

## Meadowbrook Cycle Scheme proposed changes from the Maynooth Access Group

### 1 Introduction

This is a submission for proposed changes from the Maynooth Access Group on the Meadowbrook Cycle Scheme for Maynooth.

Maynooth Access Group's purpose is to promote universal accessibility and inclusivity by sharing information, events and campaigns with the wider community and key stakeholders and by championing the needs of residents of Maynooth and the surrounding areas who have accessibility-related needs and requirements. Maynooth Access Group is part of the County Kildare Access Network, working to make Maynooth inclusive and fully accessible to all.

Maynooth Access Group welcomes the opportunity to make a submission on this proposal. We thank the Kildare County Council, Atkins members of the snc-lavalin group, the NTA for their work on the Cycle Scheme as well as the local residents and Maynooth Access Group members who contributed to this proposal document, with a specific thank you to Grainne Geraghty.

As an access group, there are a number of matters we wish to address in this submission. We make these suggestions in relation to the Meadowbrook Cycle Scheme's stated aims and objectives, with specific attention to; **Safety** and **Accessibility & Social Inclusion**.<sup>[1]</sup> We have attempted to provide a comprehensive and holistic response to the original proposal.

### 2 Overview & Current circumstances

The Maynooth Access Group wish to propose the inclusion of a **controlled crossing** connecting the Newtown Shops with the Meadowbrook Drive cul de sac.

Presently this area has a strongly established desire path used by many residents currently to access the shops, with road markings and metal fencing already in place.



Fig 1 & 2 Current crossing connecting Newtown Shops with Meadowbrook Drive cul de sac featuring Grainne Geraghty.

The installation of a **controlled crossing** at this point has been a requested addition to the Meadowbrook road by residents of the local area for some time now. This document would like to recognise that a number of **uncontrolled crossings** are planned as part of the Meadowbrook Cycle Scheme [1,2]. It is the assertion of this document however that a **controlled crossing** is required for this particular section of the Meadowbrook road to ensure **Safety, Accessibility & Inclusiveness** as well as to promote access for everyone to the local businesses of the Newtown Shopping area.

A **Puffin Crossing** which detects pedestrians crossing the road and will adjust the crossing time in line with the progression of the pedestrian would in our opinion be the optimum choice for this location. It meets the needs of the vulnerable road user including people with physical, psychological and cognitive disabilities.

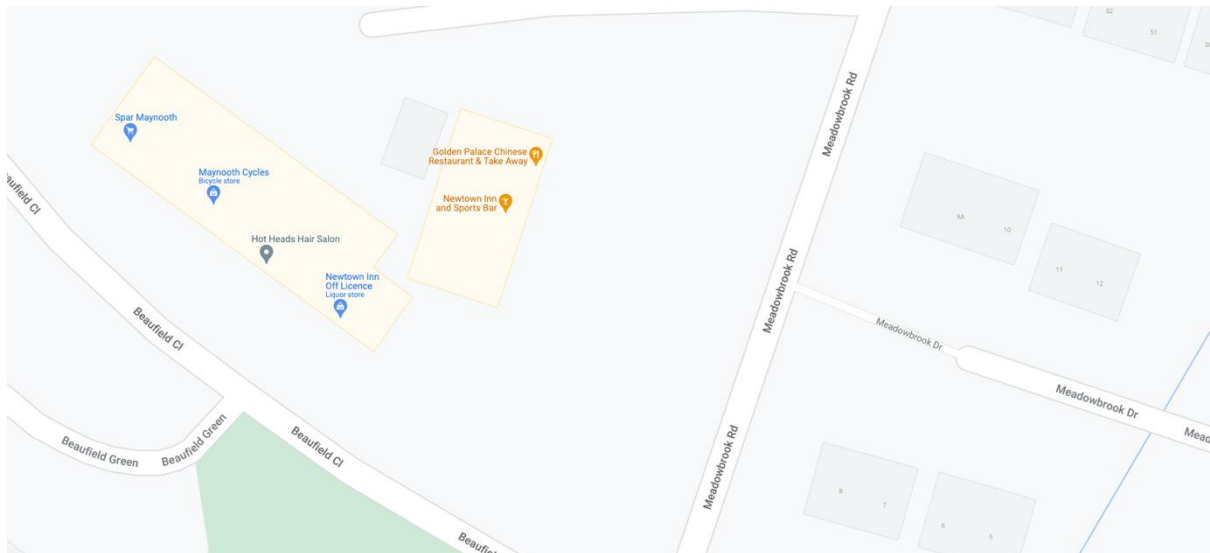


Fig 3 Overhead view of Meadowbrook Drive, Meadowbrook Road and the Newtown Shopping area.

### 3 Safety, Accessibility & Social Inclusion

To begin this section of the document we would like to include the words of a local Meadowbrook Drive resident, Grainne Geraghty, who has a visual impairment.

