



Dublin City Active Travel Network

Coolock to Clontarf Active Travel Route

Phase 1: Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme

Report on Non – Statutory Consultation

September 2024

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1. INTRODUCTION

Dublin City Council's (DCC's) Active Travel Network will enhance quality of life by connecting people through the delivery of a walk-wheel-cycle network. This will be achieved by improving access, connectivity and sustainable mobility. The Network will also contribute to the reduction of transport-related carbon emissions. Over the lifetime of the programme, the Active Travel Network will grow from 10km to a connected network of 310km across the city.

Part of this network is the Coolock to Clontarf Active Travel Route. This route is 5.1km in length and will be delivered in three phases as shown in figure 1:

- Phase 1: **Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue. (Red)** This phase which is along Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybil Hill Road and Vernon Ave commenced in 2023.
- Phase 2: **Vernon Avenue (Green)**. This phase runs along Vernon Avenue terminating at the junction with Clontarf Road and will commence later in 2024.
- Phase 3: **Clonshaugh Road to Artane Roundabout (Blue)**. This phase is along Clonshaugh Road, Oscar Traynor Road, Kincora Road and the Ardlea Road and will commence later in 2025.

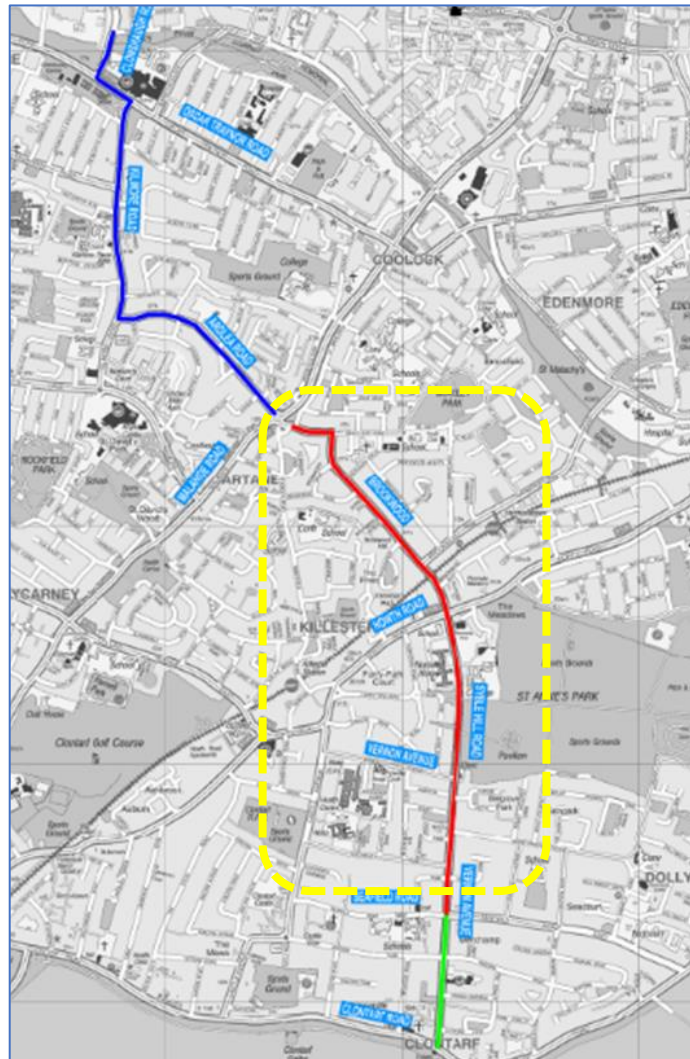


Figure 1: Coolock to Clontarf Route

Phase 1 Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue -Overview

Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybil Hill Road and Vernon Avenue have been identified as suitable roads for proposed walking and cycling active travel improvements. The scheme will deliver protected cycle provision in both directions and numerous pedestrian improvements over a length of 2.5km. The scheme will provide quality, protected cycling facilities to cater for people of all ages and abilities. It will facilitate a more active lifestyle for all ages bringing multiple benefits for physical and mental wellbeing. The scheme will also improve active travel links to St. Anne's Park and numerous schools in the area.

Public Consultation

Non-statutory public consultation was held to obtain the views of the public of the proposed walking and cycling scheme along Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue.

The scheme was published on the DCC Public Consultation Hub in June 2023 and consultation was open for five weeks (6th June to 4th July 2023 and 24th to the 31st of July 2023).

A walk-in Public Consultation Event was held on the 25th July 2023 in the Artane-Coolock Family Resource Centre. At the event, the Active Travel team met with residents and stakeholders to address concerns and questions. The event was attended by over 80 persons.

Over 452 information leaflets were distributed in the area, primarily to residents with access directly onto the scheme. All the drawings were available to view in hardcopy format in Raheny Library during the consultation period. In total, there were 802 responses to the public consultation, over the five week period and of these responses 710 were submitted via the consultation hub and 92 via email.

Scheme Objectives

The main aim of the scheme is to provide an attractive, cohesive, direct, comfortable and safe environment to enable a modal shift from private car use to walking and cycling.

The scheme will provide quality, protected cycling facilities to cater for people of all ages and abilities. It will facilitate a more active lifestyle for everyone and bring multiple benefits for physical and mental wellbeing. It will

