



Churchtown Road Upper: March 2022

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1. Introduction

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. Dublin Cycling Campaign is a member of Cyclist.ie, the Irish Cycling Advocacy Network. We want to make Dublin a safe and friendly place for everyone, of all ages, to cycle and walk.

The area covered by the project is residential and bordered by two roads with high traffic volumes - Nutgrove Avenue to the south and Braemor Road to the north. In the heart of the area is De La Salle secondary boys school, and there are local amenities, shops and businesses on Landscape Road, around SuperValu and in Airfield Drive. The area is prone to rat-running due to its permeability to traffic seeking to move north/south - particularly along Whitehall Road.

2. Summary

Overall we welcome the proposed changes to Churchtown Road Upper. In particular, the school zone proposed outside De La Salle has the potential to boost active travel among students there and keep students and staff safe. The separation of cycles/scooters/mobility scooters from general traffic is welcome. We expect the narrowed lanes to calm traffic. The continuous footpaths along Churchtown Road Upper are a welcome improvement for people with disabilities and parents of young children who travel in this direction.

3. Observations and Suggested Improvements

3.1 Bicycle Parking

An increase in cycling due to the new infrastructure will mean increased demand for bike parking nearby. We suggest that improved cycle parking is provided at the shops at the eastern extent of the scheme. A dished kerb is needed to make the existing Sheffield stands accessible outside Insomnia cafe. This location would be ideal for some non-standard bike parking to enable people with trikes or cargo bikes to shop. Bicycle parking should be at nearby locations such as shops on Landscape Park which currently have none.

3.2 30km/hr zone

The speed limit of Churchtown Road Upper should be reduced to 30km/hr as part of this project. The area is residential and home to a large secondary school. The proposed street design will help limit traffic speeds naturally. Signposts with 30 km/hr would further reinforce that this street is a low-speed area. Reduced speed limits will also discourage use of minor roads for through traffic (see section 3.6) as SatNavs etc will route drivers onto roads with higher speed limits.

3.3 Footpath parking

Parking on the footpaths and grass verges is a frequent problem along the proposed route. Hotspots include:

- at the east extent of the scheme, where delivery vans servicing businesses in 92-98 Churchtown Road Upper regularly park partially on the footpath
- west of Oakdown Road (south side)
- West of Landscape Road (northside)

The cycle paths should be protected from infringements at these points using bollards, planting, higher kerbing or other methods. At locations such as in front of 92-98, protection of the cycle path is needed, and sheffield stands on the edge of the footpath would also be useful in preventing drivers parking inside any cycle path protection.

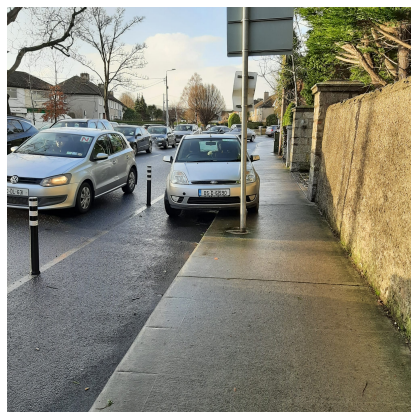


Fig 1. Illegal parking takes place inside cycle lane protection bollards

The council should also enforce illegal parking in the lead up to the scheme and after installation in order to help the scheme bed in, with formal requests also made to Rathfarnham Garda station.

3.4 Junction between Braemor Rd and Churchtown Rd Upper

In the proposed plan, there is no way for pedestrians to cross Braemor Road at the eastern extent of the scheme. There is a zebra crossing 50m west of the junction, but in reality, the desire-line for pedestrians is straight across the mouth of the junction. We suggest that a continuous footpath be used at this location to enable pedestrians to continue along Braemor road unimpeded (Fig 1). This amendment would also calm traffic as it enters Churchtown Road Upper.



Fig 2. Pedestrian-priority crossing at Braemor road using a continuous footpath.

3.5 Landscape Road / Hillside Drive & connection to Dodder

The western extent of the scheme is currently partially along Hillside Drive. It is unclear why the scheme should end here specifically. The road beyond Landscape Rd is primarily residential and traffic volumes there seem quite low. In contrast, Landscape Rd is a highly-used route, with amenities, shops and businesses (Buttercup creche, Fiacla Dental and Churchtown Expert Hardware, etc.). The scheme might be improved by routing down Landscape road to re-join Braemor Road in the North (Fig 2).

