely unchanged over this period, other than the development of access routes between the N81 and Troopersfield/Burgage More as part of the development of industrial areas to the south east of the town centre. Suburban-style housing development has occurred along the Naas Road and south of Kilbride Road, which are largely dendritic in character with many cul-de-sacs and poor pedestrian permeability. The present-day alignment of the Naas Road is evident in this period, with the road now terminating directly onto the N81 just south of Blessington town centre and bypassing Dempsey's Lane. Similarly, the N81 has been straightened and now bypasses Holyvalley and the site of Blessington Mart.





**Figure 7:** Aerial Imagery (July 2022): Settlement of Blessington. Source: Google Earth

Aerial imagery from July 2022 shows the current road layout of the settlement. A number of new roads have been constructed since the 1995 Aerial Photography. In the mid-1990s, further roads were constructed by Wicklow County Council and others to facilitate the expansion of industrial areas in the town; a roundabout was constructed on the N81 to the south of the town centre with a perpendicular road to Burgage More along to the north of of Burgage Graveyard. Similarly, Oak Drive was constructed north of the town centre extending west, facilitating the development of Blessington Business Park and adjoining residential areas.

The biggest change in this period was the development of the former Blessington/Downshire Demesne in the 2000s. Alongside significant residential development, this led to the development of the existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road, connecting the Naas Road to the town centre and Blessington Business Park/Oak Drive from the west. The northern and southern sections of the BIRR have yet to be completed, though a road reserve is evident through Blessington Manor to the south. Through-traffic generally continues to utilise the existing N81 along Blessington Main Street.

As part of the development of Blessington Demesne, a further road was constructed to facilitate the development of Blessington GAA grounds. An additional road south from the GAA grounds to the Naas Road is partly laid out and remains in an unfinished condition.

A range of road and active travel projects are currently being progressed by a variety of stakeholders, including Wicklow County Council, TII, and the NTA. These are as follows:

### **Blessington eGreenway:**

This project will deliver a predominately off-road shared use path for pedestrians and cyclists. It will cover approximately 33 km and involve the provision and upgrading of a greenway mostly through forest and woodlands adjacent to the shoreline of the Poulaphouca Reservoir and will connect Blessington with other areas including Russborough House, Vallemount, Ballyknockan, and Lacken. This project is currently progressing through the statutory planning permission process.

### **N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross Upgrade:**

The N81 Hollywood Cross to Tallaght Road Improvement Scheme entails a major improvement to the N81, from Knockroe Bend, which is south of Hollywood Cross, to the existing Tallaght By-Pass dual carriageway. The scheme involves an upgrade of approximately 29km of the N81 National Secondary Road. Improving road safety and journey times are a priority for this scheme. The preferred route corridor for this scheme was published in May 2016.

### **Blessington Inner Relief Road:**

This project will deliver a purpose built route connecting existing sections of the Inner Relief Road already completed between the Naas Road and the Blessington Business Park junction (opposite Maxol filling station) and between the N81 south of the town and the Kilmalum Road. There are two primary sections of the Inner Relief Road yet to be completed which are subject to the emerging preferred route, one section is located to the south of Blessington and the other to the north of the town.

Southern Section - The section of road to be constructed lies between the roundabout on the R410 Naas Road and Roundabout on the L8364 Kilmalum Road, with WCC as the lead authority. This section has yet to progress through the statutory planning permission process.

Northern Section - The proposed route of this section of road heads northwards from the existing roundabout on the Blessington Inner Relief Road just to the west of Woodleigh Estate and traverses the quarry to emerge onto the N81 in the vicinity of the existing quarry entrance. The 'gateway' to the town will thus be a short distance to the north of the new roundabout on the N81. This section has received planning permission.

New pedestrian and cycling infrastructure is proposed along the route to encourage alternative more sustainable transport modes.

### **Blessington Main Street N81 Road Safety Improvement Scheme:**

This project will deliver safe cycling infrastructure and improved pedestrian facilities along Blessington Main Street. It will also reconfigure parking and junctions along the street. This project is at concept and options stage.

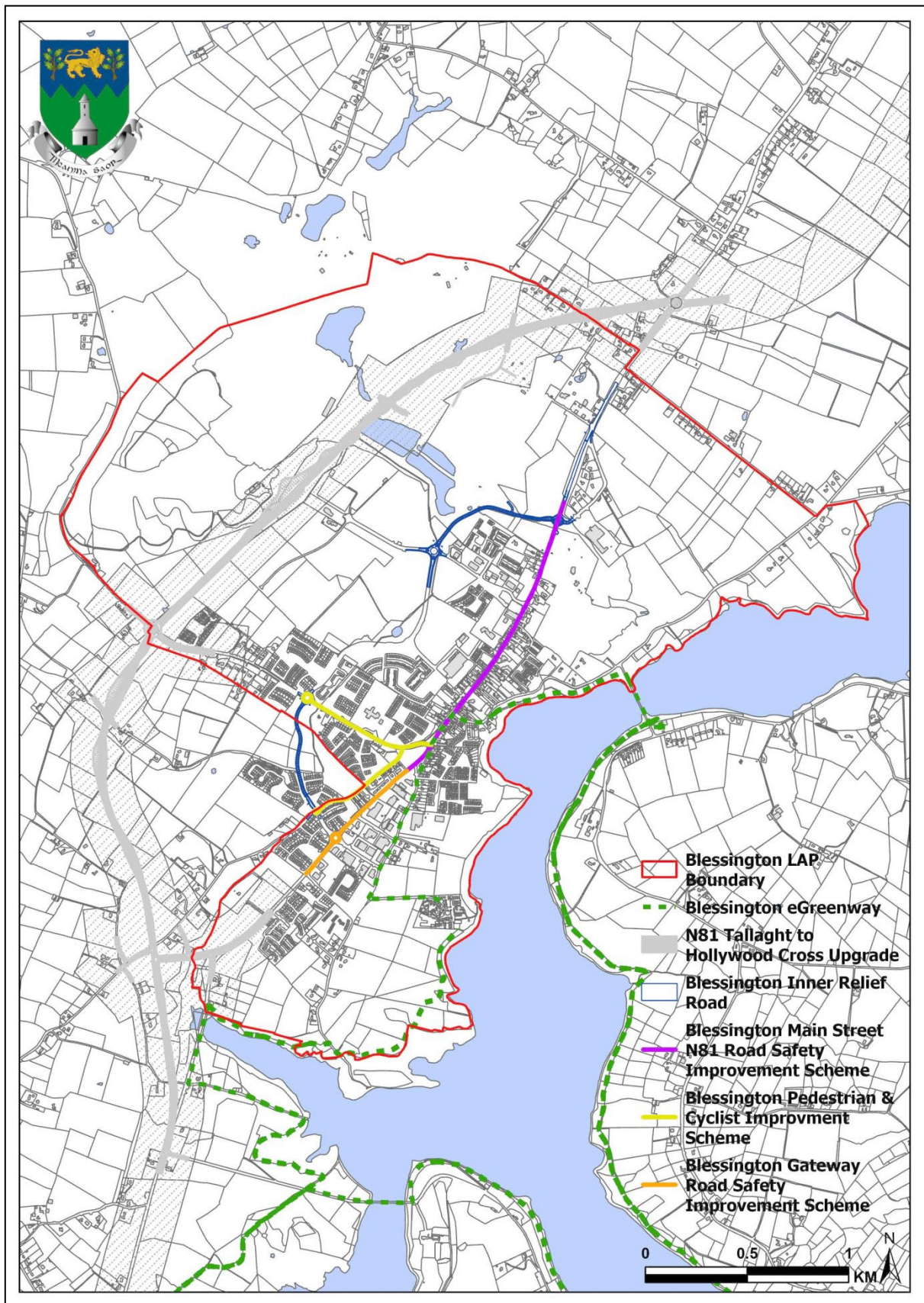
### **Blessington Pedestrian & Cyclist Improvement Scheme:**

This rapid-build project will deliver improved pedestrian and cycle facilities on a section of the R410 Naas Road and Kilmalum Road in order to create an improved street environment for vulnerable road users over c. 1.3km. This project is at concept and options stage.

### **Blessington Gateway Road Safety Improvement Scheme:**

This project will deliver alterations to the existing gateway including junctions, layouts, road narrowing, and new pedestrian facilities along c. 750m of the N81 south of Blessington Town Centre. This project is at concept and options stage.





**Figure 8:** Current road and active travel projects within the Blessington area. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

## **2.2 Active Modes of Travel**

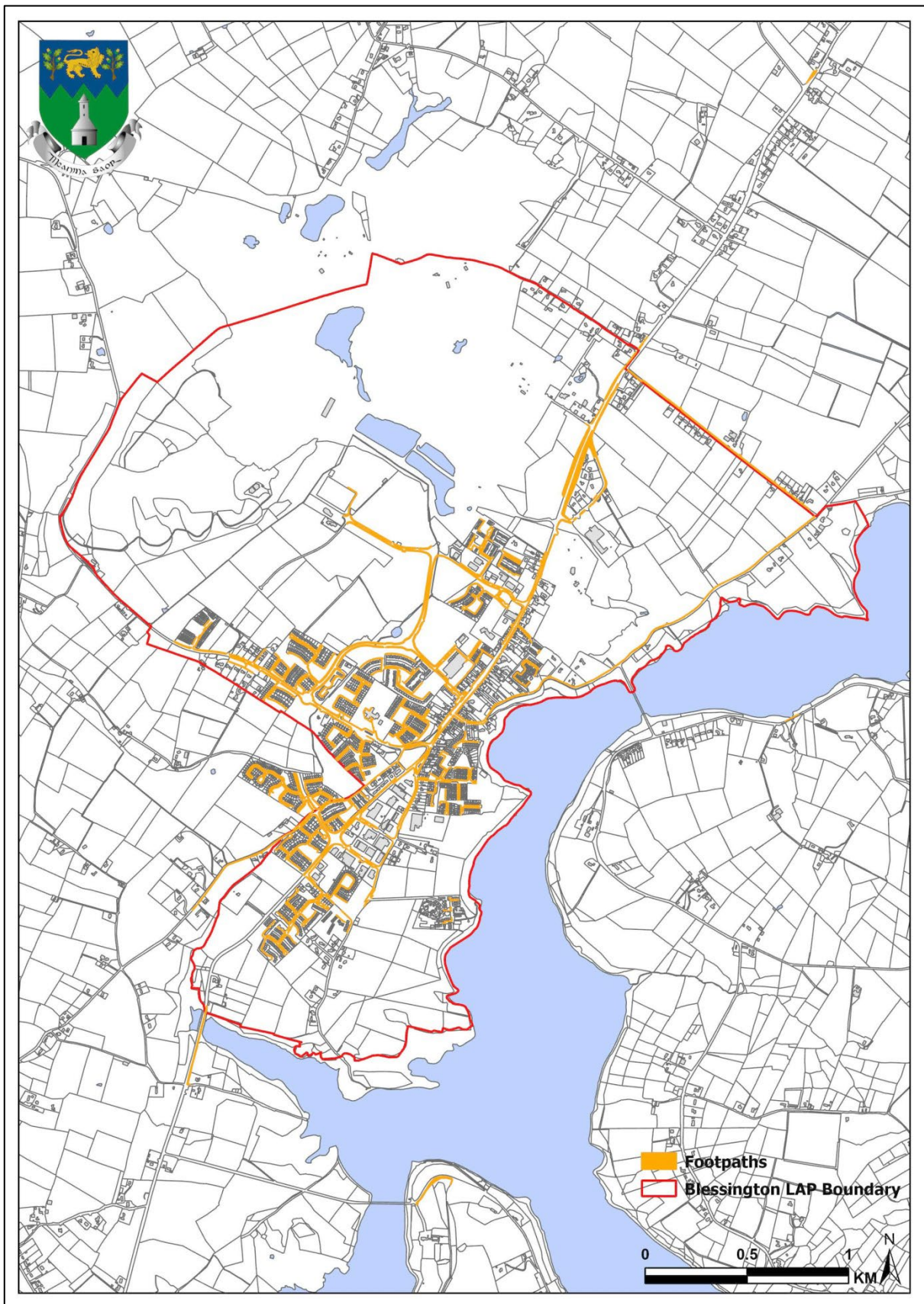
The provision of walking and cycling routes within towns and between towns forms an essential part of a connected transport system. Pedestrian and cycle routes should provide direct linkages to public transport, schools, local amenities and services. While it is acknowledged that these forms of movement may make up only a small part of a longer journey, they are the most environmentally and cost efficient form of transport for local journeys.

There are a number of factors that will influence whether one will walk or cycle to a destination (rather than taking the car), including distance, weather, road safety, topography, coherence and directness of the route, bicycle parking facilities and the availability of car parking at the destination. A land-use plan such as a County Development Plan or Local Area Plan cannot influence all of these factors, but through the implementation of various objectives and standards, it is intended that a land-use pattern will be developed and infrastructure / facilities will be significantly improved, that will support and promote these forms of transport.

### **2.2.1 Existing Active Travel Infrastructure - Pedestrians:**

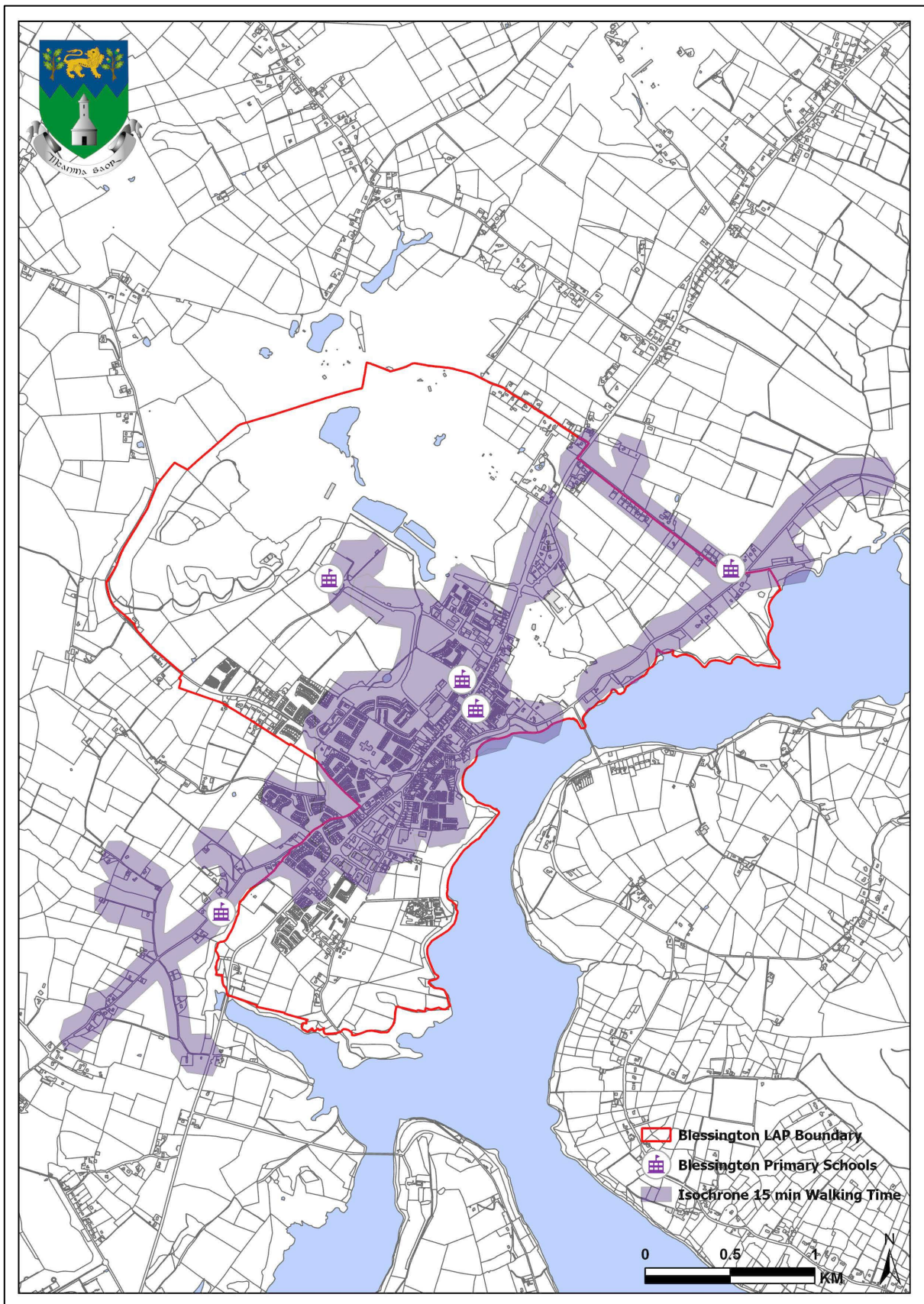
Detailed survey data of pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in Blessington (e.g. on widths, gradients, conditions, footfall/usage) is not available for the settlement. However, the Prime 2 data from Tailte Éireann and the description of individual road segments in Section 2.4.2 below does allow for identification of the footpath network through the settlement, as shown on the map(s) to follow. Footpaths are generally present throughout the settlement, though coverage is not always consistent on both sides of a road. An analysis of walkability can be carried in relation to the 15minute walking time of existing (or permitted) primary and secondary schools. This may also reveal areas in which permeability is lacking despite the geographic proximity of schools.





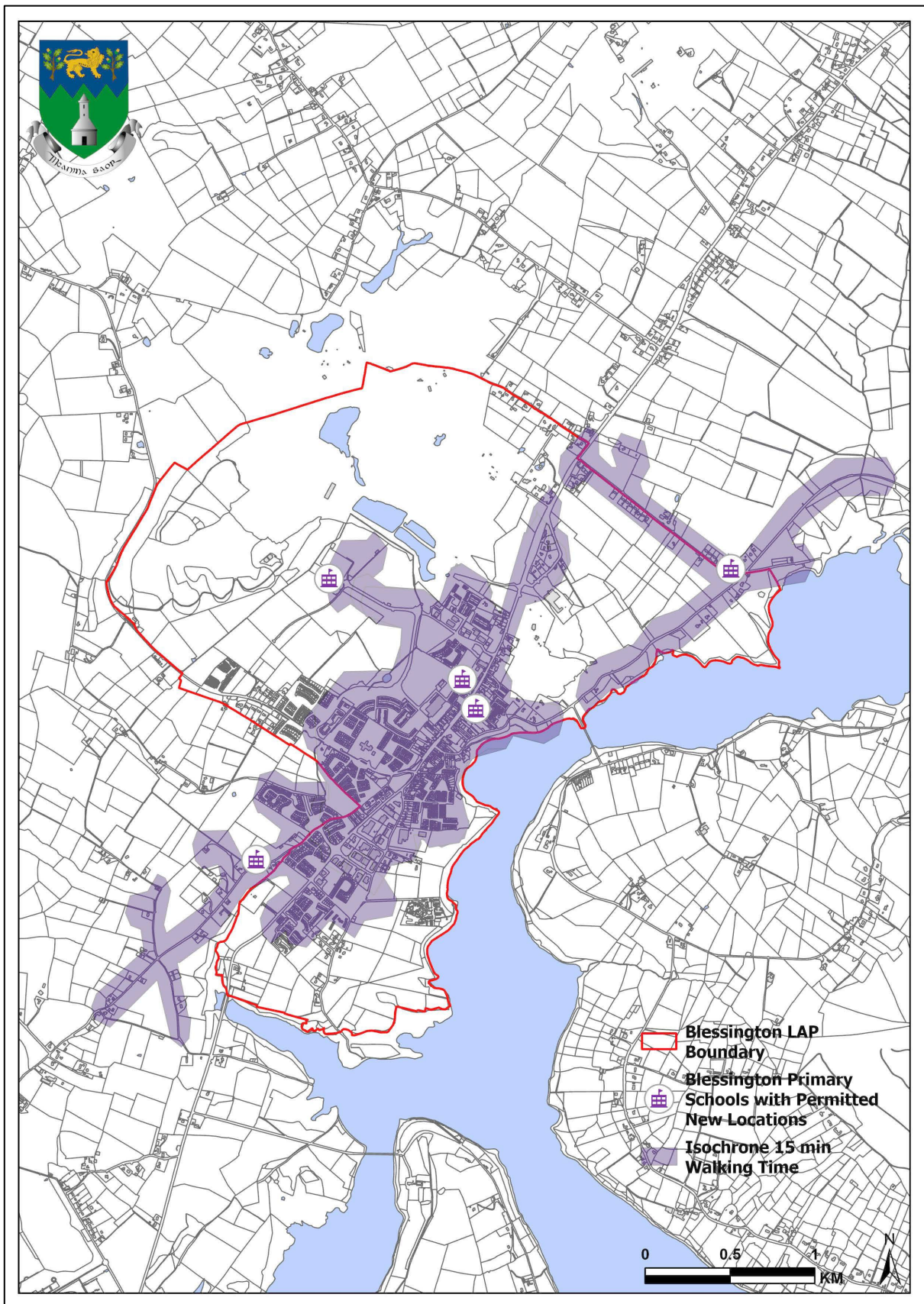
**Figure 9:** Blessington Footpath Network. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





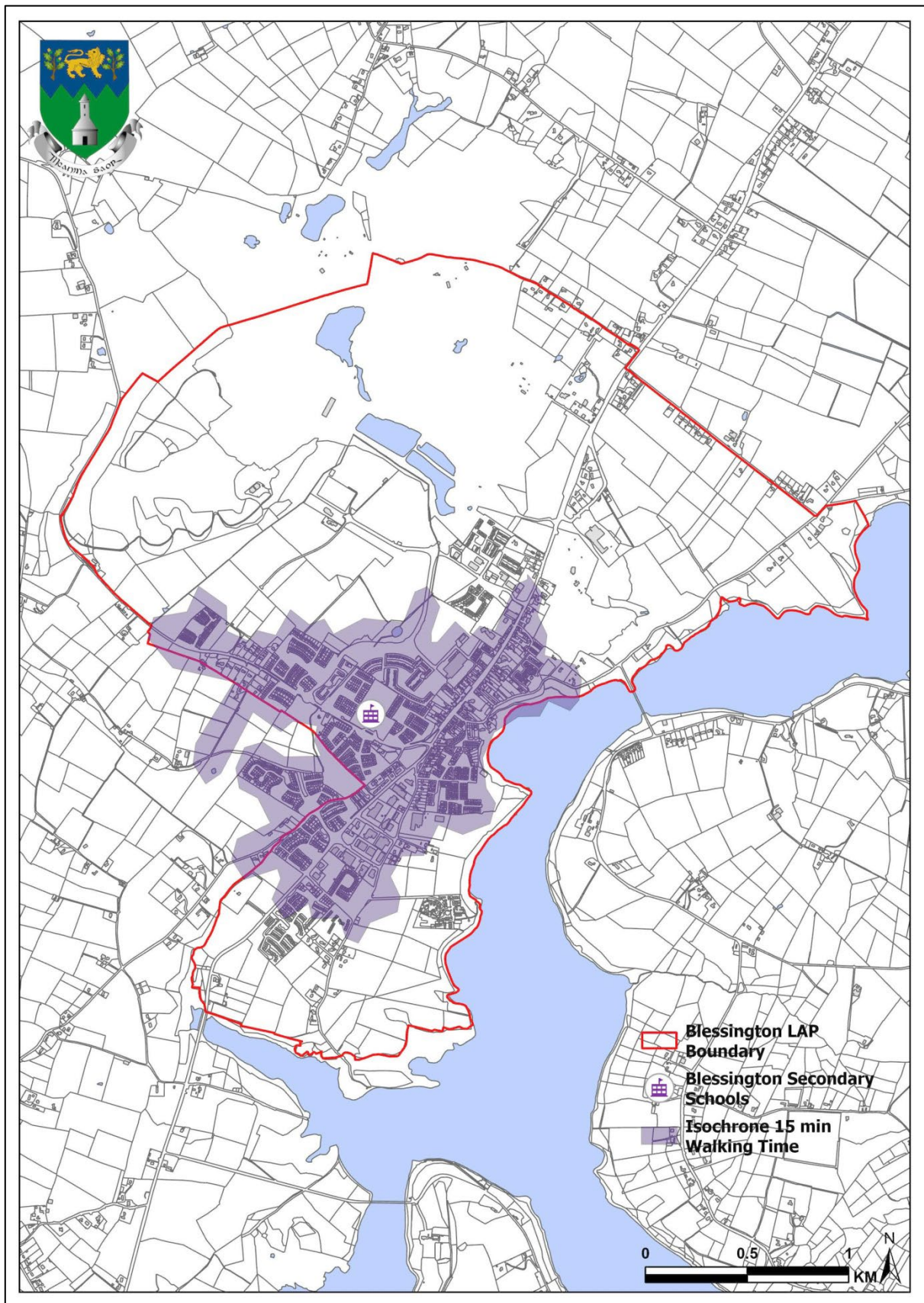
**Figure 10:** Blessington Primary Schools 15-minute walking time isochrone. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





**Figure 11:** Blessington Primary Schools 15-minute walking time isochrone (with permitted permanent location of Gaelscoil). Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





