



APPENDIX 5

Playful Cities Report

Portlaoise **Playful** Active Travel Route

**Community Consultation Report
and
Design Brief**

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Executive Summary

In 2022, Laois County Council issued a tender for a project aimed at promoting active travel in the community. Under this project, the council's remit is to,

'extend the first section of the recently opened "Triogue Way" from An Pairc an Phobail to Summerhill Area (Southern Circular Road to The Downs to Aghnaharna Drive) which five schools are located on two campuses via a playful street encompassing design elements applied to pavements and along the route to create an interactive trail to encourage Active Travel to school.'

The Brief also outlined that the design elements must achieve the following aims:

- Encourage Active Travel (walking and cycling)
- Increase Road safety as it will define school zone area
- Reduce perceived distance of walking/cycling to these schools
- Connect and signpost Triogue Way and An Pairc an Pobal to the school route

In February 2023, A Playful City was contracted by Laois County Council to deliver this brief. Engagement and Research Activities carried out by A Playful City were as follows:

- Preliminary and Primary Research with the Community of Portlaoise
- Co-Design Workshops with young people of Portlaoise and their parents guardians
- Community Trialling to prototype the co-designed interventions

A Playful City mapped the 5Cs of Good Walking Networks by Tim Pharoah and Transport for London against the four main aims of the project and used them to underpin all community engagement, detailed below, from the outset.

Community Engagement:

1. Community Surveys and Outreach

- **Family Survey** - available online at the following url - <https://laois.ie/active-school-travel/>
- **Community Survey** - available online at the following url - <https://laois.ie/active-school-travel/>
- **Youth Survey** - issued to all five schools along the route - over 500 responses from the students in Portlaoise Educate Together National School (PETNS), Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS
- **Outreach** - Series of texts to be sent via schools' text-a-parent systems, posters erected along the route and social media posts that were drafted and provided to all five schools and Laois County Council

2. Site Visits

3. Co-creative Workshops and Worksheet Packs

- **Youth Workshop** - 24 students, 8 from each of the following schools; PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS
- **Youth Worksheet Packs** - issued to all five schools along the route - over 500 responses from the students in PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS
- **Parents Workshop** - parents from PETNS and Gaelscoil Phortlaoise, including a parent of a child with disabilities and a Community Garda.

Key Insights from Community Engagement:

1. **Play on the Way** - Both young people and parents highlighted the importance of 'play on the way' opportunities to reduce travel time to and from school.
2. **Changing the Narrative** - Drivers are currently the main safety concern for cyclists, wheelers and walkers. How do we share children's perspectives and experiences about their journeys to school & in relation to driver attitudes and behaviours?
3. **A Time to Connect** - Both parents and young people highlighted travelling to school as a key time to connect and check-in with one another.
4. **A Time for Adventure** - Both the youth workshop and youth survey produced many requests for zip lines, pump tracks and wriggly lines, indicating a desire for freedom and adventure.
5. **Multisensory and Physical Interaction** - 'Objects and Things' was among the Top 2 selections in 'Getting Inspired' for all groups indicating a desire for physical interaction. There were also multiple requests for multisensory interventions.
6. **Nature, Mindfulness and Noticing** - All groups indicated that connecting with nature was one of the main benefits of engaging in active travel. Parents also highlighted it as an opportunity to slow down and connect with nature in a mindful way.

Proposed Design Interventions:

A Playful City built on the ideas and insights that came out of the community engagement to finalise six interventions that best incorporated each of these insights and themes from engagement and the 5Cs.

1. **Park n Stride System** - A Playful City proposes a series of playful signs in car parks around Portlaoise that indicate the time it takes to walk or cycle to the two school campuses.
2. **Gateway to Play** - A Playful City proposes colourfully designed *Gateways to Play* at each of the park entrances.

3. **The Mindful Way** - A Playful City proposes *The Mindful Way*, a series of playful signs that promote mindful engagement with nature along the route.
4. **The Wiggly Way** - A Playful City proposes *The Wiggly Way*, a new section of the path that meanders for young people to follow on foot or wheels.
5. **The Worry Rook** - A Playful City proposes *The Worry Rook*, a mascot that invites young people to leave their worries behind by touching its wing.
6. **Children's Safety Signs** - A Playful City proposes a series of *Children's Safety Signs* for this section of the route that depict how young cyclists, wheelers and walkers feel while travelling to school in order to start to change the narrative and shift the onus responsibility back to drivers to make cyclists, rollers and pedestrians feel safer.

A prototype of each intervention was installed on 20th June 2023, A Playful City hosted a launch and trial day which included;

1. **Facilitated walkshop** with students,
2. **Observations and ad hoc consultation surveys** with students, parents and other members of the community
3. **Feedback survey** to each of the schools and received some responses after the launch and trial day.

Overall there was strong support for the design interventions, with a number of community recommendations for improvement which should be incorporated into the final designs.

Key Recommendations Beyond Design Interventions:

Park Opening Times - The Park currently opens at 8:30am, which is later than many of the school openings. In order for the route to be used on the way to school, the opening time of the park will need to be changed.

Crossing Issue at Private Entrance - There is currently a private entrance that crosses the path on the route, A Playful City proposes that a speed ramp should be installed here to change driver behaviour and for the keypad to open the gate to be moved further along the car's path as its current location means that the car stops on the cycle path when inputting the access code.

Dishing of Kerbs - A Playful City recommends that all kerbs at all entrances should be dished to accommodate cyclists and wheelchair users.

Motorway Crash Barriers - There are currently motorway crash barriers along The South Circular Road, visually prioritising cars over cyclists and walkers. A Playful City proposes that there is an intervention to humanise the crash barriers, and to begin to work towards mitigating the need for them completely.

The Power of In Person Engagement - Participants responded significantly more in favour of the design interventions when they engaged with the physical prototype rather than an image of the design. A Playful City recommends that Laois County

Council proceed with full scale and in person engagement for all future consultation on this project and all future projects of this nature.

More Concrete Impact Measures - A Playful City and Laois County Council have yet to obtain any statistics on sustained behaviour change as a result of the temporary interventions. Going forward, A Playful City recommends that an accurate baseline is measured before the designs are implemented, with a further accurate reading taken in the same way some time after the interventions have been installed to measure their long term impact.

Introduction

Climate Action Laois County Council - The Triogue Way

Every morning, over 5000 people in Portlaoise drive less than 15 minutes to school while the vision for Portlaoise envisages a low carbon town where people will be more reliant on safe and clean walking and cycling routes as a means of making their daily journeys to work and school.

The Triogue Way is a key infrastructure intervention that supports the achievement of a low carbon town. It provides a huge opportunity for Portlaoise communities to make a genuine shift towards a more pedestrian, cyclist friendly means of commuting to schools, to places of work and to local amenities.

The Triogue Way is a three metre walking and cycling path which starts in the Summer Hill Bellad area of the Portlaoise Southern Circular Road and it enters into the People's Park from there; goes through the People's Park, exits onto and across JFL Avenue; goes through the Parochial House site into the Convent lands, onwards adjacent to the War Memorial and thereafter following the banks of the River Triogue under the railway line into and through the Linear Park. Exiting onto Green Mill lane, onto Harper's lane and terminating at the school campuses on Harper's Lane at the Western Orbital.

The principal benefits of the Triogue Way can be summarised under three headings:

1. **Enhanced Sustainability** by way of less reliance on motor vehicles, reduced traffic congestion, better air quality and reduced carbon emissions.
2. **Enhanced Safety** by way of separations of cyclists and pedestrians from motor vehicles, enhanced accessibility for mobility and visually impaired people, older persons and so on.
3. **Enhanced the use of local amenities** such as the Linear Park and the People's Park.

"It's the children who are saying, I don't want to go to school in the car, I want to cycle, I want to walk. The challenge for us is to provide those children with the circumstances in which they and their parents are confident in terms of their safety and the quality of the infrastructure that we can provide to enable them to get out of the car and to either cycle or walk."

Simon Walton

Director of Services, Laois County Council

Project Brief

In 2022, Laois County Council issued a tender for a project aimed at promoting active travel in the community. Under this project, the council's remit is to,

'extend the first section of the recently opened "Triogue Way" from An Pairc an Phobail to Summerhill Area (Southern Circular Road to The Downs to Aghnaharna Drive) which five schools are located on two campuses via a playful street encompassing design elements applied to pavements and along the route to create an interactive trail to encourage Active Travel to school.'

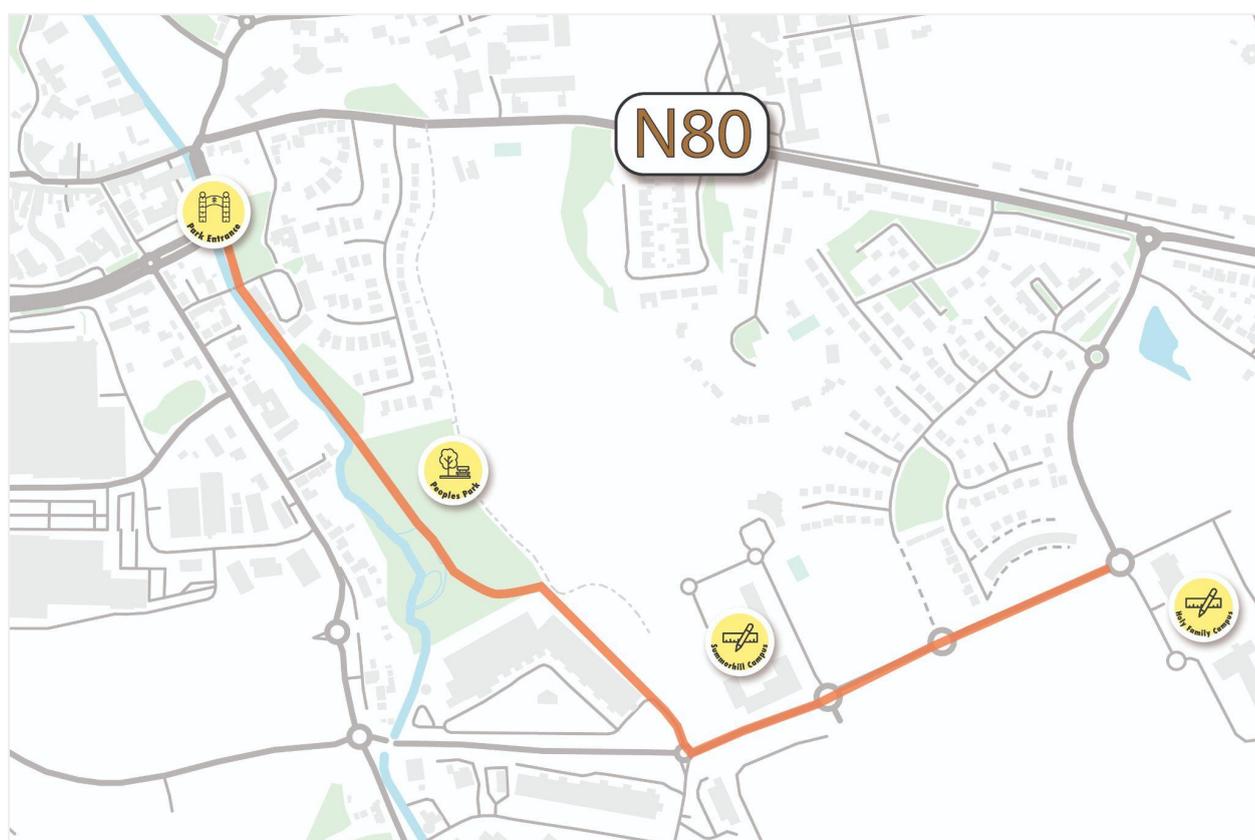


Figure 1: Proposed route for interventions

Previous research carried out by An Taisce found that the main barriers to active travel were as follows:

- Lack of safety for both cyclists and pedestrians
- Inaccurate perception of distance

The Brief also outlined that the design elements must achieve the following aims:

- Encourage Active Travel (walking and cycling)
- Increase Road safety as it will define school zone area
- Reduce perceived distance of walking/cycling to these schools

- Connect and signpost Triogue Way and An Pairc an Pobal to the school route

In February 2023, A Playful City was contracted by Laois County Council to deliver this brief. Engagement and Research Activities carried out by A Playful City were as follows:

- Preliminary and Primary Research with the Community of Portlaoise
- Co-Design Workshops with young people of Portlaoise and their parents guardians
- Community Trialling to prototype the co-designed interventions

The aim of A Playful City's research and engagement was to co-create an interactive travel route that successfully achieved the four main aims of the project previously highlighted.

This report has been created to set out in broad terms the results of these tasks, outlining the community's vision for the route and how it can be best implemented and supported going forward.

The Neighbourhood Play System - The Importance of Play on the Way

The Neighbourhood Play System, by Sports New Zealand advocates for such playful active travel routes to school. Increasingly structured lives and reduced free time, the loss of traditional play spaces such as streets and driveways, heightened fears around safety and risk, and a loss of societal connections means play deprivation is increasingly becoming a national and international concern.

Play spaces and play locations have become car-centric destinations that require parents/guardians to drive children to, for play to occur (see Figure 2 below).

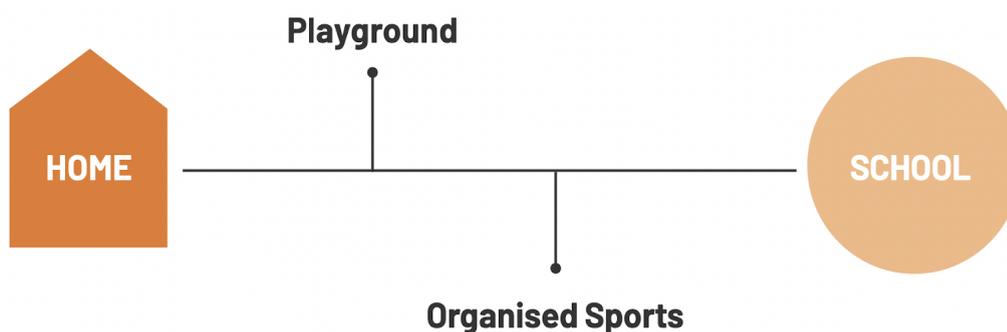


Figure 2: Car-centric play system.

Each neighbourhood has the opportunity to build upon its own cultural, political, socio-economic and environmental contexts to realise the benefits of play through child-friendly urban planning. Schools are core play areas for children but they are inaccessible outside of school hours, which dramatically decreases play opportunities.

The neighbourhood footprint surrounding a school is just as important in creating a liveable and playful city for our children and their families.

Considering that children spend most of their time at home or at school, these two settings should be used as anchor points for play within the neighbourhood footprint. Providing safe travel routes to enable independence and creating a network of opportunities to play on the way and in every space available helps form the foundations of a truly child- friendly neighbourhood (see Figure 3).

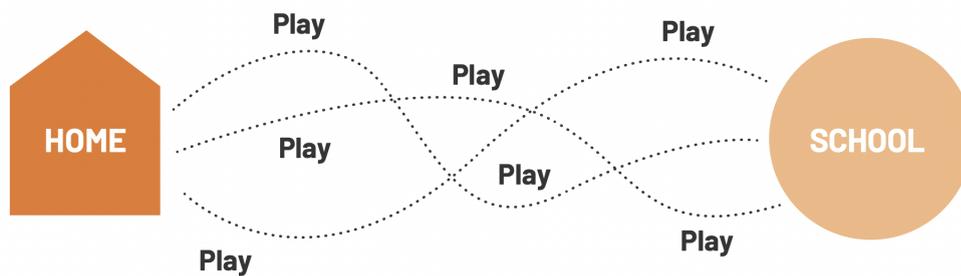


Figure 3: Walkable play system

Children's Independent Mobility (CIM)

The Neighbourhood Play System aligns with the concept of Children's Independent Mobility (CIM), which is the ability of children to move around their communities without adult supervision. CIM is important for children's physical, cognitive, and social development.

Children also learn about the world around them as they engage more directly with their local environment.

There are many health benefits associated with CIM. Active travel, such as walking or cycling to school, is a very effective way of increasing physical fitness. Opportunities for free play and participation in recreational activities provide opportunities for the development of bone and muscle strength, regulating body fat levels, controlling weight, and maintaining healthy blood pressure levels.

The overwhelming evidence from the international literature is that improving levels of CIM can help communities to feel safe, and simultaneously enable children to become more included in society. Conversely, reducing levels of CIM and the lack of opportunities for free play and recreation can adversely affect children's immediate wellbeing and future development.

A Note on Vulnerable Road Users

The term Vulnerable Road Users is often used to describe children, but this can be misleading. Vulnerability is largely created by the physical environment, attitudes and laws. If we want to make our streets safer for children, we need to focus on addressing the hazards created by the volume and speed of traffic. This means making it easier for children to walk and wheel to school and other destinations.

