

**Grange Road / Barton Road Extension Area Community  
Walking and Cycling Route**

**Project Update Report**

**August 2012**

## **1.0 Introduction**

South Dublin County Council, in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA), is proposing short walking and cycling routes to serve local neighbourhoods across the County. These will create more sustainable local neighbourhoods with direct pedestrian and cycle links to popular local destinations. The aim is to encourage people to leave the car at home for local trips by bringing more households within walking and cycling distance to local amenities in accordance with the policies of the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the Council.

In many cases the links are based on existing shortcuts, enabling cyclists and pedestrians; including those with decreased mobility, to access safe, direct, hard surfaced routes to the local shops, school, community centre, public transport stop, cycle route, or the park / playground. Increased walking and cycling within local neighbourhoods reduces carbon footprints, encourages a healthier lifestyle and increased numbers of users will improve the safety of the route and discourage anti-social behaviour.

## **2.0 Permeability Projects**

The Council and the NTA have proposed a number of permeability projects in South Dublin County Council. The overall scheme contained a list of county wide projects; of which 2 No. progressed to construction in 2011 at Dargle Wood, Knocklyon and Corkagh Park. Since then further projects have been approved funding by the NTA, some to Part 8 stage for 2012 at Esker, Fforster, Bawnogue, and Grange Road in Rathfarnham, and others to construction at Aylesbury and Deansrath. The Grange Road link is one of the routes funded in 2012.

The Grange Road / Barton Road Extension project was first presented to the Rathfarnham Area Committee Members at the Local Area Meeting of the 14<sup>th</sup> June 2011 as part of the Planning Department's overall scheme of permeability projects.

Once funding was approved by the NTA to progress the scheme to Part 8 in 2012 a draft plan for the project was presented to the Rathfarnham Area Committee members at a briefing meeting on the following dates: 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June 2012 and 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2012.

## **3.0 Case Study – Dargle Wood, Knocklyon**

### **3.1 Introduction & Context**

As outlined above, the overall NTA funded developments contained a list of county wide projects; of which 2 No. progressed to construction in 2011. One of these projects was a community walking and cycle link through an open space within Dargle Wood housing estate in Knocklyon. The proposal was for 2 no. new accesses and a 4m wide, 310 metre long pedestrian and cycle route to open up an enclosed open space that contained an existing strong desire line. The new route proposed to reduce the distance for walkers and cyclists to the local centre and adjacent schools and other facilities.

### 3.2 Public Consultation

As part of the Dargle Wood project, public consultation was carried through a questionnaire survey and meetings with Resident Associations as well as elected representatives in the area.

The initial proposal generated support from a wider area but also generated considerable concern in the immediate area; mainly with regard to the possibility for increased anti-social behaviour, increased litter, increased pedestrian and cyclist traffic through the open space where there was no route previously.

These concerns and issues informed the design and provided an iterative design process that moulded the proposals and ensured a purpose built route.

Following the in-depth public consultation and despite some continuing public concerns, the Planning Authority progressed the project to construction. The link has been open since March 2012.

### 3.3 Outcome

Since March, the Planning Authority has had feedback from local residents; in particular, some who said they were previously opposed to the scheme expressed their opinion that the project has improved the area. A count of pedestrian and cyclists on the scheme show that the route provided access for over 100 people on one particular, quite rainy, day. The route is well used and has opened up views into an area previously rather concealed. The community Gardaí have included the route in their cycle patrols and the removal of graffiti was carried out as part of the project.

Among comments received:

“As a long time resident of Scholarstown Park, I would like to congratulate SD County Council on the marvellous pathway. It really is terrific and a great shortcut to SQ, new bus stop on Knockyon Road etc etc..... I think for once it is taxpayers money well spent!!..... congrats to all concerned.”

Other comments received: that the area looks a lot better; that it has ‘civilised the area’, made the area more open and attractive, some have asserted that previously existing anti-social activity has moved away since the route was built and the type of lighting (‘white light’) used has been complimented.