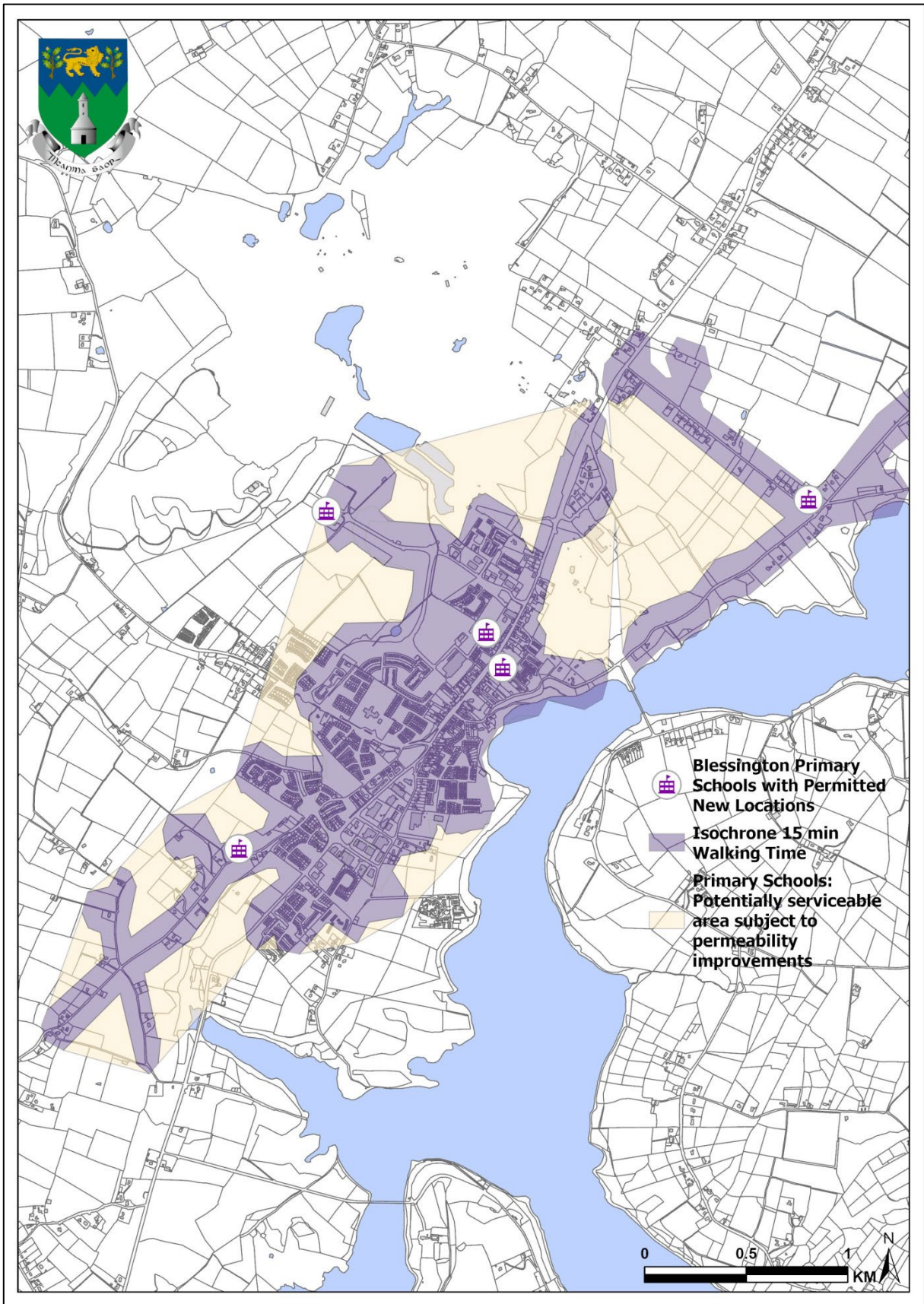
**Figure 12:** Blessington Post-Primary Schools 15-minute walking time isochrone. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

Generally, the existing settlement is well served by primary schools within a 15 minute walking distance. However, there are areas of existing housing that is not well served. This includes residential areas along Naas Road, e.g. Glen Ding estate, and also includes residential areas to the south east of the town centre in Burgage More, e.g. Burgage Manor. The development of the permitted permanent location of the Gaelscoil national school would improve the coverage in Burgage More, however there are visible gaps in permeability across the Deerpark stream in the vicinity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant and to the Naas Road to the north. Some residential areas along Naas Road would remain outside of walking distance in this scenario. Conversely, Blessington Educate Together national school is in a peripheral position such that minimal residential areas are within walking distance. In relation to secondary schools, the existing centre of the settlement is within walking distance of Blessington Community College. However, residential areas to the north and south of the town are outside this distance, e.g. Burgage Manor in the south and Oak Drive to the north.

In many cases, gaps in permeability could be filled through development of infill sites, i.e. the development of a footpath network where currently there is a greenfield infill site. Green corridors within the plan area (e.g. lands zoned OS2 'Natural Areas') may also present opportunities for permeability improvements throughout the settlement in the development of active travel infrastructure along their boundaries, subject to the protection of the ecological connectivity of the green corridors themselves. Potential permeability improvements are in some cases underway, e.g. walkways are under construction through the new town park. By 'filling the gaps' in the 15 minute isochrones (see maps below) and assuming adequate permeability has been achieved, the potential locations for any additional schools may be identified.

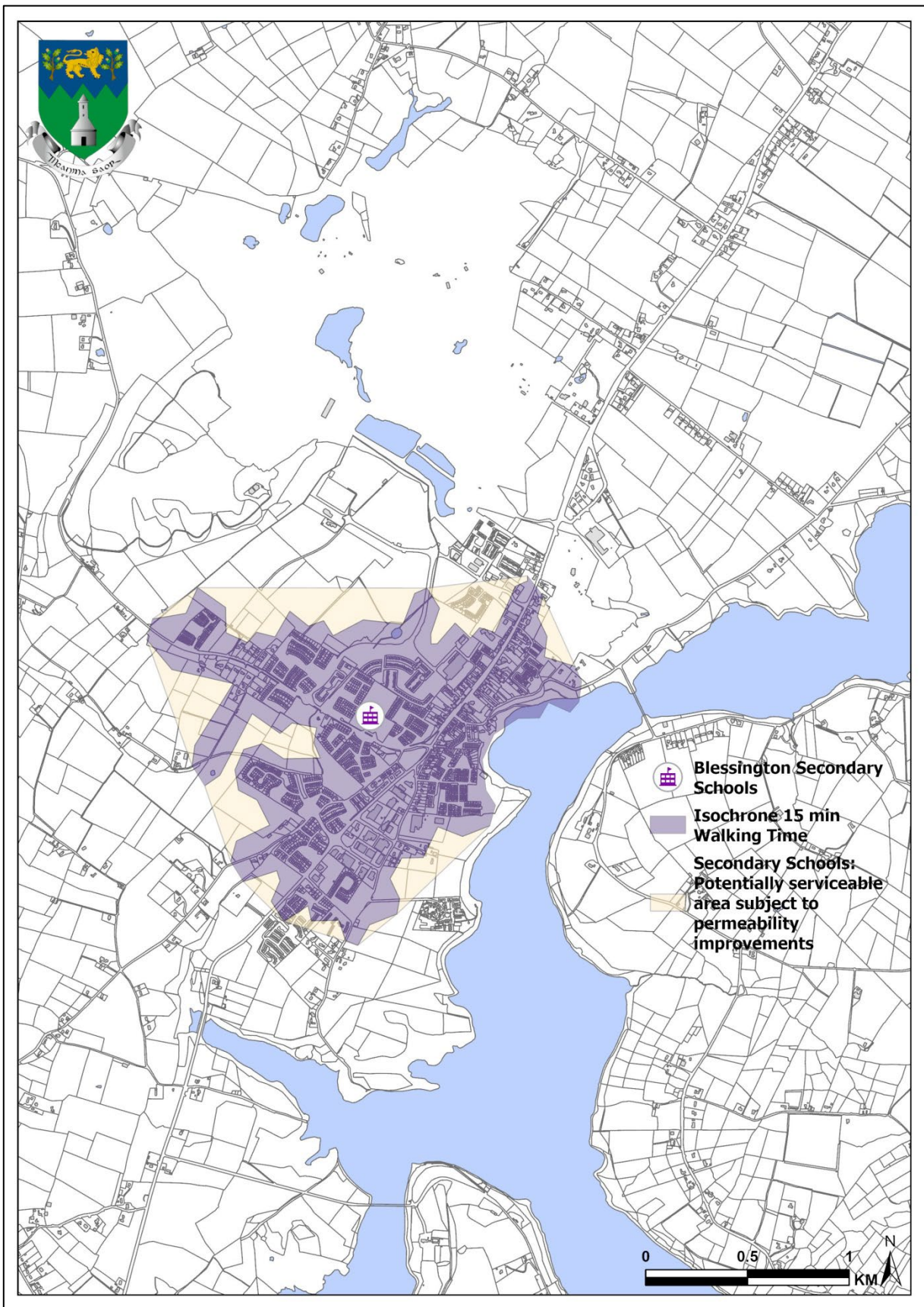
**On the basis of this analysis, should a need for future primary schools arise, optimal locations which would maximise the number of residents within 15 minutes' walk time of a school would be to the west of the settlement, in the vicinity of Glen Ding estate. Similarly, should a need for future post-primary schools arise, optimal locations which would maximise the number of residents within 15 minutes' walk time of a school would be to the north-west of the settlement, in the vicinity of the GAA grounds/Blessington No.1 school.**





**Figure 13:** Blessington Primary Schools 15-minute walking time isochrone (with permitted permanent location of Gaelscoil). Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





**Figure 14:** Blessington Post-Primary Schools 15-minute walking time isochrone. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

## 2.2.2 Proposed/Planned Active Travel Infrastructure - Pedestrian:

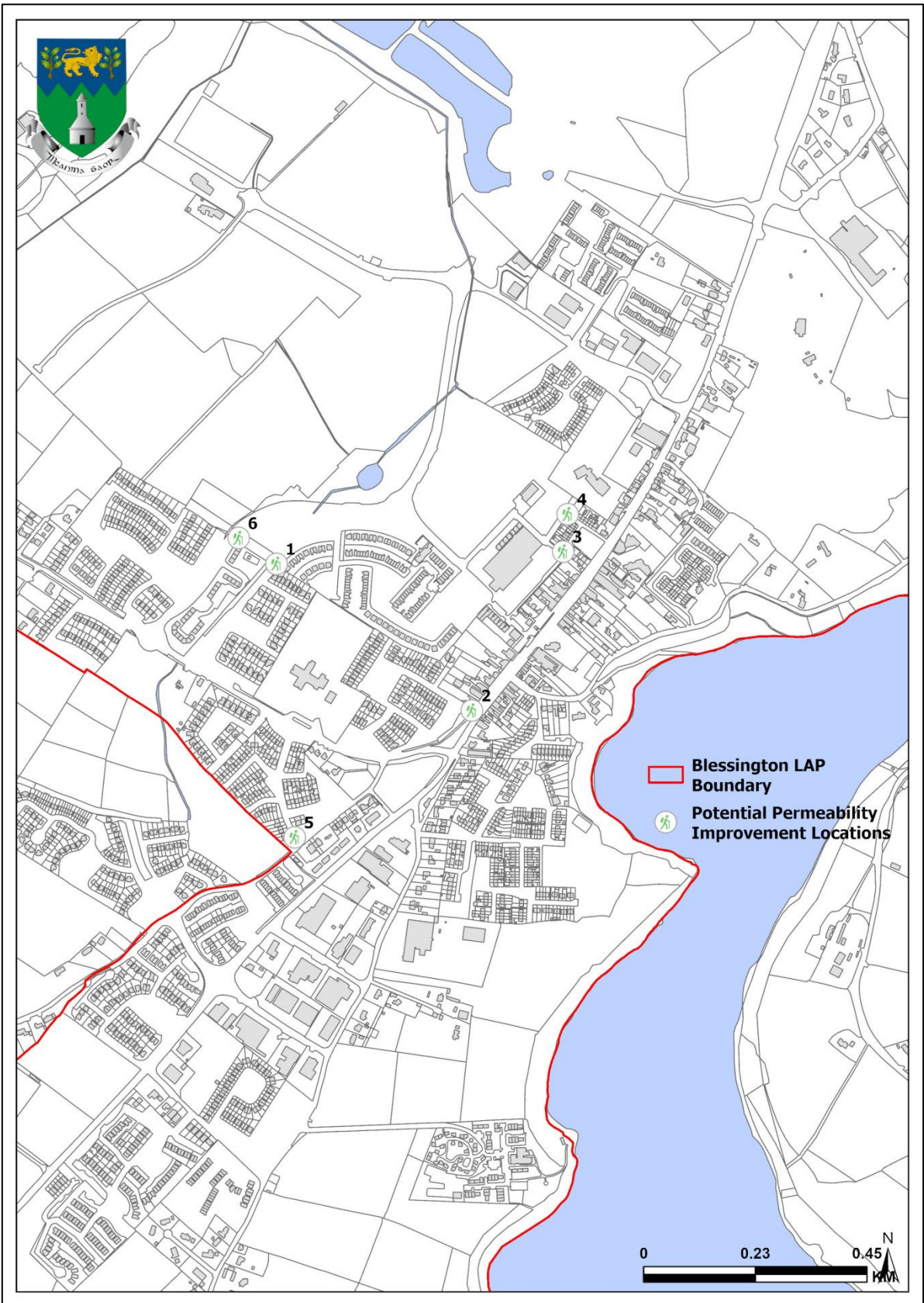
Footpath improvements can be delivered in a variety of ways. In general, road/active travel projects on existing sections of road will have regard to the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and other guidance, which includes minimum widths for footpaths, such that improvements will occur alongside improvements to road safety and cycling infrastructure. In greenfield land that is zoned for development, permeability improvements within and around a site will be delivered as part of its development, or alongside indicated road objectives.

Where it is deemed necessary to do so, desirable indicative pedestrian/cyclist routes through greenfield land and large infill sites can be detailed in both the written statement and accompanying maps of the Blessington Local Area Plan. Such routes could also be achieved through a general objective of the Local Area Plan, e.g. for permeability improvements along green corridors.

However, a review of the existing footpath infrastructure has indicated that there may be opportunities for permeability improvements within the existing built up environment. This could involve the individual removal of barriers between two residential areas. A selection of such areas is presented below (which does not preclude the identification of further areas as part of any individual active travel/road project):

Map Label	Location	Improvement
1	Downshire Park/Ashton	To allow for active travel permeability through Downshire Park and Ashton along the course of the deerpark watercourse, and to allow for permeability westward into a green space/permitted attenuation area.
2	Dempsey's Lane	To allow for active travel permeability between Beechdale and Dempsey's Lane and onward to Blessington Main Street.
3	St. Joseph's Road (south)	To allow for active travel permeability through St. Joseph's Road southward into the new town centre.
4	St. Joseph's Road (west)	To allow for active travel permeability westward toward St. Mary's Senior National School. This could link with a walkway to the west serving permitted but not constructed apartments to the south of the school (or other potential developments on that site), and potentially into greenfield land beyond.
5	Westpark	To allow for active travel permeability from Westpark south-eastward onto Old Ballymore Road.
6	Blessington Inner Relief Road	To allow for active travel permeability from the Blessington Inner Relief road in the vicinity of the traffic lights eastward through a green area towards Downshire Park. This would link to the under construction walkway toward Glen Ding to the west of the Blessington Inner Relief Road. This link should, insofar as is practical, remain unlit for the protection of biodiversity (refer to the accompanying Green Infrastructure Audit).





**Figure 15:** Potential locations of permeability measures within the existing settlement of Blessington. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

### **Recommended objectives of the LAP for pedestrian infrastructure:**

- New development should be focused on locations with the highest quality existing pedestrian infrastructure, in particular in the built up centre of Blessington.
- The continued improvement of deficiencies in infrastructure, particularly in areas where there are attractors such as schools and areas of employment.
- Major public realm improvements in Blessington town centre should be a key goal of this plan, including but not limited to:
  - Enhancement, including widening, of all footpaths serving the area zoned as 'Town Centre' and creation of new hard and soft landscaped urban spaces for pedestrians to congregate and recreate as space allows. This could include the carrying out of public realm improvements on Market Square;
  - Enhancement management/control of space devoted to vehicles and car parking on all main routes through the core of this centre.
- In determining the optimal location for the zoning of lands for **new schools**, while the priority with all new development shall be within the existing built up areas, where greenfield locations are needed due to site size requirements, these should serve existing and future residents in areas outside 15 minute walking distance of existing schools. In particular, provision should be made for the reservation of lands for new schools (primary and secondary) to the west of the settlement.
- The continued improvement of pedestrian permeability throughout the existing built-up area of the settlement, including the above identified potential permeability improvement measures.
- The written statement and relevant accompanying maps should include additional indicative pedestrian routes through greenfield land and significant brownfield/infill sites where relevant, e.g. for the servicing of currently impermeable land within walking distance of various facilities. This could be detailed within the text of a Specific Local Objective or indeed included in illustrative indicative layouts as appropriate.

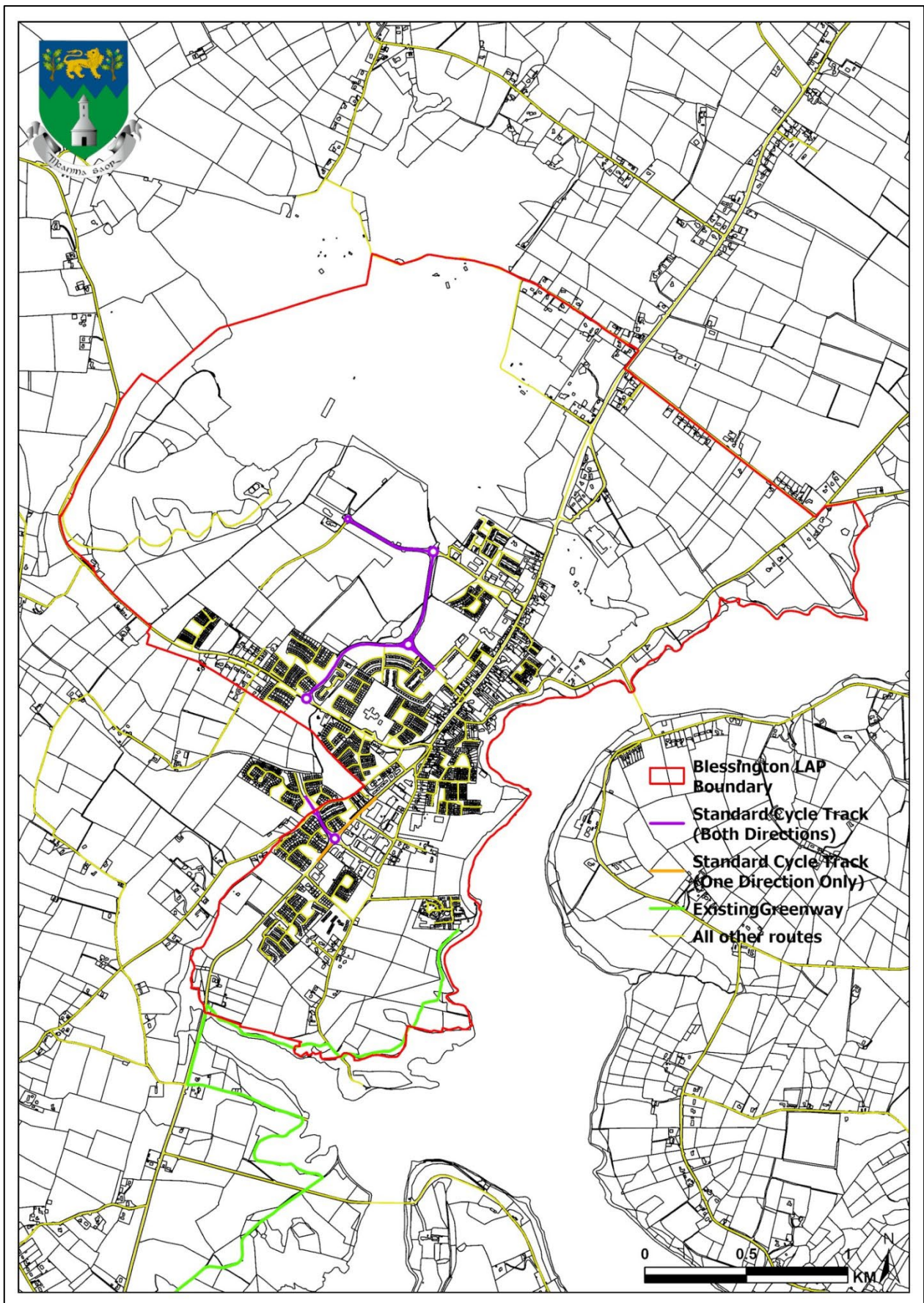
### **2.2.3 Existing Active Travel Infrastructure - Cycling:**

Figure 16 below illustrates the existing provision of cycle facilities within Blessington. Generally, newer sections of road have good cycling facilities, with segregated cycle tracks along the existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and towards the GAA grounds. Some other segregated infrastructure is present, e.g. a short distance north and south of the 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout, however it is narrow and poorly delineated from the adjacent footpath such that it may not be recognisable or usable as segregated cycling infrastructure.

However, the provision of segregated facilities within the older parts of the settlement is limited, such that the usability of the existing segregated network is diminished due to poor connectivity with older residential areas. Blessington Main Street, currently comprising the main arterial route for N81 traffic through the settlement, does not have segregated cycling facilities. The spatial extent of Blessington is such that most of the settlement is within 15 minutes' walk of the town centre (as represented by the Downshire monument). Land zoned for development within or just beyond such a walking distance would be easily accessible by bicycle in a short time to/from other parts of the settlement were adequate infrastructure in place.

The existing sections of the Blessington Greenway provide an important recreational facility for cyclists in the area. However, its connectivity to other nearby settlements is currently limited such that it does not likely provide opportunities for daily commuting, e.g. secondary school children from nearby settlements cycling to school in Blessington. The proposed extended Blessington eGreenway would improve the functionality of the greenway beyond that of recreation towards general active travel mobility in the wider area.





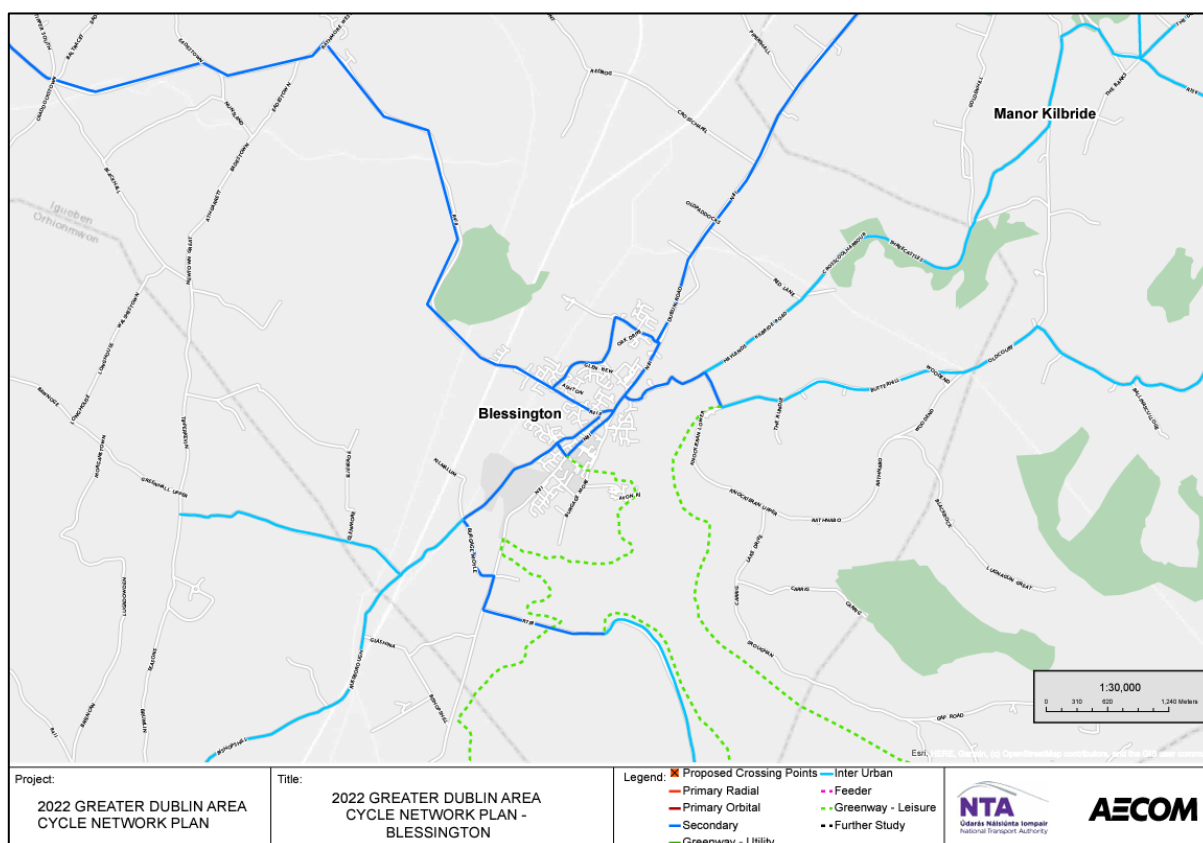
**Figure 16:** Blessington Existing Cycleway Network. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

## 2.2.4 Proposed/Planned Active Travel Infrastructure:

### 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network:

The NTA's Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Transport Strategy 2022-2042 includes the 2022 GDA Cycle Network. This network is an update of the previous Cycle Network published in 2013 and sets out a comprehensive cycle network for development during the period of the transport strategy. The route network comprises Primary, Secondary, Feeder, Greenway and Inter-Urban routes.