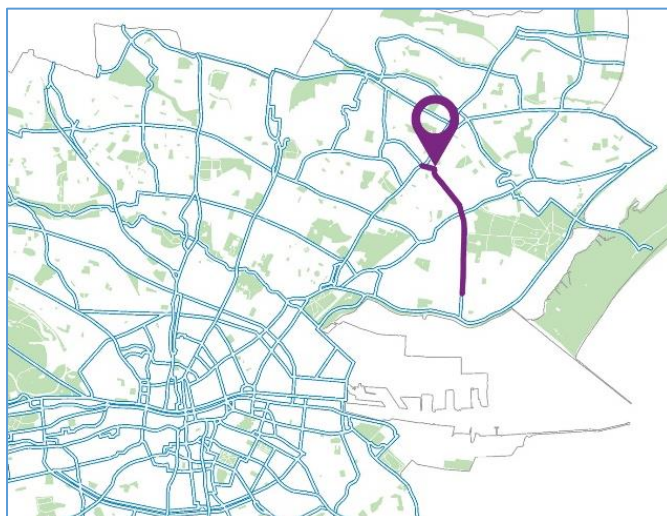


Figure 2: DCC Active Travel Network

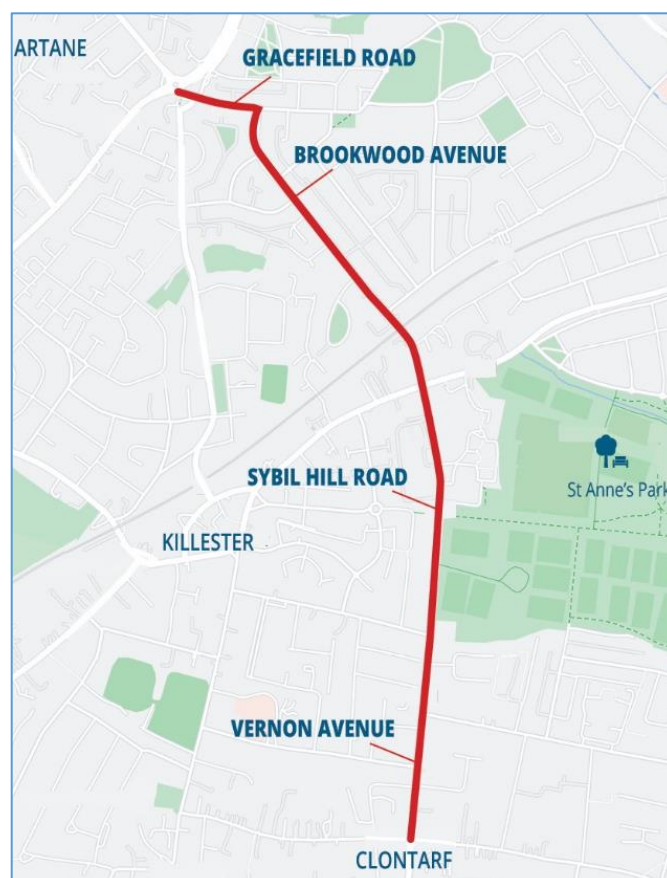


Figure 3: Gracefield Road to Vernon Ave Scheme

also contribute to a reduction in transport emissions in line with the objectives of the Climate Action Plan by encouraging a modal shift to active travel use.

The proposed cycling and walking infrastructure will provide a link into adjacent active travel and public transport schemes including; Harmonstown Dart Station, Bus Connects: D and H Spines, S2S East Coast Trail and Baldoyle to Fairview Active Travel Schemes. The scheme will also improve active travel links to St. Anne's Park as well as numerous other community amenities and education centres.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE SCHEME AT PUBLIC CONSULTATION

The key features of the walking and cycling scheme that originally went to the public consultation in 2023 proposed the following;

- Improved walking and new cycling facilities over a length of 2.5km from Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue. Cycle tracks on both sides of Gracefield Road, Brookwood Ave and Sybill Hill Road
- New School Zones outside St Brigid's Boys National School and St. Paul's College along Sybil Hill Road. The School Zones would have colour themed road markings, pencil shaped bollards and high friction buff surfacing.
- On Sybill Hill Road on-street parking would be maintained on the eastern side of the road with a parking protected cycle lane. Parking on the western side of the road would not be permitted due to the cycle track. The disabled parking bays and additional bicycle parking at the park entrance would be relocated to the opposite side of the road.
- At Howth Rd/Brookwood Avenue/ Sybill Road junction right turn pockets to be removed but right turns movements still be permitted. At Seafield Road / Vernon Avenue junction to be improved by removing the vehicle left turn slip.

Refer to figure 4 shows the photomontages that were part of the public consultation.



Figure 4: Photomontages of the proposed Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue scheme during Public Consultation 2023

NOTE: A number of these key features have being changed in the revised design following the Public Consultation. These are outlined further in this report and summarised in Section 7.

3. PUBLIC CONSULTATION INTRODUCTION

The concept designs were developed in 2023 and presented to the elected members in Dublin City Council North Central Area Committee in May 2023.

The scheme was published on the DCC Public Consultation Hub in June 2023 and submissions on the scheme were received over four weeks, between 6th June 2023 and 4th July 2023. There was a further one week extension of the consultation period from the 24th to the 31st of July 2023, to accommodate the Public Consultation Event. Over 452 information leaflets were distributed in the area, primarily to residents with access directly onto the scheme. Paper copies of the drawings were available to view in Raheny Library, during the consultation period. Refer to figure 5 on the following page for an extract from the DCC Public Consultation Hub and Copy of Information Leaflet for the Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme.

In total, there were 802 responses to the public consultation. Of these responses 710 were submitted via the consultation hub and 92 via email. There was also a petition submitted by residents of the area opposing the scheme which had 109 signatures. The petition included similar concerns and issues raised about the scheme as the consultation hub respondents. The concerns raised in the petition included; trees, cyclist safety, right pocket turns, costs and parking. The active travel responses to these concerns are contained in Section 5.

Following the public consultation, the design team have taken into account the feedback from the public and where appropriate have amended the designs. Detailed design drawings will be prepared and once approval is achieved from the National Transport Authority, the scheme will go out to tender, where a contractor will be procured and the scheme constructed.

Non-Statutory Public Consultation Report
Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme

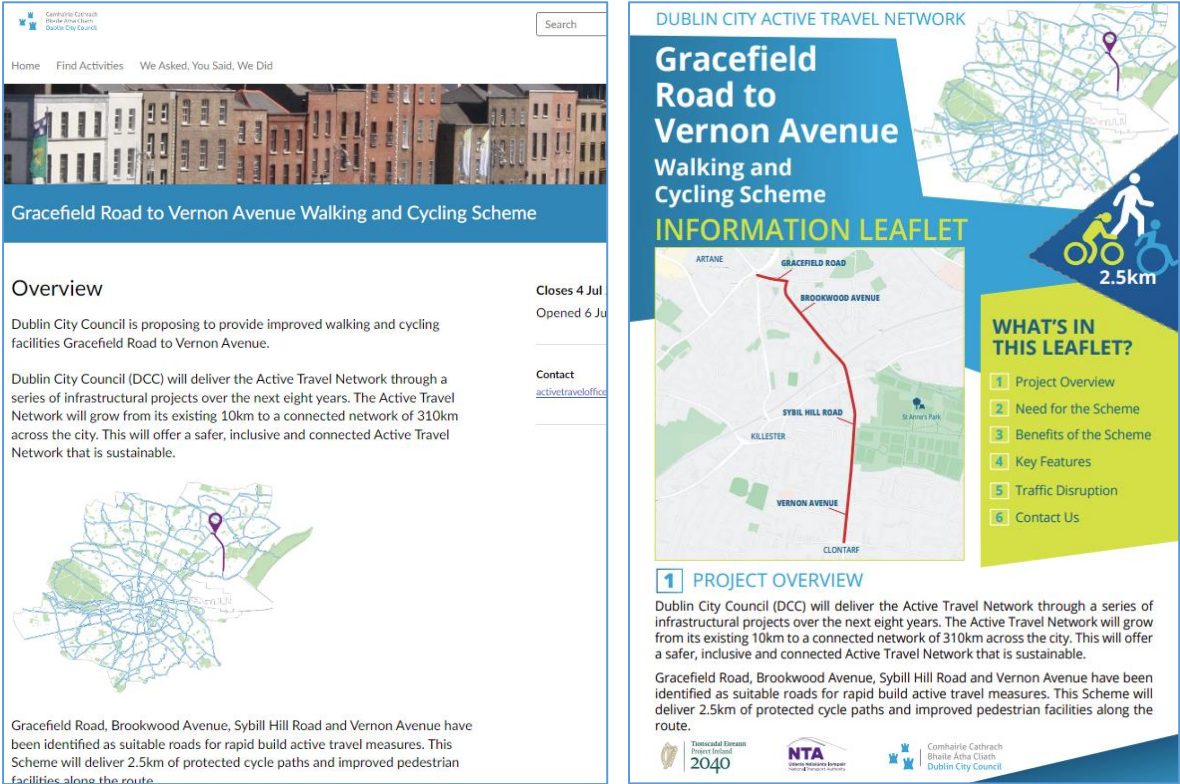


Figure 5: Extract from the DCC Public Consultation Hub and Copy of Information Leaflet for the Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme

4. CONSULTATION RESULTS

4.1 Consultation Hub Questionnaire

On the consultation hub, respondents were asked several questions on how regularly they use sustainable transport, whether they lived/worked nearby and whether they had any comments or observations on the scheme. A full summary of the consultation question results can be found in Appendix 1 of this report.

The results of the brief questionnaire indicated that the majority of respondents lived either along the scheme on Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybill Hill Road or Vernon Avenue (24% of respondents) or live within 5km of the scheme (60% of respondents). The questionnaire indicated that roughly three quarters of respondents regularly or occasionally cycled (43% and 29% respectively), and 9% of respondents did not cycle but would like to.

In order to get to work, school, for purposes such as attending meetings or going shopping, respondents were asked how often do you walk, cycle, and use public transport or drive. 28% of respondents said that they cycle daily and 21% cycle weekly, indicating a strong need for safe cycling infrastructure. 29% of respondents said that they drive daily and 24% weekly, indicating a big opportunity to promote a modal shift from private car use to sustainable transport modes.

4.2 Comments and Observations (Consultation hub and emails)

The majority of the respondents submitted a number of different comments or observations via the online consultation hub and emails. The main suggestions / concerns can largely be grouped into 15 distinct categories. Some of the respondents dealt with multiple categories in one response. The 15 categories are outlined in Table 1;

A number of the comments could not be categorised specifically as they represented the respondents overall opinion of the scheme, rather than a specific issue. These comments ranged from “This is a great idea - please proceed with as soon as possible” to “I do not support this scheme”. These comments have been labelled as “Opinion”. Finally, a number of respondents did not leave a comment or have any particular suggestion and therefore was counted as “No Comment”.

A key issue arising from the public consultation was the concern about the removal of right turn pockets at the Howth Road Junction. Also a large number of very positive submissions were received about the proposals but expressed disappointment that the walking and cycling facilities do not go far enough and suggested increasing the scheme length. Section 5, outlines the detailed responses from DCC’s Active Travel Programme Office (ActPrO) to the key suggestions / observations raised during the public consultation outlined in Table 1.

Table 1: Public Consultation Response Categories

Categories:	Suggestions: Number	Suggestions: %
Right Turn Pockets Approaching the Howth Road	148	35.3%
Increase the Length/Scope of the Scheme	107	25.5%
Parking at St. Anne's Park	66	15.8%
Congestion	34	8.1%
Cyclist Safety	33	7.9%
Removal of Parking	32	7.6%
Driveway Accessibility	31	7.4%
School Drop Off	30	7.2%
Disabled Parking Bays	28	6.7%
Loss of Trees	26	6.2%
Parking Enforcement	7	1.7%
Emergency Vehicles	7	1.7%
Deliveries	7	1.7%
Additional Cycle Infrastructure Proposals	44	10.5%
Other Concerns and Observations	8	1.9%
Opinion	12	2.9%
No Comment	80	19%

4.3 Comments and Observations (Public Consultation Event 25th July 2023)

A walk-in Public Consultation Event was held on the 25th July 2023 in the Artane-Coolock Family Resource Centre. At the event, the Active Travel team met with residents and stakeholders to address concerns and questions. The Public Consultation Event was attended by over 80 persons. At the event the attendees expressed a range sentiments towards the scheme and expressed a number of concerns and suggestions.

The Public Consultation Event was an inclusive way of engaging with residents where they had the opportunity to engage face to face with the design team and discuss the designs expressing their opinions. The main suggestions / concerns expressed at the consultation event were largely similar to the concerns received via the consultation hub and emails. The concerns can largely be grouped into five distinct categories. The design team have taken into

account the feedback from the public consultation event and where appropriate have amended the designs. The 5 distinct categories are summarised below and outlines the responses from DCC's ActPro.

- Right turn pockets approaching Howth Road
- Removal of Parking
- Loss of Trees
- Driveway Accessibility
- Additional Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Proposals

4.3 Public Sentiment

In addition to the analysing the key responses from the consultation hub and emails submissions, the overall sentiment of each submission was assigned a satisfaction ranking with the proposed scheme based on the comments made. The scale range for this is as follows:

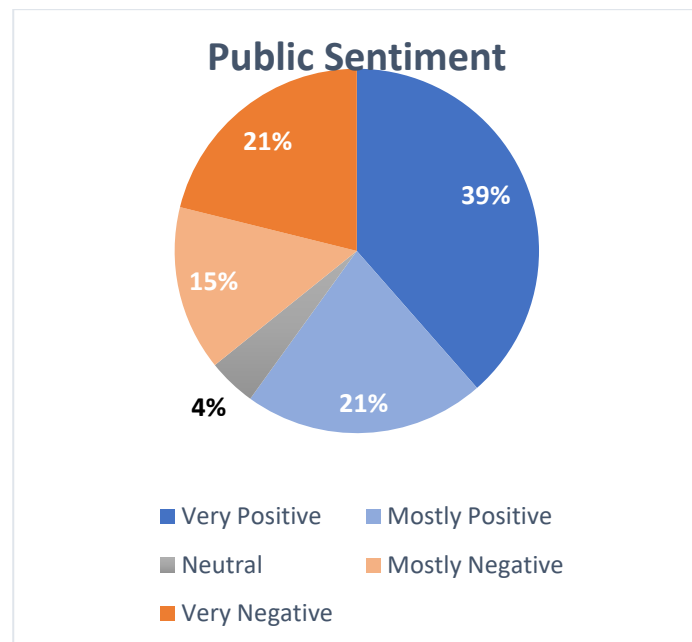
- Very Positive
- Mostly Positive
- Neutral
- Mostly Negative
- Very Negative

In assessing the above, it should be noted that many submissions are positive and supportive of the scheme but with specific issues and concerns. Where the overall sentiment of the submission is positive despite these specific issues, a positive ranking has been assigned. Conversely, submissions which have not expressed any positive sentiment towards the scheme have been assigned negative rankings.