**Fig 1 & 2** (above): Pictures of the Dargle Wood area before project construction



**Fig 3:** Picture of constructed Dargle Wood project



#### 4.0 Grange Road / Barton Road Extension Area Community Walking and Cycle Link

It is proposed to construct a shared pedestrian and cycle link from Grange Road to Barton Road Extension / Grange Manor Road area, a route which is used as an existing pedestrian shortcut. The route will greatly reduce the walking and cycling distance to Nutgrove Shopping Centre, bus stops and local amenities for local households.



**Fig 4:** Aerial view of proposed Grange Road to Grange Downs route

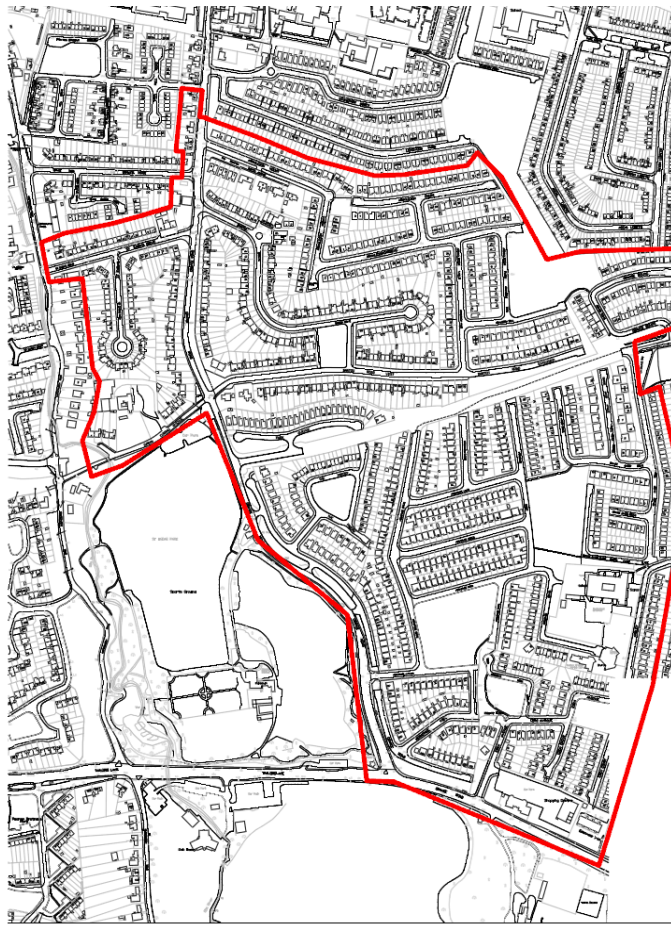
#### 5.0 Public Consultation

As part of the feasibility process, the Planning Authority carried out a non-statutory public consultation process to gauge public opinion on the project.

In early June, the Council arranged the delivery of an information brochure and accompanying questionnaire to approximately 1350 households in the area. The purpose of the leaflet was to inform residents of the proposed route and invite feedback through a questionnaire. Submission of the questionnaire was available on [www.sdcc.ie](http://www.sdcc.ie) and by postal return. The deadline for receipt of submissions was 3<sup>rd</sup> August 2012.

The information leaflet proposed the following:

- Upgrading and realignment of the existing footpath/ walkway to a new 4m wide walking and cycling route.
- Upgrading of the existing access points onto Grange Manor Road, Grange Road / Park Avenue and Hermitage Drive.
- A new 4m wide walking and cycling route linking Park Avenue with Grange Manor Road / Barton Road Extension Area.
- New landscape design along the route.
- Provision of lighting & CCTV for the route.