In relation to Blessington, the 2022 GDA Cycle Network proposes the following:



**Figure 17:** 2022 GDA Network in Blessington. Source: NTA GDA Transport Strategy 2022-2042.

- No primary radial/orbital routes are located in the area.
- The N81 is designated as a secondary route along its length from Dublin southward as far as the 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout at the junction of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and Blessington Industrial Estate. This secondary route then heads westward at the roundabout and merges with the route along Kilmalum Road.
- Kilmalum/Old Ballymore Road is designated as a secondary route between the Naas Road and the 4-way junction south-west of the current Gaelscoil site. At that point, the route continues as an Inter-Urban route in the direction of Ballymore Eustace/Barretstown, while the secondary route travels eastwards to the N81, southwards until the R758, and eastwards until Baltyboys Bridge, where it continues as an Inter-Urban route.
- The Naas Road is designated a secondary route from its junction with the N81 and westward outside the plan boundary in the direction of Naas.
- The existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and Oak Drive eastward to the N81 are also designated a secondary route.

- Kilbride Road is designated as a secondary route as far as the junction with Knockieran Bridge, where the secondary route crosses the bridge and continues as an Inter-Urban Route towards Oldcourt. Kilbride Road also continues as an Inter-Urban route from Kockieran Bridge towards Threecastles/Manor Kilbride.
- The expansion of the Blessington Greenway, currently under consideration by An Bord Pleanála at the time of writing, is designated as a Leisure Greenway.
- No feeder routes are designated within the plan area.

The designations made under the 2022 GDA Cycle Network do not refer to the standard of infrastructure required, i.e. a quiet street without through traffic could suffice as adequately fulfilling a route. However, most of the indicated routes do occur along roads well-trafficked by private vehicles, therefore the presence of segregated infrastructure will be used as an indication of whether routes are currently in-situ, pending any further analysis/traffic counts at future route design stages. Note in the table below that green indicates that segregated infrastructure is in place, orange indicates that some level of segregated infrastructure is in place, and red indicates that segregated infrastructure is not in place.

Note that the presence of existing segregated infrastructure does not necessarily infer that said infrastructure meets current design standards as per the Cycle Design Manual 2023.

Route Segment	Route Designation	Infrastructure
N81 (north of Blessington to 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout)	Secondary	A very short section of northbound only cycle track extends northward c. 200m from the 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout – majority of infrastructure not in place.
Blessington Inner Relief Road (all existing sections)	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure in place along length of existing sections of BIRR.
Oak Drive/Blessington Business Park	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure is not in place.
Old Ballymore/Kilmalum Road	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure not in place – active travel scheme being progressed along section from BIRR roundabout northward, segregated facilities will be delivered a short distance to the south as part of a separate permission.
Kilmalum Road to N81 (south of town outside of LAP area)	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure is not in place.
N81 south to R758 (south of town outside of LAP area)	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure is not in place.
Naas Road to Glen Ding/Naas	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure is not in place – active travel scheme being progressed from N81 to Deerpark roundabout.
Kilbride Road across Knockieran Bridge	Secondary	Segregated infrastructure not in place – to be delivered as part of proposed Greenway extension.
Towards Ballymore Eustace/Barretstown	Inter-Urban	Segregated infrastructure not in place.
Towards Baltyboys	Inter-Urban	Segregated infrastructure not in place.
Towards Threecastles/Manor Kilbride	Inter-Urban	Segregated infrastructure not in place.
Towards Oldcourt	Inter-Urban	Segregated infrastructure not in place.
Blessington eGreenway	Greenway - Leisure	There are existing sections within the LAP area, remainder (except for a short section through Blessington Industrial Estate) to be delivered as part of an application currently with An Bord Pleanála and other improvement projects.

### **National Cycle Network Plan 2023:**

The National Cycle Network is intended to link cities and towns of over 5,000 people with a safe, connected, and inviting cycle network of c. 3,500km in length. It will further connections to a range of destinations (e.g. tourism) and transport hubs. The network aligns with the NTA's CycleConnects programme of urban and county-level cycle networks.

The network identifies Corridor 59 as a route from Naas (designated a primary node) to Blessington (designated a secondary node).

The corridor is 4km in width to allow flexibility in route options, with no indicative route currently set out. Within the plan area, segregated infrastructure is not in place along this route, though an active travel scheme is being progressed along Naas Road from the N81 to Deerpark roundabout.

### **Other local cycle routes:**

Notably, no feeder routes are indicated within the Blessington area in the above GDA cycle network or National Cycle Network. Certain road segments can form important links between these higher order cycle networks. Importantly, there may be road segments that could play important feeder functions in relation to the proposed Blessington eGreenway, ancillary park and ride infrastructure, and Blessington Town Centre.

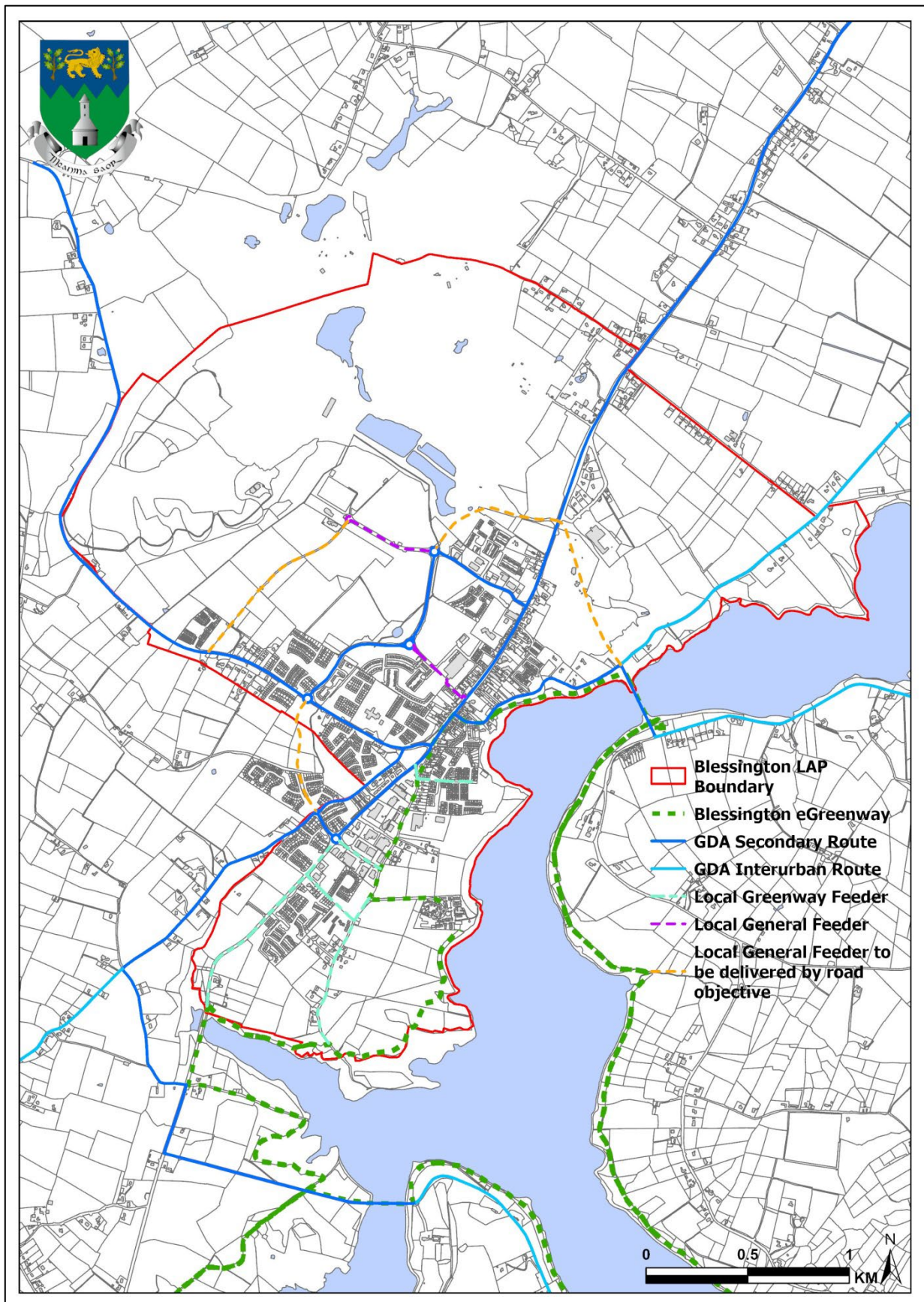
The identification of such routes may indicate that safe cycling infrastructure is required along these routes, but also that development along greenway feeder routes may be required to limit the interactions between greenway users and private vehicular traffic via objective. For example, the route of the eGreenway as proposed differs slightly than that included in the 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network and where on-road sections of the GDA greenway route are not covered by the proposed route, these sections could be identified as additional greenway feeder routes. The GDA greenway route also includes longer sections through green field land in Burgage More. It may be possible to include indicative route lines in the Local Area Plan to deliver these off-road sections in the future.

Road objectives as identified in the new Local Area Plan, or those retained from the 2013 Local Area Plan, (e.g. the Blessington Inner Relief Road or the link between the Naas Road and the GAA grounds) would be required to include cycle infrastructure at design stage as per the Cycle Design Manual and would also function as important feeder routes upon completion.

The combination of the GDA cycle network and local general/greenway feeder routes would result in the below cycle network.

Further indicative cyclist routes through greenfield land or large infill sites may also be identified as necessary in the written statement of the Local Area Plan and the relevant accompanying maps.





**Figure 18:** Blessington possible cycle network. Additional indicative cycling routes through green field or significant infill/brownfield sites to be detailed in written statement and accompanying maps. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

### **Recommended objectives of the LAP for cycling infrastructure:**

- The overarching strategy of the Local Area Plan with regard to cycling should be the delivery of a safe cycling network to maximise modal shift away from the private vehicle.
- New development should be focused on locations with existing safe cycling infrastructure or in locations where such can be delivered in the development of the lands. The spatial extent of Blessington is such that cycling would be an efficient and comfortable method of travel within the LAP boundary.
- Objectives should be included in the Local Area Plan supporting the delivery of the 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network and the National Cycle Plan as relevant to the plan area.
- Objectives should be included in the Local Area Plan supporting the delivery of identified local general feeder routes and local greenway feeder routes.
- Objectives should be included in the Local Area Plan to manage the interactions of private vehicles with cyclists along the eGreenway and important local greenway feeder routes.
- The written statement and relevant accompanying maps should include additional indicative cycling routes through greenfield land and significant infill sites where relevant, e.g. for the servicing of currently impermeable land within walking distance of various facilities. This could be detailed within the text of a Specific Local Objective or indeed included in illustrative indicative layouts as appropriate.

## 2.3 Public Transport Networks

### 2.3.1 Train / Light Rail Services

No train services or light rail services currently serve Blessington. Trams served Blessington from 1888 and provided a service from Terenure to Poulaphouca until 1932, when the tram was discontinued.

CPO 12.21 of the Wicklow County Development Plan 2022-2028 promotes the Luas extension from City West/Tallaght to Blessington.

However, the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 (published after the adoption of the County Development Plan) does not make reference to such an extension in either its Proposed 2042 Light Rail Network or its post-2042 Light Rail Network. As such, it is unlikely that any LUAS service will extend to Blessington during the period of the new local area plan.



**Figure 19:** Proposed Post-2042 Light Rail Network. Source: Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042.

The closest rail service operates from Sallins & Naas Rail Station, situated on the main Dublin-Cork railway line c. 16km to the west of Blessington. Currently, this station is served by Commuter services toward Dublin Heuston/Grand Canal Dock, and other less frequent intercity services. The Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 indicates under 'Measure RAIL 3- Dart Extension' that electrified DART services will be extended to Sallins & Naas over the lifetime of that plan.

On this basis, Sallins & Naas station could provide an important opportunity for onward travel for Blessington residents for journeys not served by current or proposed bus routes through Blessington itself. A Local Link service (introduced in 2023) provides a public transport link between Blessington and this rail station (see below).



**Figure 20:** Proposed 2042 Combined Rail Network, including the expansion of DART services to Sallins. Source: Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042.

### 2.3.2 Bus Services

Blessington is currently served by several bus routes operated by a variety of operators.

#### Current Bus Services:

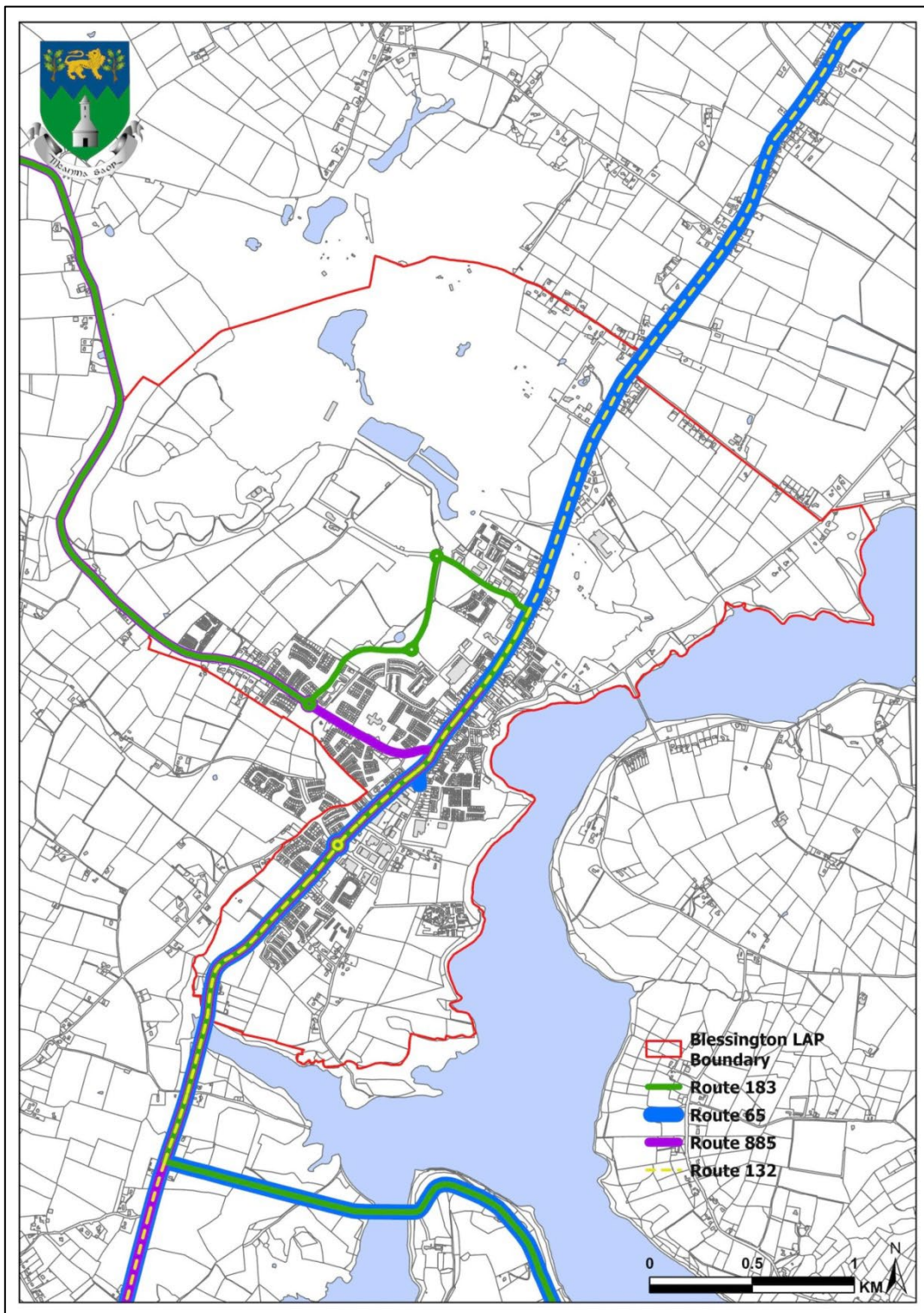
All frequencies and travel durations as per published timetables:

Route No.	Operator	Route	Approximate Frequency and Duration
65	Dublin Bus	Poolbeg St., Blessington - Ballmore Eustace - Ballyknockan	Blessington to Tallaght: 35 mins Blessington to Poolbeg St.: 1hr 40mins Frequency: peak frequency of approx. 1 hr (with converging services from different termini increasing capacity towards Dublin at approx. 7.30am), off-peak and weekend frequency of approx. 2 hours. Some services operate only during school terms.
183	TFI <sup>1</sup> Local Link	Arklow – Avoca – Rathdrum – Glenealy – Rathnew – Wicklow Town – Ashford – Roundwood – Annamoe – Laragh – Glendalough – Valleymount – Blessington – Eadestown – Naas - Sallins	Blessington to Naas: 25 mins Blessington to Sallins Rail Station: 35 mins Blessington to Valleymount: 9 mins Blessington to Glendalough: 32 mins Blessington to Wicklow Town Rail Station: 1hr 27 mins Blessington to Arklow Rail Station: 2hrs 22 mins Frequency: 4 No. services daily.
885	TFI Local Link	Sallins – Naas – Blessington – Ballymore Eustace – Brannockstown – Dunlavin – Stratford-on-Slaney	Blessington to Naas: 22 mins Blessington to Sallins Rail Station: 25 mins Blessington to Ballymore Eustace: 9 mins Blessington to Dunlavin: 29 mins

<sup>1</sup> Transport For Ireland (TFI)

		<b>Baltinglass</b>	Blessington to Stratford-on-Slaney: 41 mins Blessington to Baltinglass: 49 mins Frequency: 4 No. services daily
<b>132</b>	<b>Bus Éireann</b>	<b>Dublin – Blessington – Annalecky Cross – Baltinglass – Tullow – Bunclody</b>  <b>Thursday Service: Dublin – Blessington – Baltinglass – Kiltegan – Hacketstown – Tinahely – Shillelagh – Carnew – Bunclody – Enniscorthy – Wexford Town – Rosslare Europort</b>	Blessington to Baltinglass: 27 mins Blessington to Tullow: 48 mins Blessington to Bunclody: 1hr 17 mins Blessington to Rosslare Europort: 2hr 34 mins Frequency: 4 No. services daily, reduced weekend service. Thursday only service to Rosslare Europort. Services towards Dublin are drop-off only in Blessington, while services towards Tullow are pick-up only in Blessington





**Figure 21:** Combined Bus Routes through Blessington. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

**Proposed Bus Services:**

**Bus Connects – Dublin Network Redesign:**

BusConnects is the National Transport Authority’s programme to greatly improve bus services in Irish cities. The new Dublin Area Bus Network was published in September 2020 and will be implemented on a phased basis.

The network redesign will replace the current 65 service with the following routes:

Route No.	Route	Approximate Frequency
<b>L44 – local route</b>	<b>Ballymore Eustace – Blessington - Tallaght</b>	– Frequency: 60 mins daily (including weekends)
<b>P44 – peak only</b>	<b>Ballymore Eustace – Blessington – City Centre</b>	– Frequency: 1 No. morning service and 1 No. evening service
<b>P43 – peak only</b>	<b>Ballyknockan – Blessington – City Centre</b>	– Frequency: 1 No. morning service and 1 No. evening service

These proposed changes will greatly increase the frequency of bus services in Blessington from a current off-peak frequency of approx. 2hrs to an all-day frequency of 60 mins. While this does involve the L44 route terminating in Tallaght, peak-only services P44 and P43 maintain a direct connection between Blessington and Dublin City Centre. Furthermore, more frequent services to Tallaght will facilitate easier interchange with spine, orbital, and light rail services at the L44 terminus.



**Figure 22:** Interchange between Local Route L44 and spine, orbital, and light rail services operating from Tallaght.



## Connecting Ireland:

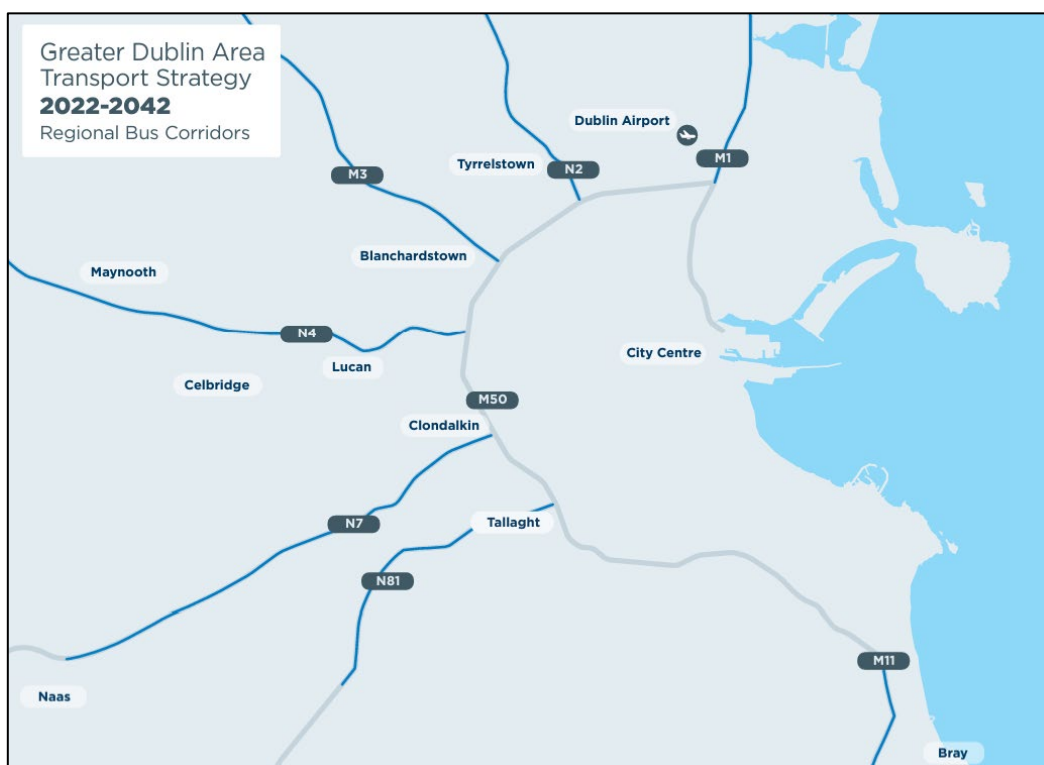
The Connecting Ireland Rural Mobility Plan aims to increase transport connectivity for people living in rural Ireland. Proposed Network Maps for each county were published in 2021. The proposed network in the vicinity of Blessington (see below) proposed new local routes as follows:

- Route 183 from Sallins to Arklow – in operation since November 2022.
- Extension of existing Route 884 from its current terminus at Ballymore Eustace to Carlow – has been extended under the designation of Route 885 as far as Baltinglass, as of November 2023

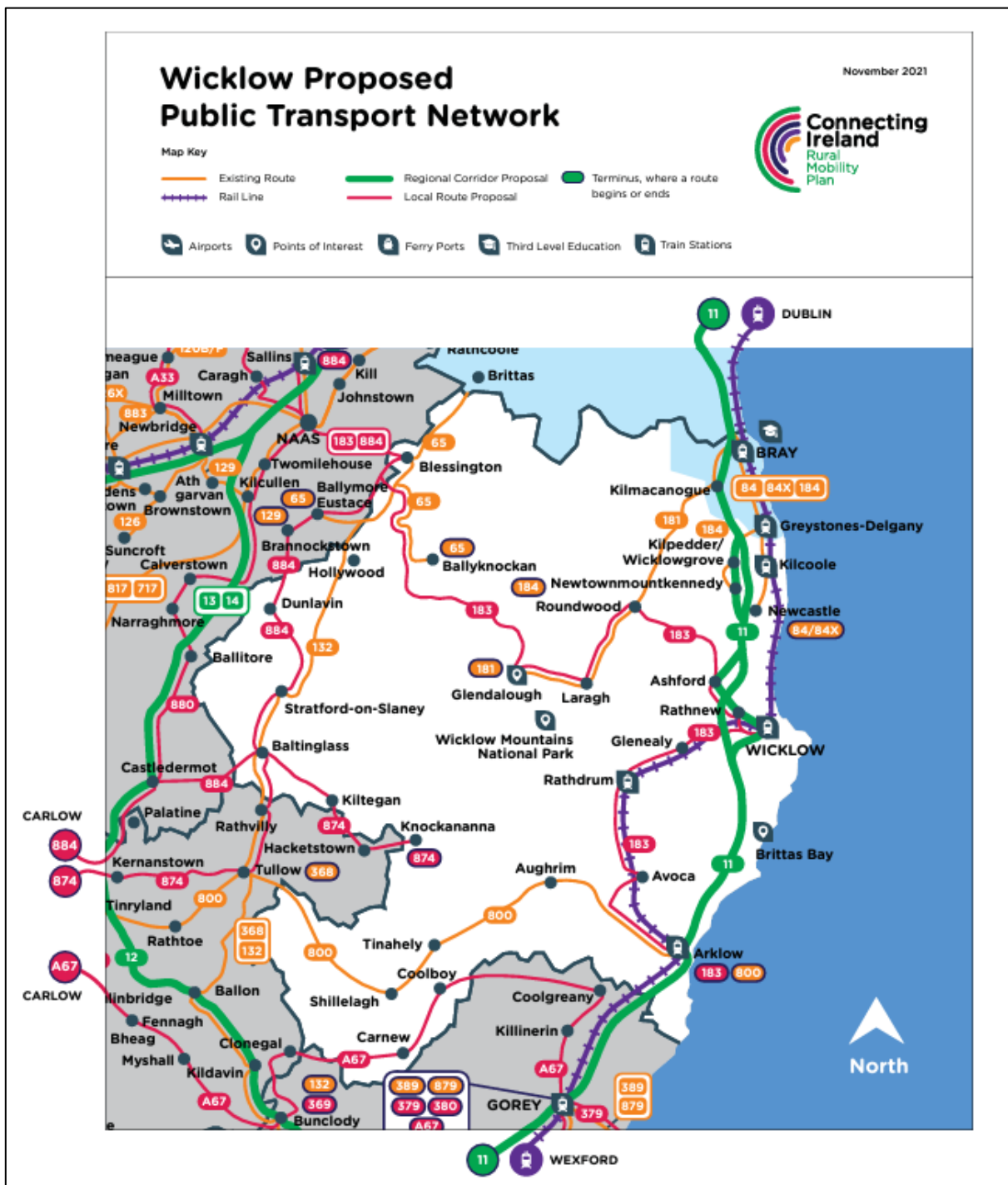
## The Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042:

The strategy identifies 7 No. regional core bus corridors. Blessington is identified as being along the N81 Regional Bus Corridor, described as follows:

- Serving longer distance bus from south-west Wicklow and east Carlow; and
- Serving regional bus from Blessington and Baltinglass plus other locations.