A breakdown of the results of the general sentiment ranking is given below;

Table 2: Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Public Sentiment

Sentiment:	Number	%
Very Positive	279	38.5%
Mostly Positive	155	21.4%
Neutral	32	4.4%
Mostly Negative	105	14.5%
Very Negative	153	21.1%
Total:	724	100%



The results indicate that 60% of the respondents who made comments or observations (via the hub or email) had a positive sentiment towards the scheme, with 39% Very Positive and 21% Mostly Positive. Whilst the minority of submissions expressed negative sentiments, with 21% Mostly Negative and 15% Very Negative. This suggests that the scheme is generally welcomed in the local community.

5. DCC ACTIVE TRAVEL TEAM RESPONSES

The following section outlines the responses from DCC's ActPrO (Active Travel Programme Office) to the key suggestions / concerns raised during the public consultation from Table 1.

The design team have taken into account the feedback from the public and where appropriate have amended the designs. Work has started on the detailed design drawings. Pending approval from the National Transport Authority, the scheme will go out to tender, where a contractor will be procured and the scheme constructed.

5.1 Right turn pockets approaching Howth Road

A significant concern from many respondents was the proposal to remove the right turn pockets approaching Howth Road on Brookwood Avenue and Sybil Hill Road.

Response:

The original design proposed to reduce the traffic lanes width on Brookwood Avenue and Sybil Hill Road and the removal of the right pocket turns to provide sufficient space for the cycle tracks on the carriageway. Following on from the consultation and concerns from the residents, it is now proposed to provide a protected cycle friendly junction. The new design will maintain the right pocket turn lanes and ensure the junction can continue to function with right turn pockets but also allow safe passage of cyclists through the junction. The new junction arrangement is in line with the Cycle Design Manual (September 2023).

Please note that a protected signal controlled junctions are signalised junctions with segregated cycle tracks around the perimeter, typically located between the footway and carriageway. The inclusion of cycle tracks creates a dedicated space for cycling that is segregated from both pedestrians and motor traffic and that caters for all cycle movements. Importantly, a protected junction layout allows cyclists to make right turn movements protected from motor traffic

Maintaining the right turn pockets and accommodating cycle lanes will require the removal of three trees at the junction. The multi-disciplinary design team is engaging with DCC parks department to develop a tree planting scheme along the route.

5.2 Increase the Length/Scope of the scheme

A number of very positive submissions expressed disappointment that the walking and cycling facilities do not go far enough. There were suggestions to extend the scheme further down Vernon Avenue and numerous side roads including Seafield Road.

Response:

The ActPrO are currently focussing resources on the delivery of the Dublin City Active Travel network which comprises of 310km of walking & cycling routes. Seafield Road (and other side roads) are currently not included in this network. However these representations have been noted and the ActPrO can confirm that it will be considered in the future when a review of the network will be undertaken which is expected to be in a 2 to 3 years' time.

A number of respondents requested the scheme to extend along the entire Coolock to Clontarf Active Travel Network route, further south along Vernon Avenue and northbound along Ardlea Road and Kilmore Road. Our Active Travel Design Office propose to commence concept development of Phase 2: Vernon Avenue to Clontarf Road Phase later in 2024 and commence Phase 3 Clonsaugh Road to Artane Roundabout in 2025.

5.3 Parking at St. Anne's Park

Concerns over the removal of parking along Sybill Hill Road next to St. Anne's Park.

Response:

The original design published in 2023 proposed one way cycle tracks on each side along Sybill Hill Road. This is changed in the revised design. A new two-way cycle track is now proposed on the western side of Sybill Hill Road. On-street parking bays will be marked on the eastern side of the road. Parking on the western side of the road will not be permitted. Bicycle parking next to St. Anne's Park gate will be increased.

This will result in the reduction of the overall parking along Sybill Hill Road. The removal of some parking along the road is required in order to accommodate the School Zone, the cycle track and to provide a calmer, safer street.

For residents and visitors who have to drive, there will still be parking along the eastern side of Sybill Hill Road. There is also parking available adjacent to other gates around the park such as Mount Prospect Car Park (Woodside), The Red Stables Car Park (Mount Prospect Avenue), St Anne's Car Park Clontarf Road (James Larkin Road) and St. Anne's Tennis Courts Car Park (All Saint's Road).

5.4 Congestion

Concerns over the level of congestion as a result of the proposed walking and cycling facilities.

Response:

It is anticipated that the scheme will have minimal impact on traffic congestion along the route on Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybill Hill Road and Vernon Avenue. All the roads on the route and adjoining the route will maintain two vehicle lanes, one in each direction. The scheme will not remove any traffic lanes nor is it proposed to redirect or divert traffic onto other roads or from other roads. Narrowing vehicle lanes will slow traffic, creating a traffic calmed environment but not result in traffic congestion. As outlined in Section 5.1, the revised scheme will now maintain the right pocket turn lanes at the Howth Road junction.

Respondents to consultation have expressed concerns about the existing levels of congestion in the area. The current levels of congestion are present without any cycling facilities. Car dependency will increase if no improvements are made to walking and cycle infrastructure. Additionally the Clongriffin to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme and wider public transport improvements in the areas will reduce the car dependency and subsequent congestion.

The scheme will provide improved cycling facilities to cater for people of all ages and abilities and improve links to numerous education centres along the route including; St. Paul's College, St. Brigid's National School and St. Mary's Holy Faith Catholic School. Following completion of the active travel scheme and further active travel schemes in the area more people will choose to cycle to school and work. This will further reduce the number of vehicles on the road in the short and long term. It is not expected that the reutilisation of this space for Active Travel will have a negative traffic impact.

5.5 Cyclist Safety

Concerns that the cycle lanes should be to the highest quality and cyclist safety is not compromised.

Response:

The DCC Active Travel Programme Office endeavour to provide the highest quality walking and cycling facilities. The published revised design drawings have taken on board (where applicable) submissions received during this public consultation process. All cycle lane facilities have been designed in accordance with the NTA Cycle Design Manual 2023. Furthermore all designs will be subject to quality checks as well as Road Safety Audits and Quality Audits throughout the design and construction phases.

The two pillars of safety in the NTA Cycle Design Manual ensures cycle facilities should be designed so that they are safe for people of all ages and abilities to use. Furthermore, as well as being actually safe to use, facilities should be perceived to be safe i.e. people must feel safe using them.

5.6 Removal of Parking

A number of concerns were raised about the removal of parking options along Gracefield Road and Brookwood Avenue and in particular for those houses that have no driveway.