**Distribution Grange Road Rathfarnham South Dublin County**

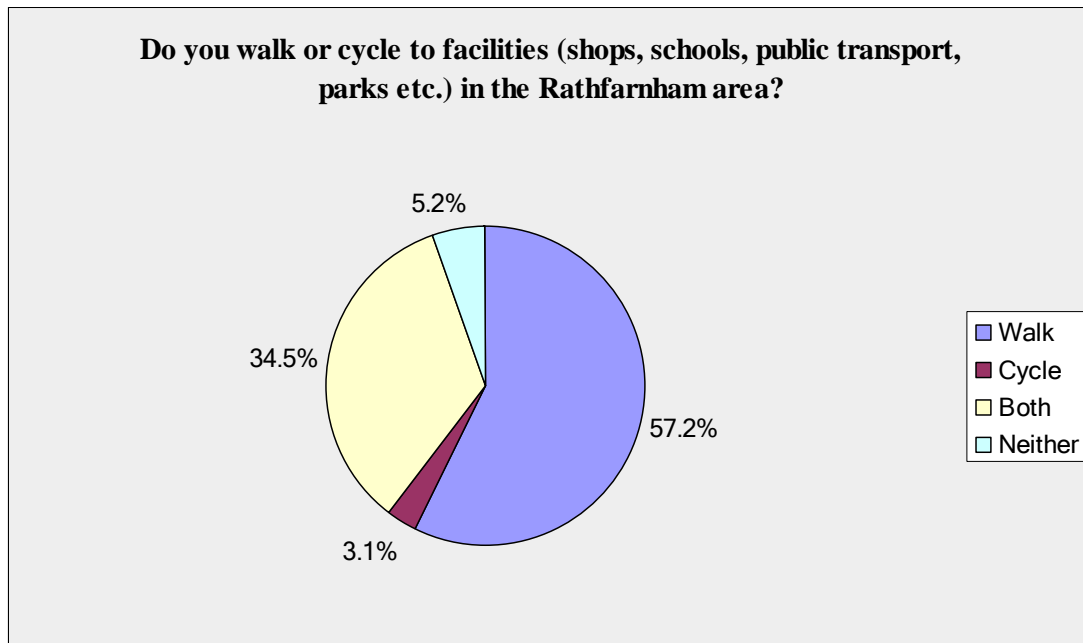
**Fig 5: Leaflet and Questionnaire delivery area**

The questionnaire consisted of 11 No. questions (see Appendix A) to determine the respondents opinion on the project. During the public consultation period a total of 229 submissions were received from members of the public through the circulated questionnaire, returned by post and online. A number of direct submissions were also received.

The results of the questionnaires are detailed below.

5.1 Do you walk or cycle to facilities (shops, schools, public transport, parks etc.) in the Rathfarnham area?

In Question No.1, the respondents were given 4No. possible answers. The results are charted as follows:



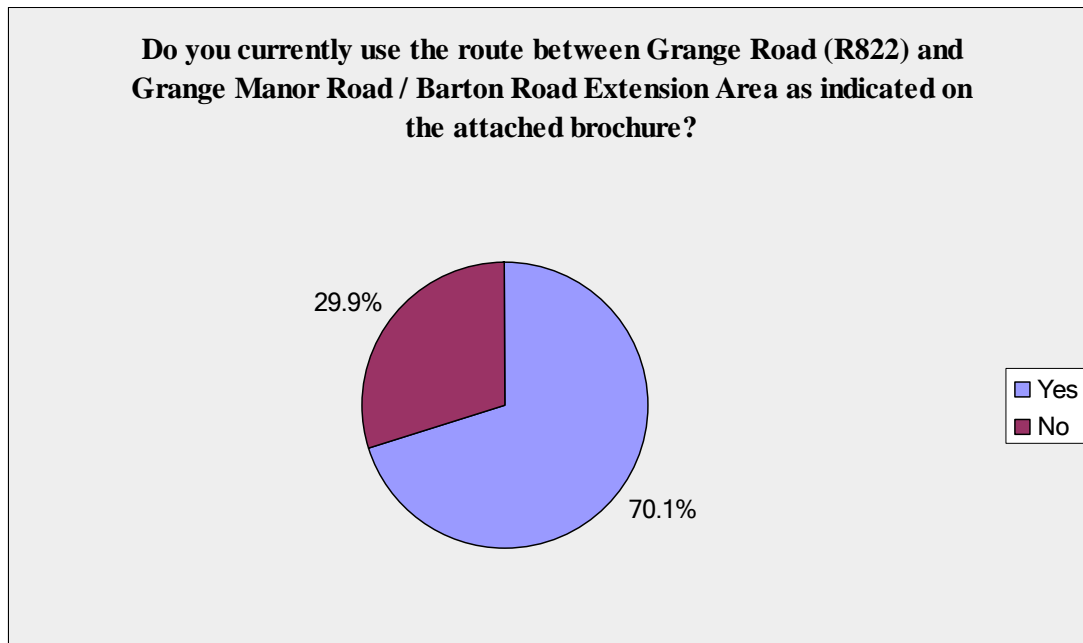
**Fig 6:** Pie Chart of responses to '*Do you walk or cycle to facilities (shops, schools, public transport, parks etc.) in the Rathfarnham area?*'

