



*Parish of Our Lady and St. John,  
Cork Road,  
Carrigaline,  
Co. Cork*

Senior Engineer,  
Cork County Council,  
Traffic and Transportation,  
Planning and Development Directorate,  
Floor 11,  
County Hall,  
Cork.

25<sup>th</sup> February 2021

Dear Friends,

**Re: Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan.**

We are writing to you on behalf of the *Carrigaline Parish Care of the Earth*. Inspired by Pope Francis' encyclical on the environment, 'Laudato Si', our Parish community is a member of Eco Congregation Ireland (ECI) – an organisation that encourages churches of all denominations to take an ecological approach to lifestyle, community outreach, property and worship as well as remembering communities in developing countries who are worst impacted by climate change.

Whilst we are proud of our beautiful community, we are very grateful for the opportunity to make a submission to the Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan. As you begin to work on the plan, we kindly ask you to consider the following:

***Laudato Si: We as a Church community are committed to care of creation in life, mission and lifestyle and taking practical steps to prevent further damage.***

This includes us being mindful and having respect for local biodiversity and wildlife habitats.

- As part of redesign of the public realm we want to see existing pollinator and wildlife friendly areas identified, mapped and protected from either removal or disturbance as part of any development.
- To plan to include a commitment to an increase of at least 25% in the number and diversity of pollinator and wildlife habitats, which include providing for the needs for food, shelter and safety as highlighted in the All Ireland Pollinator Plan 2015 – 2020.

- To commit to have 75% of all ornamental planting associated with any development to be pollinator friendly and any trees planted under the plan to be native Irish varieties, as outlined in the *All Ireland Pollinator Plan*.

***Laudato Si: We as a Church community reflect on the beauty of God’s world and commit to positive change for future generations.***

- Establishment of a Carrigaline community orchard planted with native Irish heritage varieties of fruit trees, and native Irish wildflowers and including a communal space with seating for all abilities.

### **Sense of community**

***Laudato Si: We as a Church community are committed to a “culture of care which permeates all of society”***

We ask that this plan would:

- Enhance our local environment by actions that reduce use of plastic through the provision of public water fountains in parks and public areas as part of any public realm design.
- Include the fitting of amber shields to public LED street lights to prevent harm to wildlife such as disturbance to nesting birds and bat populations.
- Create additional community spaces for people of all ages and abilities to gather together through the provision of additional seating, creation of parklets within housing estates and in additional public areas.
- Such a communal place should not follow the modern design aesthetic of grey concrete or marble like so many places, which creates a cold, sterile and unwelcoming vista. Instead, it should take inspiration from the local architectural heritage, of simple bricks, limestone and sandstone, creating welcoming nooks for outdoor gatherings or simple catch ups with friends.
- Stone walls built without concrete are an exceptionally useful habitat for plants and wildlife, as well as aesthetically pleasing and part of our local heritage as original field and road boundaries. They provide a unique habitat for specially adapted plant species found hardly anywhere else, as lichens, mosses, liverworts and ferns cling to the rock itself or grow in small pockets of windblown soil and weathered rock. Woodlice and millipedes live in the damp recesses, slugs and snails use the crevices for daytime cover. Dry stone walls can benefit solitary and social bees. The walls provide cavities for bees to nest in, but they also create permanent, undisturbed habitat for perennial herbs to grow alongside them, indirectly providing diverse floral resources for bees to forage on.

***Laudato Si: We as a Church community are committed to concern for others and the natural environment.***

Carrigaline cannot currently be described as a pedestrian friendly, age friendly or an active transport promoting town. Current pedestrian facilities, where they exist, are hostile to both the leisure walker and to the utility pedestrian (i.e. those walking to the shop, bank, to school, or work). Where footpaths exist, they are narrow (as highlighted by the recent COVID19 pandemic and the need for social distancing), stop suddenly, cross junctions, roundabouts and commercial entrances without safe crossing.

We ask that this plan would:

- Reestablish zebra crossings to improve pedestrian access to the Church of Our Lady & St. John, Carrigaline as well as the schools in our parish.
- Correct and further establish pedestrian friendly/age-friendly cycle paths, made suitable for all abilities - i.e. for scooters/trikes/adapted bikes for people with physical disabilities, as well as ordinary bicycles.
- Ensure that all of our residents have the option to choose active travel for all short trips in and out of the town centre, in safety and comfort, to enjoy our wonderful town in a sustainable way.

Thank you for reading our submission. We wish you well in the important work you will do to ensure sustainability and harmony in our town for our existing community members and future generations.

Yours faithfully,

Carrigaline Parish Care of the Earth