Response:

It is proposed to create a number of areas that will facilitate parking along sections of the route. These will be located in a number of locations along Gracefield Road and Brookwood Avenue. It total there will be 16 new areas to facilitate parking;

- *Two new areas along the northern side of Gracefield Road between houses 22 to 28*
- *Four new areas along the western side of Brookwood Avenue between houses 4 to 46*
- *Three new areas along the eastern side of Brookwood Avenue between houses 19 to 33*
- *One new area along the eastern side of Brookwood Avenue next to house 99*
- *Two new areas along the western side of Brookwood Avenue between houses 108 to 114*
- *Four new areas along the eastern side of Brookwood Avenue between houses 133 to 149*

Residents should also note the option of converting their front garden to a driveway under the standard Dublin City Council planning requirements and processes. Converting a front garden into a driveway should only be undertaken where there is sufficient space, good visibility when entering and exiting the driveway and no major obstructions such as trees. If a resident requires more information on the planning requirements for converting their driveway they can contact the DCC Planning Department at planning@dublincity.ie. Furthermore DCC provides Housing Adaption Grants for people with a disability for converting a driveway.

5.7 Driveway Accessibility

Another concern was in relation to access in and out of existing driveways:

Response:

It must be noted that existing driveways will not be affected as part of this scheme. Residents will still be able to drive in and out of their house driveway. Residents on the main route of the scheme will have to drive across a cycle track when leaving the house. New infrastructure will not affect vehicle manoeuvres or limit visibility. As before, residents will continue to have to look out for cyclists and pedestrians when accessing and egressing driveways.

5.8 School Drop Off

Concerns over the new safe routes to school zone and parking.

Response:

Front of school congestion is a widespread problem across Ireland. The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) Programme was developed as a response to the need to support schools to increase walking and cycling to school. Active Travel schemes and SRTS Programme will improve safety at the school gates by providing 'front of school' treatments to alleviate congestion and improve access. A new two-way cycle track is proposed on the western side of Sybill Hill Road. Numerous access / egress points will be provided along the new two-way cycle track to allow children safely cycle to school.

The main aim of the SRTS programme is to increase the number of students who walk and cycle to school. Furthermore it must be noted, that it is illegal to park on the footpath and cycle lanes. There will be on-street parking options along Sybill Hill Road next to St. Anne's Park which can be used by parents who have to drive their children to school.

5.9 Disabled Parking Bays

Concerns over the relocation of two disability parking bays across the road.

Response

The updated preliminary design includes the retention of the two disabled parking bays on the park side (eastern side) of Sybill Hill Road. The two disabled parking bays will be wider and designed to current standards.

5.10 Loss of trees

Concerns over the loss of trees on the route.

Response

An Arborist survey and report has been carried out along the scheme as the protection of trees is a priority. Design mitigation measures will be implemented where possible to minimise impact on trees. DCC will seek to keep the removal of trees to a minimum where possible and will plant additional trees along the route to offset any removal

In order to maintain the right turn pocket turns and to accommodate a fully protected cycle tracks across the Howth Road/ Sybill Hill Road junction, the new revised design will require the removal of two, possibly three trees at the junction.

The design team are engaging with our landscaping team and with the parks department to plant additional trees along the route. In order to protect the existing trees along Brookwood Avenue and Vernon Avenue, the cycle lane width will be reduced to 1.75m to avoid impact on trees.

5.11 Parking Enforcement

Concerns over illegal parking along the route.

Response

It must be noted that it is illegal to park on the footpath under the Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking) Regulations 1997. Illegal parking results in blocked footpaths, meaning vulnerable road users such as wheelchair users, the visually impaired, people with buggies, children and older pedestrians do not have adequate room to walk safely, potentially forcing them out onto the road. Additionally, parking on cycle lanes forces cyclists out into mainstream traffic, where there is an increased risk of a collision occurring.

5.12 Emergency Vehicles

Concerns over the affect the cycle tracks will have on emergency vehicles.

Response

All the roads on the route and adjoining the route will maintain two vehicle lanes, one in each direction. The scheme will not remove any traffic lanes nor is it proposed to redirect or divert traffic onto other roads or from other roads.

The presence of cycle tracks will not affect the responses of emergency services or prevent cars from pulling in. The kerbs at the edge of the cycle tracks are easily mountable by a fire tender when attending an emergency call out. The ActPrO will continue to engage with Dublin Fire Brigade about the project. There will be further meetings with emergency services prior to commencement of the construction of the scheme.

5.13 Deliveries

Concerns over access for deliveries:

Response:

No restrictions have been put on delivery arrangements. As referenced above, it is illegal for delivery drivers to park on the footpath or cycle lanes under the Road Traffic (Traffic and Parking) Regulations 1997.

5.14 Additional Walking and Cycling Infrastructure Proposals

The following proposals were suggested by members of the public to the walking and cycling infrastructure:

Response:

A number of respondents to the public consultation who were largely supportive of the scheme suggested additional measures to improve the infrastructure in the area. As mentioned above, the design team will endeavour to provide the highest quality walking and cycle facilities. A summary of some of the suggestions are outlined below;

- **Cycleway Width:** *The design team will seek to provide a sufficiently wide cycle lane where possible throughout the scheme. However in order to protect the existing trees along the route, the stepped cycle track will predominantly be 1.75m wide*
- **Cycleway Colour:** *The cycle track surface colour will be red in line with the new Cycle Design Manual 2023.*
- **Bus Stops:** *the original preliminary design proposed an in-line bus stop which would require cyclist to wait behind a bus when it stops. However, the revised design now proposes bus stop landing zones that will allow cyclists to continue along a protected cycle track behind the bus stop. This is in line with the Cycle Design Manual.*
- **Two-Way Cycleway:** *A one-way cycle lane on both sides of the road was proposed for the entire route in the preliminary design proposal. However, following further review of Sybill Hill Road, a two-way cycle track is now proposed on the western side. On-street parking will be provided on the eastern side of the road. Further details on the two-way cycle track is contained in Section 7.*
- **Continuous Footpaths and Raised Tables:** *The design drawings will be modified to include additional raised tables and continuous footpaths / cycle-tracks across side roads where applicable.*
- **Plastic Bollards:** *Bollard protected cycle lanes will not be utilised in this scheme. School Zone treatments will be provided next to St. Brigid's and St. Paul's School which will include pencil shaped steel bollards and colourful road markings to highlight the presence of the school and prevent parking on pavements.*

5.15 Other Concerns and Observations

Other concerns and observations proposed from members of the public included the following;

Response:

Refuse collection: *There will be no restrictions or impact on refuse collection in the area.*

Left Turn Slip at Seafield Road: *The Seafield Road / Vernon Avenue junction will also be improved by removing the vehicle left slip. Once one / two cars are waiting at the red lights, the left slip becomes inaccessible. Therefore, removal of the slip will have a negligible impact of traffic congestion, whilst greatly increasing safety for pedestrians and cyclists.*

School Zones: *School Zone treatments will be provided next to St. Brigid's and St. Paul's School on Sybill Hill Road, which will include pencil shaped steel bollards and colourful road markings to highlight the presence of the school and prevent parking on pavements. The design team have met with representatives of the schools, the SRTS teams and An Táisce and will continue to engage with them and as the design develops.*

School Zone Treatments at locations outside of the scheme extents, such as Howth Road and Seafield Road, are outside the scope of this scheme. These locations can be included in other Active Travel Schemes or by the DCC/ An Taisce Safe Routes to School Teams if applied for by the school.