Figure 6 above illustrates that 94.8% of the respondents walk or cycle to facilities in the Rathfarnham area and is an indicator that sustainable transport modes are prevalent in the area. Furthermore, it is a positive indicator of possible usage of the proposed route.



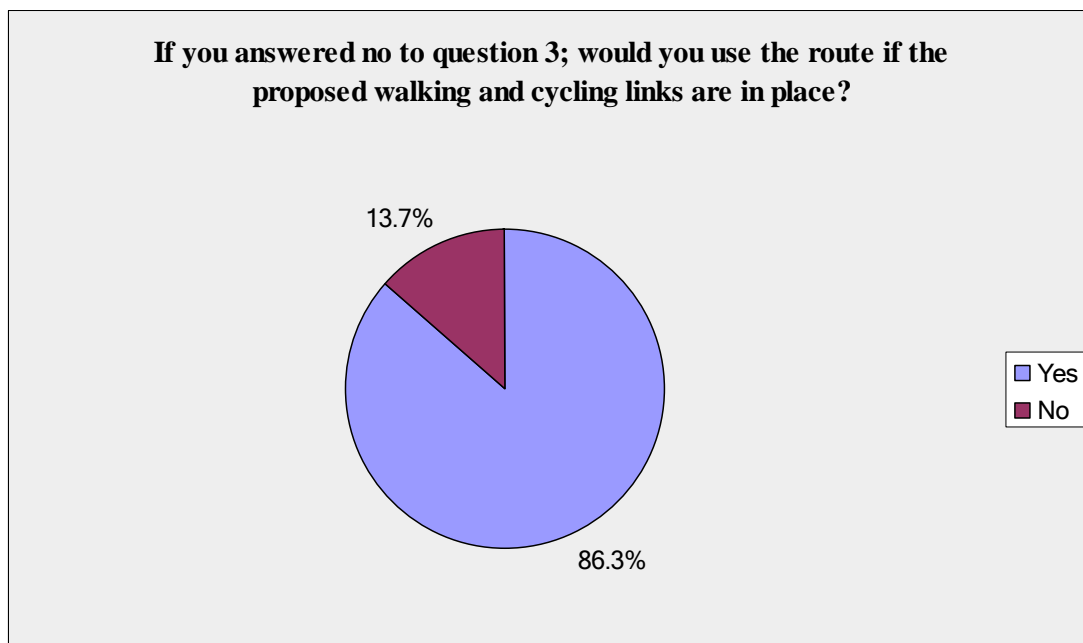
5.2 Do you currently use the route between Grange Road (R822) and Grange Manor Road / Barton Road Extension Area as indicated on the attached brochure?

In Question No.3, the respondents were asked to indicate if they used the current tracks created by desire lines that exist along the route at present. The question was framed as a Yes or No answer.