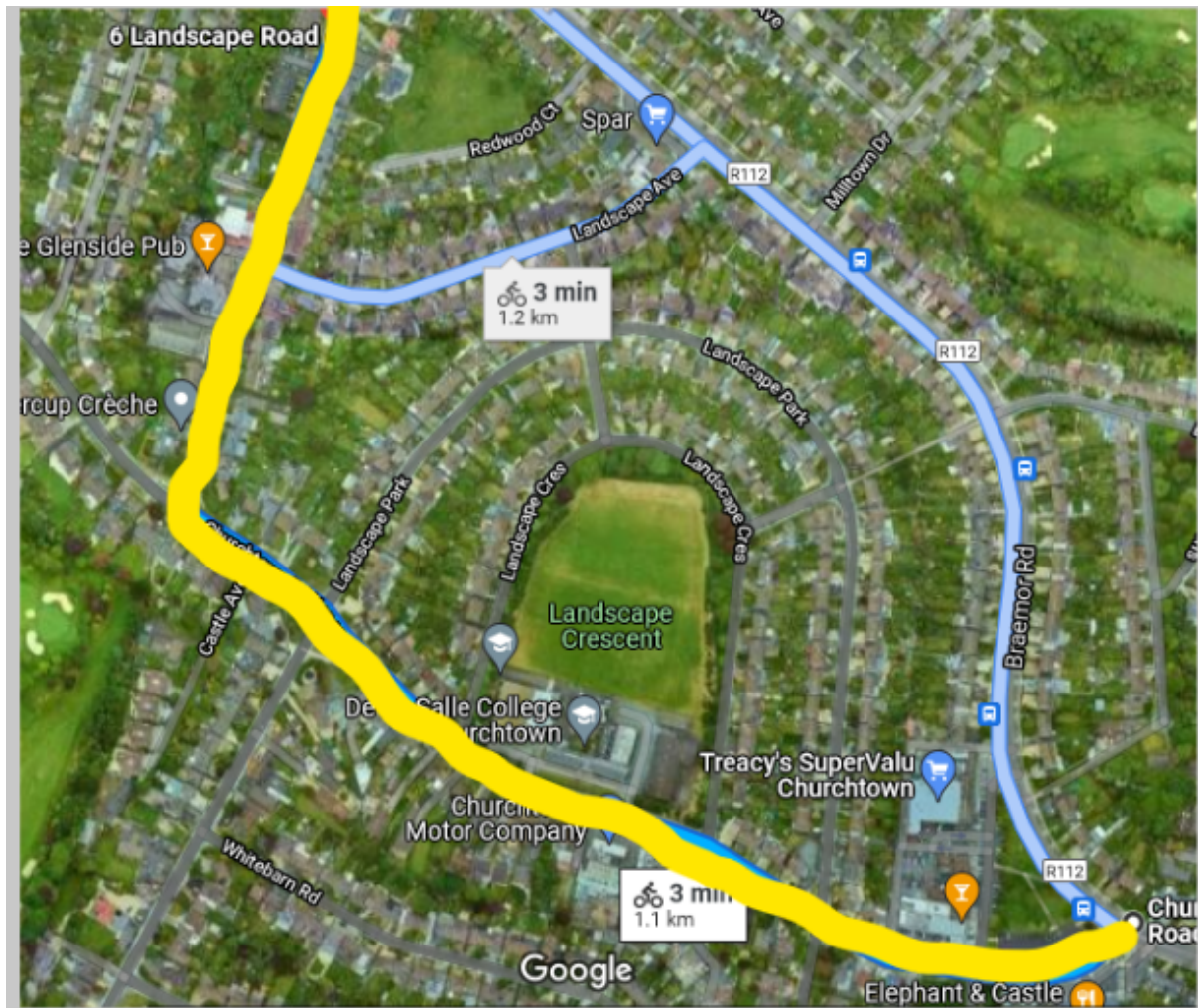


Fig 3. Alternative route along Landscape Road.

3.6 Rat-running through the area

There is currently an incentive for traffic to use this area as a north-south rat run. For example, google maps routes along Whitehall Road - Churchtown Road - Landscape Rd road from Nutgrove Shopping Centre to Ely's Arch and on northwards (Fig 3), whereas Nutgrove Avenue - Braemor road is a wider, higher capacity route. This rat-running creates two dangerous junctions on Churchtown Road Upper (starred in Fig 3). Oakdown Road and Whitebarn Road also contend with rat-running traffic. We suggest that traffic patterns are monitored in this area after the scheme is complete, and that strategies to restrict rat-running are explored.

