

MAYNOOTH CYCLING CAMPAIGN

PRESS RELEASE

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ESRI REPORT IGNORES ROLE OF CYCLING

Maynooth Cycling's verdict on the recent ESRI report on 'Designing Primary Schools for the Future' is MUST DO BETTER! While the report concentrates on the building structure and teaching needs, the narrow focus omits any proper consideration of travel which is an essential element in the operation of schools.

The report briefly refers to public transport and walking to school but makes no mention of cycling although government policy seeks a major increase in the level of cycling to schools and policy on obesity recognises cycling as one of the measures to improve the health of our young.

A spokesperson for Maynooth Cycling Campaign said "How does the government expect cycling numbers to increase when Kildare County Council gives planning permission for new schools on the Celbridge Road (in Maynooth) with no facilities for cyclists". He continued "It is ridiculous on the one hand to expect parents to allow their children to cycle to school while on the other hand providing no facilities and tolerating 4x4s pulling up on adjacent footpaths. I think we need more joined up thinking".

Issues which should also have been more fully addressed include where schools should be located, the encouragement of driving by the provision of turning bays at schools, the desirability of independent travel by young people and the fact that pupils who walk or cycle to school are more focused on their lessons from the start of the day compared to pupils who are driven.

All in all, the ESRI need a more comprehensive vision for the future.