**Fig 7:** Pie Chart of responses to 'Do you currently use the route as shown in the image above?'

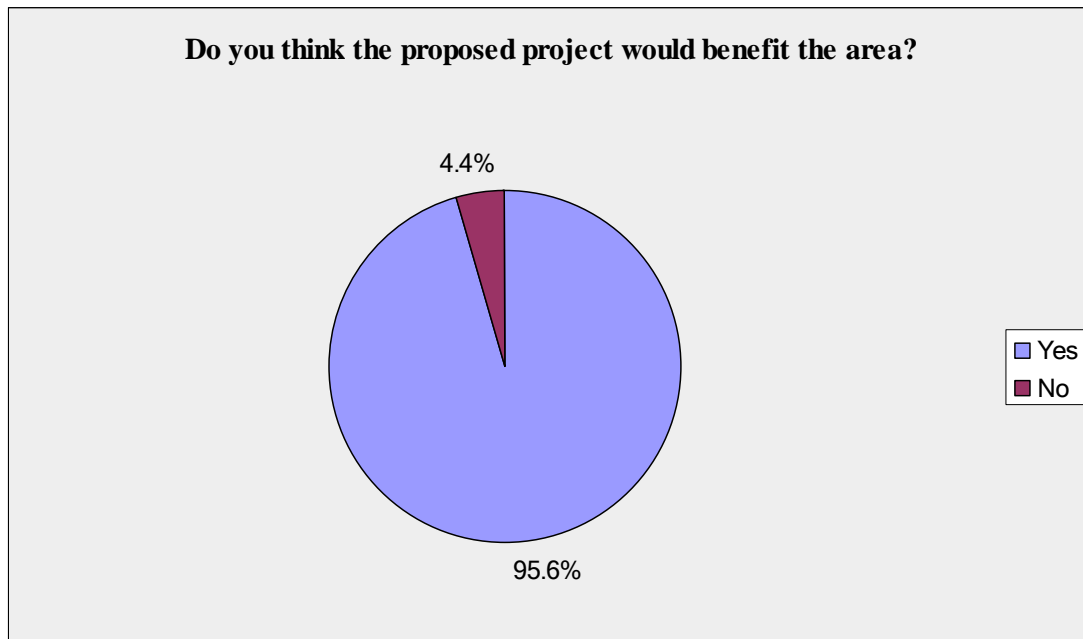
As illustrated on the graph above, 70% of the respondents outlined they currently use the route. As a follow up, in Question No.5, the 30% of respondents who don't currently use it were asked would they use the route if the proposed walking and cycling links are in place. 86.3% of the respondents who don't currently use it said they would use the route if it is constructed.



**Fig 8:** Pie Chart of responses to Question No.5

### 5.3 Do you think the proposed project would benefit the area?

95.6% of the total respondents stated that they thought the proposed project would benefit the area.



**Fig 9:** Pie Chart of responses to ‘*Do you think the proposed project would benefit the area?*’

### 5.4 Other Submissions

#### 5.4.1 Green Party

Email correspondence was received from the Dublin South Green Party on 31<sup>st</sup> July. The submission was as follows:

“The Green Party greatly welcomes the proposal to upgrade the existing rough shortcut between Grange Road and Marlay Grange (behind Barton Road) to a proper cycle and pedestrian path but we believe that it could be even better to fully serve the local community.

In this plan the cycle path would be closed off from the residents in Aranleigh, Barton Drive and most of Barton Road. At present these cyclists have to cut through the Aranleigh estate damaging the grass on the greens and increasing the risk of accidents with cars reversing out of driveways etc. An entrance point to the new cycle path at the junction with Aranleigh Vale is essential and would not add much to the cost.

The Green Party also suggests that allotments and a community garden should be located beside the path. As there is a waiting list for allotments in the South Dublin area this addition to the proposal would satisfy an existing need and would save money on unproductive landscaping. Community gardens give locals responsibility for such areas and discourage anti-social behavior. These additions would also save money on maintenance for years to come. Over time the scheme could include amenities for the young and not so young, such as play / exercise equipment and benches.”

#### *5.4.2 Barton Residents Association*

On August 7th, the Barton Road Residents Association submitted a letter to the Planning Authority. The Association stated that it is 'delighted with the proposed development' and believe it will benefit the local community. The letter detailed how the proposal would benefit the local community by:

- Providing access to popular destinations such as Enda's Park, Nutgrove Park and Shopping Centre
- Supporting more active and healthy lifestyles
- Bringing a welcome (temporary) conclusion to the long running uncertainty over the 'road reservation' issue.
- Increasing enjoyment of homes and gardens of adjoining properties
- Improving visual amenity along the route
- Improving general security in the area.