We also need to change the way we think about children's mobility. Instead of seeing them as vulnerable road users, we need to see them as active participants in the transportation system. By giving children more freedom to move around, we can help them stay healthy, learn about their communities, and build a brighter future for everyone.

The social model of disability says that people are disabled by barriers created by society, rather than by innate attributes. This same principle can be applied to children's vulnerability on the roads.

The design of our roads and streets creates a number of barriers for children, including:

- Mixing with heavy, fast vehicles
- Inadequate priority crossings
- Lack of protected cycling infrastructure
- A hostile and unforgiving road culture enabled by driver attitudes and behaviour

These barriers make it difficult for children to move around safely and independently. As a result, understandably, many parents refuse to give their children permission to use the roads independently.

The "Playful Active Travel School Zone" along the Triogue Way aims to address the needs of children and their carers by creating a more walkable and wheelable Portlaoise, and changing the way we think about children's mobility.

By taking these steps, we can create an environment where children have much more freedom to move around safely and independently. This will not only benefit children and their families, but it will help build a healthier, more sustainable, and more equitable community.

Policy Context

The design and development of spaces and opportunities for children's independent mobility and play, as well as children's participation in this process, are all supported by a series of international, national, and local policies.

The UN Convention on Human Rights.

In 1992 Ireland ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, the UN requires states to consider the following:

- Article 12: - Respect for the views of the child: When adults are making decisions that affect children, children have the right to say what they think should happen and have their opinions taken into account.
- Article 31 - Leisure, play and culture: Children have the right to relax and play, and to join a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities. Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

National Children's Strategy (2000)

This commitment to Article 12 is built on in the National Children's Strategy (2000) in the form of the first goal of the Strategy:

- NATIONAL GOAL: Children will have a voice in matters which affect them and their views will be given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity. A key challenge in the development of public play facilities will be the incorporation of meaningful consultation with children and young people in their design, development, management and evaluation.

National Action Plan for Social Inclusion

This commitment to both Article 31 and Article 12 is built on in the most recent social inclusion strategy, which identified a wide range of targeted actions and interventions to achieve the overall objective of reducing consistent poverty.

- Every child should have access to quality play, sport, recreation and cultural activities to enrich their experience of childhood, and;
- Every child and young person will have access to appropriate participation in local and national decision-making.

National Play Policy – Ready Steady Play

The National Play Policy from the Department of Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth also builds on these commitments. The Policy provides a framework for future development, actions assigned to local authorities include:

- The development of a play policy (18),
- the participation of children in decision making relevant to them (2) and,
- the use of creative landscape for play (13).

The Children's Sport Participation and Physical Activity Study, *Sport Ireland, Healthy Ireland and Sport Northern Ireland (2018)*

The 2018 report found “extremely high” levels of insufficient activity in Irish children's lives. "Active Youth Environments" are 1 of the 4 key strategic action areas to create healthy spaces & places.

This involves creating supportive spaces and places that promote and safeguard the rights of youth of all ages and abilities to have equitable access to safe places and spaces in their cities and communities in which they can engage in regular physical activity.

Laois Play Policy

Looking more locally, the commitment to include the community in decision making processes is reflected in Laois County Council's Mission Statement which states:

- Our mission is to develop and promote the County in an inclusive and sustainable manner, ***in partnership with the community.***

The inclusion of children and families in these processes and the provision of safe spaces and opportunities for play is detailed more specifically later in the play policy which states that Laois County Council will:

- Plan and develop play opportunities in consultation with children and families to meet their needs in local communities, making best use of available resources.
- Work towards safer communities so that all children are able to play safely outdoors, and older children able to get around safely on their own.
- Introduce traffic calming measures including 'safe' routes to school, cycle ways and speed restrictions so that children have safe access to community facilities.

A Playful City Approach

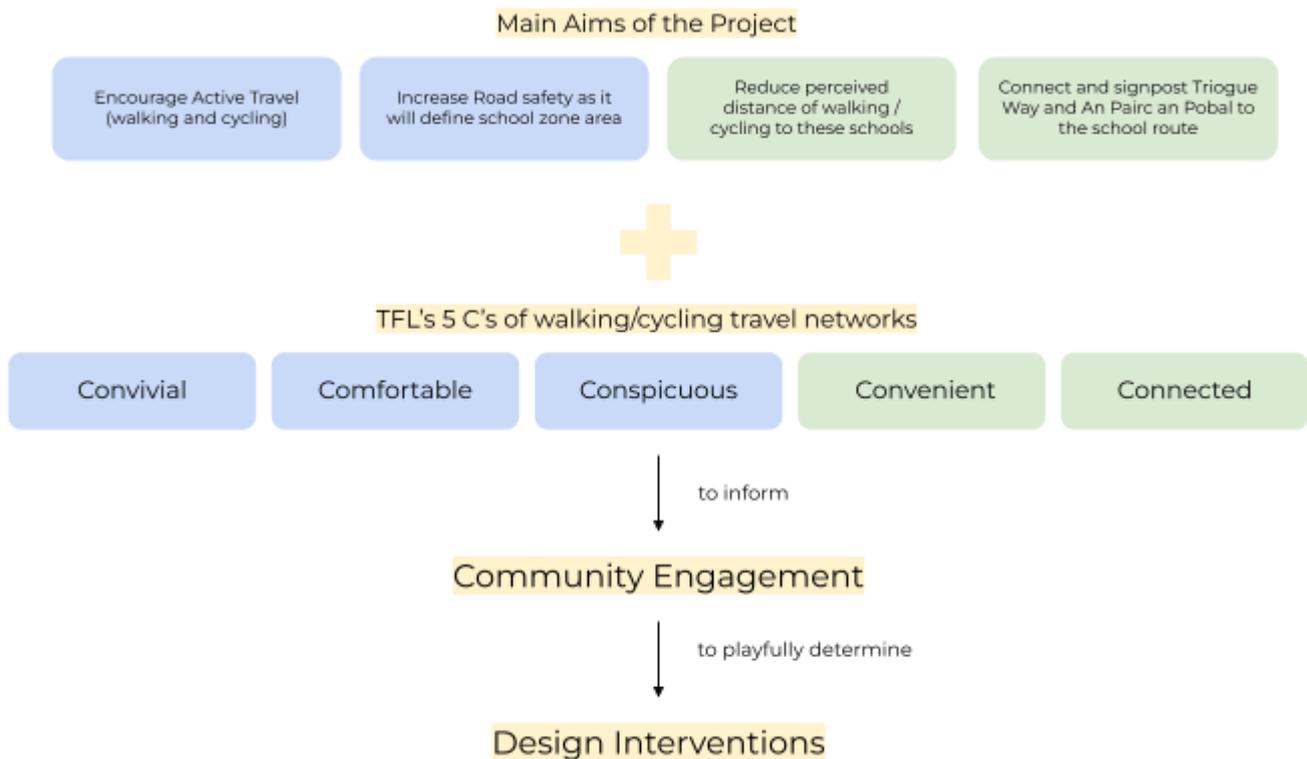
Framing the Brief

When looking at improving walkability, wheelability or cyclability, A Playful City have applied the concept of the 5Cs by Tim Pharoah and Transport for London which outlines the core criteria that must be reviewed in determining the quality of the walking environment, or "walkability" of a street or area.

The '5Cs' of Good Walking Networks:

- 1. Convivial** - Walking routes and public spaces should be pleasant to use, allowing social interaction between people, including other road users. They should be safe and inviting, with diversity of activity and continuous interest at ground floor level.
- 2. Comfortable** - Walking should be enjoyed through high quality pavement surfaces, attractive landscape design and architecture, and as much freedom as possible from the noise and fumes and harassment arising from proximity to motor traffic. Opportunities for rest and shelter should be provided.
- 3. Conspicuous** - Routes should be clear and legible, if necessary with the help of signposting and waymarking. Street names and property numbers should be comprehensively provided.
- 4. Convenient** - Routes should be direct, and designed for the convenience of those on foot, not those in vehicles. This should apply to all users, including those whose mobility is impaired. Road crossing opportunities should be provided as of right, located in relation to desire lines.
- 5. Connected** - Walking routes should connect each area with other areas and with key 'attractors' such as public transport stops, schools, work, and leisure destinations. Routes should connect at the local and district level, forming a comprehensive network.

A Playful City mapped these against the four main aims of the project and used them to underpin all community engagement from the outset.



A Playful Approach

At A Playful City, we are focused on creating more playful, engaging and inclusive cities. We work with the public and private sector to engage with local communities to reimagine public space, with and for the community.

A Playful City has a phased approach to the delivery of its projects - each phase builds upon the last, and involves listening to and collaborating with community members and stakeholders of all ages.

1. Meeting the Community

- **Internal Kick-Off** - A Playful City works closely with the client to understand insights that have already been gathered from any related past work to identify key messaging for our outreach to stakeholders. It is important that the client has considered and heard views from within its own organisation too. A Playful City runs in-house online/in person workshops to encourage cross departmental involvement and views on the relevant piece of public realm and to ensure everyone is clear on the scope and parameters of the project.

- **Community Mapping and Surveys** - During this phase, we carry out community mapping and surveys to establish a baseline before carrying out any work.
- **Site Visits** - A Playful City work on the ground, meeting with the community and having initial conversations with key local stakeholders in the places that our work will be impacting.

2. Brainstorming Together

- **Engaging Young People** - Childrens environment has a strong impact on their overall health and wellbeing. Children have a unique perspective and individual needs of their environment. Participation in the decision making process helps ensure that these needs are addressed.
- **Engaging Parents and the Wider Community** - A Playful City believes in co-creative and collaborative processes with local communities. This community led approach builds trust and increases capacity within the community to ensure the sustainability of the finished development into the future.

3. Thinking and Trialling Together

- **Testing Pilot Interventions** - 1-to-1 scale prototyping is important in the work we do at A Playful City, it allows communities to test and experience their ideas and give feedback before final and more permanent change is implemented. This, again builds trust and consensus around the final outcomes of the project and troubleshoots in a tangible and iterative way. The 1-to-1 approach allows for personal and tangible engagement with the interventions and offers an opportunity to gather more feedback from members of the community (e.g young people) who might not otherwise attend more formal community consultations.

4. Making it Happen

- **Key Recommendations**
- **Design Brief** - The final community design brief outlines all findings of the project life cycle, highlights themes, offers suggestions and structures opportunities for future community involvement with the public space - in order to foster efficient and dynamic models of community stewardship into the future.

Meeting the Community - Community Mapping

Community Mapping and Surveys

During this phase, we carried out community mapping and surveys to establish a baseline before carrying out any work. We conducted comprehensive stakeholder mapping of the Portlaoise area and determined our strategy for engagement.

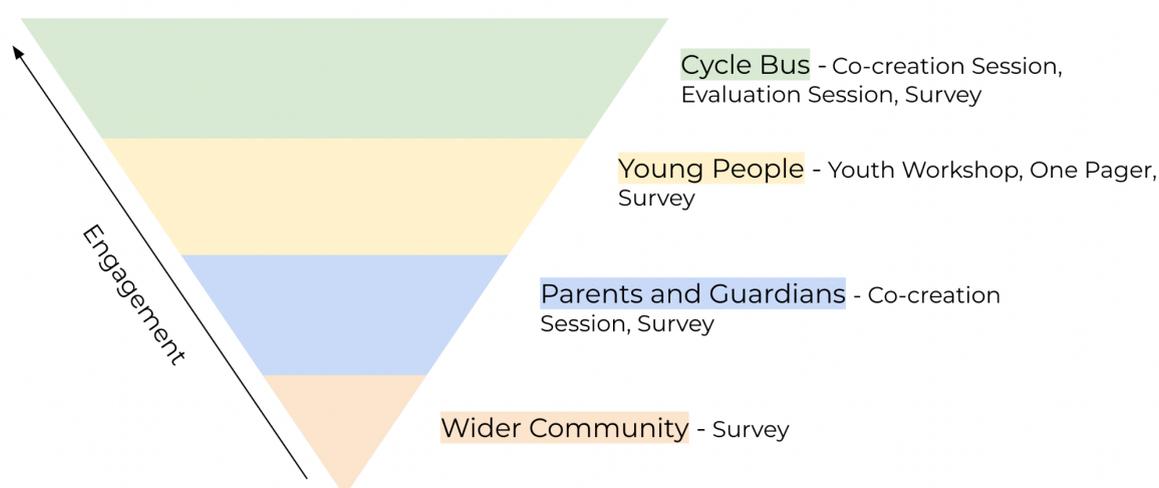


Figure 4: Engagement Pyramid of Hierarchy

Cycle Bus

We identified the Portlaoise Cycle Bus as core engagement allies as we believed that they possess valuable input in terms of lived experience when it comes to active travel, with site specific insights and information, and they can also continue to act as community ambassadors for behaviour, ensuring sustainable and continued behaviour change.

Young People

As previously mentioned, children have a unique perspective and needs relating to their environment. Their participation in the decision making process helps ensure these are addressed. We ensured there were multiple ways for young people to engage in the design process.

Parents and Guardians

The An Taisce report ultimately found that young people express the desire to engage in active travel to school, however, it was parents and guardians who acted as the ultimate barriers to this behaviour. For this reason, we knew we had to engage parents whose children do not currently actively travel to school from the outset to ensure that true barriers were identified and meaningfully addressed in the design of the interventions.

Wider Community

As part of the route is in a public park, and another part on a busy, public main road, it was important to engage the wider community in the design process to ensure buy in and approval of the designs and to also build awareness and consideration for other road users (ie. children travelling to school) among the local community.

Community Surveys and Outreach

A family survey and a community survey was issued to determine a baseline impression of the four main aims of the project. These were accessible at the following url - <https://laois.ie/active-school-travel/>. To promote engagement, A Playful City outreached to all five schools along the proposed Active Travel Route - Portlaoise Educate Together National School (PETNS), Gaelscoil Phortlaoise, Maryborough NS, Holy Family SS and Holy Family JS - with a series of texts to be sent home directing parents to the survey. PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS all issued these texts over the course of a couple of weeks. A number of posters were also erected along the route, directing people to the survey link, as seen below. These were accompanied by social media posts that were drafted and provided to all five schools and Laois County Council to further drive survey responses.



Figure 5: Posters for Survey Outreach

These surveys received a low response rate and the insights were not quantifiably analysed for this report as they were not reflective of the entire community.

However, A Playful City also issued a physical youth survey to be printed by schools. This survey received over 500 responses from students in PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS and the insights are detailed in the Key Insights section below.

Site Visits

A Playful City and members of Laois County Council also conducted a number of site visits to Portlaoise to meet the community and examine the route to determine opportunities for intervention. We observed parent, student and other road users' behaviour at school pick up time both along the route and at all five schools. We also met with members of the cycle bus to conduct a bodystorming session, cycling the route to experience it firsthand and held a debrief discussion to discuss opportunities and challenges for intervention after cycling the route.



A Playful City and LCC with Theo and Jane from Portlaoise Cycle Bus

Key Insights



Not all of the route is suitable for active play due to prioritisation of cars

Cars and driver behaviour is the primary cause for anxiety among children who cycle to school. A section of the route is on a main, busy road, with unsafe crossings at roundabouts and motorway crash barriers, overall this section of the route prioritises cars and is not currently designed for active play.



Community do not know the route exists and is open to the public

Many members of the community did not know the route through the park existed and was open to the public. This highlighted the importance of signposting and mapping the route with our design interventions.



Students innately want to engage in active travel

The majority of those that already walk, cycle or wheel to school want to continue to do so, while the majority of those that travel to school by car or bus would prefer to walk or cycle. This shows an innate desire to engage in active travel among students and indicates that parents and parental control is the true barrier.



Parents act as barriers to active travel due to misperceived inconvenience

The An Taisce report found that perceived distance to school was a primary barrier to active travel for parents. However, we found that, due to traffic build up, it was just as quick, sometimes quicker, to walk or cycle. This highlighted the importance of highlighting the convenience of active travel with our design interventions.

“I feel unsafe cycling to school because there’s a lot of cars”

- *Student*

“People don’t know the route or some of the entrances exist”

- *Parent*

7 out of 10 of those that drive to school would prefer to walk or cycle, while 8 out of 10 of those that walk or cycle would like to continue walking or cycling

- *Student Survey*

“There’s a false sense of convenience surrounding the car, if you could highlight that it takes less or more or less the same amount of time I think far more people would walk or cycle to school”

- *Parent*

Key Insights

7 out of 10 of those that drive to school **would prefer to walk or cycle** to school

8 out of 10 of those that walk or cycle **would like to continue walking or cycling** to school

8 out of 10 of those that **drive** to school said that they feel **BORED** or **TIRED** when travelling to school

10 out of 10 of those that **cycle** to school said that they feel **HAPPY** or **FREE** when travelling to school

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

people come around the roundabout so fast.