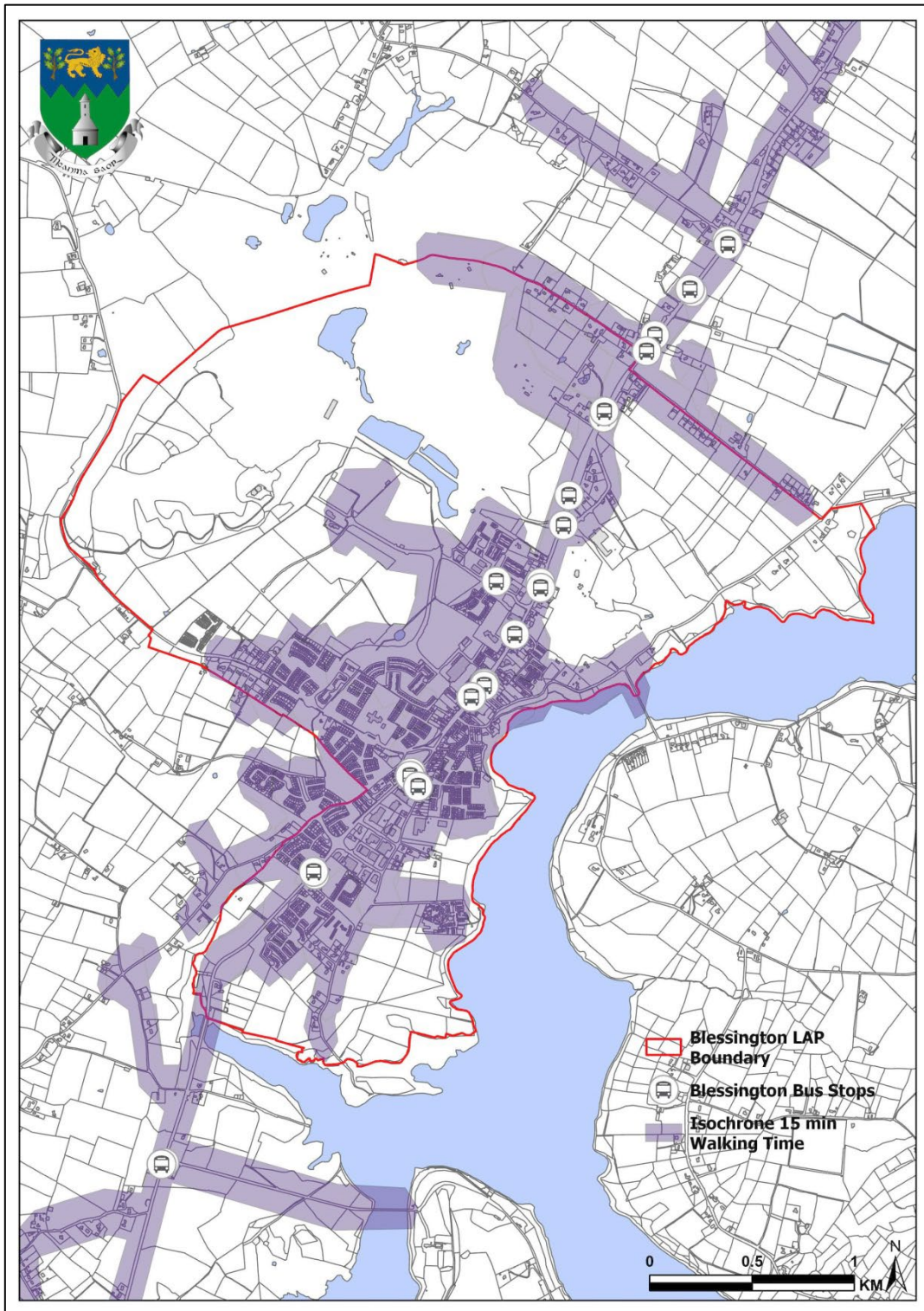
**Figure 23:** GDA Transport Strategy Regional Core Bus Corridors, including the N81.



**Figure 24:** Connecting Ireland Proposed Public Transport Network – Wicklow.

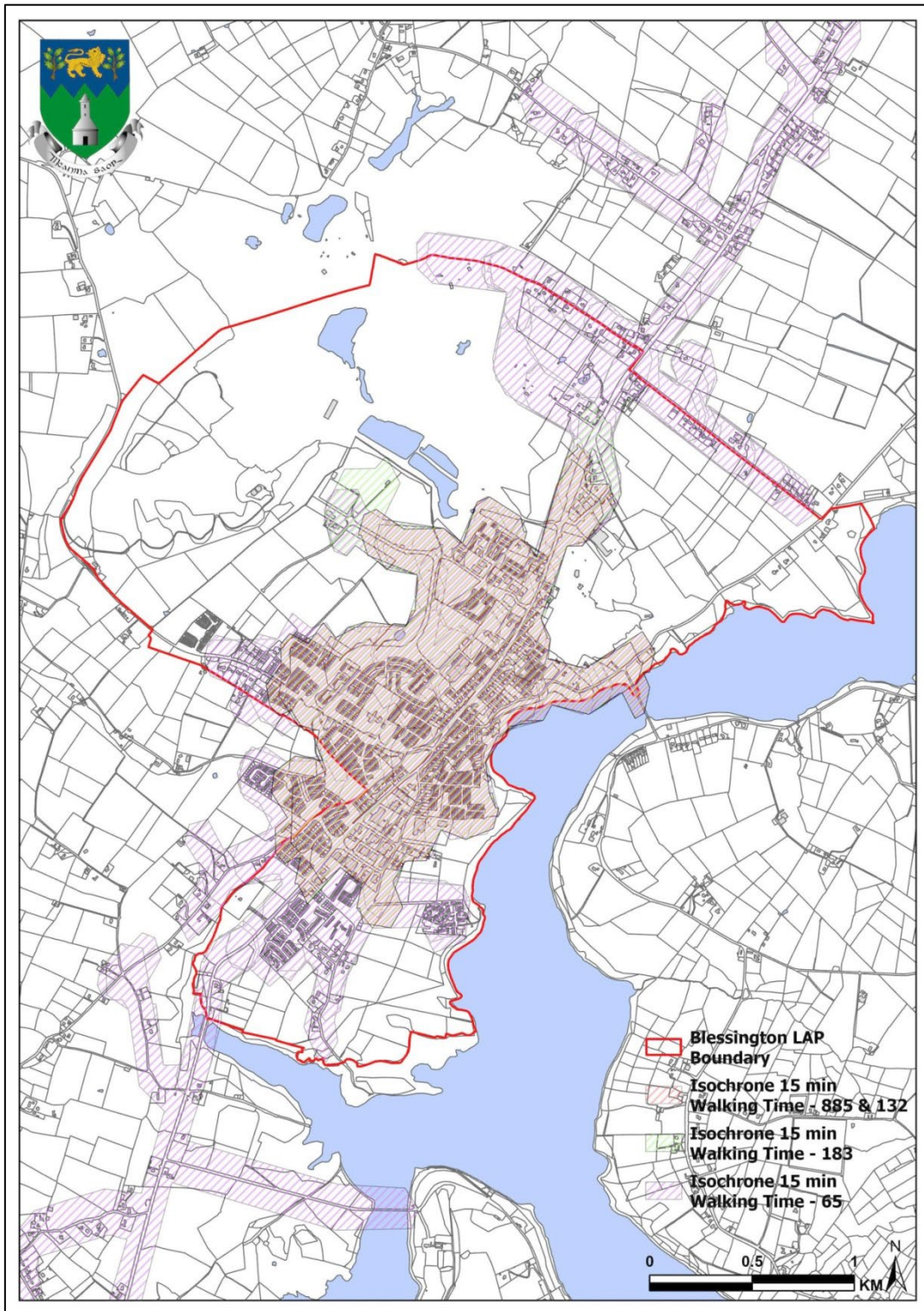
As a key goal of the new LAP is to craft a land use pattern that facilitates maximum use of sustainable transport modes, further investigation into the accessibility of these services has been undertaken, in the form of mapping of walking distance isochrones from each public transport stop.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Cycling time isochrones have not been generated due to inadequacy of cycling infrastructure at the time of drafting this document.



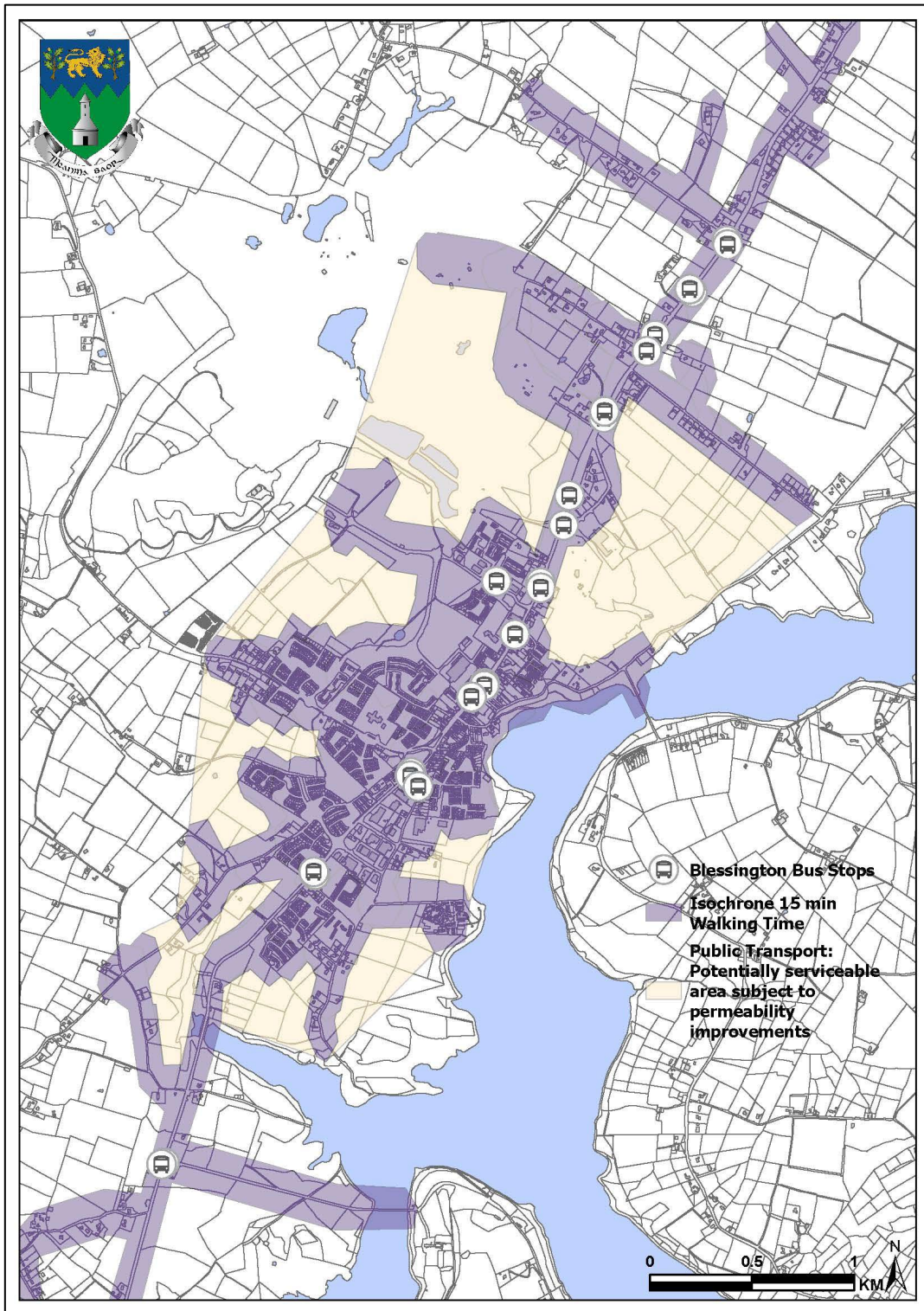
**Figure 25:** Public Transport (Bus) 15-minute Isochrone Walking Time. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





**Figure 26:** Public Transport (Individual Bus Routes) 15-minute Isochrone Walking Time. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





**Figure 27:** Areas of Blessington that may be within 15-minute walking time of public transport subject to adequate permeability improvements. Note this does not include the possibility of public transport using constructed bus stops along the existing Blessington Inner Relief Road. Glen Ding estate is the only existing residential development currently largely outside of the serviced or serviceable areas.

#### **2.3.4 Recommended Objectives of the LAP for public transport accessibility**

- It is recommended that all previously zoned lands beyond the 15-minute walking isochrone from a public transport node be re-evaluated as to the appropriateness of maintaining the previous zoning and consideration be given to de-zoning or phased zoning based on improved public transport services in the future.
- It is recommended that all areas within the 15 minute isochrone be evaluated as to the adequacy of footpath and cycling infrastructure and where deficiencies are identified, the rectification of same be an objective of the new LAP.
- The new plan should support and facilitate the significant enhancement of facilities and infrastructure at bus stops on Blessington Main Street (the primary location for interurban public transport interchange), including but not limited to enhanced pedestrian and cycling connectivity and enhanced bicycle parking.
- The new plan should include objectives to support the reduction of private vehicular through traffic along Blessington Main Street as a bus priority measure. This would in turn support the efficient use of the N81 Regional Core Bus Corridor, as congestion along Blessington Main Street is reduced
- The new plan should include objectives for the provision of additional bus stops within the plan area, including in the vicinity of Glen Ding estate on Naas Road.
- The new plan should include objectives to support the general improvement of public transport frequency and capacity, both towards destinations along the N81/Dublin City Centre and in relation to interchange with rail services in Sallins.

## 2.4 Roads Infrastructure

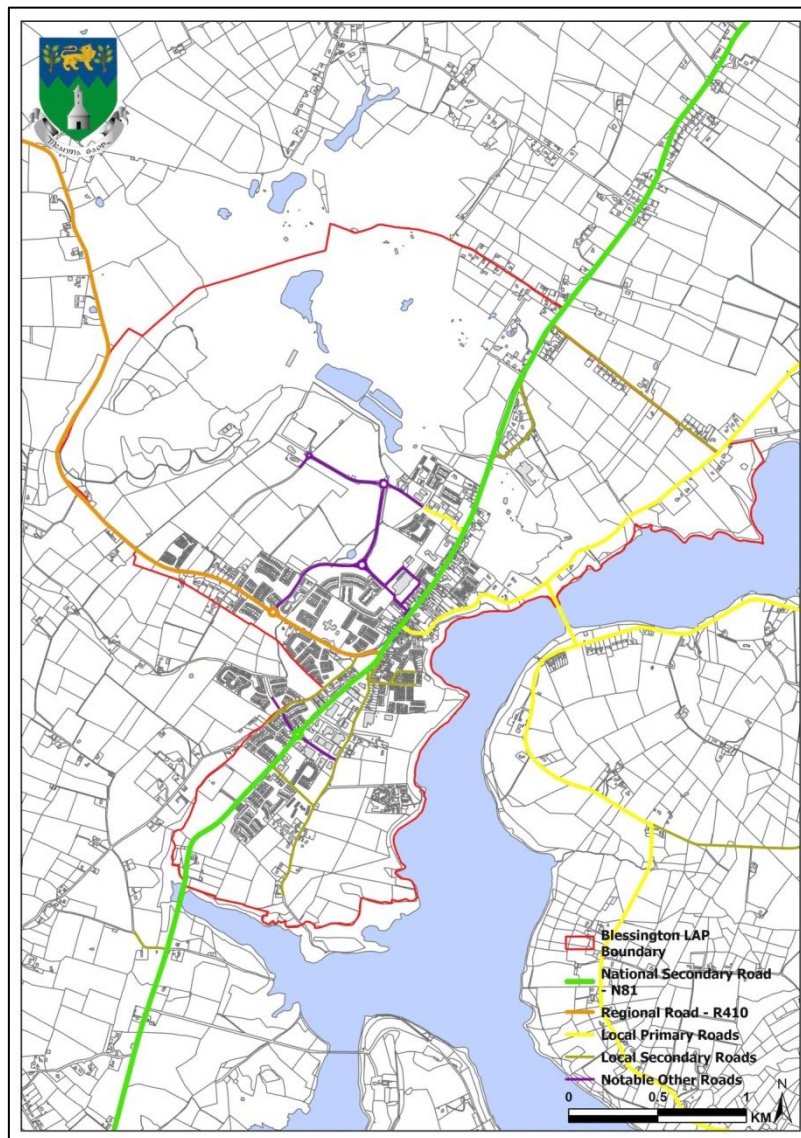
### 2.4.1 Existing Road Network in Blessington

Blessington is located along the N81, a national secondary road connecting Dublin to Tullow through west Wicklow. The N81 terminates just south of Tullow and joins the N80, linking to nearby Carlow and Bunclody. Presently, the route of the N81 traverses directly through the built-up area of Blessington, along Blessington Main Street. Blessington is located approximately 8km from the boundary with Co. Dublin, c. 30km from Dublin City Centre and c. 47 km from Tullow to the south.



**Figure 28:** Blessington National Road Context. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.





**Figure 29:** Road Network in Blessington (Classified Roads and Other Notable Roads). Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

#### 2.4.2 Condition of Existing Road Network in Blessington.

Note that condition in this instance does not refer to road surface, maintenance, potholes, etc. Rather, it refers to width, alignment, the presence or otherwise of footpaths/cycling infrastructure, and general patterns of usage, as follows:

- Red** Substandard road quality
- Orange** Adequate road quality (adequate width, alignment, but limited pedestrian/cycling facilities, public lighting)
- Green** High standard road quality (good width, alignment, pedestrian facilities on both sides, cycle lanes, public lighting)



## National Roads:

### Segment N1 – N81 from Edmondstown/Red Lane to Junction with Oak Drive:



**Figure 30: Road Segment N1**

This road segment has good alignment and a generous width along most of its length. Speed limits increase from south to north along this section, from 50km/h to 100km/h as the N81 leaves the built up area. Within the built up area, around the junction with Oak Drive/Blessington Business Park, the road is more constrained in width with footpaths provided. However, controlled crossing opportunities are limited, with three lanes across the junction with Oak Drive required to be crossed by pedestrians. Outside of the built up area, there are hatched central medians and hard shoulders of varying widths. Footpaths do not extend along the length of this segment. The presence of bus stops along wide sections of 100km/h road without footpaths or controlled crossing points may present difficulties for pedestrians wishing to access public transport. No cycling infrastructure is in place along this segment. Presently, this segment constitutes the main arterial route through Blessington towards Dublin for all settlements south along the N81. High traffic volumes at peak hours cause congestion at the Oak Drive junction. There are multiple side roads in quick succession, including the bypassed section at Hollyvalley/Blessington Mart and Quarry entrances. The completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road (BIRR) will ameliorate this situation by replacing several side road junctions with a roundabout, and will in effect move the 'gateway' into the town northward to just past the southern junction to the Mart. Similarly, the possible redevelopment of former Quarry lands along this segment may provide the opportunity to adjust this road to being more urban in character, and/or provide adequate off-line options for pedestrians and cyclists. The N81 Hollywood Cross to Tallaght Road Improvement Scheme will bypass this road from a point just north of this segment, significantly reducing traffic volumes along this segment to a degree that it may be appropriate to reconfigure elements of the segment to being more urban in character.

#### Recommendations for Segment N1:

- Improve pedestrian infrastructure, including safe crossing points.
- Provide cycling infrastructure.

- Reconfigure to a more urban character upon the completion of the N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross Road Improvement Scheme as relevant. Smaller, incremental reconfiguration may be possible south of the completed northern section of the Blessington Inner Relief Road, subject to TII approval.

Segment N2 – N81 along Blessington Main Street:



**Figure 31: Road Segment N2.**

This segment has a good alignment and has a generous width along most of its length, although some pinch points exist, for example towards the junction with the Naas Road. This road segment constitutes Blessington Main Street, the primary town centre street in the settlement. Footpaths of varying widths are present along the street, although no cycling infrastructure is present. A large amount of road space is currently allocated to perpendicular car parking. Cars entering and leaving these perpendicular spaces can conflict with traffic travelling along Blessington Main Street, and there have been collisions recorded along this section of road arising from such movements. Rationalisation of the number of parking spaces along this segment, and/or their reconfiguration to diagonal or parallel parking bays, would likely improve road safety and allow for road space allocation to pedestrians and cyclists. There are also 3 No. entrances/exits in close proximity from Market Square car parking. Similarly, at the southern end of this road segment, an entrance from Rockypool Villas at the Naas Road junction is poorly defined and is not vital for access to those houses. A public realm scheme could consider reducing the number of exits from Market Square to improve traffic safety, and the rationalisation of other junctions as necessary. Currently, Blessington Main Street is also the main arterial route to Dublin from Blessington and all other settlements south along the N81. This results in high traffic volumes along the street. The completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and/or N81 bypass would likely reduce through-traffic along its length, and result in improved movement/priority for public transport.

Recommendations for Segment N2:

- Reduce and/or reconfigure car parking spaces along Blessington Main Street.
- Provide cycling infrastructure and pedestrian infrastructure improvements.
- Improve public realm (including a rationalisation of junctions where necessary).
- Reduce through-traffic along Blessington Main Street.