In addition, the Association expressed a number of concerns about potential unintended consequences of the development and suggested ways in which these concerns may be removed or, at least, mitigated:

- Anti-social behaviour: Submission highlights importance of CCTV
- General security of some houses on Barton Road West: Submission suggests the provision of a wall running from corner of the rear of no.27 Park Avenue eastwards to the wall at the rear of no.63 Barton Road West.
- Lighting pollution
- Drainage
- Trees
- Seating: Submission requests no seating to prevent anti-social behaviour.
- General tidy up: Development should include ground leveling and the removal of existing (now dysfunctional) barriers and dense scrub.

#### 5.5 Issues and Reasons

Question No. 7, No.8 and No.11 of the questionnaire stated:

*7. Why do you think the proposed project would benefit the area?*

*8. If you think the proposed project would NOT benefit the area, why not?*

*11. Do you have any other feedback or comments you wish to make on the above proposal?*

The purpose of these questions was to gauge the reasons behind the answer to question No.3 '*Do you think the proposed project would benefit the area?*' As outlined in Fig. 9, 95.6% of the respondents stated that they thought the proposed project would benefit the area.

Following a review of the answers to Questions No.7, No.8 and No.11 of the questionnaire and the submissions received, the following suggestions and issues are noted:

- Anti- Social Behaviour/ Dumping
- Further Links to estates
- Long Term Road Objective
- Allotments

- Access Control

- Other

A number of other issues were outlined including signposting, biodiversity, area in front of St Enda's Park, landscaping, lighting, CCTV, drainage, graffiti and boundary wall heights adjacent to the route.

## **6.0 Summary of Public Consultation**

The opinions expressed in the public consultation are strongly positive; however, some residents have expressed concerns and outlined design suggestions. It is considered that further consultation and inclusion of design responses to issues raised could mitigate some of these concerns for local residents.

- Anti- Social Behaviour/ Dumping

It would appear that the proposed route has the potential to address a number of issues that pre-exist in the area, in particular anti-social behaviour. It is evident from the submissions that there is sufficient demand (See Section 5.2 above) to ensure adequate usage and activity on the route to provide passive surveillance. Of the 229 No. questionnaires received, only 8 No. submissions expressed concern in relation to an increase in anti-social behaviour and dumping in the area as a result of the proposal. The predominant opinion expressed in the public consultation on anti- social behaviour is strongly positive and many responses outlined that the route would improve the area and would 'clean up' the location. The inclusion of CCTV, lighting and the increased use of the route would assist in the decrease of both anti social behaviour and dumping.

- Further Links to estates

It is noted that some submissions suggested further links to the proposed route from the adjoining housing estates. It is considered that these suggestions are valid and would be positive in terms of permeability in the medium term. The surrounding area is quite impermeable; with long detours being required to access relatively close facilities such as schools and shops. Additional links would also be of benefit to the management of the route itself; they would increase the potential users of the route and therefore increase the passive surveillance of the route. However, with regard to this project the main priority is to establish the main artery route and improve the general environment in order to encourage walking and cycling within the area. A link on the northern side of the route will be suggested as a possible future link. Further consultation will be carried out with the local residents association and adjacent residents during the Part 8 Phase in this regard.

- Long Term Road Objective

A number of submissions outline that a road would be preferred at this location to ease traffic and that a future road route transverses the site. A Long Term Road Objective is included in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016 at this location. Following consultation with the Roads Department, it is considered that the provision of the proposed shared cycle and walking route would not impinge on the achievement of the Long Term Road Objective in the County Development Plan 2010 – 2016.



- Allotments

The Green Party Submission and 1 No. questionnaire submission outline that a community garden and/or allotments should be provided on the open space adjacent to the route. It is considered that these are valid suggestions but are outside the scope of the project. The project aim is to encourage people to leave the car at home for local trips by bringing more households within walking and cycling distance to local amenities in accordance with the policies of the National Transport Authority (NTA) and the Council.