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

because there's lot's of traffic

Statistics from Student Survey - Over 500 responses

Brainstorming Together - Community Engagement

Engaging with Young People

Children have a unique perspective on and specific needs in relation to their environment. We set out to ensure there were multiple ways for young people to engage in the design process.

A youth workshop was held in Portlaoise Educate Together NS, on Wednesday 26th April and invited 8 students from each of the following schools; Portlaoise Educate Together National School (PETNS), Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS.

We also issued a youth worksheet pack with the same tasks to be facilitated by individual teachers during class time to maximise the number of students reached and included in this research.

1. Youth Workshop - 24 students, 8 from each of the following schools; PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS

2. Youth Worksheet Packs - issued to all five schools along the route - over 500 responses from the students in PETNS, Gaelscoil Phortlaoise and Maryborough NS



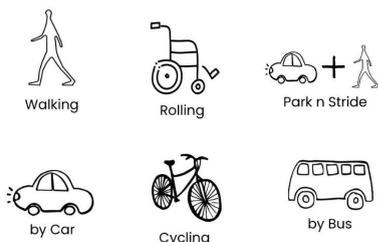
Workshop Tasks

Task #1 Talking about our feelings..



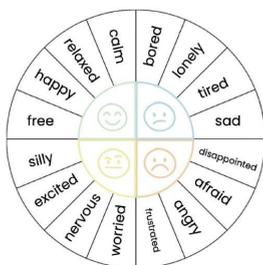
How do you currently travel to school?

Put a circle around your answer..



How does travelling to school like this make you feel?

Colour in the three feelings that you feel most often..



How would you like to travel to school?

Put a circle around your answer..



How do you think you would feel if you travelled to school like that?

Colour in the three feelings that you think you would feel..



Task #2 Getting inspired..



We will be designing some fun things along your route to school but we want to know what you would like to see!

Put a sticker on your favourite picture under each question to help us know what fun things to put along the route..



How would you like to play..



Where would you like to play?



Would you prefer to see..



Task #3 Our Journey and Ideas



If you had to walk or cycle to school, what way would you go? Mark it on the map..



1. Where do you feel most **safe** on your journey to school?

Mark it with a blue sticker

2. Where do you feel most **unsafe** on your journey to school?

Mark it with a green sticker

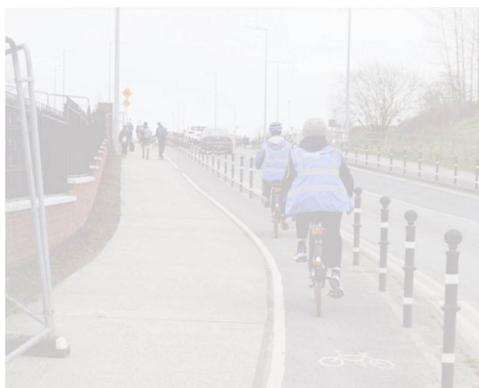
3. Why do you feel unsafe here?

Where is the most **boring** part of your journey to school?

Mark it with a red sticker

What could we put here to make it more fun?

Draw or write about your idea below!





Images from Youth Workshop

Engaging with Parents, Guardians and the Wider Community

The team had initially planned on solely engaging cycle bus parents in a co-creation session to co-create design interventions. However, with indications that parents were a primary barrier to adopting active travel among families, it was decided to open up the session to all parents, regardless of how they currently travel to school.

An in person co-creation session was held Portlaoise Educate Together NS, on Wednesday 26th April with parents from PETNS and Gaelscoil Phortlaoise, including a parent of a child with disabilities and a Community Garda.

The aim of this session was to discuss suitable and safe locations for interventions along the route, and to co-create solutions that overcame the barriers to adopting active travel.



Workshop Tasks

Task #1 Getting inspired..



We will be designing some fun things along the route to your child's school but we want to know what you would like to see!

Put a sticker on your favourite picture under each question to help us know what fun things to put along the route..



How would you like your child to play..



Where would you like your child to play..



Would you prefer to see..



Task #2 Setting the Scene..



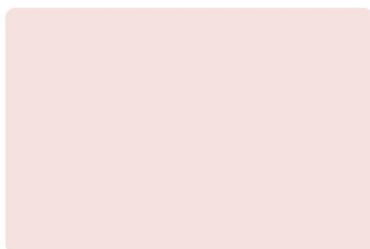
1. Are there areas you think are **safe and suitable** for playful interventions?

Please mark locations on the map using green stickers

2. Are there areas you think are **unsafe or unsuitable** for playful interventions?

Please mark locations on the map using red stickers

3. Tell us why you think they are unsafe below:



For Task #4, A Playful City devised five 'how might we' statements for ideation based on the 5Cs to ensure ideas were focussed and specific yet comprehensive, meeting the main aims of the project.

Each group ideated around their assigned 'How might we' statement before developing their strongest idea using prompts adapted from [The Playful by Design Toolkit](#) by the Digital Futures Commission.

Task #4 How do we get there?

How might we make the mobility route more **inviting, fun and enjoyable** to use?

Write down your ideas on p...

As a group, choose your favourite idea and stick the post it here:

Use the following prompts

- What if a you could nudge a child towards an unexpected area?

Task #4 How do we get there?

How might we make the mobility route more **comfortable and safe** to use?

Write down your ideas on p...

As a group, choose your favourite idea and stick the post it here:

Use the following prompts

- What if a child wants to play or engage with your idea with a parent?

Task #4 How do we get there?

How might we make the route more **convenient** to use? How might we make the convenience of the route obvious to all road users?

Write down your ideas on post its and stick them below:

Think about prioritising those on foot/wheels vs those in vehicles

The idea that travelling by car is more convenient is often a misconception - how can you highlight this?

As a group, choose your favourite idea and stick the post it here:

Use the following prompts to build on your idea, what would you add or change?

- What if a child's disability makes access challenging?
- How might your idea suggest moments of "play on the way" along the route?

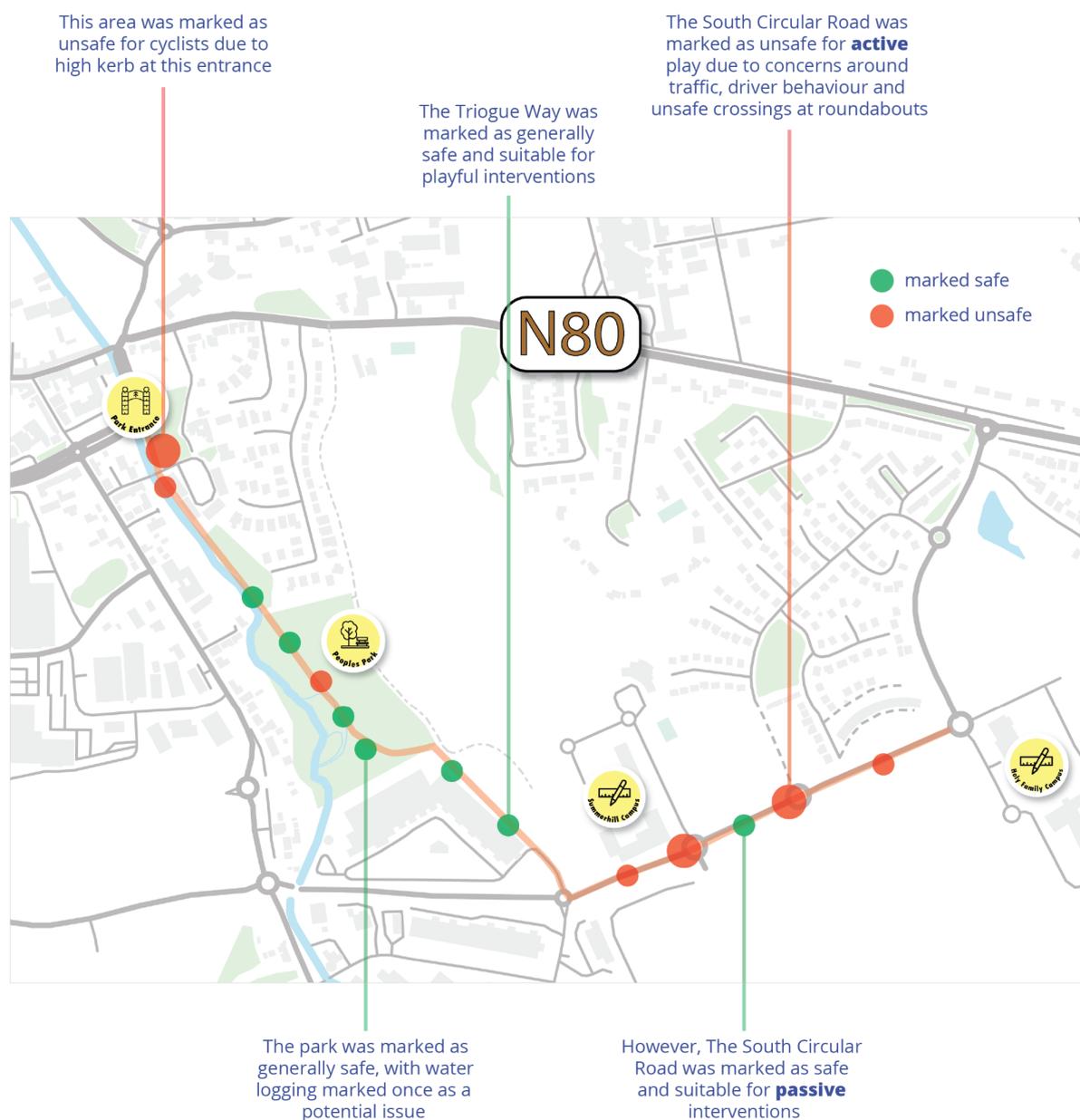


Images from Parent Workshop

Key Insights

The following insights are a culmination of recurring themes and insights from across the youth workshop, the youth worksheet packs and the parent workshop.

Mapping areas for intervention



Key Design Opportunities

1

Play on the Way

Both young people and parents highlighted the importance of 'play on the way' opportunities to reduce travel time to and from school. How can we introduce more 'play on the way' opportunities along the route?

"It will be important to keep them moving, especially in the mornings"

"You could try and have more things to see along the way rather than things you stop and interact with"

- *Parents*

"I like this one because instead of having to stop for a few minutes you can just go through it"

- *Student*

2

Changing the Narrative

Drivers are currently the main safety concern for cyclists, wheelers and walkers. How can we change the narrative and make it a driver's responsibility to make cyclists, rollers and pedestrians feel safe?

"89% of cyclists feel unsafe on their way to school due to cars or drivers, while 52% of students who travel to school by car feel completely safe"

- *Student Survey*

"The only thing is my mum wouldn't let me cycle to school because of the cars"

- *Student*

3

A Time to Connect

Both parents and young people highlighted travelling to school as a key time to connect and check-in with one another. How can we promote reflective conversations among parents and children travelling to school together?

"I love walking and cycling to school with my kids because it's a time to connect and check in"

- *Parent*

"I'd love to cycle more so that I could play and talk to my friends"

- *Student*

4

5

6

A Time for Adventure

Both the youth workshop and youth survey produced many requests for zip lines, pump tracks and wriggly lines, indicating a desire for freedom and adventure. How can we incorporate a sense of freedom and adventure into our interventions?

49% of cyclists feel free and 61% of non cyclists said they would like to cycle to school to feel more free”

- *Student*

“When I ride on my bike, the wind blows in my face and gives me a nice feeling”

- *Student*

Multisensory & Physical Interaction

‘Objects and Things’ was among the Top 2 selections in ‘Getting Inspired’ for all groups indicating a desire for physical interaction. There were also multiple requests for multisensory interventions. How can we incorporate multi sensory and physical interactions into our interventions?

“It would be great to incorporate sounds as well as visuals, multi sensory spaces are great for kids with certain disabilities”

- *Parent*

‘Objects and Things’ was among the Top 2 selections in the ‘Getting Inspired’ task across all groups

Parent, Student Workshop, Student Survey

Nature, Noticing and Mindfulness

All groups indicated that connecting with nature was one of the main benefits of engaging in active travel. Parents also highlighted it as an opportunity to slow down and connect with nature in a mindful way. How can we promote awareness and mindful connection to nature along the route?

“It would be great to collaborate with local biodiversity and nature groups to integrate with and incorporate local biodiversity”

- *Parent*

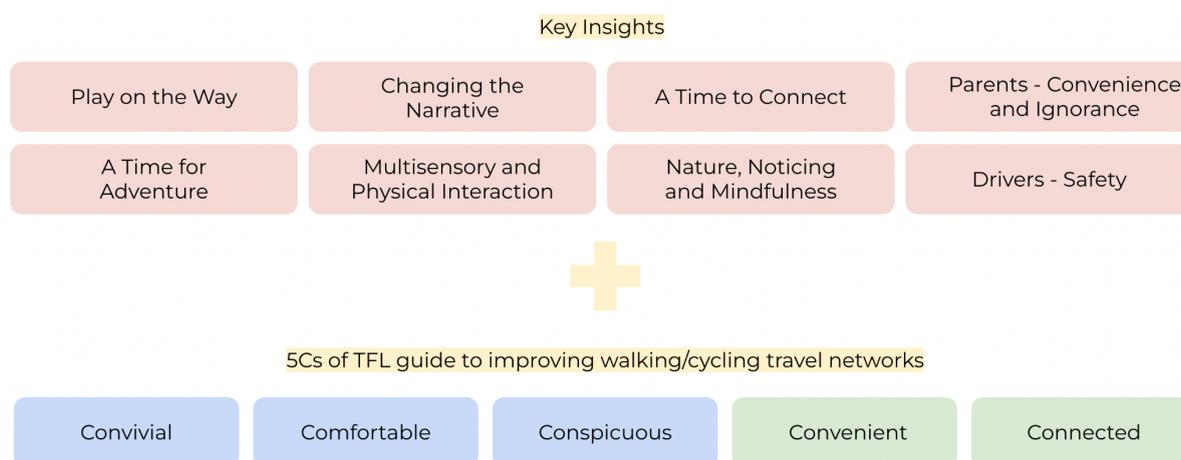
“I would like my child to interact with and appreciate nature more”

- *Parent*

Thinking and Trialling Together - Pilot Interventions

Pilot Interventions - Rationale and Design

A Playful City built on the ideas and insights that came out of the community engagement to finalise six interventions that best incorporated each of the **insights and themes from engagement** and **the 5Cs**:



The **install sites** were also strategically located based on the sites marked as suitable for intervention by the community:



Overall Design Approach

The following section outlines A Playful City's recommendations for the design interventions. Design ideas were brainstormed, building on ideas that were developed during the co-creative consultation process, before being shortlisted and selected for prototyping in a way that ensured all insights had been incorporated and designed around in some way.

Each of the design interventions were prototyped, primarily using corriboard signs. This was due to budget restrictions and A Playful City both recognises and recommends that the form of the final designs may change. The images seen below are the initial designs for these prototypes and may be redesigned and interpreted differently in the final designs.

There are also some general insights that A Playful City recognise as important and recommend to be incorporated into each of the designs;

Incorporating Colour

When asked what they would prefer to see in the designs, 'Lots of Colour' was the top selection in 'Getting Inspired' across all groups indicating a desire for colourful design interventions. This was also reflected in the co-creative sessions where lots of colour was consistently used in drawings and even in written descriptions of what kinds of interventions they wanted. A Playful City used the A Playful City colours for the following design interventions but this was for prototyping purposes only, another colourful colour palette may be used in its place going forward.

Consistent Aesthetic

Parents and the Wider Community also indicated a desire for a high quality and consistent aesthetic across all of the design interventions. This will ensure buy-in from the local community and offer a strong identity for the route and campaign and should be adhered to in the final designs.