### Segment N3 – N81 from Naas Road Junction to Waste Water Treatment Plant:



**Figure 32: Road Segment N3.**

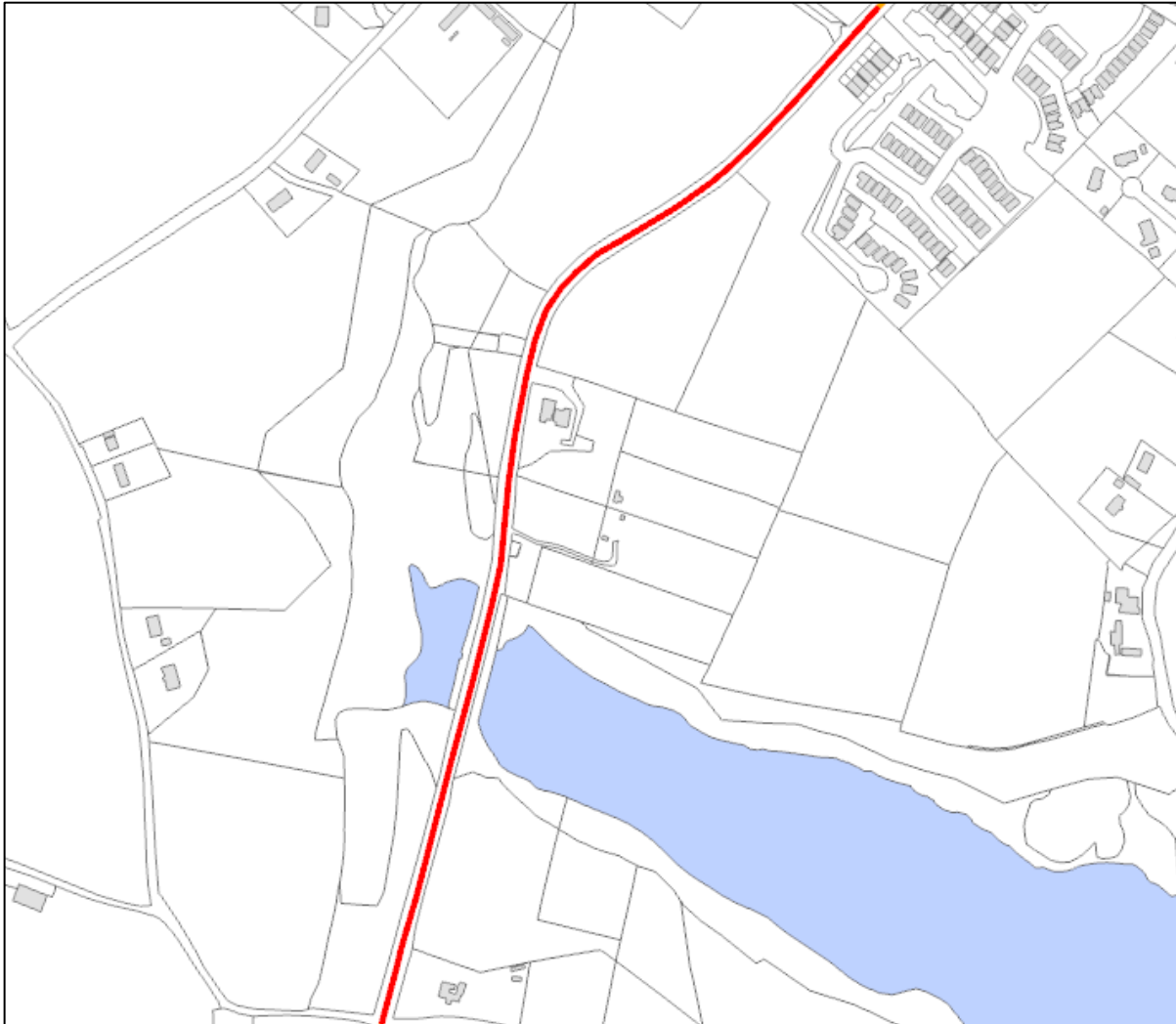
This road has a good alignment and is of a generous width along its length. While there are footpaths along most of this road segment, coverage can be intermittent, e.g. on one side of the road only or lacking entirely. Footpaths do not continue past the junction leading to the Burgage Manor residential area. There are some narrow uni-directional cycle paths in the area, although these can be poorly differentiated from the adjacent footpath in places. The 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout along this road segment will form the main junction with the completed Blessington Inner Relief Road. The geometry of this roundabout does not result in a significant traffic calming effect. Despite extending well into the centre of the settlement, much of this road has the appearance of an inter-urban national road as opposed to an urban street, with poor road frontage/surveillance from housing estates and industrial areas along its length. Many junctions, especially to industrial areas, have wide corner radii. Unfortunately, the straight alignment, width, and appearance along this road segment can result in excessive speeds of motor traffic along its length. Recent traffic surveys have revealed that the majority of vehicles are exceeding the 60km/hr speed limit along this segment, with instances of vehicles travelling in excess of 100km/hr within the 60km/hr zone. A number of collisions have been recorded in this area, which unfortunately has included fatalities. Traffic calming and pedestrian safety measures are required in this area, as proposed by the Blessington Gateway Road Safety Improvement Scheme. The completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road would reduce through traffic north of the roundabout, while the N81 bypass would reduce through-traffic along the entire road segment, and allow for the reconfiguration of the road into one more urban in character.

#### Recommendations for Segment N3:

- Improve pedestrian infrastructure, including safe crossing points.
- Improve and provide cycling infrastructure

- Implement the Blessington Gateway Road Safety Improvement Scheme
- Reconfigure this road segment to one more urban in character upon completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road/N81 bypass as relevant.

Segment N4 – Blessington Waste Water Treatment Plan to Burgage Moyle:



**Figure 33: Road Segment N4.**

This road segment has a generous width, however it has poor alignment. Vehicular traffic at 100km/hr must traverse a significant bend, known as Nolan’s Bend, along this segment. The straightening or bypassing of this bend could improve road safety along this segment. Footpaths and cycle infrastructure are generally not provided along this segment. However, a short section of the Blessington Greenway travels along this road segment on a pathway where it crosses a bridge over the Poulaphouca Reservoir. Though this section of the greenway is segregated, it is likely uncomfortable for users to be in such proximity to 100km/hr traffic. This road segment is currently the main arterial route to Dublin from settlements south along the N81, a situation which will be unchanged by the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road. However, the completion of the N81 bypass, from a point just south of this segment, would reduce through-traffic along this route. Were lands to be developed along this segment, the road could be given a more urban character that could have a further traffic calming effect.

Recommendations for Segment N4:

- Improve the alignment along Nolan’s Bend



- Provide pedestrian and cycle infrastructure
- Reconfigure this road segment to that which is more urban in character upon completion of the N81 bypass as relevant, whether through the reallocation of road space or other measures.

**Regional Roads:**

Segment R1 - Naas Road from N81 Junction to Glen Ding Estate:



**Figure 34: Road Segment R1**

This segment of road generally has a good alignment and road width. There are footpaths along this length, which are generally on both sides of the road. However, heading westward after the Piper’s Stones estate, there are footpaths only on the northern side of the road to Glen Ding estate. Cycling infrastructure is provided around the Deerpark/BIRR roundabout but is otherwise lacking along this road segment. Recent improvements have included junction radii tightening and the provision of a zebra crossing at the junction with Old Ballymore Road. There are some areas around Blessington Community College with poorly defined hard shoulders/set down areas that could result in conflict between road users. An active travel scheme is currently seeking to provide cycling infrastructure along this road segment between the N81 and the roundabout.

Recommendations for Segment R1:

- Improve pedestrian infrastructure.
- Provide cycling infrastructure.
- Implement the Blessington Pedestrian and Cycle Improvement Scheme.

Segment R2 - Naas Road from Glen Ding estate to county boundary:



**Figure 35: Road Segment R2.**

This segment of road is more rural in character and does not provide for pedestrian and cyclist traffic after passing Glen Ding estate. Further past this segment, the road alignment and width are constrained as it passes through Glen Ding, with the car park for Glen Ding Forest located along this curving road section, however this section is outside of the county boundary in Co. Kildare. The commencement of construction of a path from the Blessington Inner Relief Road to the forest may reduce traffic movements in this area. This road is also within the corridor of the National Cycle Network Sallins to Blessington branch, and would likely be the location of any on-road route. On completion of the N81 bypass, this route will remain the main arterial route from Blessington to Naas/Sallins.

Recommendations for Segment R2:

- Provide pedestrian infrastructure, and cycle infrastructure as a secondary route in the GDA Cycle Network.

## Local Primary Roads:

### Segment LP1 - Red Lane to Knockieran Bridge:



**Figure 36: Road Segment LP1.**

This road segment has generally good alignment, however it is constrained in width. A footpath has recently been constructed along its length (west side), leading to Blessington Educate Together national school; there is no segregated cycle infrastructure. As the road segment has the sloping banks of the reservoir on one side, and significant numbers of mature trees on the other, it may not be possible to significantly widen this road. The provision of off-line cycle infrastructure may be possible as an alternative. This road can currently be used as an alternative route (avoiding the N81) by traffic from Manor Kilbride/Threecastles.

#### Recommendations for Segment LP1:

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure (including an off-line option if necessary).

## Segment LP2: Knockieran Bridge to N81:



**Figure 37: Road Segment LP2.**

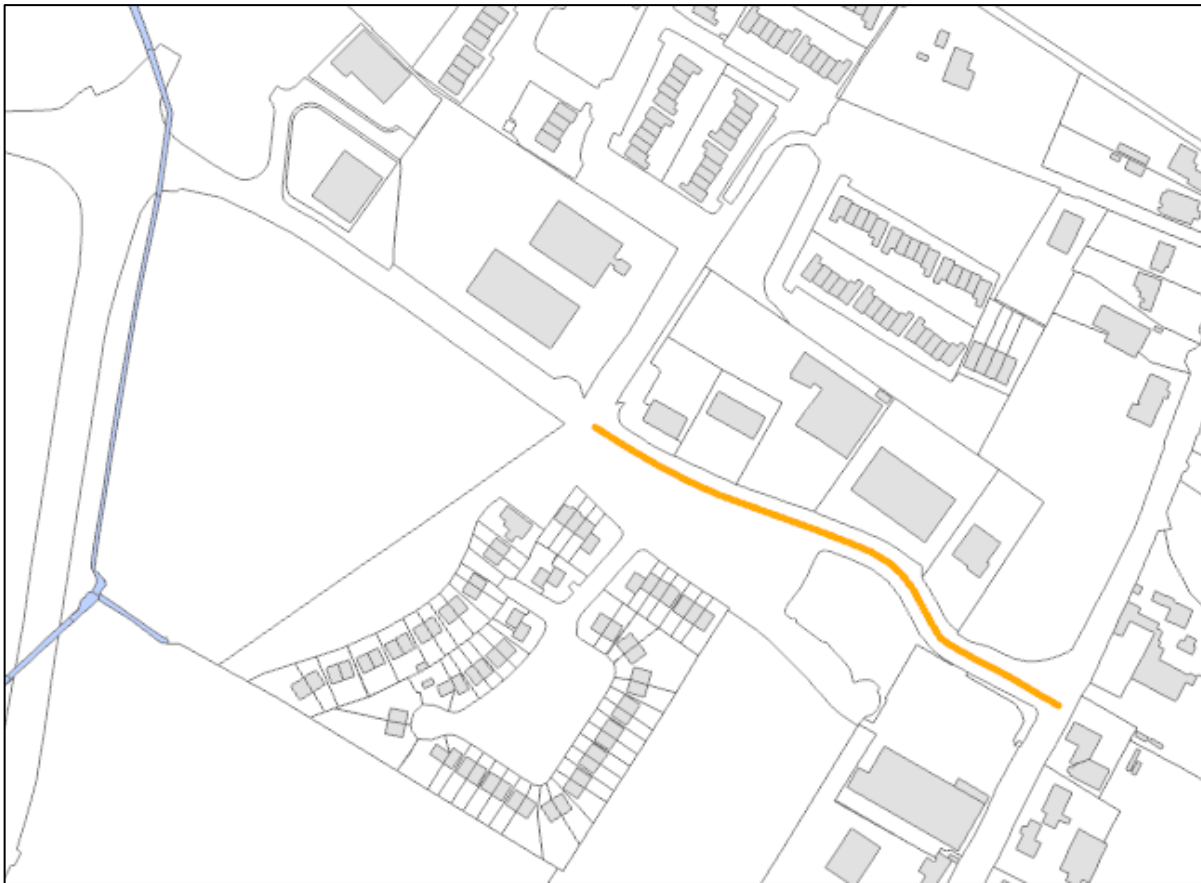
This road segment has a poor alignment and width where it sharply curves just eastwards of the Rectory residential development. As land to the southern side of the road slopes sharply down to reservoir, it is unlikely that significant improvements to width or alignment can be made. There are generally only footpaths on the northern side of the road. Cycle infrastructure is not provided, however the proposed eGreenway will provide for a mixture of off-line and on-line infrastructure along this road segment. Road objectives (such as through Doran's Pit) may allow for a reduction in through traffic along this segment.

### Recommendations for Segment LP2:

- Improve pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure, including the implementation of the proposed eGreenway.
- Consider a reduction in through traffic upon the completion of an alternative route through Doran's Pit.



Segment LP3 – Oak Drive/Blessington Business Park:



**Figure 38: Road Segment LP3.**

This road has a good alignment and width. There are footpaths on both sides, however no cycle infrastructure is provided. It currently can be used to bypass Blessington Main Street on the existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road (BIRR), however the junction with the N81 can experience congestion issues.

Recommendations for Segment LP3:

- Provide cycle infrastructure.
- Construct northern section of the BIRR to reduce through traffic.

## Other roads:

### Segment ON1 - Blessington Inner Relief Road from Naas Road to Oak Drive:

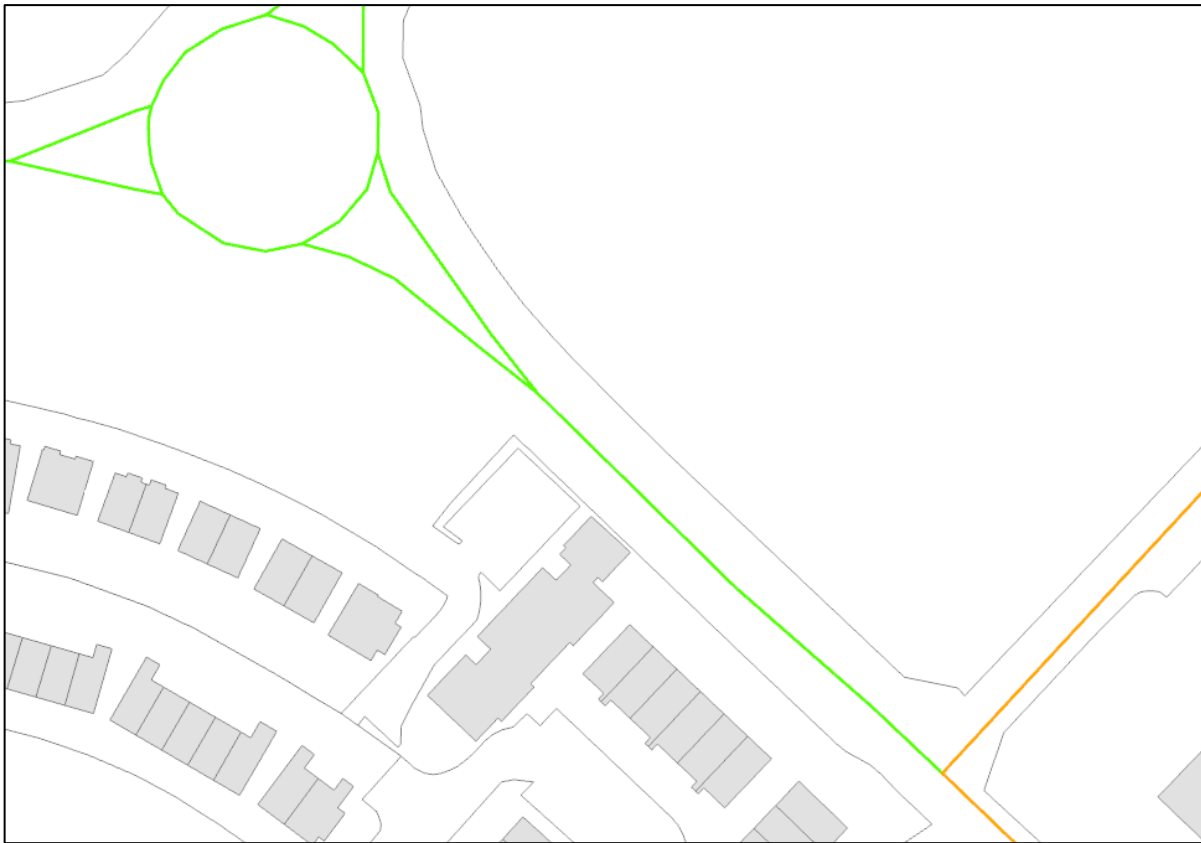


**Figure 39: Road Segment ON1.**

This road segment has a good alignment and width, with three roundabouts along its length at major junctions. The road has centre line hatched areas and turning lanes into minor junctions along its length (other than at the recently constructed entrance to Sorrel Wood). There are two bus lay-bys along the road segment. Segregated cycling infrastructure is in place along its length, although the junctions with some side roads may not be up to current design standards. Footpaths are in place along its length of generally sufficient width. There is a controlled crossing across this road just north-east of the Deerpark estate. Currently, this road does not carry significant traffic volumes, but does provide a way to bypass Blessington Main Street. Upon completion of the southern and northern sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road, this road segment will likely become part of the main arterial route through West Wicklow and will likely cater for significantly higher volumes of traffic. The condition of the road segment with segregated infrastructure for other road users and a good alignment and width indicates that this will be suitable for such use. However, an increase in the number of pedestrian crossings (controlled or uncontrolled as appropriate) may be appropriate as traffic volumes increase.

#### Recommendations for Segment ON1:

- Improve pedestrian crossing facilities along this road segment.
- Consider the improvement of junctions for cyclists along this road segment.



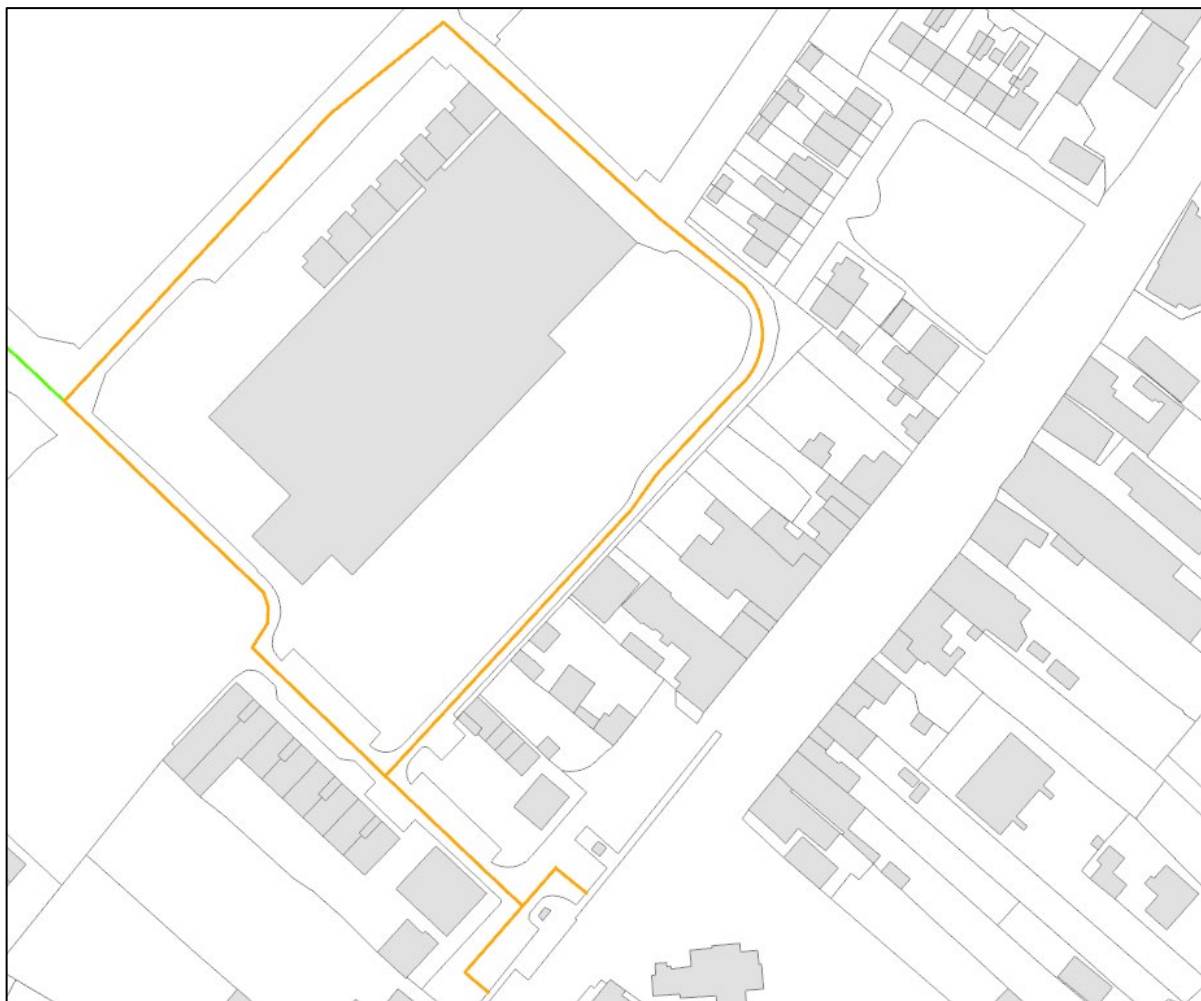
**Figure 40: Road Segment ON2.**

This road segment has a good alignment and width, and leads from a roundabout on the Blessington Inner Relief Road to the junction with the one-way system at the Newtown Centre. Segregated cyclist facilities are present, as are footpaths. The junction arrangement at Dunnes will be discussed in relation to the next road segment below. Upon completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road, this road could become the main entryway into the new town centre development for private vehicular traffic. There is a single uncontrolled crossing set back from the roundabout towards the western end of the roundabout. If there is an increase in vehicular traffic arising from the completion of the BIRR, additional crossings (uncontrolled or controlled as appropriate) could be considered.

Recommendations for Segment ON2

- Consider the improvement of pedestrian crossing facilities along this road segment.

## Segment ON3 – Newtown Centre and Market Square:



**Figure 41: Road Segment ON3**

This road segment consists of the circuit of routes around the Newtown Centre and leads through Market Square onto the N81 on Blessington Main Street. Route alignment and width are generally sufficient in terms of the location of the segment within the centre of the town. Segregated cycling infrastructure is generally not present, and footpaths are not consistently on both sides of the roads around the segment. Car parking in this area, both as large areas of surface car parking and on-street parking bays, contributes to the level of vehicular movements here. The majority of the south-western part of the circuit, and the road through Market Square, are lined by diagonal or perpendicular parking bays.

The north-western and north-eastern parts of the circuit cater for two-way vehicular traffic as far as the turn to enter the multi-storey car park, while the south-eastern and south-western parts of the circuit cater for one-way traffic only (that splits into two turning lanes at the south-western corner). The road leading from the circuit through Market Square car park onto the N81 caters to two-way traffic. There are two entrances onto the N81 from Market Square in close proximity to one another that could complicate traffic movements in the area.

Subject to further analysis, a reconfiguration of traffic flows in this area may be of benefit, as the area is intended for town centre development along narrow, pedestrian focused streets, specifically along the south-eastern part of the circuit and on areas of temporary surface car parking. The two-way road as far as the car park entrance could theoretically cater for all traffic to and from that location.

Similarly, the development of a vacant site to the immediate south of the Newtown Centre may impact on traffic levels passing through the circuit and Market Square unless the south-western segment (only) is configured for two-way traffic to enter directly from segment ON2. It is intended that a public realm scheme be progressed on Market Square that



would include the removal of car parking from the square. This could rationalise entrances onto the N81, but could also provide a perfect opportunity to reduce, or entirely eliminate, the number of cars accessing the circuit through Market Square as a through route from the N81.

Recommendations for Segment ON3:

- Improve pedestrian facilities along this segment.
- Provide cycling infrastructure (which could include mixed traffic areas as appropriate) along this segment.
- Consider using traffic management measures to reduce through traffic using this segment to access segment ON2 from the N81.
- Consider the reconfiguration of road layouts and traffic flows in this area to reduce vehicular movements along the south-eastern and south-western parts of the circuit, subject to further traffic analysis.

## Segment ON4 – Blessington Inner Relief Road to GAA Grounds:



**Figure 42: Road Segment ON4.**

This road segment has a good alignment and width. There are footpaths and segregated cycling infrastructure present along its length. This road segment is not currently a through route but provides access to the GAA Grounds, Blessington No. 1 School, and the KARE centre. A short segment (indicated in orange in the above map) leads from this segment to an unfinished road in the direction of Naas Road. Were that road to be completed, this segment could become a link road for areas zoned for development in this area and increase vehicular movements along this segment. An increase in crossing points (controlled or uncontrolled as appropriate) may be warranted in such a case.

### Recommendations for Segment ON4

- Consider improving pedestrian crossing facilities along this road segment as traffic volumes increase.

## Road Segment ON5 – Blessington Inner Relief Road to Oak Drive:



**Figure 43: Road Segment ON5.**

This road has a good alignment and width along its length. Footpaths are present consistently along the southern side of the segment, but are lacking along much of the northern side. Segregated cycling infrastructure is not present. The segment currently acts as the main link between the existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road to the N81 north of Blessington Main Street. The completion of the northern section of the BIRR will likely reduce traffic volumes along this section, however it will remain an important link for access to Blessington Business Park and municipal facilities such as the Fire Station.

### Recommendations for Segment ON5:

- Provide improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities.

### 2.3.2 Current Patterns of Road and Junction Usage

On the basis of the above discussion in relation to the various road segments, an overall picture of road and junction usage in Blessington can be developed in line with Section 5.2.1 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets. For this purpose, descriptions of the movement function of roads as per Section 3.2 of the DMURS will be utilised, as follows:

**Arterial Streets:** These are the major routes via which major centres/nodes are connected. They may also include orbital or cross metropolitan routes within cities and larger towns.