- Access Control

It is noted that the responses have not detailed major concerns in relation to the control of the accesses to the route. At present, vehicular restrictions are in place at Park Avenue, Hermitage Drive and Grange Downs accesses but there are no motorbike access controls. It appears that the control of motorbikes is only a minor issue at this location (4 No. responses outline concerns regarding motorbike access). The Planning Authority is of the opinion that in order to promote passive surveillance of the area it would be advisable to keep the existing 'open' nature of the east and west accesses as much as possible. It is recommended that the design include deterrents in the form of low walls (300-400mm high) with grass bank behind, and bollards at the east and west accesses. Other interventions to ensure the route is not attractive to scramblers and speeding motorbikes will be included in the design.

- Other

The other issues were outlined in the responses and shall be considered in the design process, these include signposting, biodiversity, area in front of St Endas Park, landscaping, lighting, CCTV, drainage, graffiti and boundary wall heights adjacent to the route.

In conclusion, as detailed in Section 5 above, the opinions expressed in the public consultation are positive with 95.6% of the responses indicating that the proposal will benefit the area. 161No. responses outlined reasons why the proposal would benefit the area (Question 7); the following are examples of responses:

*'It is a very positive development.'*

*'Would be delighted to see this completed as it will vastly improve that area'*

*'I think this is a great idea - it has been an eyesore for too long - it needs to be more safe & accessible to use'*

*'Thank you for finally doing something with this area. Am a resident of hermitage drive for 20 years and it has been a dump for that time.'*

*'Excellent proposal, hope it is implemented soon'*

## **7.0 Actions**

The route is intended to provide direct and simple pedestrian and cyclist links where there is evidence of existing use through short cuts. It is envisaged that the proposed route would serve a wide catchment and enable a shorter, more direct and pleasant route to schools, work, leisure facilities, public transport and the nearby shops.

Having regard to the strategic nature of the route and the initial response to consultation and the potential benefits to the area, it is recommended that the Planning Authority prioritise this project and proceed to Part 8 in 2012 with suitable mitigation measures to address the issues raised in the public consultation.

It is recommended that the following measures be incorporated into the design process:

- Upgrading and realignment of the existing footpath/ walkway to a new 4m wide shared walking and cycling route from Grange Road to Grange Downs.
- Upgrading of the existing accesses from Barton Road East Extension, Grange Manor Road, Grange Downs, Grange Road, Park Avenue and Hermitage Drive to the route.
- New landscape design along the route.
- Public realm improvement works on Grange Road; including traffic calming, provision of cycle facilities, footpath upgrade and realignment of road (if required).
- Provision of a toucan crossing on Grange Road (location & design subject to consideration)
- Provision of public lighting & CCTV for the route
- All ancillary works
- Ongoing consultation with adjoining residents
- Further 'links' onto the main route to be assessed. A possible future link to the north of the route will be suggested subject to further consultation and detailed design.

The Part 8 submission will be prepared and circulated to the members prior to public display.

## **Appendix A - Questionnaire**

1. Do you walk or cycle to facilities (shops, schools, public transport, parks etc.) in the Rathfarnham area?

Walk \_\_\_\_\_ Cycle \_\_\_\_\_ Both \_\_\_\_\_ Neither \_\_\_\_\_

2. If you walk or cycle; where are you usually going?

Walking: \_\_\_\_\_ Cycling: \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you currently use the route between Barton Road East and Grange Road (R822) as indicated on the attached brochure?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

4. If yes, where are you going to mostly?

Bus Stops	_____	Schools	_____
Work	_____	Shops	_____
Community Centre	_____	Church	_____
Visit friends	_____	Other	_____

5. If no; would you use the route if the proposed walking and cycling links are in place?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

6. Do you think the proposed project would benefit the area?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

7. If yes why?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

8. If no, why not?

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

9. Would the proposed links encourage you to walk or cycle rather than use a car for short local journeys?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_

10. What neighbourhood are you from?

\_\_\_\_\_ Prefer not to answer \_\_\_\_\_

11. Do you have any other feedback or comments you wish to make on the above proposal?

\_\_\_\_\_