Park 'n' Stride System

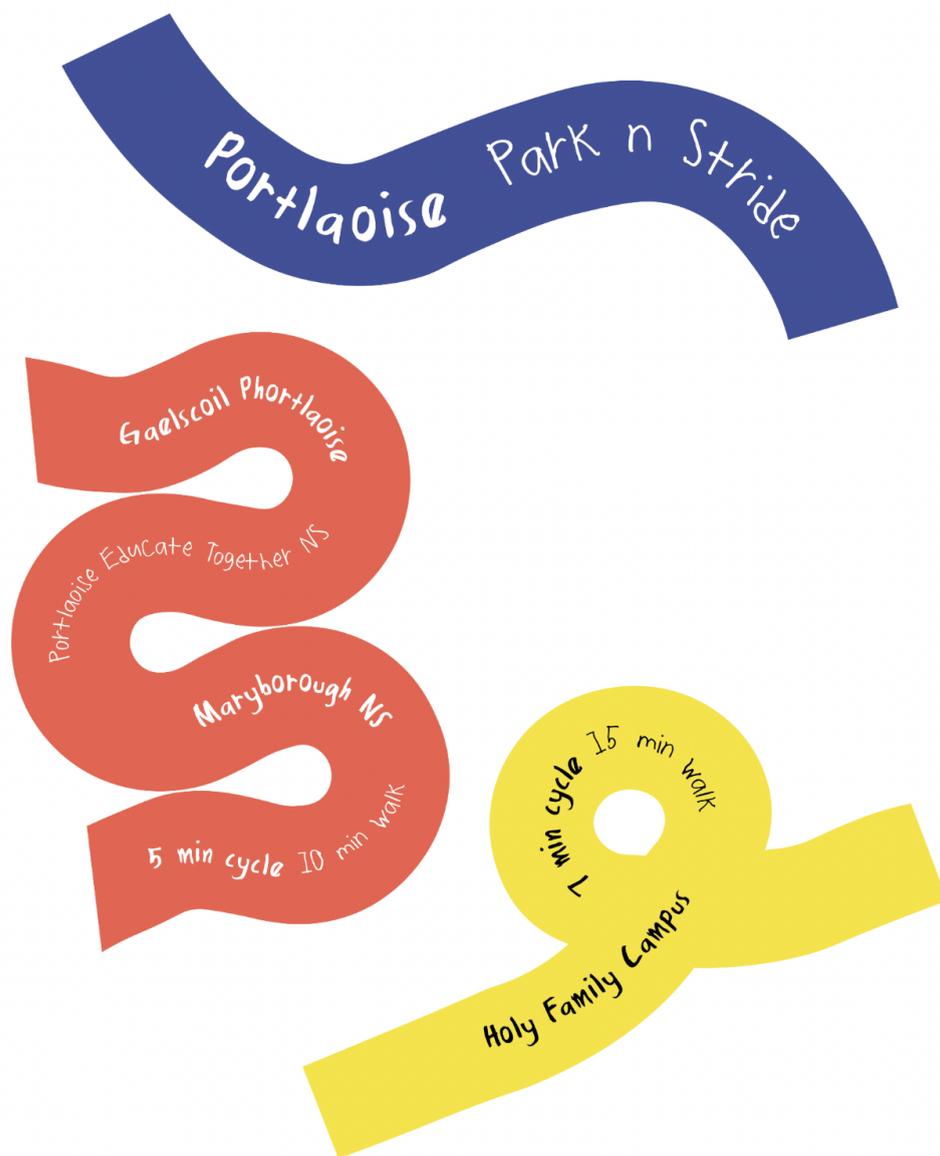


To highlight convenience of walking and cycling, A Playful City proposes a series of playful signs in car parks around Portlaoise that indicate the time it takes to walk or cycle to the two school campuses.

A number of locations were identified by the community as being suitable Park 'n' Stride locations:

- Dunnes Stores car park
- Lidl car park
- The Church car park

Park 'n' Stride System

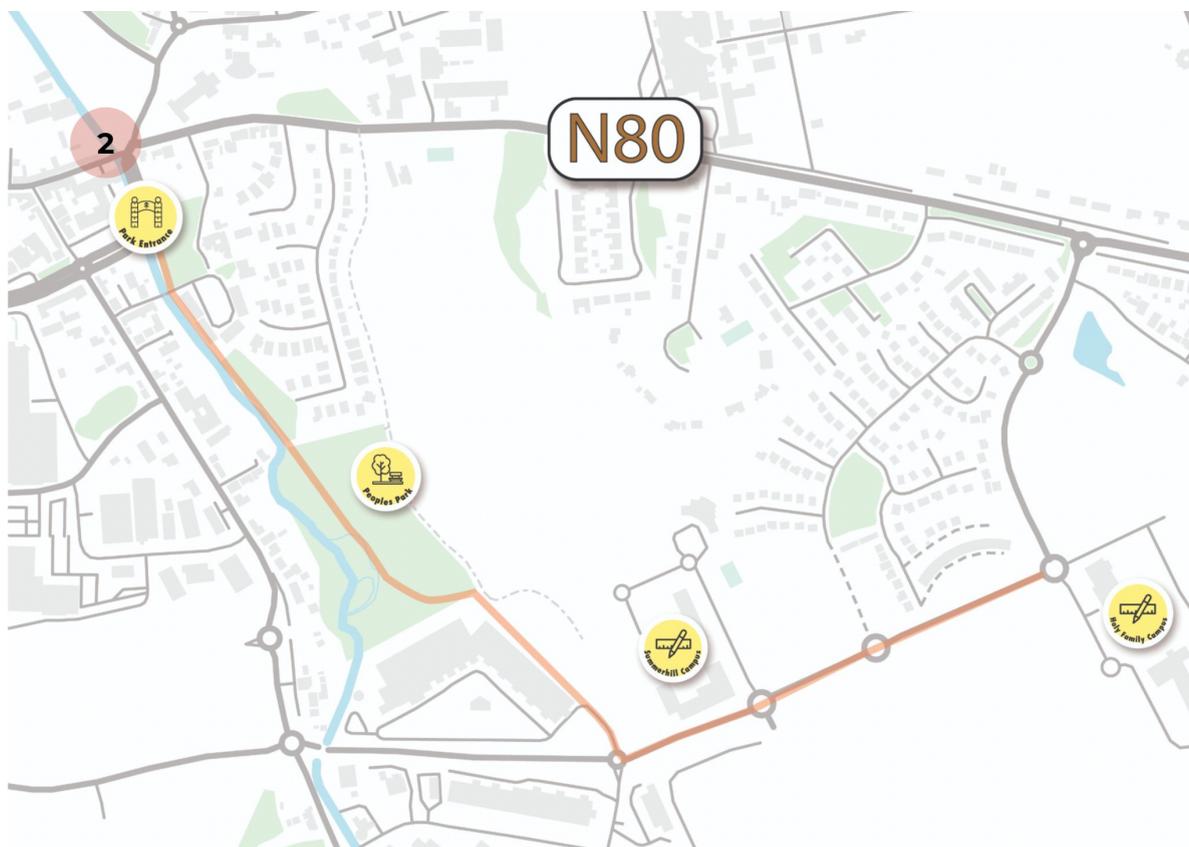


1

Parents - Convenience
and Ignorance

Convenient

Gateway to Play



With indications that many members of the community did not know the route through the park existed and was open to the public, A Playful City proposes colourfully designed *Gateways to Play* at each of the park entrances. These will signpost the route and also act as a positive framing device, indicating to other route users that this is a space that will be used by young people and to behave accordingly.

A recurring idea to come out of both the young people and parent's workshops was to have positive messages depicted along the route. A Playful City sees the *Gateways to Play* as a key opportunity for these to be incorporated, again acting as a positive framing device for the route.

Gateway

to

Play

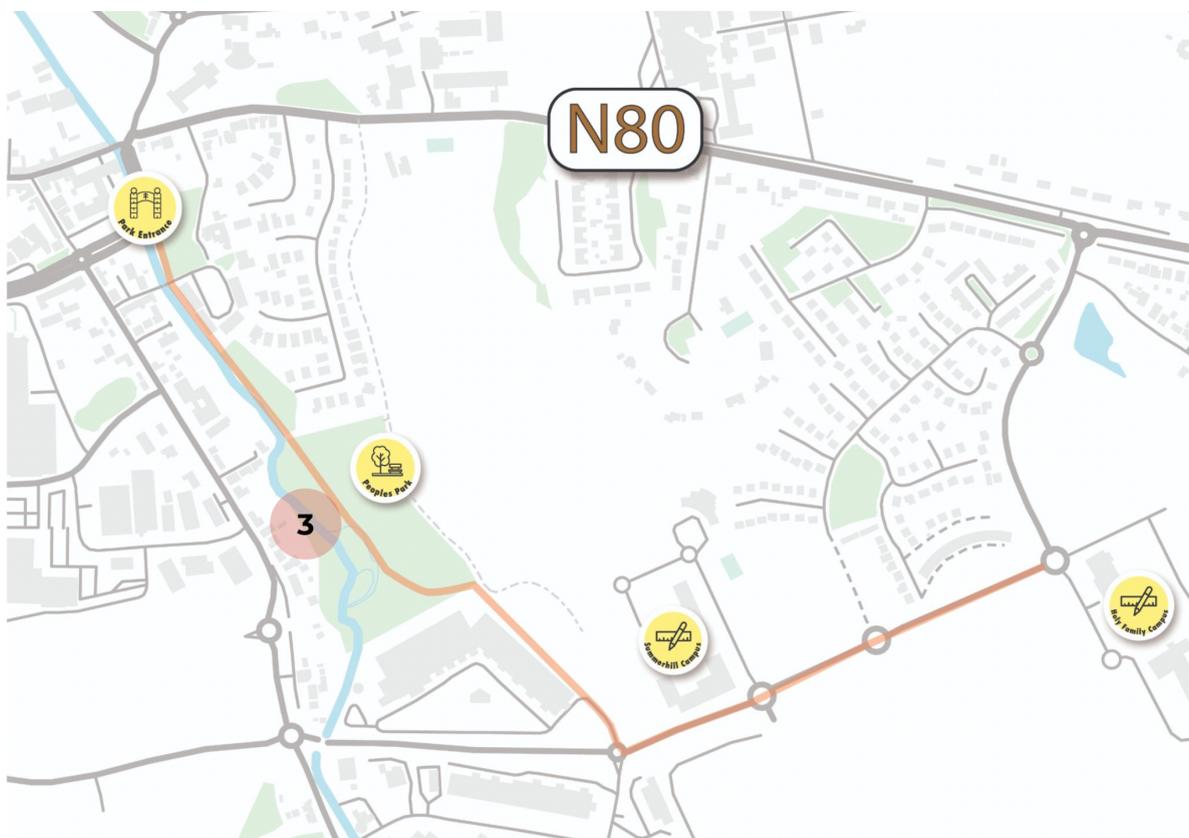


2

Parents - Convenience and Ignorance

Connected

The Mindful Way

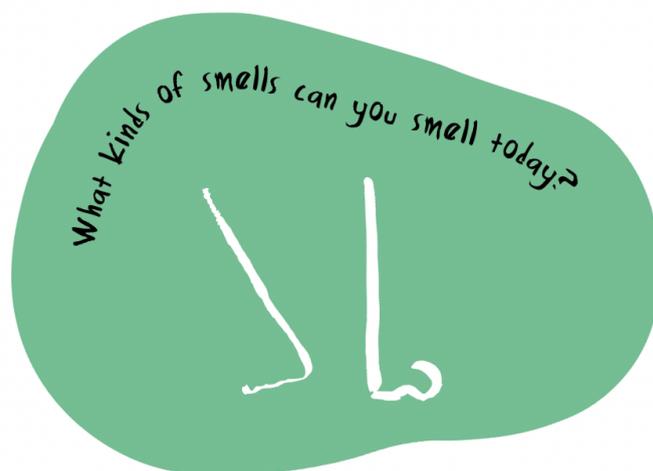


Based on the community's desire for multisensory play and a connection with nature along the route, A Playful City proposes *The Mindful Way*, a series of playful signs that promote mindful engagement with nature along the route.

Rather than imposing external multisensory interventions, the signs invite route users to take a minute to tune into their senses and take in their surroundings. This will also build a connection to nature and provide a moment of mindfulness to start or end the school day, as requested by parents.

The co-creation sessions also indicated the importance of a peaceful section of the route, for people with additional needs to go if they need to take a moment away from the stimulation of the other interventions. It is therefore important that *The Mindful Way* is on a designated section of the route which exists off the main path.

The Mindful Way



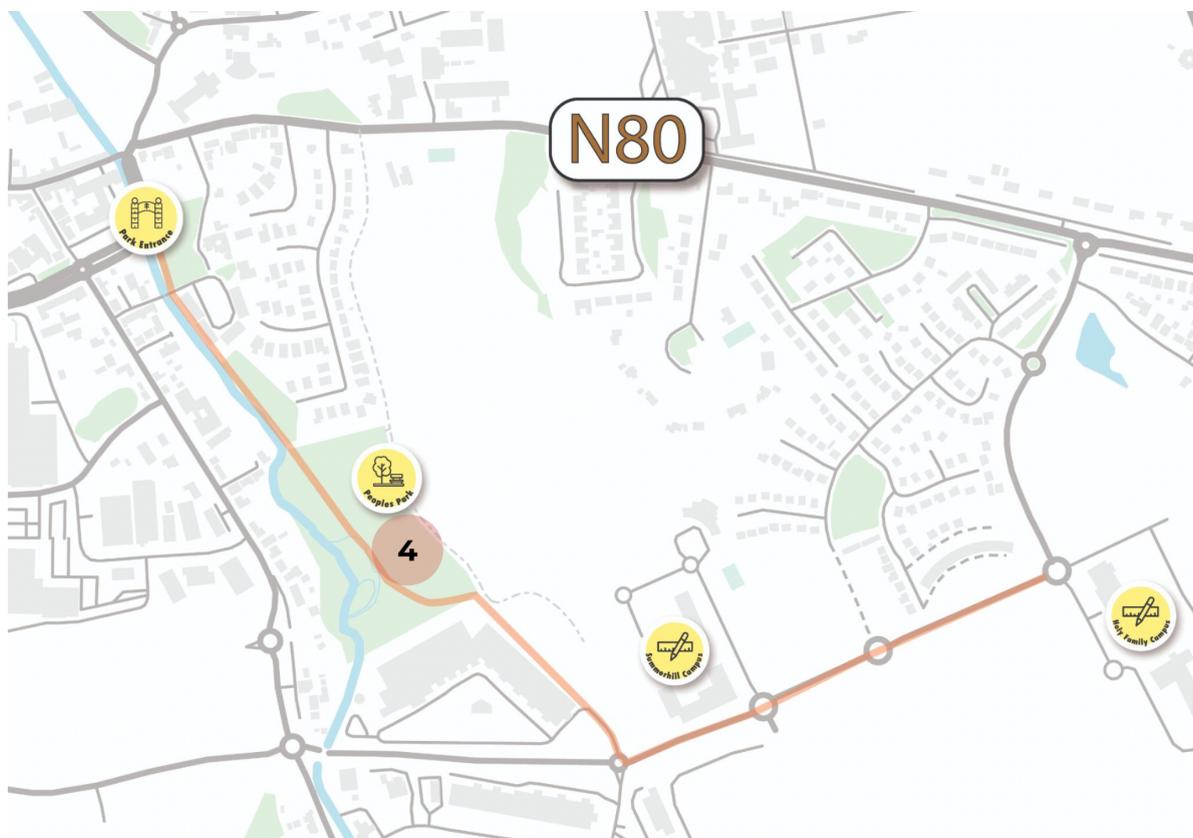
3

Nature, Noticing and Mindfulness

Multisensory

Convivial / Comfortable

The Wiggly Way



Both the youth workshop and youth survey produced many requests for zip lines, pump tracks and wiggly lines, indicating a desire for freedom and adventure. In order to incorporate this, A Playful City proposes *The Wiggly Way*, a new section of the path that meanders for young people to follow on foot or wheels.

It is important that the curves of the path are tight enough to be thrilling but wide enough to ensure safety, promoting healthy, risky play instead of being a hazard.