Flooding/Drainage: *Drainage drawings will be completed during the detailed design stage of the project. The modifications made to gullies and channels along the route will help mitigate some of the existing ponding issues.*

Pedestrian Improvements: *The design drawings have been modified to include additional raised tables and continuous footpaths / cycle lanes across side roads where applicable. Side Road junctions have also been modified and tightened with footway buildouts to improve pedestrian safety and comfort.*

Cost Benefit Analysis: *The project is funded by the Department of Transport through the National Transport Authority NTA Active Travel Programme. This project as with all Active Travel projects must follow the NTA Project Approval Guidelines which have been developed to fully align with the Infrastructure Guidelines published by the Department of Public Expenditure, NDP Delivery and Reform DEPENDR. Appropriate appraisals are being undertaken over the lifecycle of the project in accordance with the Transport Appraisal Framework (TAF) which is specifically for Transport related projects.*

Sufficient Number of Cyclists: *Traffic counts were carried out on the Howth Road / Brookwood Avenue / Sybill Hill Road junction on Wednesday, September 13th 2023. The counts demonstrated that a large number of cyclists currently travel to / from Brookwood Avenue and Sybill Hill Road by bicycle. See Table 3 below;*

Table 3: Howth Road / Brookwood Avenue / Sybill Hill Road Junction Traffic Counts

		To / From Brookwood Avenue	To / From Sybill Hill Road
12 Hrs (07:00 to 19:00)	Total Number of Vehicles	10,535	6,630
	Total Number of Cyclists	660	503
	% of Cyclists	6.3%	7.6%
Peak Hour (08:00 to 09:00)	Total Number of Vehicles	1151	816
	Total Number of Cyclists	212	188
	% of Cyclists	18.4%	23.0%

The traffic counts taken last year indicate that the % of cyclists (of total number of vehicles) over a 12hr period going to/from Brookwood Avenue and Sybill Hill Rd is 6.3% and 7.6% respectively. These figures are largely in line with the city wide average shown in the Dublin City Council Development Plan 2022 – 2028. Interestingly if we look at the peak of 8am to 9am, the % of cyclists increase drastically to 18.4% on Brookwood Avenue and 23.0% on Sybill Hill Rd.

The percentage of cyclists currently using Brookwood Avenue and Sybill Hill Road highlights the importance of providing safe cycling infrastructure for people of all ages and abilities. The Dublin City Council Development Plan 2022 – 2028 states a target mode share of 13% for cyclists in 2028. The Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme along with the wider DCC Active Travel Network will go a long way in helping achieve this target.

6. SUMMARY OF MAIN CHANGES

In summary the main changes from the original preliminary designs are as follows;

- The existing Howth Road signalised junction is proposed to be upgraded to a protected cycle friendly junction. The preliminary design proposed minimal changes at the junction but removal of the right pocket turns. This caused serious concerns with residents who were not happy with the proposed arrangement. The new junction design will ensure the junction can continue to operate efficiently but also allow safe passage of cyclists through the junction.
- A new two-way cycle track is proposed on the western side of Sybil Hill Road, from Howth Road to Vernon Avenue. The Preliminary Design proposals consisted of stepped one-way cycle tracks on one side of the road and a parking protected lane on the other side. Following further investigation of this design; in order to avoid the relocation of utilities, mitigate the loss of trees and eliminate the conflict with parked vehicles a two-way cycle track is deemed the preferred solution.
- A number of the smaller priority and signalised junctions along the route will be upgraded to include toucan crossings, tightened corner radii and additional space/pockets for right turning cyclists.
- It was originally proposed to provide a 2.0m cycle track throughout the scheme. However due to constraints along the route and in order to protect the existing trees, the stepped cycle track will predominately be reduced to c. 1.75m.
- It is proposed to create a number of areas that will facilitate parking along sections of the route. These will be located in a number of locations along Gracefield Road and Brookwood Avenue.
- The updated preliminary design includes the retention of the two disabled parking bays on the park side (eastern side) of Sybil Hill Road. The two disabled parking bays will be wider and designed to current standards.

Refer to figures 6 to 11 below for new photomontages of the revised Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue scheme.



Figure 6: Photomontage of the Vernon Avenue / Seafeld Rd Junction



Figure 7: Photomontage of Sybill Hill Road (St. Anne's Park)



Figure 8: Photomontage of Sybill Hill Road (School Zone)



Figure 9: Photomontage of Brookwood Avenue / Howth Road Junction



Figure 10: Photomontage of Sybill Hill Road / Howth Road Junction



Figure 11: Photomontage of Brookwood Avenue

7. CONCLUSION

Summary

DCC would like to thank the elected members, members of the public and stakeholders who took the time and effort to make submissions, including a number of very detailed and comprehensive ones that we received. We have analysed all the submissions and believe that they have helped in the preparation of the final proposal and influenced how this scheme can be delivered.

The results of the consultation show a strong desire for this scheme and others like it in the area, however not without improvements where possible. It is clear that from the residents and the general public that there is a wish to see a change from the current traffic arrangements to new arrangements to a further emphasis on active travel.

As a result of the public consultation and following review of the submissions, further consideration has been given to additional improvements. Designs have been modified where possible to take account of these submissions. Engineering Consultants have been appointed to proceed with Detailed Design, Tender Procedures and Construction Supervision of this project. Additionally, a number of worthwhile points outside the scopes of these works will be looked at in further details in future schemes.

It is anticipated that when safe walking and cycling facilities are in place (here and the surrounding network), more people will choose to cycle and walk in the medium and long term. This in turn will reduce the number of cars on the road, making it better for those who have to drive.

Planning Determination

The ActPrO has received a determination from the Planning Department confirming that the recommendations from the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening and the Appropriate Assessment (AA) Screening. The reports recommend that neither an EIA Report nor an AA Natura Impact Statement is required. In addition, and in accordance with the provisions of Section 4(1)(e) and Section 179(6)(bb) of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, the proposed project is exempt from the statutory planning processes as set out under Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, and Part 10 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (submission to An Bord Pleanála).

Therefore, the proposed scheme will now proceed to implementation under the provisions of Section 95 of the Road Traffic Act, 1961 as amended by Section 37 of the Road Traffic Act 1994, and under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994 as required.