*“Hello*

*As part of the remodelling of the Meadowbrook road, I would like to request that a safe pedestrian crossing be included in the plan. The Meadowbrook Link Road has become very busy. As a person with no sight, I find it difficult to cross without assistance. When I stand at the current crossing with my white stick unfolded not all cars will stop to allow me to cross and if they do I still feel uncertain about how safe it is for me to proceed.*

*This crossing should be a minimum of a pedestrian crossing similar to the one at the Newtown shops in Beaufield. The preferred option would be lights with a push-button and an audible bleep similar to the lights close to Kingsbury on the Straffan Road.*

*There should be tactile markings going from the edge of the curb right into the wall to enable anyone with a visual impairment to locate the crossing easily.  
Thank you.*

*Grainne Geraghty”*

The inclusion of a **controlled crossing**, with tactile paving and lights to stop both motor vehicles and cyclists would be a significant quality of life boost to residents like Grainne as well as residents who experience reduced mobility due to temporary injury, a physical disability, age-related health issues or even parents with a buggy. The additional safety for local pedestrians and younger residents cannot be overstated, especially with the expected desired increase in cyclists on the road.

## 4 Type of Crossing

In this section, we will be outlining the reasoning behind the chosen area for a **Puffin crossing** as well as the features for the preferred type of crossing for the area.

Primarily these features focus on three key elements.

- 1) Tactile paving,
- 2) Audible crossing signals,
- 3) Lighting for both cyclists and drivers.

The type of crossing best practices, as well as the reasoning behind how to identify its location, have been obtained from the Voice of vision Impairment [3] website. Voice of Vision Impairment (**VVI**) is an all-Ireland organisation which exists to campaign for the needs and rights of people with disabilities, with particular expertise in the perspective of those who are blind and partially sighted.

The reasoning behind the specified location for the **controlled crossing** can be found in section 10.2 of **VVI's** guide.

They assert that ...*“Officially designated controlled crossings should be instated at all pedestrian desire lines, including:*

*a). at junctions which are prone to have heavy traffic (even if only at certain times of the day);*

*b).at points where pedestrians would reasonably be expected to be able to cross and there is no alternative (either at all or close by);*

*c). where roads need to be crossed to access particular public areas (e.g., shopping centres, libraries, parks, etc.).”* The proposed crossing services a shopping centre which comprises a supermarket, a hairdresser, a cycle shop, off-licence, dry cleaners, a public house, a restaurant and a take away. The adjacent car park also serves as a depot for buses.

As established in section 2 **Overview & Current circumstances**, this location has an established desire path for residents, is located close to a shopping area and it will be having increased traffic once the proposed development has been completed.

The **VVI** also highlights the need for a **controlled crossing** in section 10.3 for areas that are *“where buses or coaches access and egress depots, designated stations, or informal parking bays,...”*[3].

According to the **VVI** *“The importance of signalized crossings increases with the advent and wholesale transition to electric vehicles, which can be impossible to hear, especially with other urban ambient noise.”* [3]

This noise concern is especially relevant to this development scheme as it will be increasing the number of cyclists using Meadowbrook road which will increase the risk factor to crossing for visually impaired pedestrians.

It is worth noting that cyclists do represent a significant risk to visually impaired pedestrians if the infrastructure is not adequately planned out. Toucan crossings are called out specifically by both the **VVI** and **Transport Infrastructure Ireland**.

*“Toucan crossings invite danger on the vulnerable pedestrian, and so should not be used (see National Cycle Manual 1.9). Cyclists dismounting for a few seconds is a low price to pay for general safety.”* [3]



## Toucan Crossing Limerick

Fig 4 Example of Toucan Crossing [4]

### Conclusion

The Meadowbrook Cycle Scheme has an amazing opportunity to help elevate the accessibility infrastructure and improve the quality of life for all residents in the area with only a minor alteration to the current development plan.

We encourage strong consideration for this proposed change for the inclusion of a **controlled Puffin Crossing** with parabolic audio signals and a detection system that will detect a pedestrian over the length of crossing.

### References

- 1) Proposed Cycle Scheme Meadowbrook Maynooth Report  
<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/Part8Schemes/RoadsandTransportation/ProposedCycleSchemeatMeadowbrookMaynooth-RefP8202206/5208212DG0051%20rev%202%20%20Part8Report.pdf>
- 2) Proposed Cycle Scheme Meadowbrook Maynooth Drawings  
<https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/Part8Schemes/RoadsandTransportation/ProposedCycleSchemeatMeadowbrookMaynooth-RefP8202206/General%20Arrangement%20Drawings.pdf>
- 3) Voice of vision Impairment: Pedestrian Crossings (Continued Protection and Guidance)  
<https://vvi.ie/mapp/pedestrian-crossings/>
- 4) [https://www.tii.ie/tii-library/conferences\\_and\\_seminars/TII\\_road\\_safety\\_audit\\_seminar/2021/TII-Webinar-No-3-PD-23-June-2021.pdf](https://www.tii.ie/tii-library/conferences_and_seminars/TII_road_safety_audit_seminar/2021/TII-Webinar-No-3-PD-23-June-2021.pdf)