The Wiggly Way



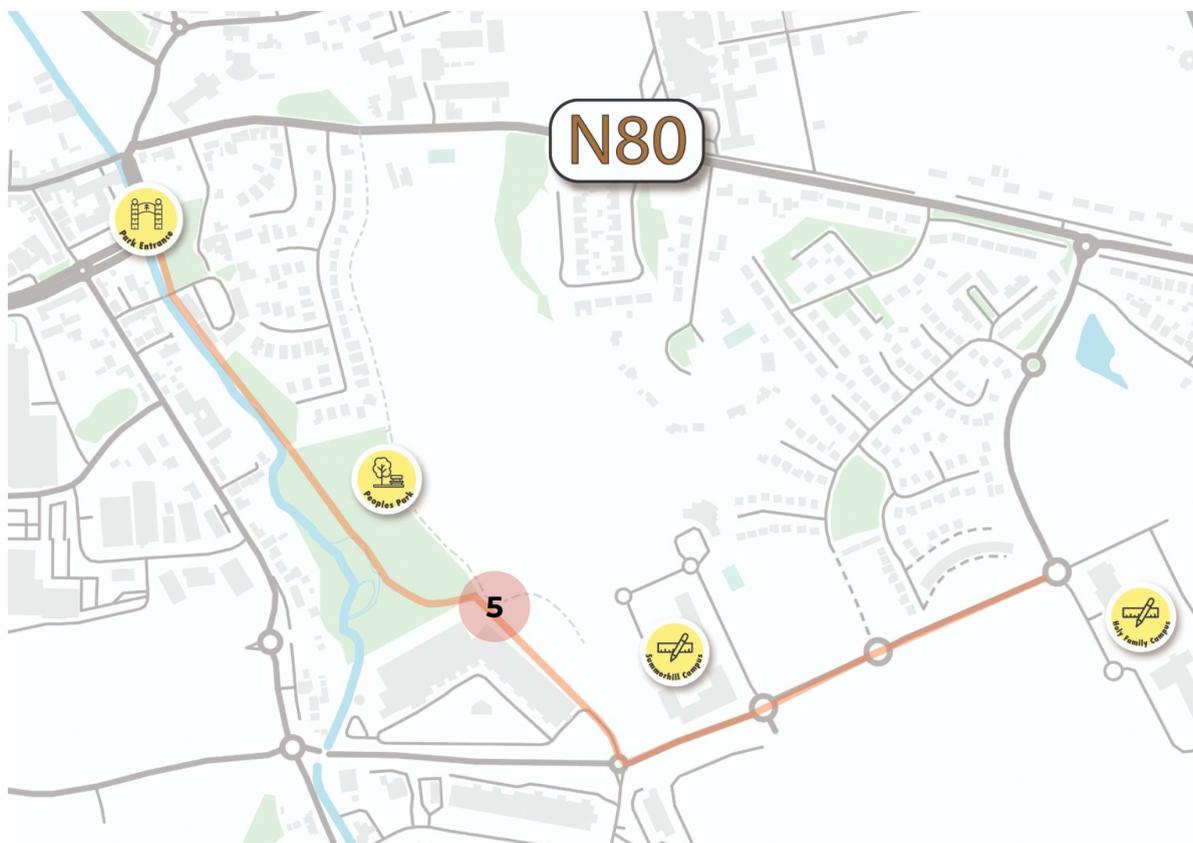
4

A Time for Adventure

Play on the Way

Convivial

The Worry Rook

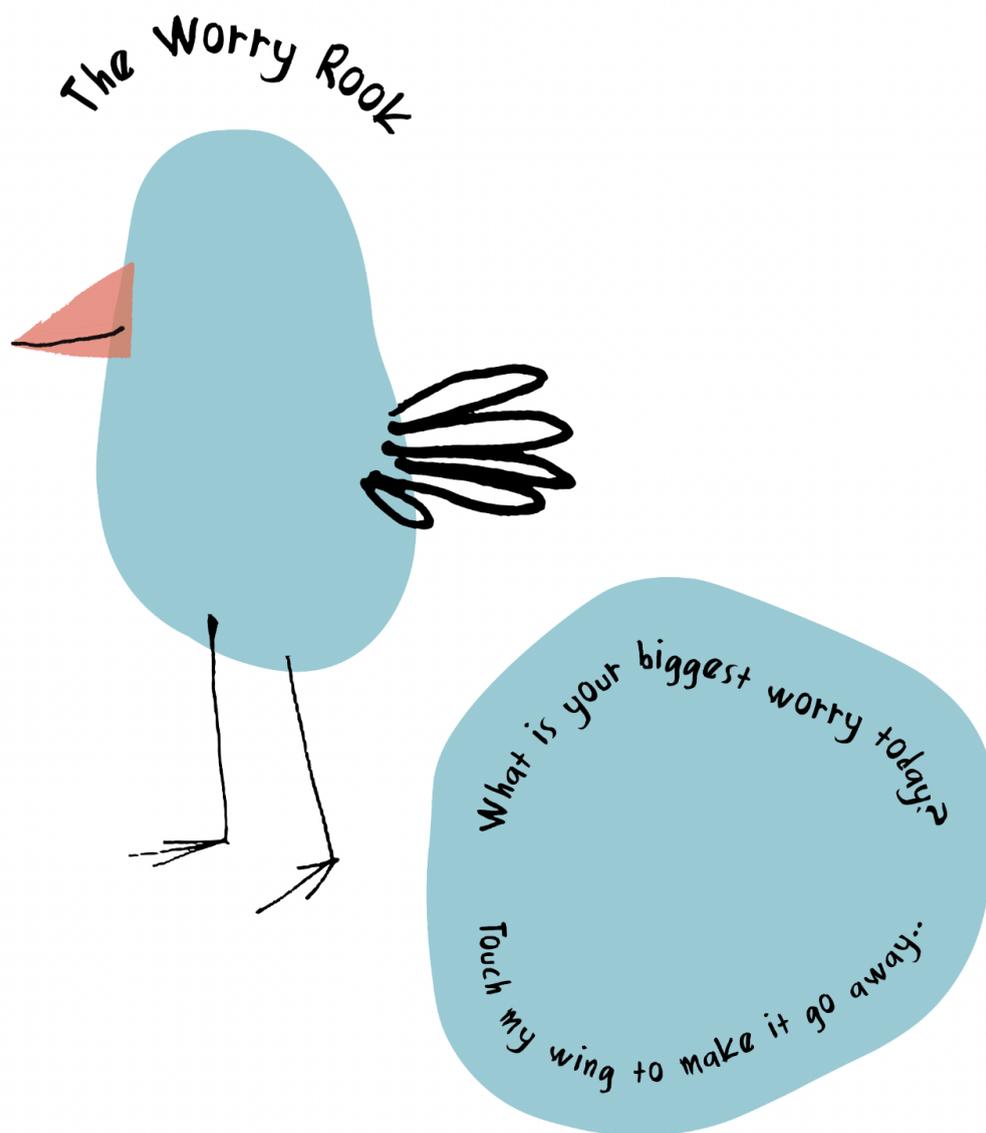


Both parents and young people highlighted travelling to school as a key time to connect and check-in with one another. In order to promote this connection and more reflective conversations among parents and children travelling to school together, A Playful City proposes *The Worry Rook*, a mascot that invites young people to leave their worries behind by touching its wing.

This design was adapted from the youth session, where young people asked for a worry monster along the route to leave their worries with. However, we used the rook as our mascot, paying homage to the rook roost in the Downs of Portlaoise.

The Worry Rook should be installed at an advantageous midpoint along the route to allow sufficient time for reflection and discussion to take place after engaging with it.

The Worry Rook



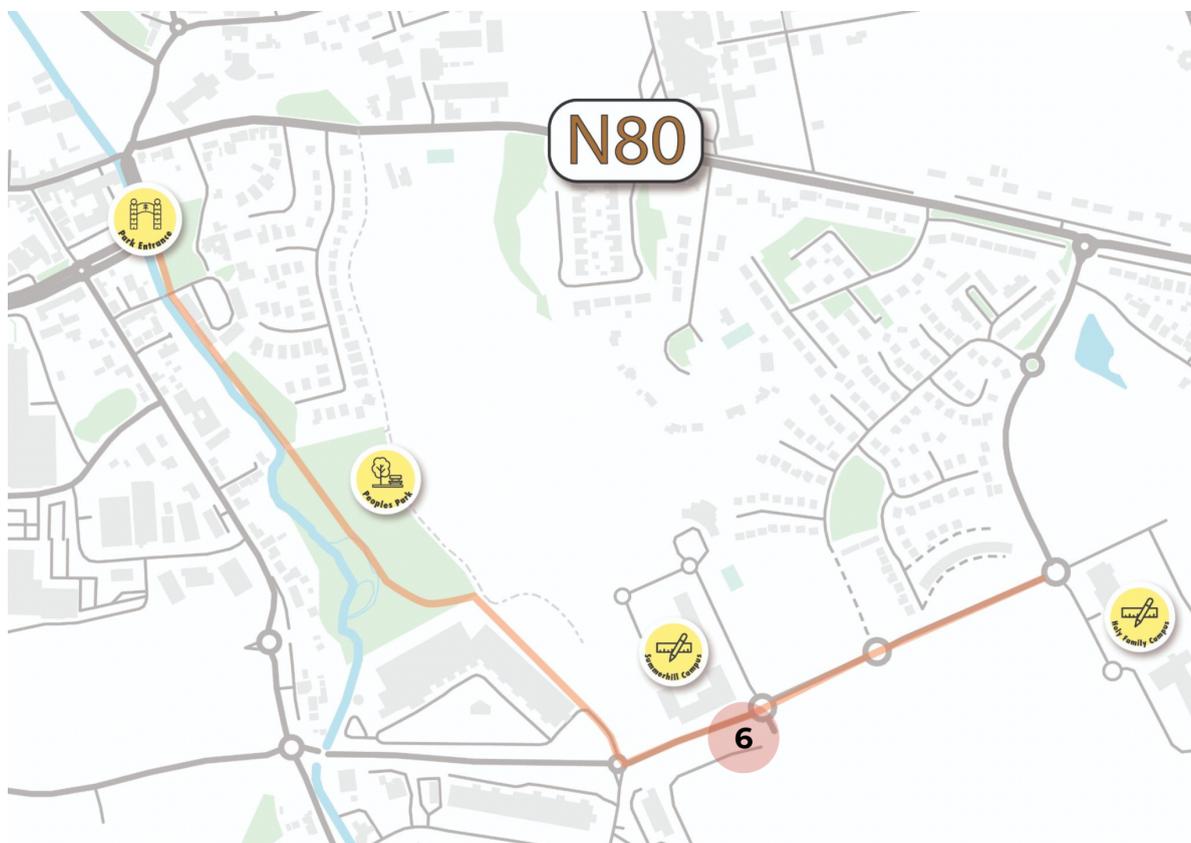
5

A Time to Connect

Physical Interaction

Convivial

Children's Safety Signs



Motorists are currently the main safety concern for cyclists, wheelers and walkers on the route. Traditionally road safety narratives often place the onus on children to be responsible for their own safety. While this approach is important, it is not enough. Children are susceptible road users, and they cannot be expected to take full responsibility for their own safety. Motorists also have a responsibility to be aware of the presence of children on the roads and to take steps to reduce the threat they pose by default because of their weight, height & speed.

A Playful City proposes a series of *Children's Safety Signs* for this section of the route that depict how young cyclists, wheelers and walkers feel while travelling to school in order to start to change the narrative and shift some of the responsibility back to drivers to make cyclists, rollers and pedestrians feel safe.

A Playful City also sees these signs as an opportunity to highlight the innate desire to engage in active travel among students, by showing the statistics that support this from the student survey, in order to overcome the barrier of parents and parental control.

Children's Safety Signs

We asked those that cycle what makes them feel unsafe, here's what they said..

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

I feel unsafe because people come around the roundabout so fast.

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

I feel unsafe because there's lot's of traffic

6

Changing the Narrative

Conspicuous

Comfortable

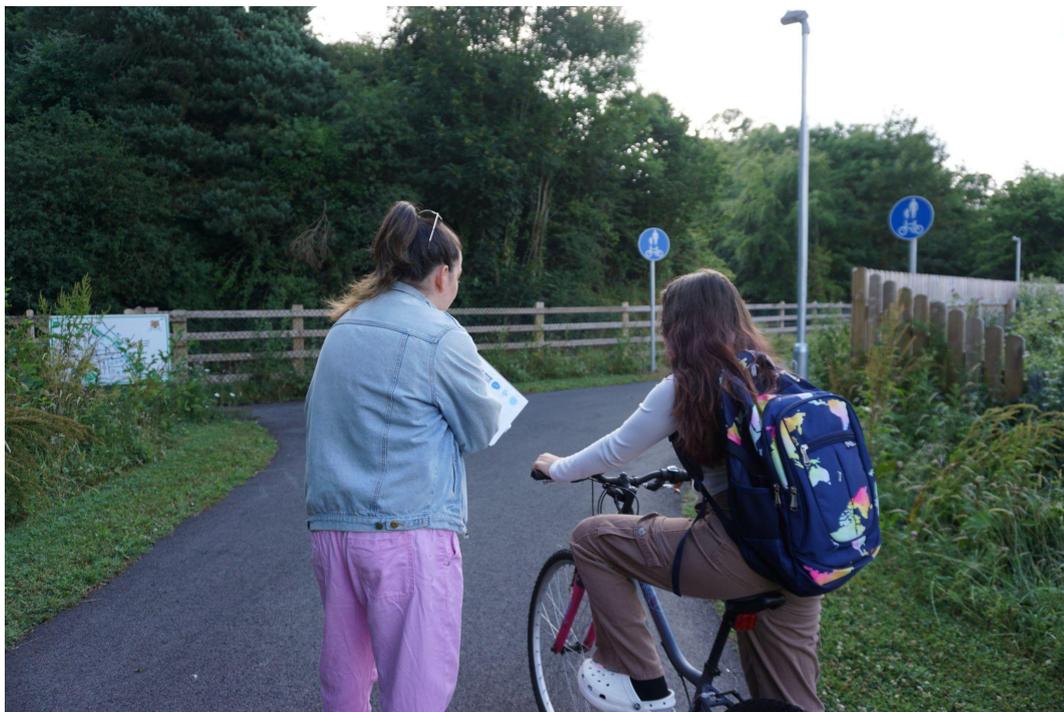
Pilot Interventions - Testing and Trialling

On 20th June 2023, a prototype of each design was installed in the above locations and remained in situ until 24th July 2023. A Playful City hosted a launch and trial day during which they conducted a facilitated walkshop with students, and also conducted observations and ad hoc consultation surveys with students, parents and other members of the community who were travelling home from school along the route. A Playful City also sent a feedback survey to each of the schools and received some responses after the launch and trial day. All of the insights have been amalgamated into the Key Insights section below.

Feedback Material

| | Park n Stride | Gateway to Play | Wiggly Path | Mindful Route | The Worry Rook | Student Road Signs |
|--|---------------|-----------------|-------------|---------------|----------------|--------------------|
| For each idea, tell us.. | | | | | | |
| ..what you like about the idea and why | | | | | | |
| ..what you would change about or add to the idea | | | | | | |

| Tick the box for each idea that makes.. | Park n Stride  | Gateway to Play  | Wiggly Path  | Mindful Route  | The Worry Rook  | Student Road Signs  |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| .. you feel safer cycling or walking to school | | | | | | |
| ..you want to cycle or walk to school more often | | | | | | |
| .. cycling or walking to school more fun | | | | | | |
| ..it easier to find your way through the park to school | | | | | | |
| Tell us how much you like each idea by putting an X the box | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! | <input type="checkbox"/> I don't like it <input type="checkbox"/> It's only OK <input type="checkbox"/> I like it a lot! |





Key Insights

Investigating Project Aims

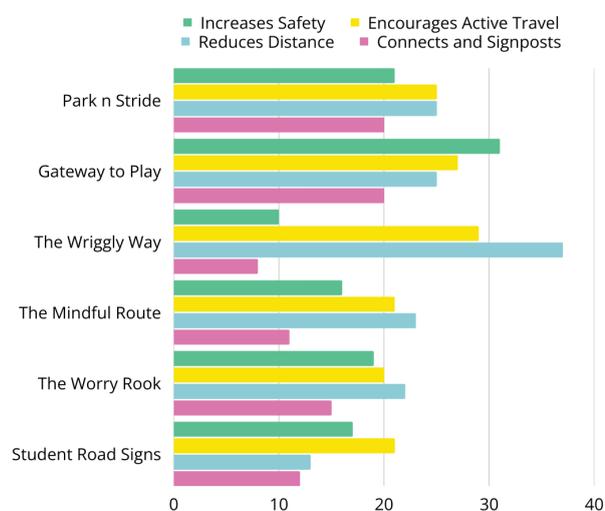
Participants were asked to 'tick the box for each idea that makes..'

- '..you feel safer cycling or walking to school'
- '..you want to walk or cycle to school more often'
- '..cycling or walking to school more fun'
- '..it easier to find your way through the park to the school'

These questions were developed to investigate each of the main aims of the project, listed respectively below;

- Increase Road safety as it will define school zone area
- Encourage Active Travel (walking and cycling)
- Reduce perceived distance of walking/cycling to these schools
- Connect and signpost Triogue Way and An Pairc an Pobal to the school route

in an accessible way for young people and their parents. The results of this can be seen below.



On Site In person Walkshop and Survey Results



Off Site Image Based Survey Results

Overall, the range of designs collectively meet all four of the main aims of the project in a sufficient and holistic way. This indicates that permanent installation of the interventions would likely influence behaviour change and increased active travel along the route.

1

2

3

Park n Stride

Overall, people liked the Park n Stride as a way to indicate the convenience of walking and cycling to school. They liked that it was practical, and encourages active travel

Community Recommendations:

- Have more signs in multiple locations
- Have colourful directional arrows on the paths as well as signs
- Use a more legible font

Gateway to Play

Overall, people liked the Gateway to Play to attract people into the park and highlight that the route exists. They also felt the range of colours and message improved their mood.

Community Recommendations:

- Have a Gateway to Play at each of the gates
- Make them bigger, use more colours alongside landscaping & planting.
- Allow students to iterate and change the messages on the signs

The Wiggly Way

Overall, people loved the Wiggly Way to make travelling to school more fun. They felt it was a unique and cool addition to the route. There were a few concerns from students and parents around safety.