**Link Streets:** These provide the links to Arterial streets, or between Centres, Neighbourhoods, and/or Suburbs.

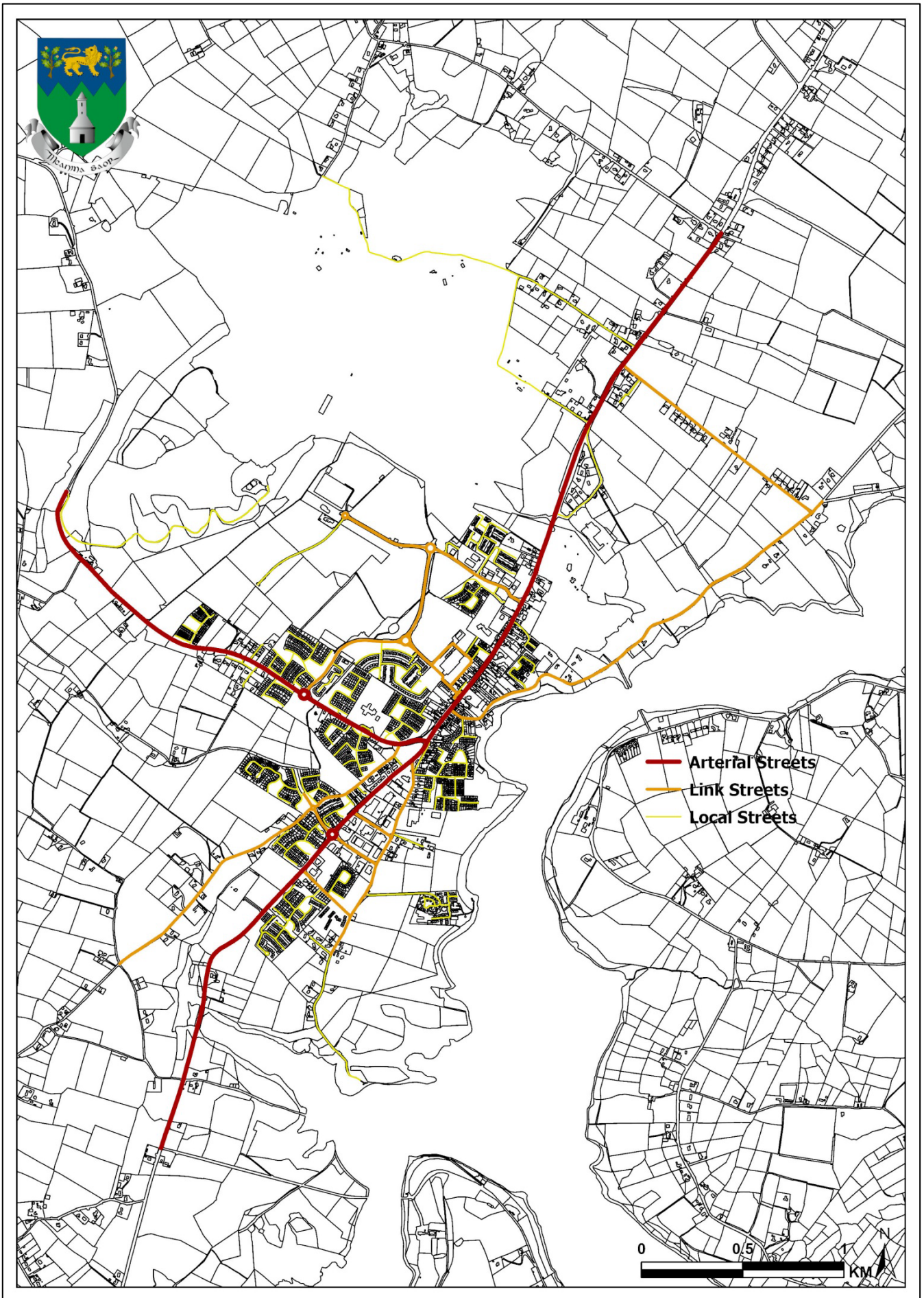
**Local Streets:** These are the streets that provide access within communities and to Arterial and Link streets.

Note that the usage of these descriptions in this document is **primarily with reference to usage of roads by private vehicular traffic**. The use of these descriptions for this purpose is considered appropriate in this case as both Table 4.1 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets, and Table 4.19 of the Cycle Design Manual indicate that pedestrian/cyclist priority reduces as a street's description increases from local to arterial. It is further noted that generally DMURS only applies within the 60km/hr zone. However, the street descriptions have been used outside of that zone to account for roads potentially becoming more urban in character in the future, and/or for illustrative clarity of the overall movement network within the settlement.

Where it is suggested below that a currently arterial street functions as a link or local street (or vice versa) this again primarily refers to a road's usage by private vehicular traffic. For example, if a reduction in through traffic along Blessington Main Street reduced its function to a 'link' or 'local' street for private vehicular traffic, it would remain a main route for public transport, a secondary route in the 2022 GDA cycle network, and a central destination for pedestrians by virtue of its town centre/retail core location. It is therefore intended that the below street descriptions, and any potential changes, serve to separate (where necessary) the movement networks of private vehicular traffic, public transport, and active travel.

As Figure 44 below indicates, currently the length of the N81 through the settlement, including Blessington Main Street, function as an arterial street, as does Naas Road along its length within the settlement. Arterial streets converge on Blessington Main Street, a movement pattern which is essentially unchanged since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The vast majority of north-south traffic movements must pass along Blessington Main street, with the existing sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road operating as a link road for traffic within the settlement, rather than significant volumes of through traffic. Troopersfield/Burgage More currently operates as a link road with multiples side roads between it and the N81, while Kilbride Road and Red Lane operate as link streets to Blessington Educate Together.

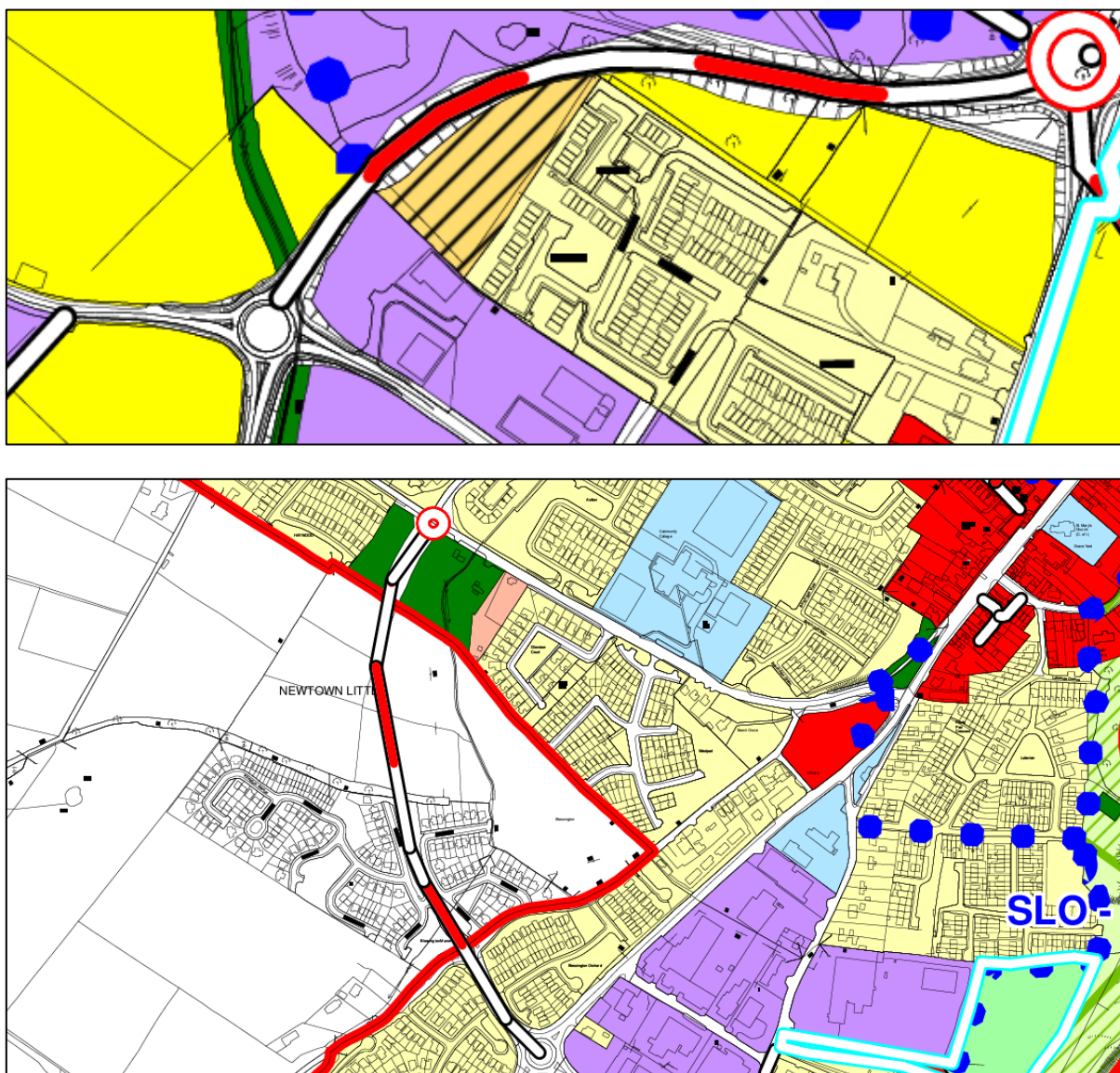




**Figure 44:** Existing movement function of the road network for private vehicular traffic in Blessington.

### 2.3.3 Review of Previous Road Objectives in the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013.

Blessington Inner Relief Road (northern and southern sections):



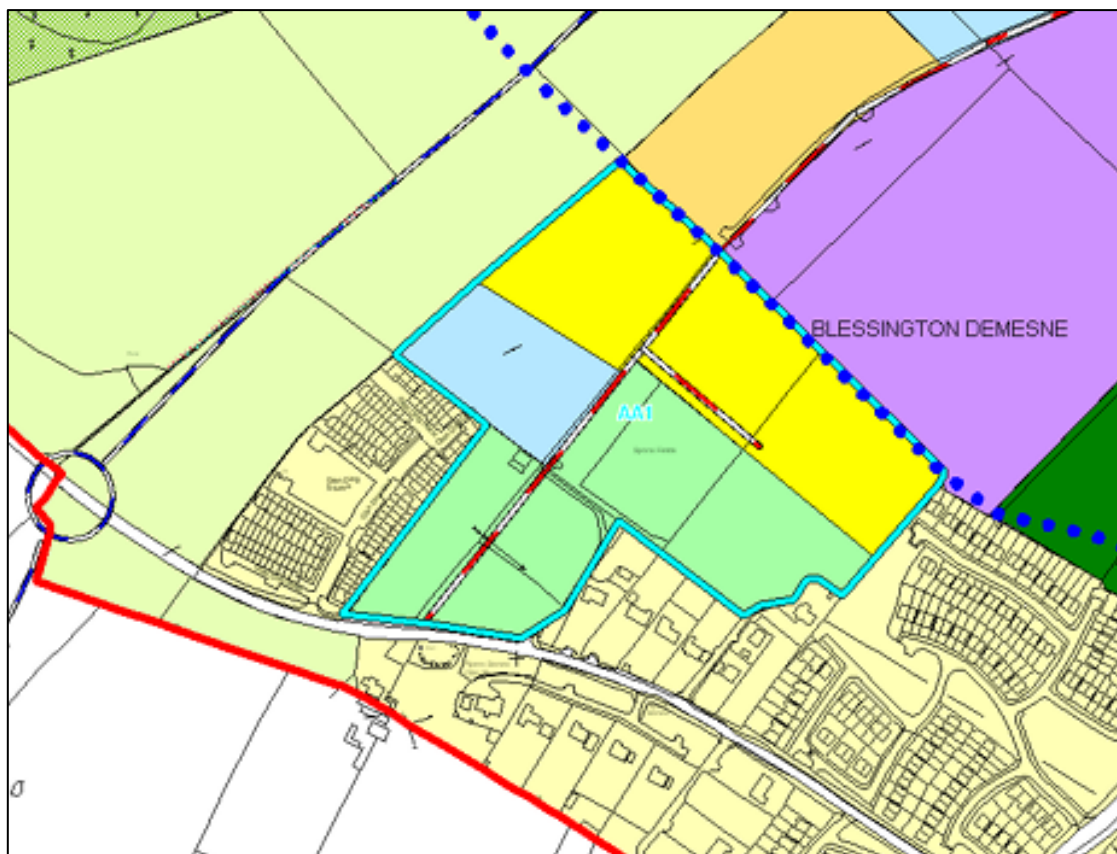
**Figure 45:** Road objectives for the northern and southern sections of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.  
Source: Blessington LAP 2013.

The completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road is the single most important road objective in the short term in Blessington. It would allow the re-routing of a considerable number of private vehicles away from Blessington Main Street and would constitute a new through-route for all north-south traffic through Blessington. The completion of the BIRR would also facilitate public realm improvements on Blessington main street with a corresponding reallocation of road space. A section of the southern segment passes out of the plan area and into Co. Kildare.

**It is recommended to retain this road objective over the next plan period.**



Road objective linking Action Area 1 to Blessington No. 1 School:



**Figure 46:** Action Area 1.

Source: Blessington LAP 2013. The road objective is also indicated on the Blessington LAP 2013 Land Use Zoning Map

The text of this Action Area includes the following:

*'Prior to the commencement of any development a through road shall be provided linking the R420 to the adjoining lands and roadway currently serving the Blessington No. 1 School and KARE Centre of a design to be agreed with Wicklow County Council Planning and Roads sections.'*

The development of this road would serve land zoned for development in the 2013 plan, and would provide a link to the GAA grounds and existing educational facilities that avoids the Blessington Inner Relief Road for traffic to and from the west of Blessington, reducing interaction with north-south traffic and reducing traffic levels on the BIRR. This road objective would also significantly improve active travel times from the south of the town to the GAA grounds and existing schools.

**It is recommended to retain this road objective over the next plan period.**

Road objectives in Action Area 2 (north of Avon Resort):



**Figure 47:** Action Area 2.

**Source:** Blessington LAP 2013. The road objective is also indicated on the Blessington LAP 2013 Land Use Zoning Map.

The text of this Action Area includes the following:

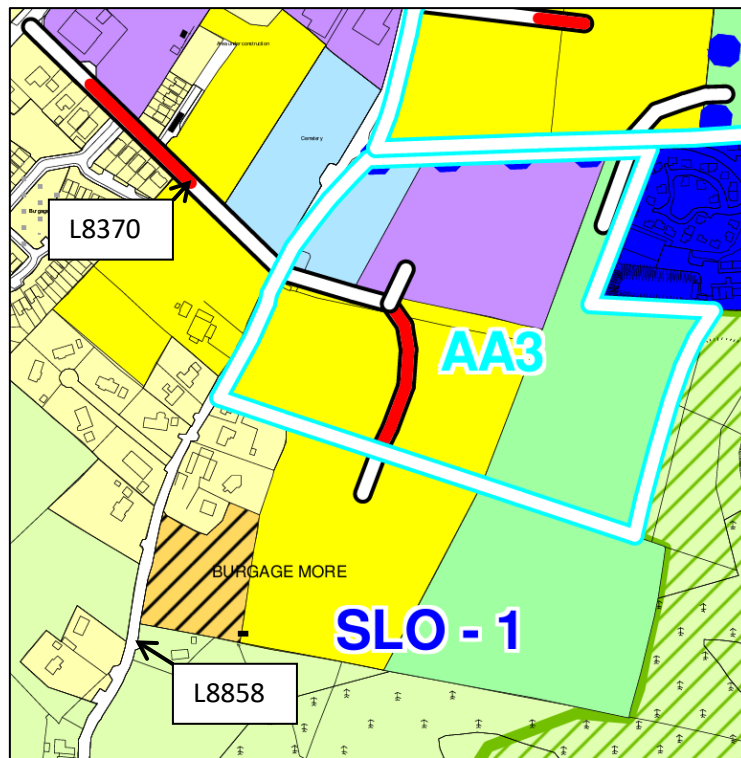
*'This Action Area Plan shall provide for two main vehicular access points off the L-8858. One entrance shall serve the residential element of the Action Area while the second entrance shall provide access to the Active Open Space lands to the rear.'*

The L-8858 Troopersfield/Burgage More road forms part of both the existing and proposed Blessington Greenway. The provision of two additional junctions in close proximity to one another, accessing the same action area, could unnecessarily increase conflict points between turning/exiting traffic and greenway users. Furthermore, the northern proposed access route passes along a linear tree stand that has been identified in the accompanying Blessington Green Infrastructure Audit. The access point into the residential zoned land could be closer to the road leading to the 'sturdy pipe' roundabout and would encourage its use rather than other side roads with priority junctions onto the N81. On this basis, the southern access point into residential lands should cater for all those entering this Action Area. This road objective could be further reconfigured to link to the road objective in Action Area 3, such that a new U-shaped link street could be provide allowing for access to both actions areas from the 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout and further reduce road traffic on both the L-8858 and the L-8370.

**It is recommended that the northern access route into Action Area 2 be omitted, while the southern access point is retained as an SLO access requirement over the next plan period and combined with access requirements in the adjoining Action Area 3(former designation)/SLO6.**



Road objectives in Action Area 3 (Text-based objective, not shown on map):



**Figure 48:** Action Area 3 and associated road objectives.

**Source:** Blessington LAP 2013 Land Use Map.

The text of this Action Area includes the following:

*'To provide for junction improvements at the intersection point between the L8370 and the L8858 and a vehicular entrance sufficiently wide to cater for traffic movements through the proposed residential and employment lands*

*Access to the Active Open Space lands shall be provided off the L-8858 through the site or alternatively off the existing avenue serving the Avon Ri Resort subject to agreement with relevant owner(s) of this roadway.*

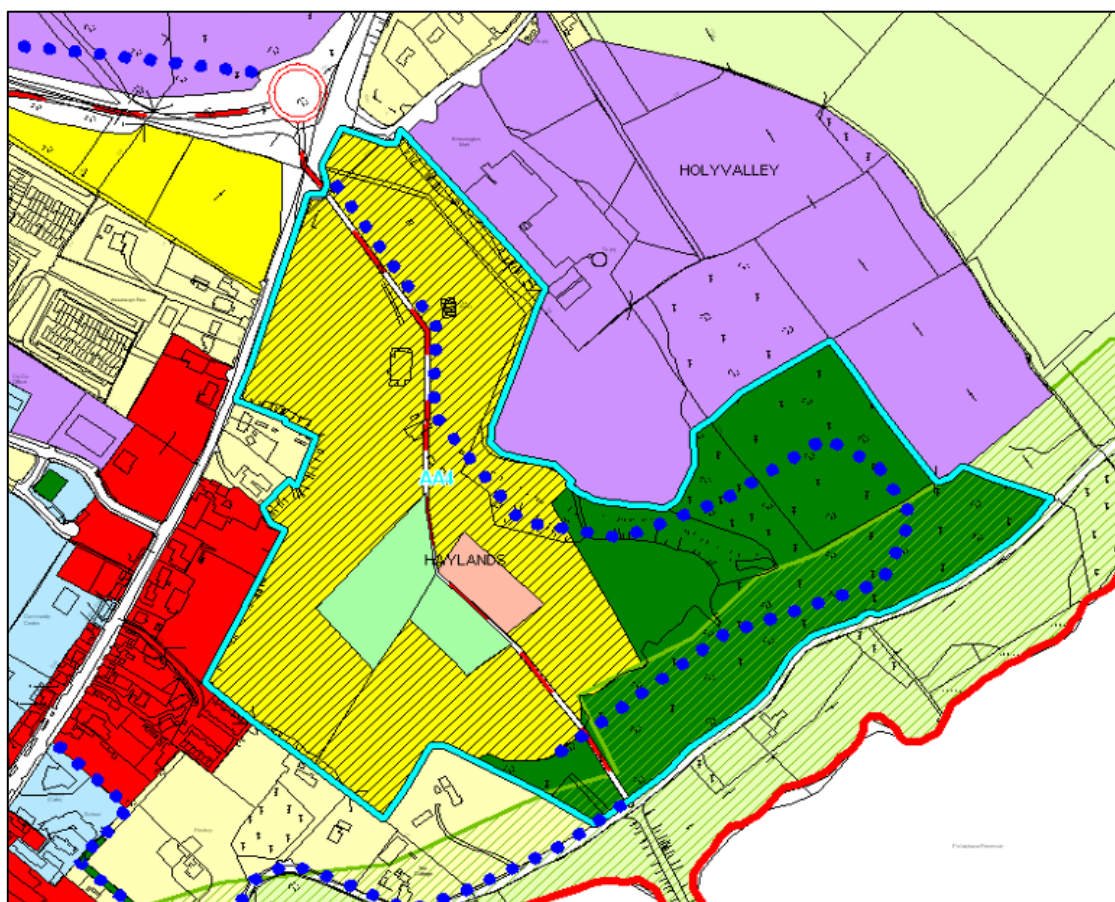
*The design and layout of the proposed residential element of the Action Area shall facilitate a through access into the residential lands to the immediate south, with the housing units to the extreme east of this zoning being orientated in a manner that provides passive surveillance of the adjoining Active Open Space lands.'*

Junction improvements at the intersection point between the L8370 and the L8858, alongside the vehicular entrance into the proposed residential and employment lands in the 2013 LAP, have been consented under a recent Local Authority housing scheme under WCC Reg. Ref. 21/1404. This also included the facilitation of a through access into residential lands to the immediate south. Construction has yet to commence. As described above, this road objective could be further reconfigured to link to the road objective in Action Area 2, such that a new U-shaped link street could be provide allowing for access to both actions areas from the 'Sturdy Pipe' roundabout and further reduce road traffic on both the L-8858 and the L-8370.

In terms of traffic management measures, in the short term the residential land to the east of Burgage More lane will likely have to use this road as a through road to avoid excessive conflict with greenway users, until such time as an offline greenway option is provided, or when the full objective through Action Areas 2 and 3 is delivered, at which point traffic management measures could potentially reduce the importance of the L-8370 such that the proposed and existing residential areas in Burgage More are primarily accessed by the new link street.

The improvement of this junction is required and on that basis of the consent for the construction of these road improvements, it is recommended to retain these objectives over the next plan period and combine with access requirements in the adjoining Action Area 2(former designation)/SLO5.

Road objective through Action Area 4 (Doran's Pit):



**Figure 49:** Action Area 4.

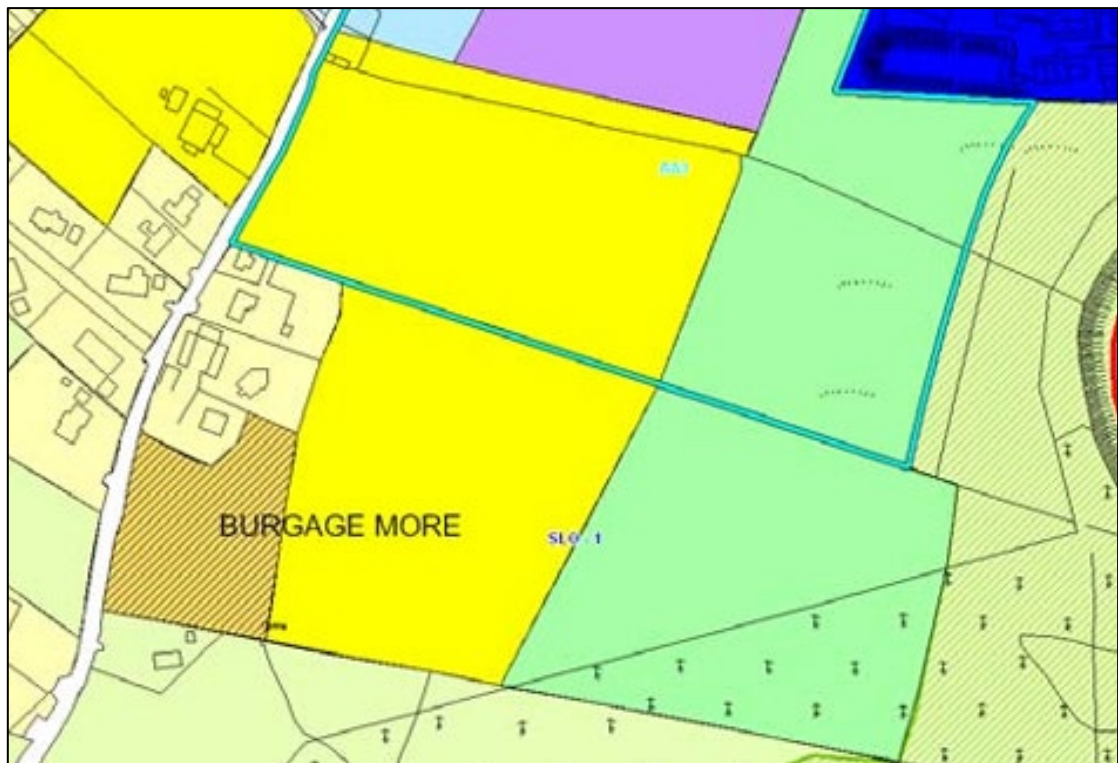
**Source:** Blessington Local Area Plan 2013. The road objective is also indicated on the Blessington LAP 2013 Land Use Zoning Map.

The text of this Action Area includes the following: *'The development of this action area shall be contingent on the provision of a through road linking the N81 directly to the L-4371 (Kilbride Road) and the L-4372 (Blessington Bridge). No residential development shall take place until a programme for the delivery and completion of this road from the N81 to the L-4371 has been agreed with the Planning and Roads Sections of Wicklow County Council. The provision of a continuous footpath along the L-4372 from Blessington Bridge to the subject lands will also be required.'*

The provision of such a route would, in conjunction with the completed Blessington Inner Relief Road, allow the bypassing of Blessington Main Street by all traffic accessing Blessington Educate Together, and those using Kilbride Road as an alternative to the N81.