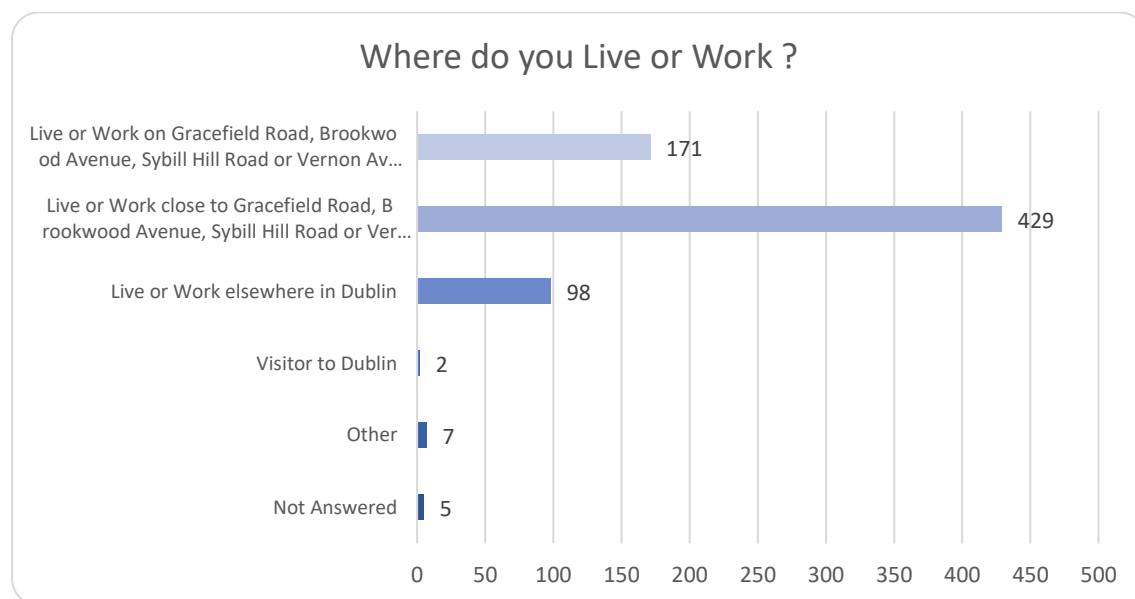
Appendix 1: Consultation Questions and Results

The scheme was published on the DCC Public Consultation Hub in June 2023 and submissions on the scheme received over four weeks between Tuesday, 6th June 2023 and Tuesday, 4th July 2023. There was a further one week extension of the consultation period from the 24th to the 31st of July, to accommodate the Public Information Event.

A full summary of the consultation question results are below.

1: Which category below best describes where you live or work?

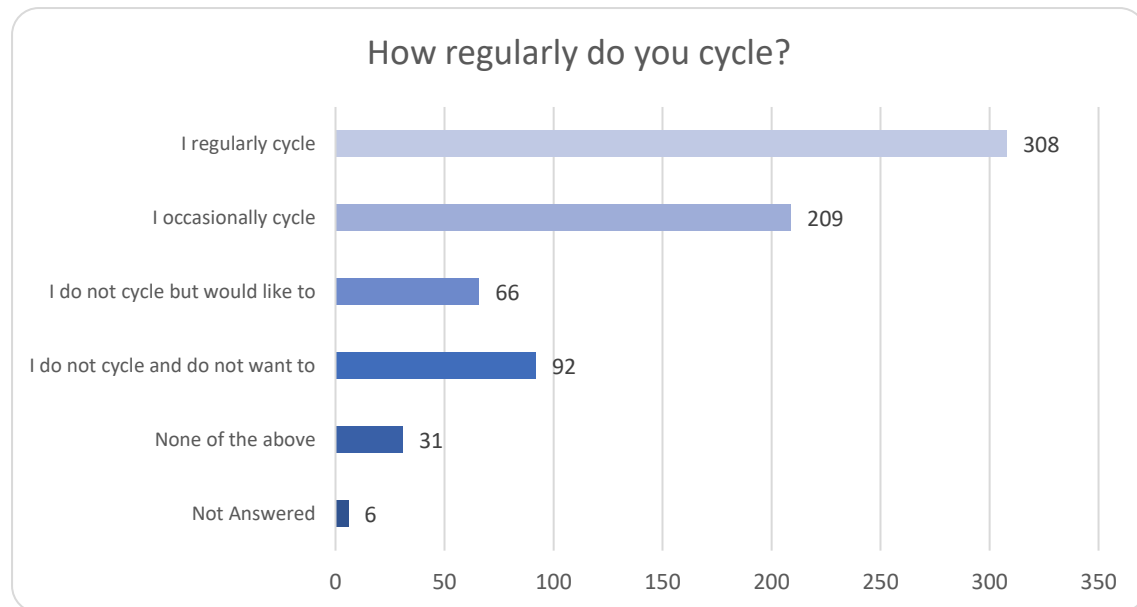
There were 707 responses to this part of the question.



Option	Total	Percent
Live or Work on Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybill Hill Road or Vernon Avenue	171	24%
Live or Work close to Gracefield Road, Brookwood Avenue, Sybill Hill Road or Vernon Avenue (within 5km)	429	60%
Live or Work elsewhere in Dublin	98	14%
Visitor to Dublin	2	1%
Other	7	1%
Not Answered	5	1%

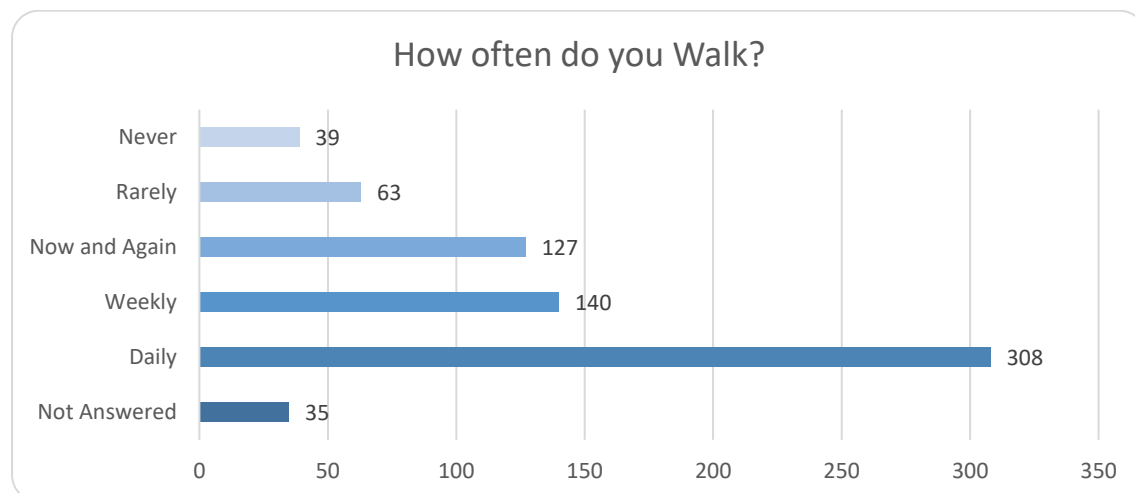
2: Which of the following statements best describes you?