Community Recommendations:

- Use permanent surfacing in final design - there were concerns about mud
- Add bumps and dips along the route
- Add more Wiggly Way diversions along other parts of the route

“It shows how far away your school is, if your parents see traffic they can drop you off”

- *Student*

“I like it because of the bright and fun colours, it’s cool and will make people want to come in”

- *Student*

“I love the idea because it’s fun”

- *Student*

4

The Mindful Way

5

The Worry Rook

6

Student Road Signs

Overall, people liked the Mindful Way to slow people down and encourage them to take in their surroundings.

Overall, people liked the Worry Rook to prompt discussion and reflection around their worries. Parents and students felt it would open up conversations.

Overall, people liked the Student Road signs to give a voice to the student population and to challenge driver behaviour. The community felt it would be nice for these signs to adapt and change to reflect behaviour and attitude changes.

Community Recommendations:

- Use natural materials instead of plastics
- Use a more legible and bigger font

Community Recommendations:

- Make sure the visual design of the Rook is friendly and has eyes
- Add a place to write and physically leave your worries behind

Community Recommendations:

- Use a more legible and bigger font
- Have iterative and changeable signs that update with further research

“I like the idea because it makes you think of your surroundings”

- *Student*

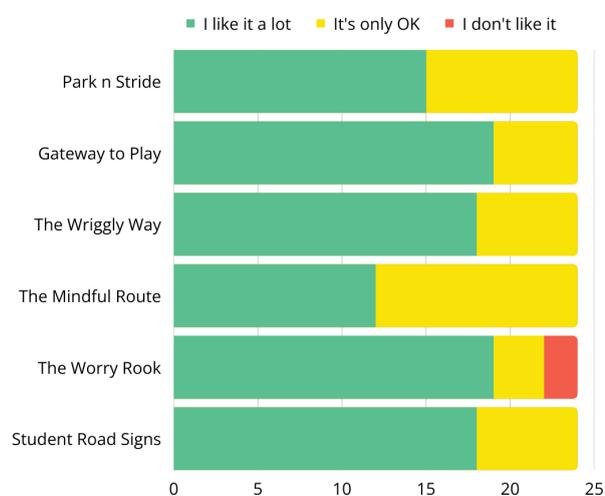
“I like the idea because it lets all ages abandon your worries”

- *Student*

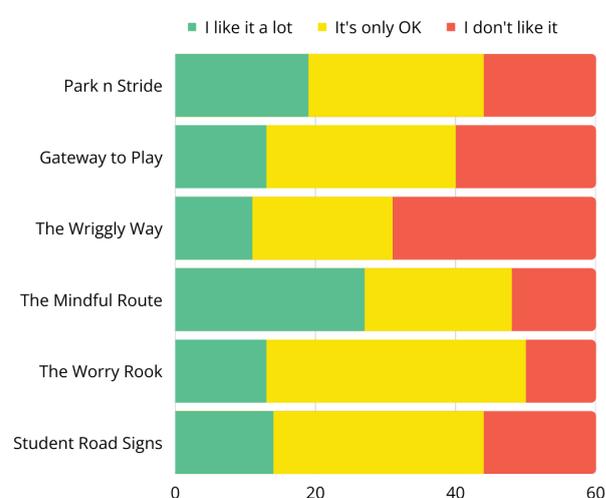
“I would like to make the signs different colours and a bit bigger and lower”

- *Student*

Investigating Level of General Support



On Site In person Walkshop and Survey Results



Off Site Image Based Survey Results

Overall support for the designs was strong when participants engaged with the physical prototype in person. Whereas, a less supportive result can be seen when participants solely engaged with a small image of each prototype out of context. A Playful City have concluded that this result indicates more about the consultation method, as discussed below, rather than the designs themselves and believe the in person results accurately represent a strong level of support for the interventions.

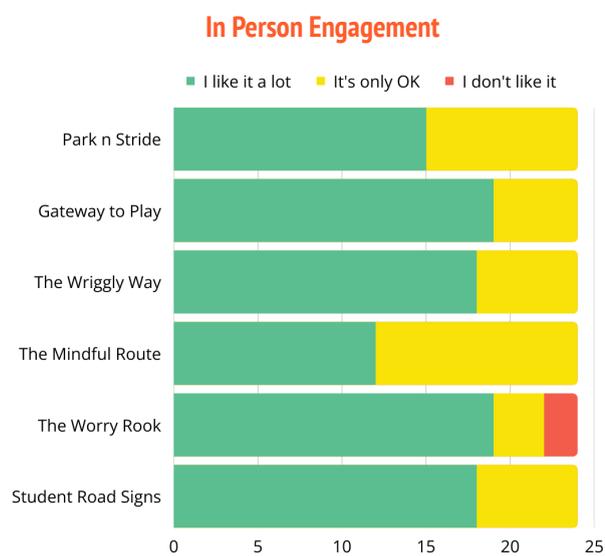
Legibility

Many respondents agreed that the font and size of the text chosen for the prototypes were difficult to read, the final designs should use a clear and large text size for all written elements.

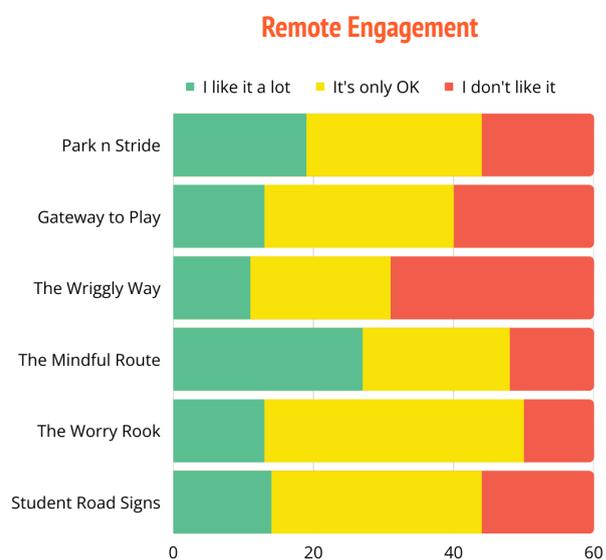
Natural Materials

Many respondents also expressed a preference for less plastic and more natural materials to be incorporated into the final designs. This should be explored in the final designs, by utilising natural materials that also meet the community's desire for lots of colour in the designs.

The Power of In Person Engagement



On Site In person Walkshop and Survey Results



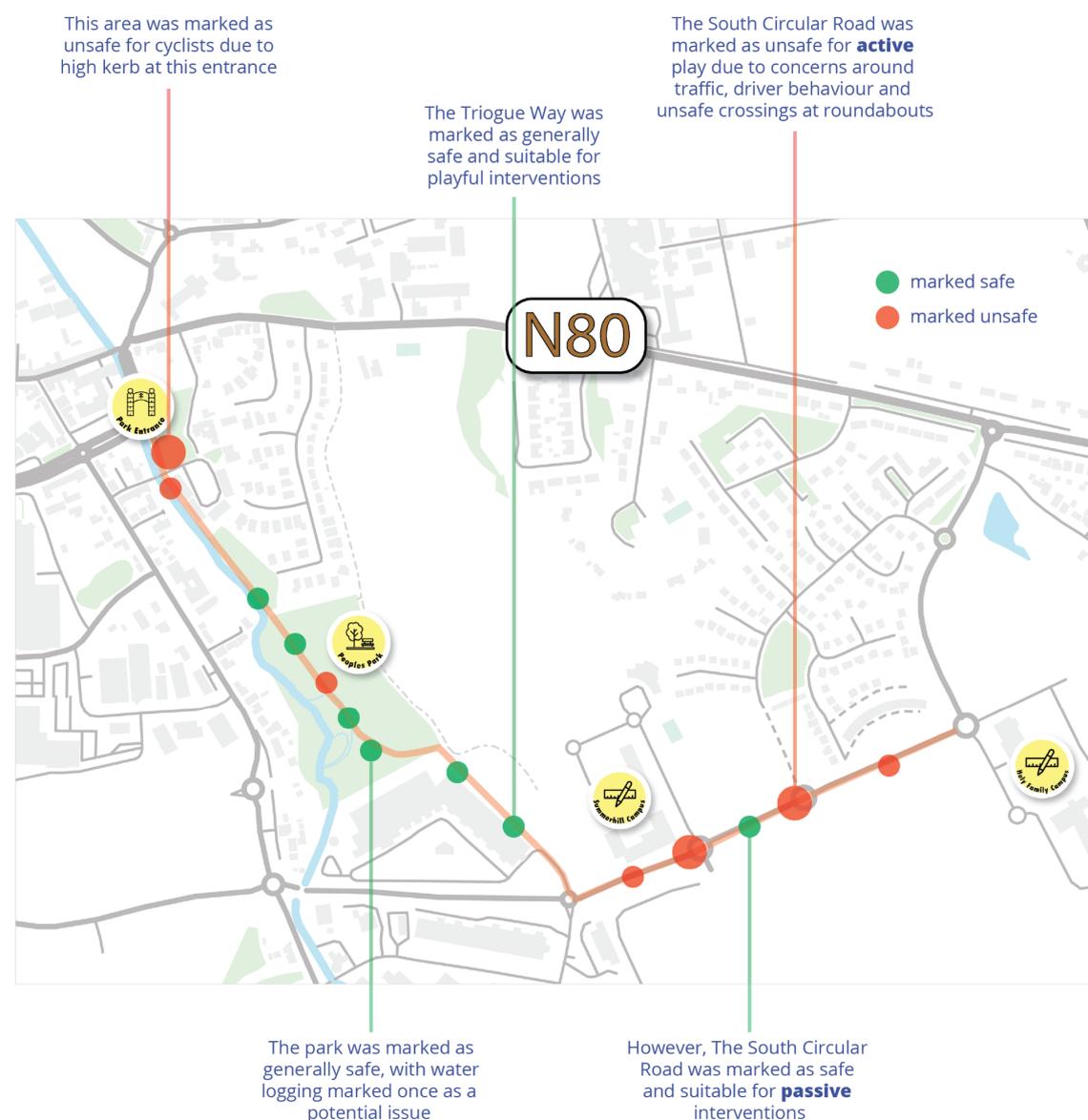
Off Site Image Based Survey Results

As seen above the participants responded significantly more in favour of the design interventions when they engaged with the physical prototype rather than an image of the design. This shows the importance and power of full scale prototyping to accurately consult on physical design interventions in order to get accurate and consistent results and to get support and consensus from the local community.

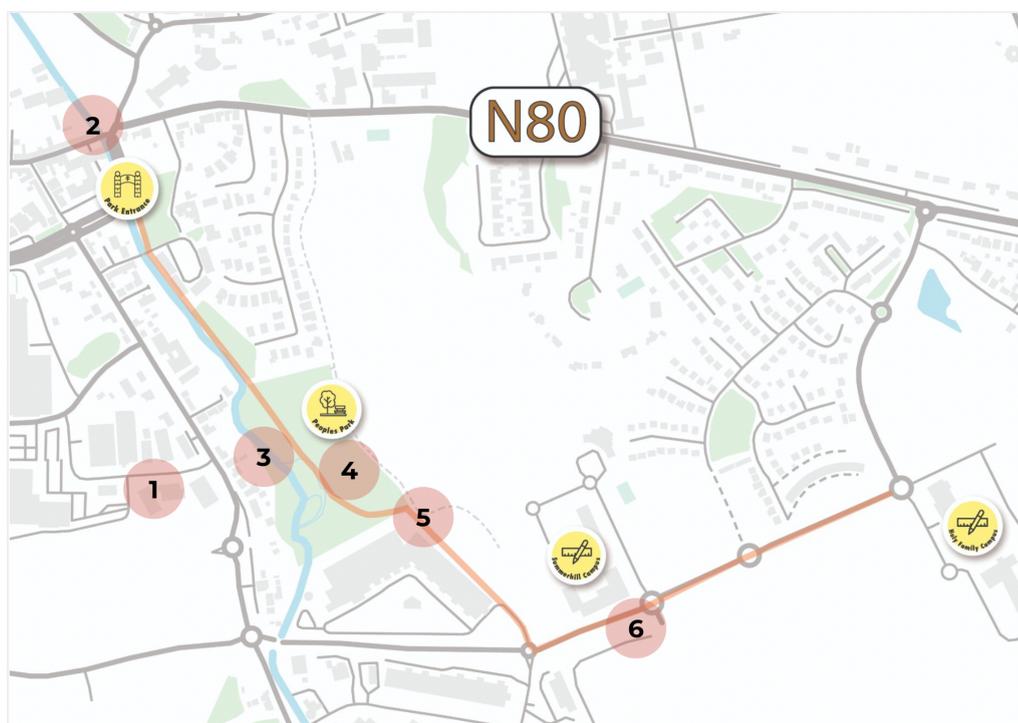
Making It Happen - Recommendations & Design Brief

Installation Location Recommendations

A Playful City carried out a comprehensive and consultative mapping exercise with the community of Portlaoise to identify suitable sites for intervention. A summary of these findings are marked below;



The **install sites** for A Playful City's intervention prototypes were strategically located based on the sites marked as suitable for intervention by the community;



A Playful City found minimal issues with the chosen install sites and would recommend their re-use for the final designs

| Install Site | Intervention | Issues with install site |
|--------------|-------------------------|---|
| 1 | Park n Stride | No issue to report |
| 2 | Gateway to Play | Kerb needs to be dishd for cyclists |
| 3 | Mindful Way | No issue to report |
| 4 | Wriggly Way | Area prone to water logging in wet months |
| 5 | The Worry Rook | No issue to report |
| 6 | Children's Safety Signs | No issue to report |

Intervention Design Recommendations

The following section outlines both A Playful City and the community's recommendations for the design interventions. Each of the design interventions were prototyped, primarily using coriboard signs. This was due to budget restrictions and A Playful City both recognises and recommends that the form of the final designs may change. The images seen in the above report are the initial designs for these prototypes and may be redesigned and interpreted differently in the final designs.

There are also some general insights that A Playful City recognise as important and recommend to be incorporated into each of the designs;

Incorporating Colour

When asked what they would prefer to see in the designs, 'Lots of Colour' was the top selection in 'Getting Inspired' across all groups indicating a desire for colourful design interventions.

This was also reflected in the co-creative sessions where lots of colour was consistently used in drawings and even in written descriptions of what kinds of interventions they wanted.

A Playful City used the A Playful City colours for the following design interventions but this was for prototyping purposes only, another colourful colour palette may be used in its place going forward

Consistent Aesthetic

Parents and the Wider Community also indicated a desire for a high quality and consistent aesthetic across all of the design interventions.

This will ensure buy-in from the local community and offer a strong identity for the route and campaign and should be adhered to in the final designs.

Legibility

Many respondents agreed that the font and size of the text chosen for the prototypes were difficult to read, the final designs should use a clear and large text size for all written elements.

Natural Materials

Many respondents also expressed a preference for less plastic and more natural materials to be incorporated into the final designs. This should be explored in the final designs, by utilising natural materials that also meet the community's desire for lots of colour in the designs.

Park 'n' Stride System



To highlight convenience of walking and cycling, A Playful City proposes a series of playful signs in car parks around Portlaoise that indicate the time it takes to walk or cycle to the two school campuses.