**It is recommended to retain this road objective over the next plan period.**

Access requirements set out in Specific Local Objective 1:



**Figure 50:** Specific Local Objective 1.

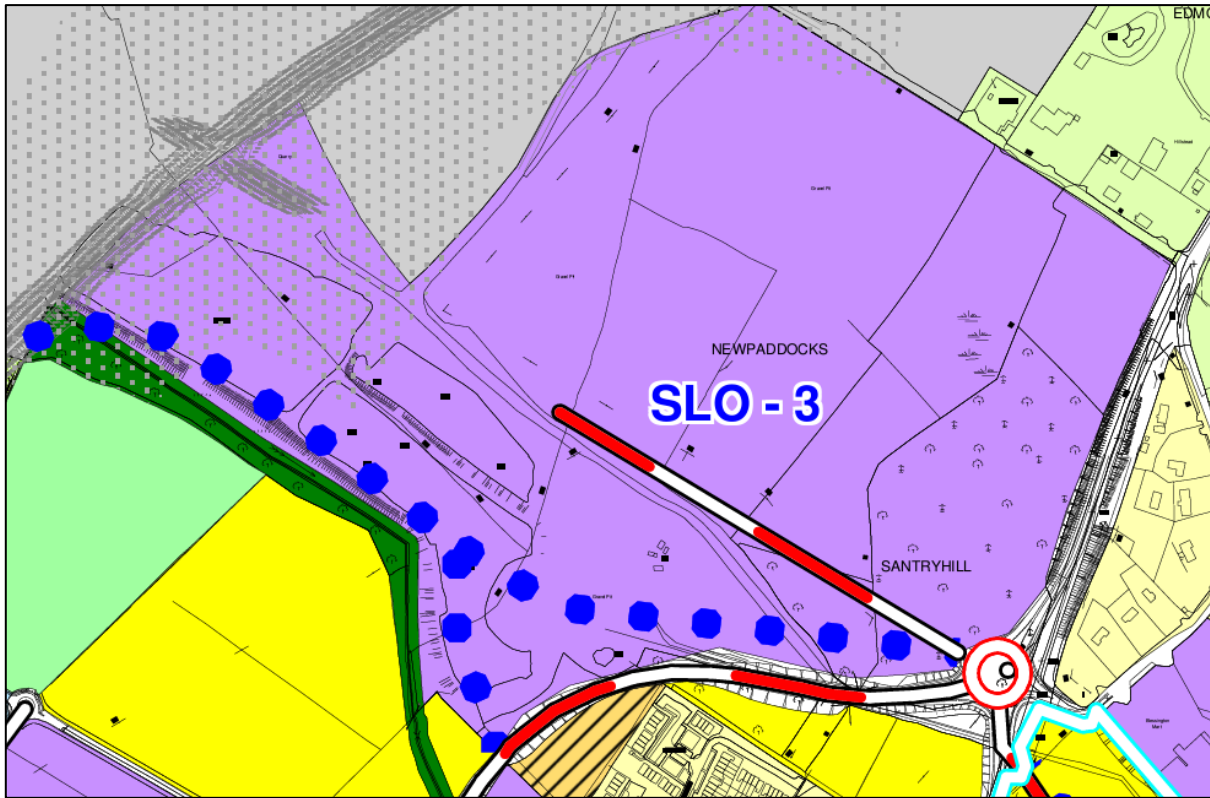
**Source:** Blessington LAP 2013.

The text of SLO1 sets out that the main point of access be provided through Action Area 3.

This would ensure that the development of these lands does not increase traffic along Burgage More Lane, which is narrow and rural in character and should retain that character rather than being significantly widened.

**It is recommended to retain this road objective over the next plan period.**

Indicative Road Line in SLO3:



**Figure 51:** Indicative Road Line through SLO3.

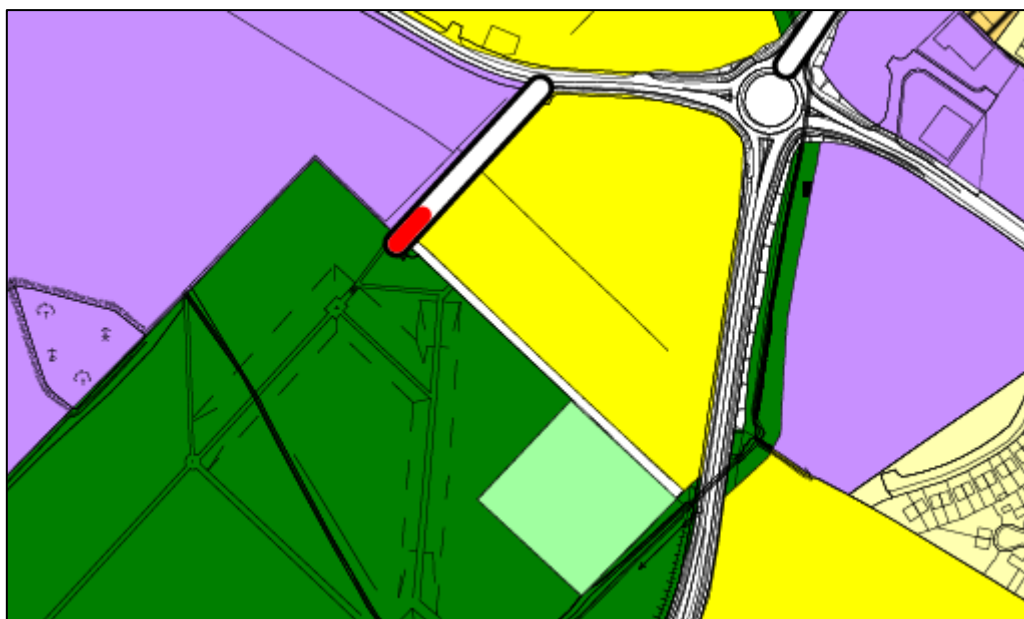
**Source:** Blessington Local Area Plan 2013.

This indicative road line may not work well with the current design configuration for the future 4-armed roundabout. It may be preferable to omit this road line, with access arrangements described in text to be further assessed at development management stage. There will be a junction onto the northern section of the BIRR that leads into this area. This road may be suitable for access to the some of the employment area, subject to the safety of cyclists and pedestrians remaining paramount in any proposed junction upgrade/design. The majority of vehicular traffic, especially HGV traffic, should ideally access the SLO before entering the built up area/BIRR (when coming from the north). Northbound traffic will have to traverse the BIRR to this northern entrance until the N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross Road Improvement Scheme is completed.

**It is recommended to omit this indicative road line for the next plan period, but include text access requirements for the majority of HGV traffic to access the from the north, away from the built up area.**



Indicative road line to north-east of town park:



**Figure 52:** Indicative Road Line adjacent to town park.

**Source:** Blessington Local Area Plan 2013.

Permitted developments provide for a road along this indicative route, alongside a separate pedestrian green link into the town park. Construction has been largely completed on road accesses in this area, therefore this does not need to be maintained.

**It is recommended to omit this road objective over the next plan period.**

On the basis of the above discussion, road objectives recommended for the new plan are as follows:

#### Blessington Road Objectives

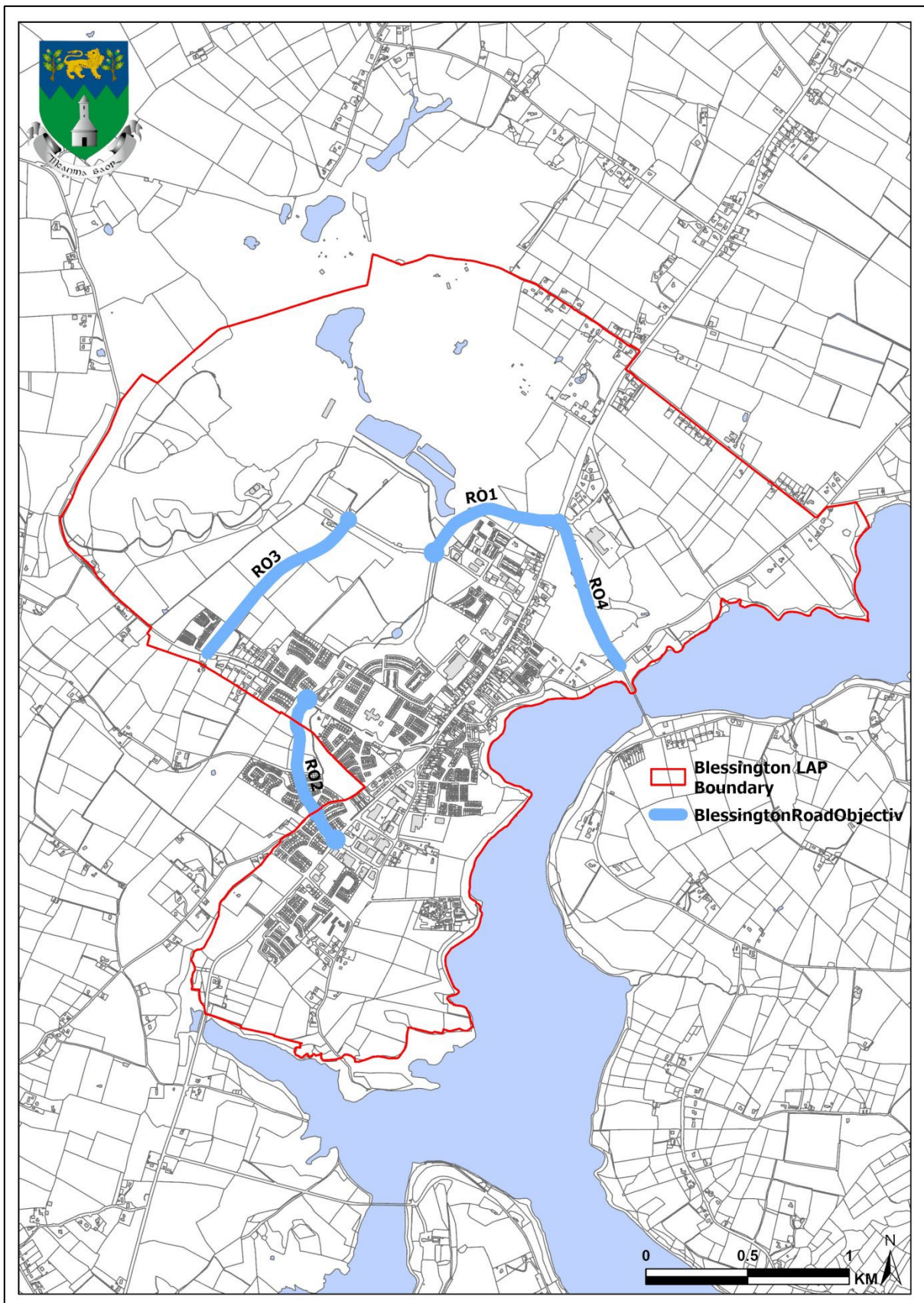
Map Label/No.	Description
RO1	Arterial road constituting the northern section of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.
RO2	Arterial road constituting the southern section of the Blessington Inner Relief Road.
RO3	Link road between Naas Road and the GAA Grounds.
RO4	Link road from N81 to Knockieran Bride through Doran's Put.

Further access requirements to be integrated into Specific Local Objectives include the following:

#### Blessington SLO Access Requirements (not mapped – to be included in SLO text and concept plans)

Map Label/No.	Description
SLO Access 1	Link road serving Action Areas 2 & 3 in Burgage More.
SLO Access 2	Section of link road serving eastern part of Action Area 2.
SLO Access 3	Local road serving proposed residential areas within and to the south of Action Area 3.
SLO Access 4	Entrance to large employment lands by most traffic/HGVs by a northern access point

The listing of SLO requirements above does not preclude the identification of further Specific Local Objective access requirements in the local area plan written statement, including if further SLOs are to be identified.



**Figure 53:** Recommended Road Objectives/SLO Access Requirements in Blessington. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

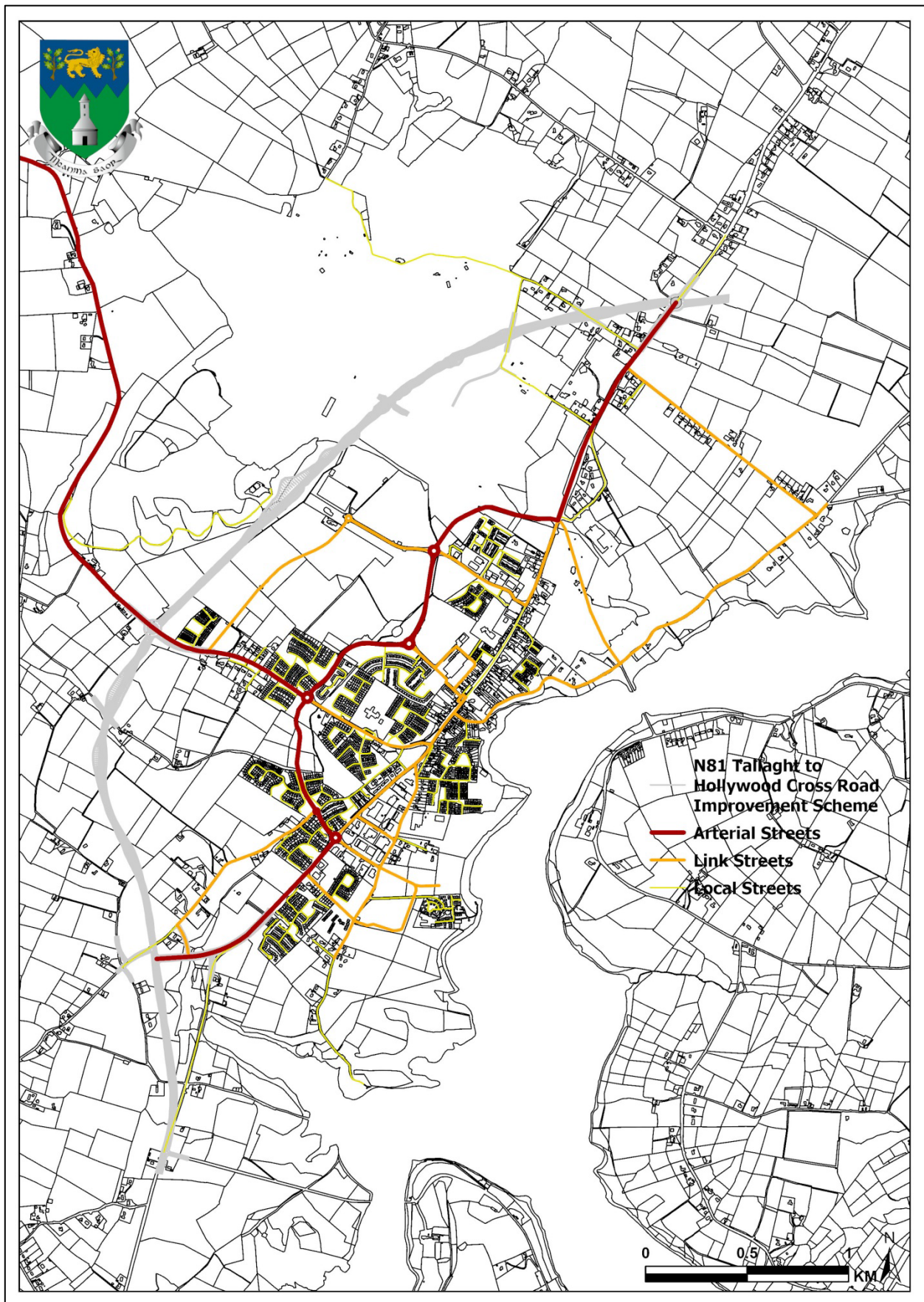
#### 2.3.4 The effect of retained road objectives on the usage of the road network in Blessington:

While many road objectives relate only to access to specific land parcels, the completion of other road objectives carried forward into the next plan period would have transformative effects on the movement of private vehicular traffic within Blessington. Namely, the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road and the road objective through Doran's Pit would result in the usage of the road network as shown in Figure 54 below. The BIRR could constitute the arterial streets through the centre of the settlement, and the Doran's Pit road could constitute a substantial link street around the north-east of the settlement, allowing private vehicular traffic to travel both north-south and east-west without passing along Blessington Main Street. This would in effect also constitute a bus priority measure along Blessington Main Street, as the decrease in traffic volumes improves bus travel times along the street. It would further facilitate the improvement of the public realm along Blessington Main Street.

However, despite this transformative change in the road network, individual drivers may decide to continue to use Blessington Main Street as the arterial street. Similarly, there will remain the possibility that sections of Blessington Main Street (and many other routes in the settlement) remain functioning as link streets, e.g. a driver coming from Dunnes, entering Blessington Main Street via Market Square, and travelling to residential areas on Kilbride road or Red Lane via the existing junction with Kilbride road. The new link road access in Burgage More would encourage access to the area via the Sturdy Pipe roundabout, however all of the roads in the area could still be potentially used as link roads.

The N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross scheme would not substantially change the function of the roads beyond this situation but would reduce traffic volumes considerably within the settlement. Rather, the completion of the N81 bypass would result in the relevant sections of the Naas Road and the northern and southern sections of the existing N81 remaining the arterial streets **to the bypass**, rather than to other destinations (Naas, Dublin, etc.).





**Figure 54:** Potential movement function of the road network for private vehicular traffic in Blessington upon completion of the above road objectives. The N81 Improvement Scheme is shown as completed here. Note conceptual access layouts in Burgage More with U-shaped link road.



### 2.3.5 Other New Roads

It is considered that the level of development over the next plan period does not required additional standalone road objectives/indicative road lines beyond those recommended for retention from the previous Blessington Local Area Plan 2013. It would be premature to indicate indicative road lines to serve lands that are not prioritised for intensive development over the next plan period.

However, above discussions in relation to the usage and function of roads in the settlement indicate that there may be a need to include objectives in relation to specific locations for traffic management measures. The development of such traffic management measures could incentivise the use of the road network according to the most optimal/desired function of individual road segments. Such an approach would be supported by Measure PLAN9 of the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042 and Section 3.1.4 of the Cycle Design Manual.

Traffic management measures could refer to a wide variety of interventions of varying permeability/restriction. The exact details and locations of traffic management measures would be developed as part of any project-level design, with associated traffic analysis and modelling, as part of either standalone projects for the delivery of a specific objective or as part of wider public realm/active travel/road safety improvement schemes. Such measures could include carriageway narrowing/road space reallocation, junction tightening, one-way systems, chicanes, priority/signalised shuttle systems, the rationalisation/closure of unnecessary junctions, or indeed filtered permeability measures such as bus gates or cycle/pedestrian only barriers where appropriate.

Traffic management measures may be possible at the following locations (subject to any changes to the LAP/settlement boundary):

Location No.	Road Segment	Purpose
TM1	Segment N2 (Blessington Main Street)	Reduce through traffic along Blessington Main Street in conjunction with the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road. This traffic management measure could also be achieved as part of the delivery other measures located at junctions with Blessington Main Street, e.g. TM2, TM6, TM9.
TM2	Junction of Segments N2 (Blessington Main Street) & LP2 (Kilbride Road)	Reduce through traffic along Kilbride Road/Blessington Main Street in conjunction with the completion of the Doran's Pit road objective.
TM3	Segment LS2 (Blessington Mart/Old N81)	Encourage the use of the southern junction with the N81 (to be upgraded to a roundabout as part of the BIRR).
TM4	Segment LS3 (Old Ballymore Road/Kilmalum Road)	Reduce through traffic and allow for road space reallocation – one-way system proposed by the Blessington Pedestrian and Cyclist Road improvement Scheme
TM5	Segment LS4 (Rockypool Villas/Mountain View/Rockypool Crescent)	Reduce through traffic and improve junction legibility by closing the northern junction with the N81 on Rockypool Villas – as proposed in the Blessington Main Street N81 Road Safety Improvement Scheme
TM6	Segment LS5 (Troopersfield/Burgage More from N81 to Burgage Cemetery), possibly at junction with northern road of Blessington Industrial Estate.	Reduce through traffic conflicting with greenway traffic along this road segment. Discourage the use of this road segment to access the northern road of Blessington Industrial Estate, access from N81 preferred.
TM7	Segment LS7 (Burgage More to N81)	Encourage traffic accessing the Avon to use the 'Study Pipe' roundabout. Junction tightening is proposed in the Blessington Gateway Road Safety Improvement Scheme.
TM8	Segment ON3 (New town centre and Market Square)	Reduce through traffic accessing the N81 via Market Square in conjunction with a public realm project on Market Square
TM9	Segment LS5 (Troopersfield/Burgage More from N81 to Burgage Cemetery)	Discourage through traffic turning into the road segment immediately in front of Burgage Cemetery from a possible new

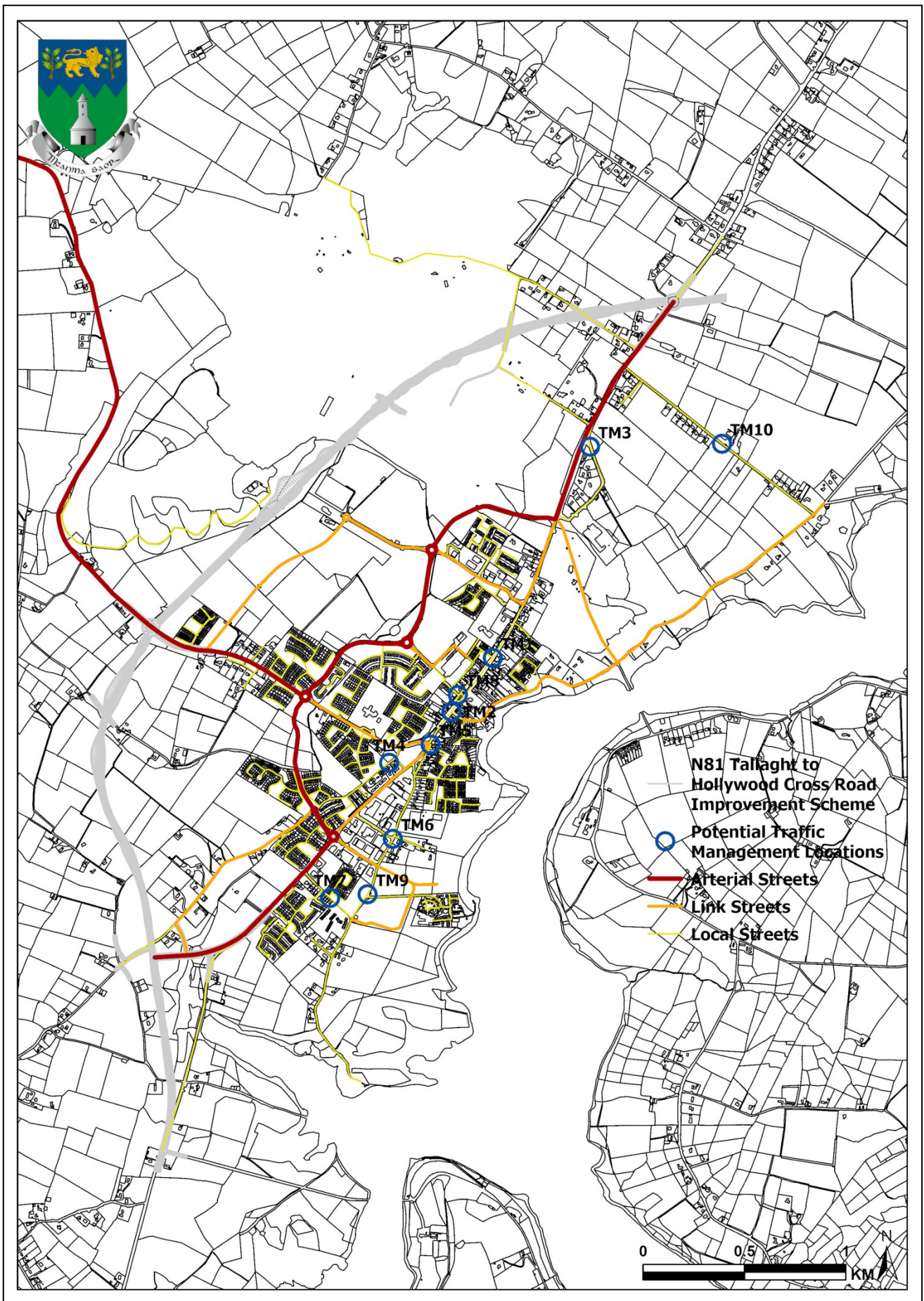
		U-shaped link road, either at a point along this segment or at either junction with the new link road. The staggering of this road at the junction with Segment LS7 is proposed as part of the Part 8 development at Burgage More.
TM10	Segment LS1 (Red Lane)	Reduce through traffic along Red Lane and Blessington Educate Together in conjunction with the completion of the Doran's Pit road objective.

Note that where traffic management measures refer to a road segment or junction location, mapped points below are illustrative only and refer to an entire road segment/vicinity of a junction. Furthermore, the listing of traffic management measures here does not infer that other similar measures proposed as part of any individual project are not warranted, e.g. signalised shuttle systems as proposed as part of the Blessington eGreenway.