There were 706 responses to this part of the question.

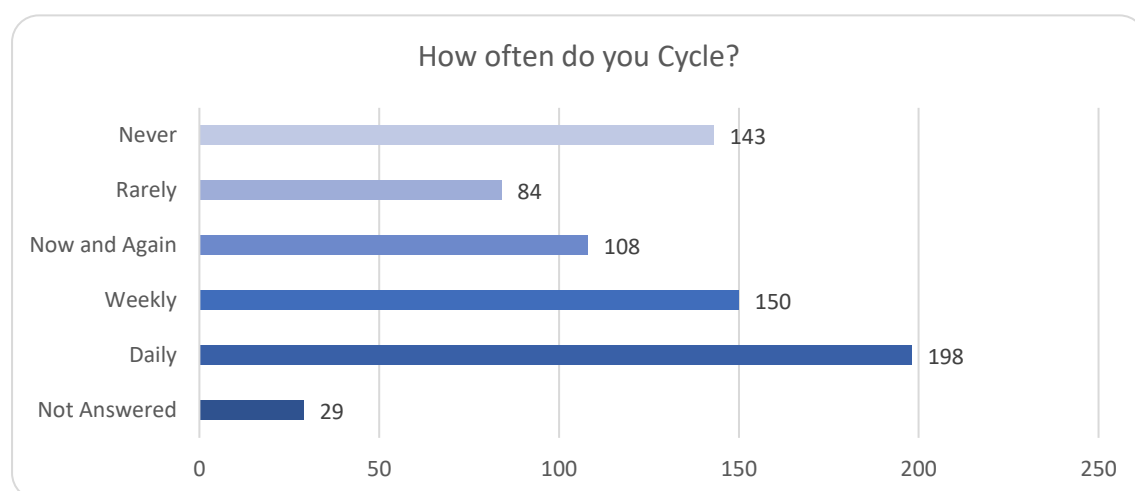


Option	Total	Percent
I regularly cycle	308	43%
I occasionally cycle	209	29%
I do not cycle but would like to	66	9%
I do not cycle and do not want to	92	13%
None of the above	31	5%
Not Answered	6	1%

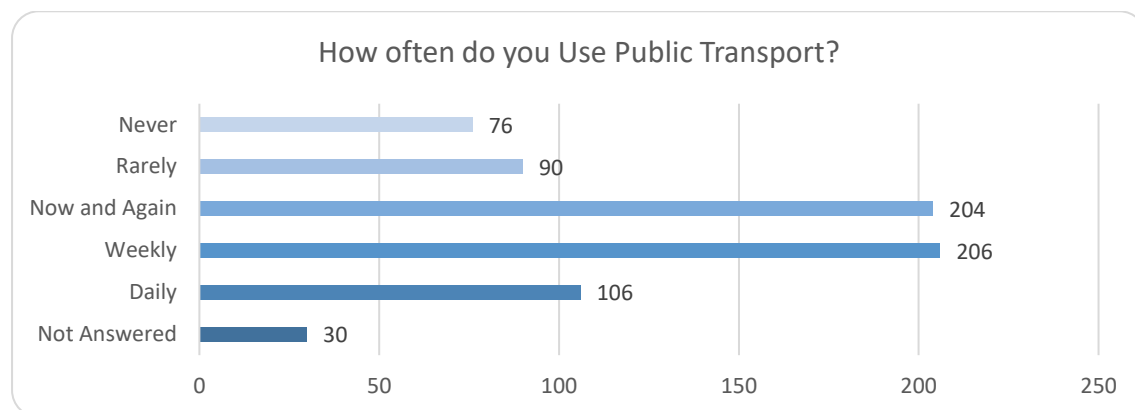
3: To get to work or school or for other purposes such as attending meetings or going shopping, how often do you: walk, cycle, use public transport or Drive?



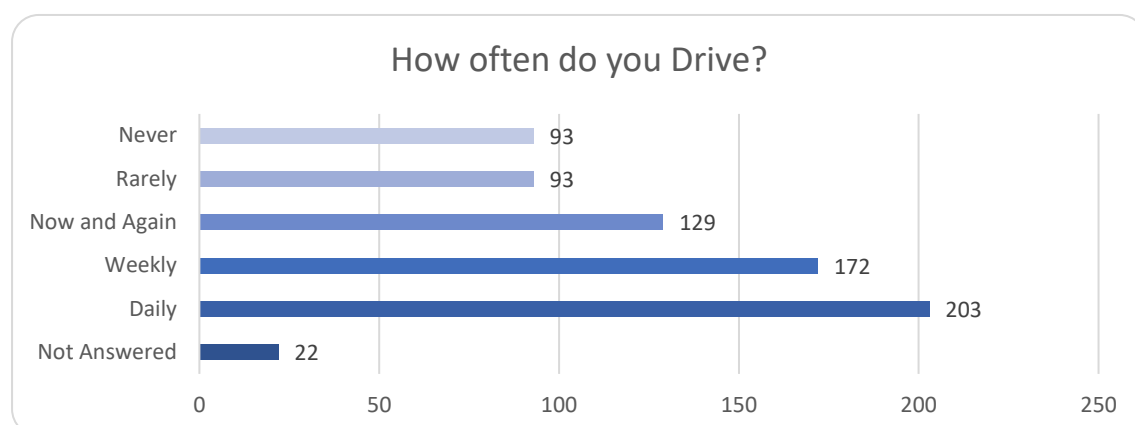
Option	Total	Percent
Never	39	5.48%
Rarely	63	8.85%
Now and Again	127	17.84%
Weekly	140	19.66%
Daily	308	43.26%
Not Answered	35	4.92%



Option	Total	Percent
Never	143	20.08%
Rarely	84	11.80%
Now and Again	108	15.17%
Weekly	150	21.07%
Daily	198	27.81%
Not Answered	29	4.07%



Option	Total	Percent
Never	76	10.67%
Rarely	90	12.64%
Now and Again	204	28.65%
Weekly	206	28.93%
Daily	106	14.89%
Not Answered	30	4.21%



Option	Total	Percent
Never	93	13.06%
Rarely	93	13.06%
Now and Again	129	18.12%
Weekly	172	24.16%
Daily	203	28.51%
Not Answered	22	3.09%

4: Please let us know if you have any comments or observations on the Gracefield Road to Vernon Avenue Walking and Cycling Scheme.

There were 635 responses to this part of the question