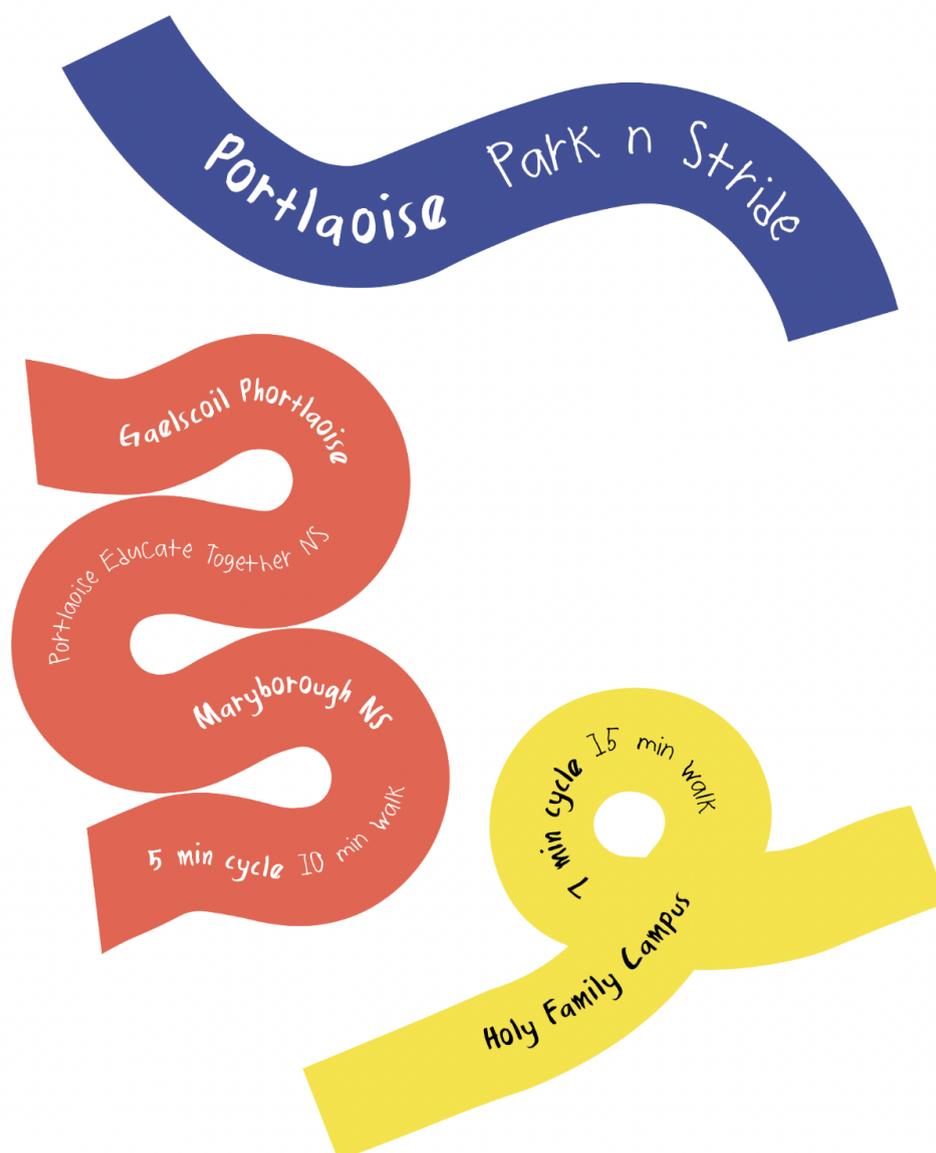
A number of locations were identified by the community as being suitable Park 'n' Stride locations:

- Dunnes Stores car park
- Lidl car park
- The Church car park

Community Recommendations:

- Have more signs in multiple locations
- Have colourful directional arrows on the paths as well as signs
- Use a more legible font

Park 'n' Stride System

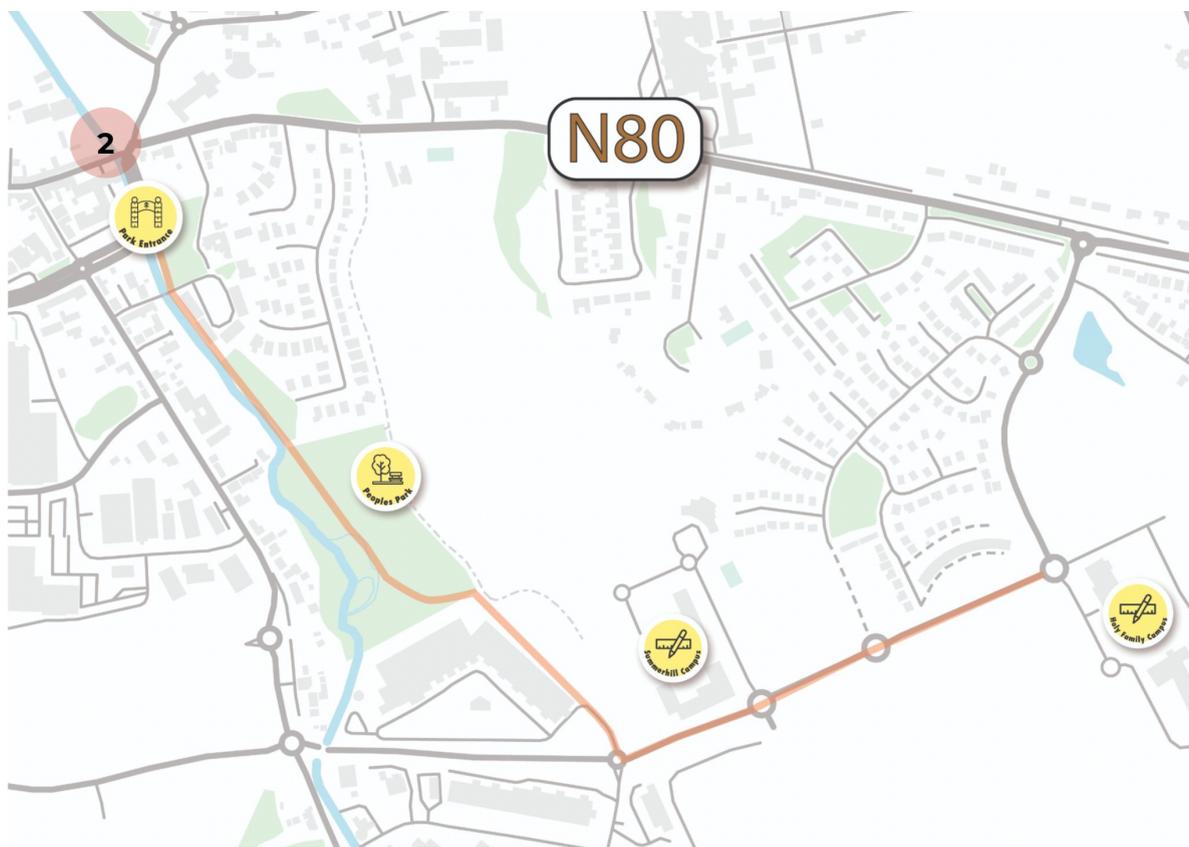


1

Parents - Convenience
and Ignorance

Convenient

Gateway to Play



With indications that many members of the community did not know the route through the park existed and was open to the public, A Playful City proposes colourfully designed *Gateways to Play* at each of the park entrances. These will signpost the route and also act as a positive framing device, indicating to other route users that this is a space that will be used by young people and to behave accordingly.

A recurring idea to come out of both the young people and parent's workshops was to have positive messages depicted along the route. A Playful City sees the *Gateways to Play* as a key opportunity for these to be incorporated, again acting as a positive framing device for the route.

Community Recommendations:

- Have a Gateway to Play at each of the gates
- Make them bigger and use more colours
- Allow students to iterate and change the messages on the signs

Gateway

to

Play



2

Parents - Convenience and Ignorance

Connected

The Mindful Way



Based on the community's desire for multisensory play and a connection with nature along the route, A Playful City proposes *The Mindful Way*, a series of playful signs that promote mindful engagement with nature along the route.

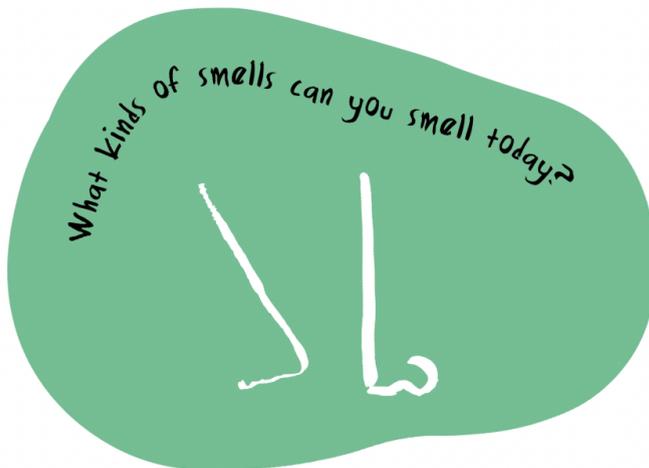
Rather than imposing external multisensory interventions, the signs invite route users to take a minute to tune into their senses and take in their surroundings. This will also build a connection to nature and provide a moment of mindfulness to start or end the school day, as requested by parents.

The co-creation sessions also indicated the importance of a peaceful section of the route, for people with additional needs to go if they need to take a moment away from the stimulation of the other interventions. It is therefore important that the *The Mindful Way* is on a designated section of the route which exists off the main path.

Community Recommendations:

- Use natural materials instead of plastics
- Use a more legible and bigger font

The Mindful Way



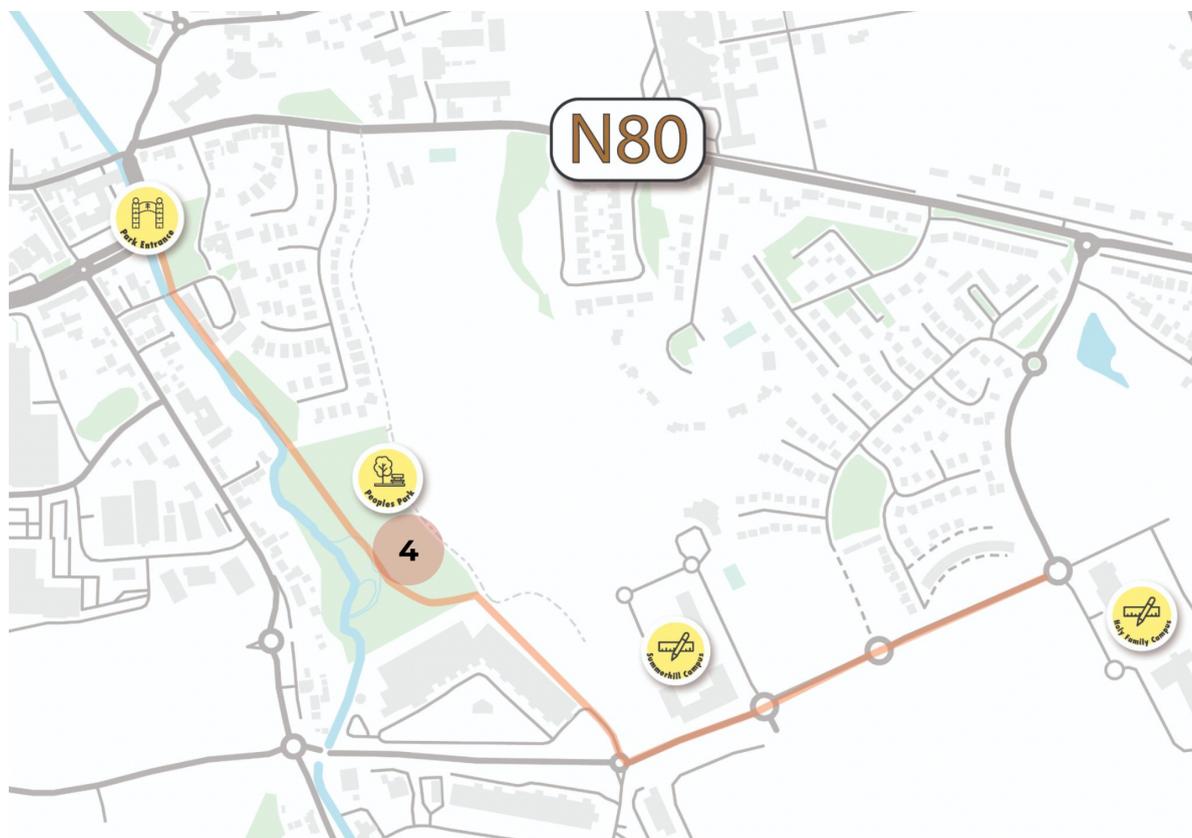
3

Nature, Noticing and Mindfulness

Multisensory

Convivial / Comfortable

The Wiggly Way



Both the youth workshop and youth survey produced many requests for zip lines, pump tracks and wiggly lines, indicating a desire for freedom and adventure. In order to incorporate this, A Playful City proposes *The Wiggly Way*, a new section of the path that meanders for young people to follow on foot or wheels.

It is important that the curves of the path are tight enough to be thrilling but wide enough to ensure safety, promoting healthy, risky play instead of being a hazard.

Community Recommendations:

- Use permanent surfacing in final design - there were concerns about mud
- Add bumps and dips (ie a pump track) along the route
- Add more Wiggly Way diversions along other parts of the route

The Wiggly Way



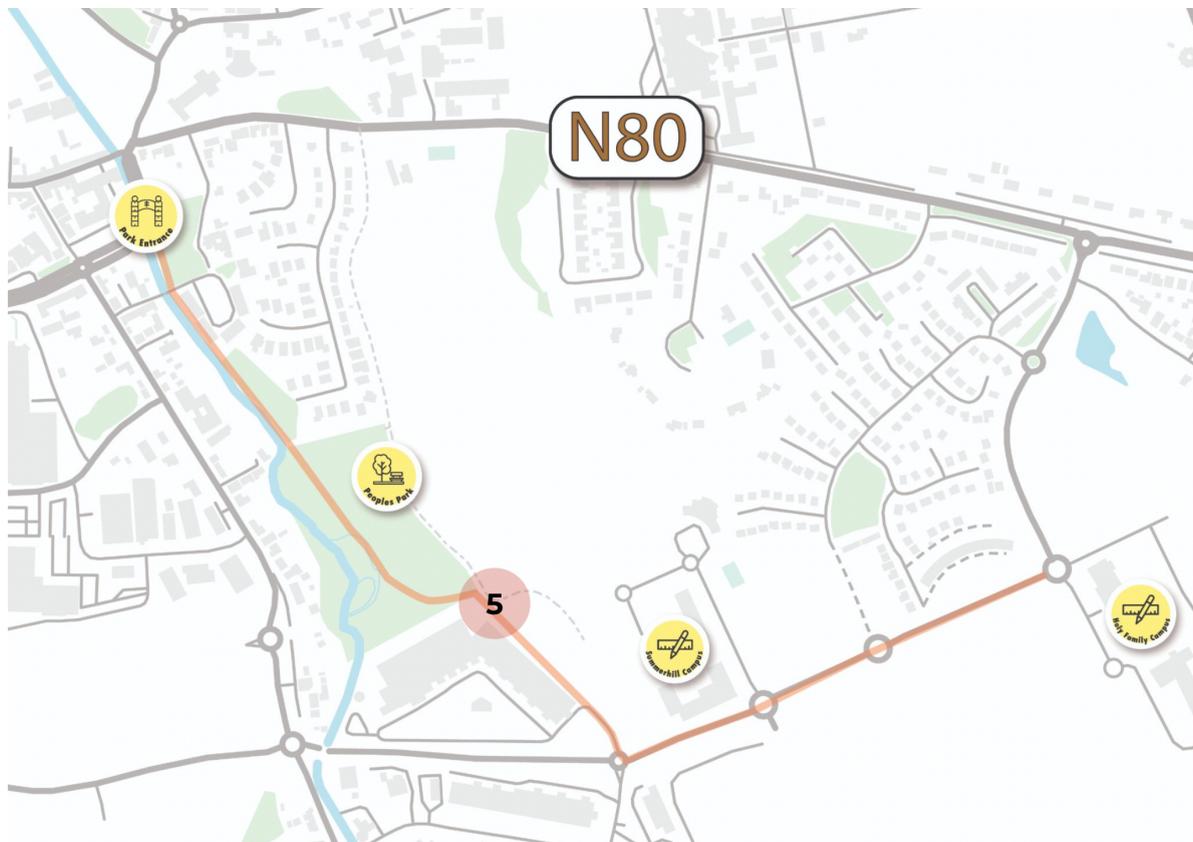
4

A Time for Adventure

Play on the Way

Convivial

The Worry Rook



Both parents and young people highlighted travelling to school as a key time to connect and check-in with one another. In order to promote this connection and more reflective conversations among parents and children travelling to school together, A Playful City proposes *The Worry Rook*, a mascot that invites young people to leave their worries behind by touching its wing.