### **2.3.6 The effect of traffic management objectives on the usage of the road network in Blessington:**

The implementation of the above traffic management measures would encourage the use of the road network in Blessington by private vehicular traffic as illustrated in Figure 55 below.

Blessington Main Street between the junction with Naas Road and the junction with Oak Drive would function, insofar as is possible, as a local street for access to the premises located along it, with through traffic passing around it along Blessington Inner Relief Road and Doran's Pit. Traffic passing through Market Square onto Blessington Main Street would be minimised or, subject to the appropriate traffic analysis, prevented from doing so. The northern section of Old Ballymore/Kilmalum Road would function as a local street, while the number of roads from the N81 into Burgage More that operate as link streets would be reduced.



**Figure 55:** Potential movement function of the road network for private vehicular traffic in Blessington upon completion of road objectives and traffic management measures. The N81 Improvement Scheme is shown as completed here. Note conceptual access layouts in Burgage More with U-shaped link road.

### **2.3.7 Recommended Objectives of the LAP for roads and junctions**

The overall objective of the Local Area Plan in relation to the usage of the road network in Blessington should be the separation (where necessary) of the various networks of movement for private vehicles, public transport, and active travel.

The reconfiguration of the pattern of usage of the road network by private vehicular traffic (as described above) should be an aim of the Local Area Plan, with a view towards reducing the importance of Blessington Main Street as an arterial route for private vehicular traffic through the settlement. This could include objectives in relation to the outlined traffic management measures or references to recommendations made on individual road segments above.

In assessing the zoning of land for development, regard should be had to the effect of such zonings on the continued importance of the operation of the N81 as a national secondary route serving West Wicklow and East Carlow.

The Local Area Plan should include objectives to support the completion of the Blessington Inner Relief Road as the most urgent requirement for the road network over the next plan period. Objectives should also be included supporting the N81 Tallaght to Hollywood Cross Road Improvement Scheme.

The Local Area Plan should include road objectives as noted to be retained above in this document, and where necessary can outline access requirements to greenfield/significant infill sites on a case-by-case basis within the written statement and relevant accompanying maps.



## **2.4 Car Parking**

There are currently several areas of freely accessible car parking within the settlement of Blessington. These include:

### Blessington Main Street - c. 188 spaces:

Perpendicular car parking is present on both sides of the street. Traffic movements in and out of these spaces can cause conflicts with traffic traversing the carriageway. Parking surveys (which included Market Square) have indicated that the majority of car parking spaces (56%) along the street were used for longer term parking of three hours or more, with a higher rate of 66% of spaces used for that purpose at the southern end of the street. In total, 122 No. vehicles were parked for longer than three hours at the time of the survey. Many vehicles (c. 42) parked for longer periods arrived between 7am-10am and left between 4pm-7pm, indicative of commuters parking on the street to access public transport. Notably, even when accounting for illegally parked cars, the parking survey indicated that there were always enough spaces available, with a peak saturation of 82% of spaces occupied around midday.

### Blessington New Town Centre (multi-storey) – c. 307 spaces (of which only c. 100 accessible on ground floor):

This two storey-building was constructed alongside the new town centre and includes car parking on both levels and an additional roof level uncovered car parking area. However, at the time of writing only the ground floor is in use, with no access possible to the upper floors. Permission was previously granted for an additional third floor extension onto this car park, however this does not appear to have been commenced or constructed. No parking survey results are available along this area.

### Blessington New Town Centre (surface) – c. 134 spaces:

A large area in front of Dunnes is in use as surface car parking. However, a significant portion of this area is permitted only on a temporary basis (the southern end of the car parking area – c. 70 spaces). The northern end of this car parking area is poorly surfaced with gravel – c. 64 spaces. No parking survey results are available along this area.

### Blessington New Town Centre (street parking) – c. 83 spaces:

Diagonal and perpendicular parking is present along the street that leads from Market Square to the Newtown Centre and onwards to the Blessington Inner Relief Road, with c. 60 spaces along this street as far as the southwest corner of the Newtown Centre. An additional c. 23 parking spaces are present to the rear of the Newtown Centre serving a series of commercial units. No parking survey results are available along this area.

### Market Square - c.30 spaces:

Market Square is currently used as surface car parking. An area in front of the Credit Union has been paved in recent years, which divides the car parking area into a northern and southern section. There are three entrances/exits onto Blessington Main Street in close proximity to one another that are poorly defined and have poor visibility along Blessington Main Street. The above parking survey for Blessington Main Street included Market Square and indicated that long-term parking was occurring in the area.

### **2.4.1 Car Parking Improvements**

In light of the above discussion in relation to active travel and the usage of the road network by private vehicular traffic, it will be the aim to reclaim Market Square as a pedestrian-focused/priority area with a high quality public realm, with a reduction in through traffic along Blessington Main Street. The Blessington Main Street N81 Road Safety Improvement Scheme will likely involve the reconfiguration or rationalisation of car parking in the area, while a public realm scheme as proposed under the Blessington Town Centre First Plan would include the removal of car parking spaces.

### Commuter parking:

Noting that long term commuter parking is an issue along Blessington Main Street and Market Square, and that car parking in these areas was not recorded as reaching saturation in these areas, the provision of a park and ride elsewhere for those wishing to transfer to public transport would free up many spaces and also reduce the effect of the reconfiguration of any such parking.

The Blessington Local Area Plan 2013 included an area of c. 0.75 ha for this purpose to the south of the town. It is proposed to retain the concept but to reconfigure the zoning in this area such that the land reserved for future park and ride is located immediately east of the WWTP, potentially a less developable site for other uses, such as residential use given proximity to the utility installation.



**Figure 56:** P&R land use zoning objective under the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013.

#### New town centre and Market Square surface car parking:

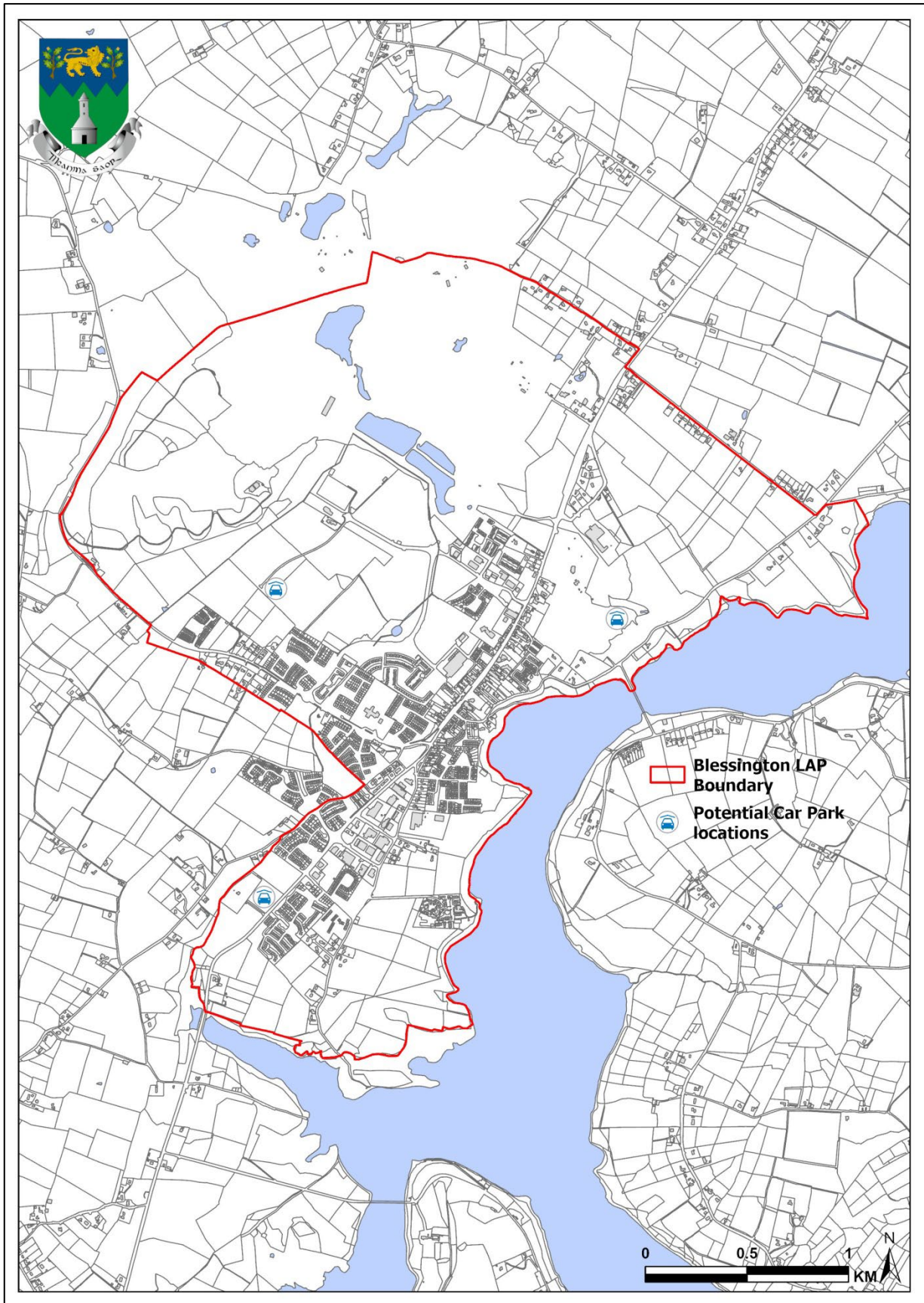
The large areas of surface car parking in the new town centre do not comprise an efficient and optimal use of town centre serviced land, and therefore it is identified in the Town Centre First Plan that these sites be considered opportunities for town centre infill, with indicative layouts included in the Blessington TCF. As such, it is intended that this area of surface car parking be removed over the plan period, as would areas of parking on Market Square and surroundings areas as part of any public realm scheme. However, there are c. 207 car parking spaces currently unused in the upper two-storeys of the multi-storey car park. This could accommodate the entirety of the expected loss of car parking in this area were the multi-storey car park to be utilised to its full capacity. On that basis, it is unlikely that compensatory parking would be required elsewhere in relation to Market Square and the new town centre surface car parking, subject to further analysis at project-stage.

#### eGreenway parking:

The proposed Blessington eGreenway could have significant implications on car parking within Blessington. A Traffic and Transport Assessment, as submitted to An Bord Pleanála as further information under ABP Reg. Ref. 312479, sets out the parking strategy in relation to the Greenway. 401 No. car parking spaces are identified as currently existing throughout the area subject of that application, which extends well beyond the plan boundary. Within the boundary of the Blessington Local Area Plan, only 1 No. location has been indicated, that being 27 spaces in the vicinity of the Greenway Hub (former HSE building). This indicates that the use of parking spaces along Blessington Main Street or in other parts of the settlement are not intended to be used by those travelling by private vehicle to use the eGreenway. An additional 100 No. car parking spaces, and 6 No. bus parking spaces, are proposed to be provided as part of the eGreenway. These are not within the plan boundary, with the closest being on the eastern end of Knockieran Bridge, with an additional 50 No.

car parking spaces and the above 6 No. bus parking spaces. The assessment concludes that sufficient car parking is proposed within the development.

In order to future proof this project, it is considered prudent that an additional area of car parking be included in proximity to the proposed Blessington eGreenway within the plan area, to account for any unforeseen usage level on the greenway. While the potential Park & Ride in the vicinity of the Waste Water Treatment Plant may provide overflow parking on weekends, this car park is primary aimed at long-term commuter parking and may not provide adequate overflow during work days. In relation to proposed road objectives in the vicinity of the proposed eGreenway, the road objective through Doran's Pit leading to Knockieran Bridge would provide the perfect location for additional parking, with access possible along that road objective to a point along the Greenway at the western end of the bridge. This could also provide car parking for accessing potential recreational wooded areas within a redeveloped Doran's Pit. The submitted Traffic and Transport Assessment estimates peak weekend daily arrivals of 765 No. cars, distributed over 10 No. car parks in the area intended for use by greenway users, i.e. c. 77 per car park. It is suggested to provide this number of car parking spaces again at Doran's pit, which should be increased to c. 100 car parking spaces to account for the use of that car park by others wishing to access nearby wooded areas.



**Figure 57:** Potential Location of additional car parking in Blessington (Public Transport/Greenway/Leisure). Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

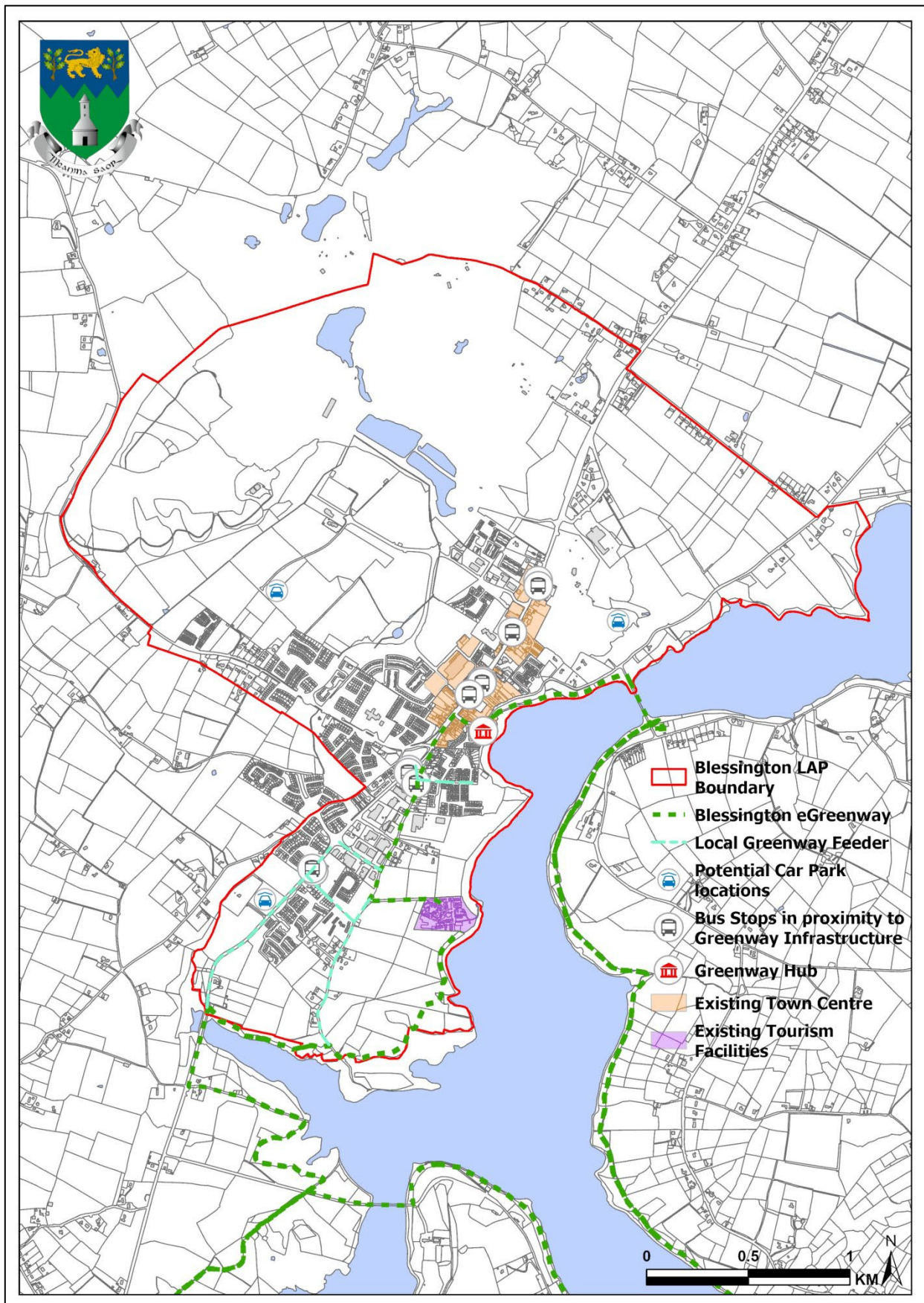


## 2.5 Blessington eGreenway Infrastructure

In light of the above discussion, a transport strategy for supporting infrastructure for the Blessington eGreenway can be developed. This would include:

- Blessington Town Centre as the primary service centre for greenway users.
- The former HSE building as a Greenway Hub/Tourist Office.
- 2 No. areas of additional car parking to cater to any overspill parking requirements
  - In the vicinity of Blessington Waste Water Treatment Plant, primarily to cater for longer term commuter parking but may provide overspill parking on weekends
  - In the vicinity of Doran's Pit to cater for greenway overspill parking and those wishing to access adjacent wooded areas.
- Bus stops throughout the settlement of Blessington with a variety of public transport options.
- Tourism facilities in Burgage More in the vicinity of the existing/proposed Greenway. These facilities would also be located along potential future off-road cycle/pedestrian routes to the east.

The above supporting infrastructure can be illustrated as follows:



**Figure 58:** Blessington eGreenway supporting infrastructure with existing town centre and tourism facilities. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

### 3.0 Transport Strategy and Objectives

#### 3.1 Active Travel

In light of the information and analysis set out in Section 2 of this report, the development strategy for the plan period and beyond with respect to Active Travel is:

- New development shall be focused on locations with the highest quality existing pedestrian and cycling infrastructure, in particular in the built up centre of Blessington.

To ensure that no new development occurs that is not or cannot be well connected to existing pedestrian and cycling networks and in particular to rigorously implement objective CPO 12.5 of the Wicklow County Development Plan:

**CPO 12.5** *New significant residential or mixed use development proposals shall be required to be accompanied by an 'Accessibility Report' that demonstrates that new residents / occupants / employees (including children and those with special mobility needs) will be able to safely access through means other than the private car (a) local services including shops, schools, health care and recreational facilities, and (b) public transport services.*

*Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity/quality of existing or planned linkages.*

- To provide for such land use zoning and development objectives that deliver opportunities to divert vehicular traffic from Blessington Town Centre thus providing for major public realm, walking and cycling infrastructure improvements at these locations including but not limited to:
  - Enhancement, including widening, of all footpaths serving the area zoned as 'Town Centre' and creation of new hard and soft landscaped urban spaces for pedestrians to congregate and recreate as space allows; this may include a public realm scheme on Market Square.
  - Enhancement management / control of space devoted to vehicles and car parking on all main routes through the cores of this centre.
- To significantly improve pedestrian infrastructure along all roads within Blessington prioritising all locations within 15 minutes' walk times of school and public transport services.
- To significantly improve cycling infrastructure along all main routes (regional roads, primary local primary roads and other distributor roads) within Blessington and linking to identified potential Park & Ride locations. (See proposed Blessington Cycle Network above).
- To support the delivery of the Blessington eGreenway and associated supporting infrastructure throughout the settlement of Blessington.
- To continue to work with the transport agencies, in particular the NTA, to develop and implement 'pathfinder', 'safe routes to schools' and other active travel schemes.

#### 3.2 Public transport

In light of the information and analysis set out in Section 2 of this report, the development strategy for the plan period and beyond with respect to Public Transport is:

- New development shall be focused on locations with access to existing or committed new public transport services, defined by those locations within 15 minute walk time of public transport services.
- To ensure that no new development occurs that is not or cannot be well connected to public transport services, to rigorously implement objective CPO 12.5 of the Wicklow County Development Plan:

**CPO 12.5** *New significant residential or mixed use development proposals shall be required to be accompanied by an 'Accessibility Report' that demonstrates that new residents / occupants / employees (including children and those with special mobility needs) will be able to safely access through means other than the private car*

*(a) local services including shops, schools, health care and recreational facilities, and  
(b) public transport services.*

*Where deficiencies are identified, proposals will be required to either rectify the deficiency, or suitably restrict or phase the development in accordance with the capacity/quality of existing or planned linkages.*

- To support all agencies in the delivery of improvement public transport services in Blessington.

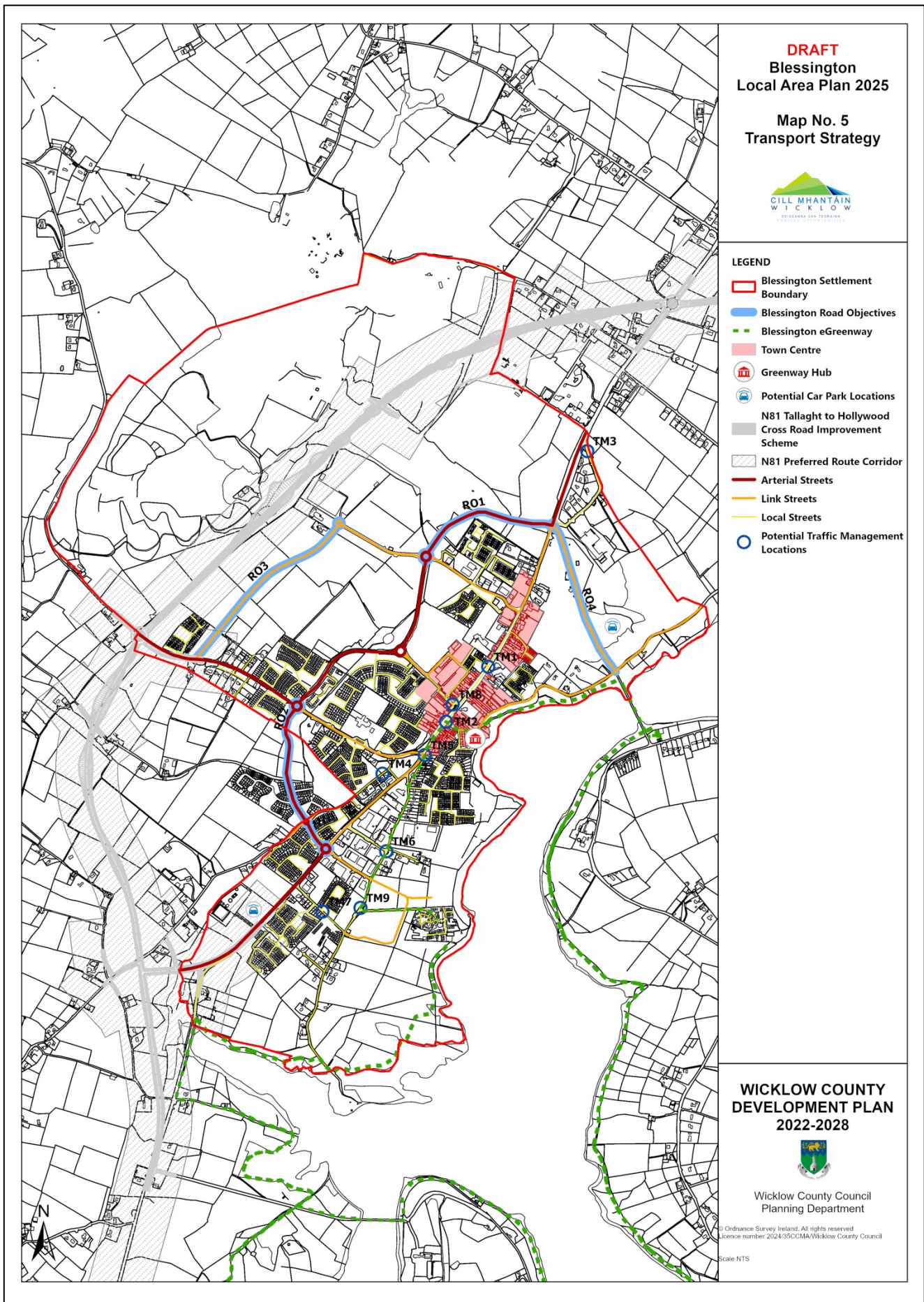
### **3.3 Road Improvements**

#### **3.3.1 Existing Roads**

##### National Roads

- To allow the N81 to play the intended strategic role in catering for inter-urban and inter-regional transport requirements that will serve economic competitiveness and regional accessibility by providing faster, more efficient and safer access to and from large towns in West Wicklow and Carlow.
- The overall objective of the Local Area Plan in relation to the usage of the road network in Blessington should be the separation (where necessary) of the various networks of movement for private vehicles, public transport, and active travel.
- The reconfiguration of the pattern of usage of the road network by private vehicular traffic should be an aim of the Local Area Plan, with a view towards reducing the importance of Blessington Main Street as an arterial route for private vehicular traffic through the settlement. This could include objectives in relation to the outlined traffic management measures or references to recommendations made on individual road segments above.





**Figure 59:** Overall Transport Strategy Map. Note that the indicated boundary is that of the Blessington Local Area Plan 2013, which may be subject to change.

## 4.0 Delivery

There are a number of stakeholders involved in the delivery of transportation projects. All projects are dependent on funding. The timely and co-ordinated delivery of such transportation projects across a number of state agencies will be a key focus of Wicklow County Council.

The key funding sources for the delivery of infrastructure are:

<b>Developer</b>	The developer of the land / infrastructure provides the funding to deliver the infrastructure or provides the infrastructure themselves.
<b>State</b>	URDF / RRDF, LIHAF funding, Smarter Travel funding, Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), National Transport Authority (NTA), LEADER/SICAP funding, other Government departments, etc
<b>Wicklow County Council</b>	WCC Development contribution schemes, WCC Capital Works Programme, etc.









W I C K L O W

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ENDLESS OPPORTUNITIES