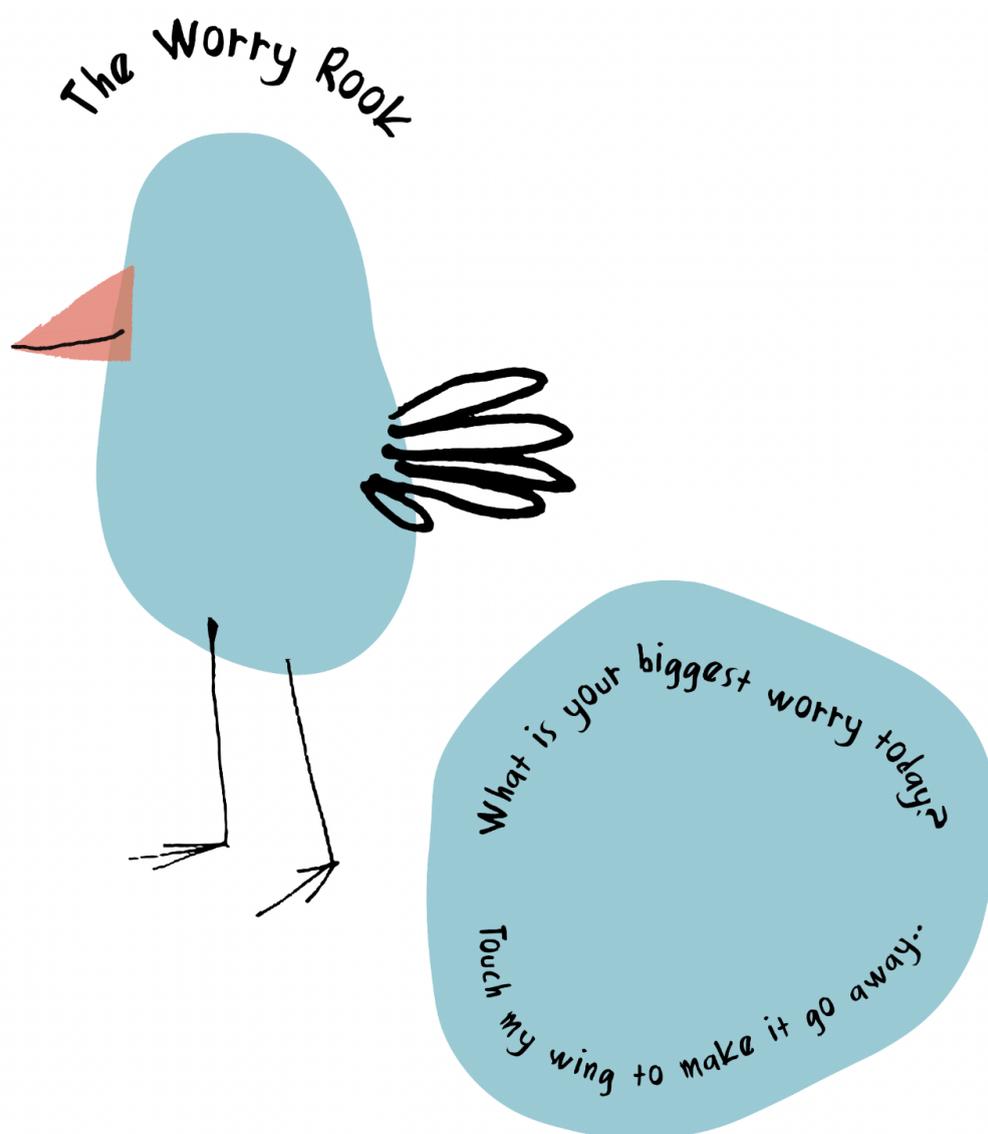
This design was adapted from the youth session, where young people asked for a worry monster along the route to leave their worries with. However, we used the rook as our mascot, paying homage to the rook roost in the Downs of Portlaoise.

The Worry Rook should be installed at an advantageous midpoint along the route to allow sufficient time for reflection and discussion to take place after engaging with it.

Community Recommendations:

- Make sure the visual design of the Rook is friendly and has eyes
- Add a place to write and physically leave your worries behind

The Worry Rook



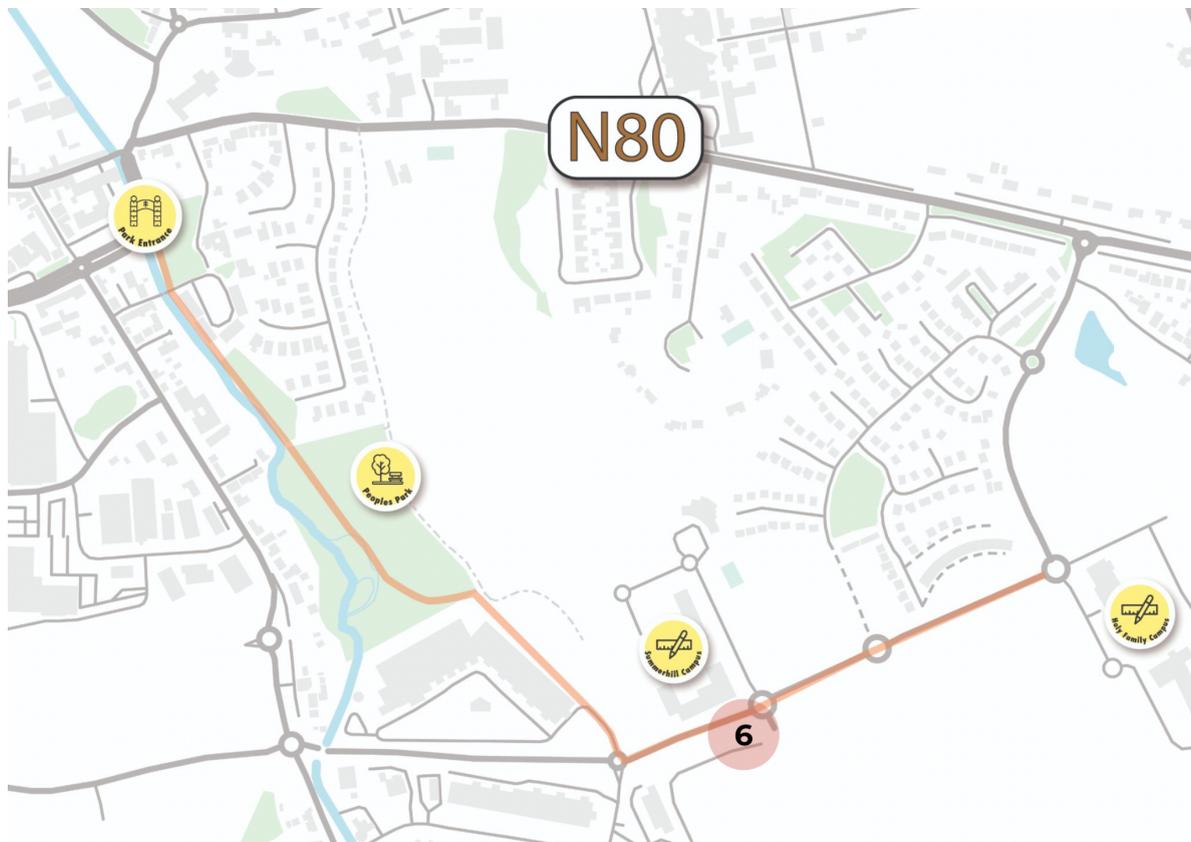
5

A Time to Connect

Physical Interaction

Convivial

Children's Safety Signs



Drivers are currently the main safety concern for cyclists, wheelers and walkers on the route and cars and their drivers are currently given priority on the section of the route on the South Circular Road. A Playful City proposes a series of *Children's Safety Signs* for this section of the route that depict how young cyclists, wheelers and walkers feel while travelling to school in order to start to change the narrative and shift some of the responsibility back to drivers to make cyclists, rollers and pedestrians feel safe.

A Playful City also sees these signs as an opportunity to highlight the innate desire to engage in active travel among students, by showing the statistics that support this from the student survey, in order to overcome the barrier of parents and parental control.

Community Recommendations:

- Use a more legible and bigger font
- Have iterative and changeable signs or banners that can be updated with further research

Children's Safety Signs

We asked those that cycle what makes them feel unsafe, here's what they said..

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

I feel unsafe because people come around the roundabout so fast.

I feel unsafe cycling to school because..

I feel unsafe because there's lot's of traffic

6

Changing the Narrative

Conspicuous

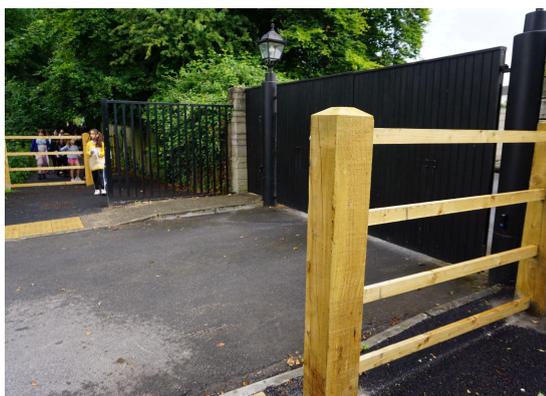
Comfortable

Infrastructural Recommendations

Park Opening Times

The Park currently opens at 8:30am, which is later than many of the school openings. In order for the route to be used on the way to school, the opening time of the park will need to be changed.

Crossing Issue at Private Entrance



There is currently a private entrance that crosses the path on the route, as seen opposite or just after the Install site number 2. A Playful City proposes that a speed ramp should be installed here to change driver behaviour and for the keypad to open the gate to be moved further along the car's path as its current location means that the car stops on the cycle path when inputting the access code.

Dishing of Kerbs

A Playful City recommends that all kerbs at all entrances should be dished and made flush to accommodate cyclists and wheelchair users.

Greening South Circular Road

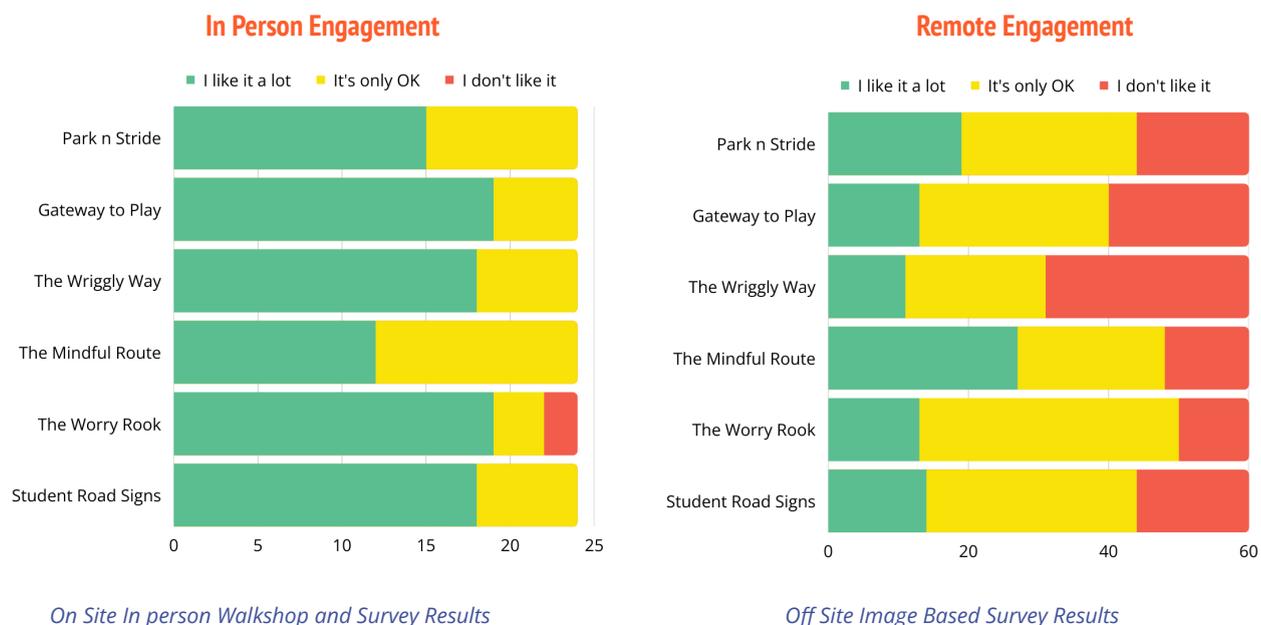
A striking absence is the lack of planting along the South Circular Road. It is recommended that space available should be used for planters. When ground space is limited how plants can be hung on posts or mounted on vertical surfaces.

Crash Barriers

A Playful City recommends that speeds be limited to 30 km/h based on a safe system approach. 30 km/h is the maximum speed where children can safely mix with traffic. Efforts should be to mitigate the need for the use of heavy motorway crash barriers outside the school gates along The South Circular Road.

Community Engagement Recommendations

The Power of In Person Engagement



As seen above the participants responded significantly more in favour of the design interventions when they engaged with the physical prototype rather than an image of the design. This shows the importance and power of full scale prototyping to accurately consult on physical design interventions in order to get accurate and consistent results and to get support and consensus from the local community.

A Playful City recommends that Laois County Council proceed with full scale and in person engagement for all future consultation on this project and all future projects of this nature.

More Concrete Impact Measures

A Playful City and Laois County Council has yet to obtain any statistics on sustained behaviour change as a result of the temporary interventions. Going forward, A Playful City recommends that an accurate baseline is measured before the designs are implemented, with a further accurate reading taken in the same way some time after the interventions have been installed to measure their long term impact.

Appendices

Intervention Design Recommendations



Gateway to Play

Portlaois Town Park

Maryborough National School

The Wiggly Way

The Mindful Way

Gaelscoil Phortlaoise

Park 'n' Stride

R426

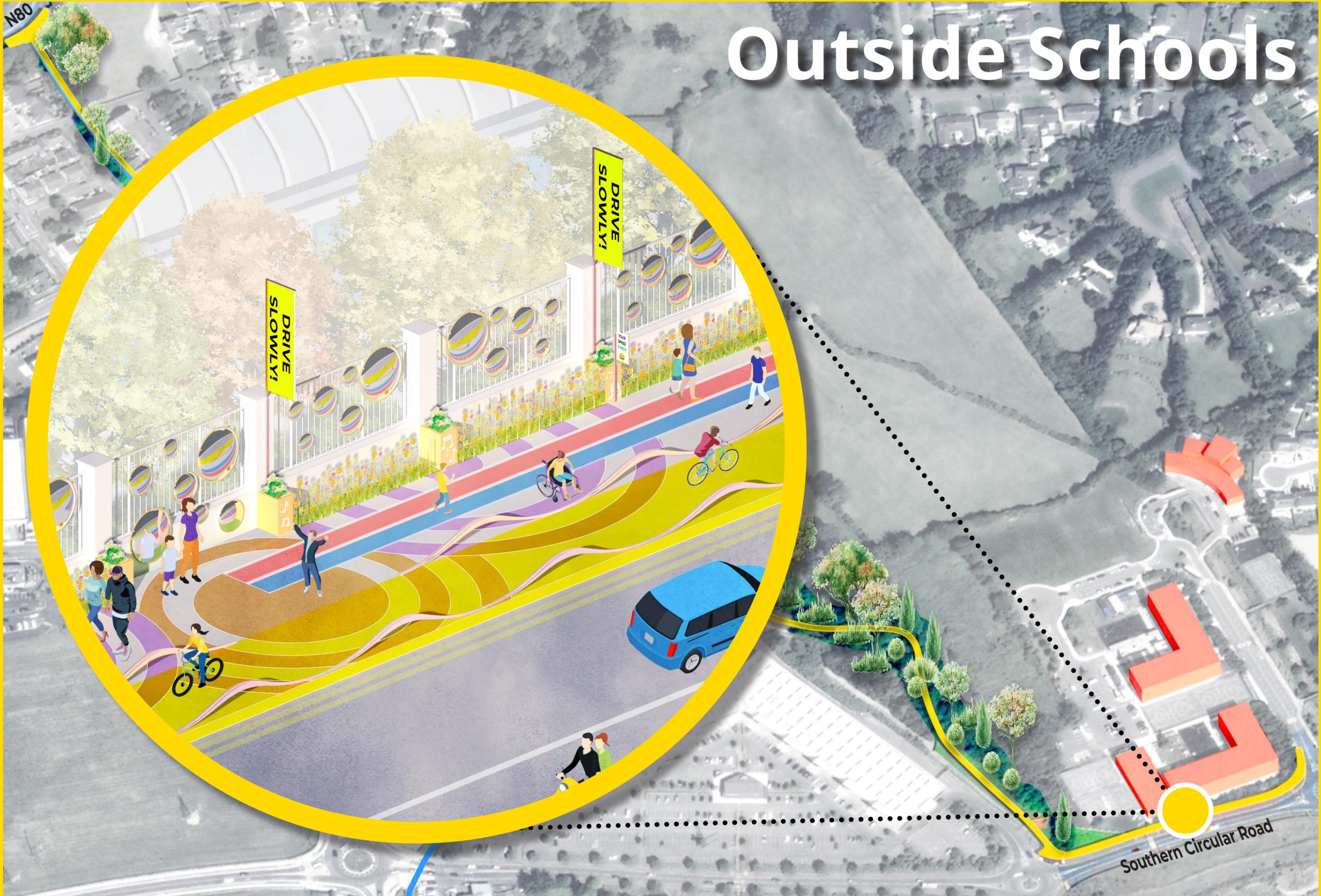
Portlaoise Educate Together

Outside Schools

The Worry Rook

Southern Circular Road

Outside Schools



Southern Circular Road

The Worry Rook



What is your biggest worry today?
Touch my wing to make it go away.

Southern Circular Road



N80

R426

Southern Circular Road

Park 'n' Stride



The Mindful Way

Southern Circular Road



The Wriggly Way

Southern Circular Road

N80



R426

Gateway to Play

Southern Circular Road