

# Session 4 - Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

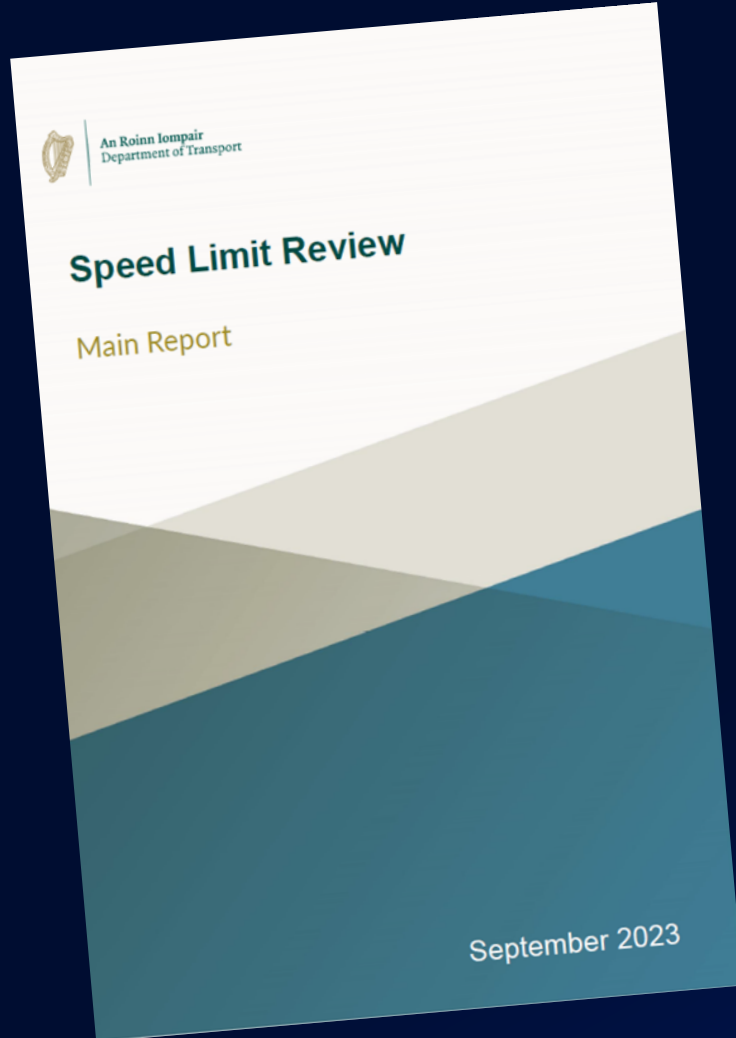
Bernard Rennick, Senior Advisor, Department of Transport

Dr. Suzanne Meade, Road Safety, Transport Infrastructure Ireland

Stephen Barry, Associate, Arup

## Safe Speed Limits In Ireland: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits



## Introduction:

- Speed Limit Review – Status/ Next Steps – Bernard
- Reducing Speed Limits in Urban Areas – Positive Impacts – Suzanne
- Setting Speed Limits in Urban Areas – Criteria & Procedures - Stephen

# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

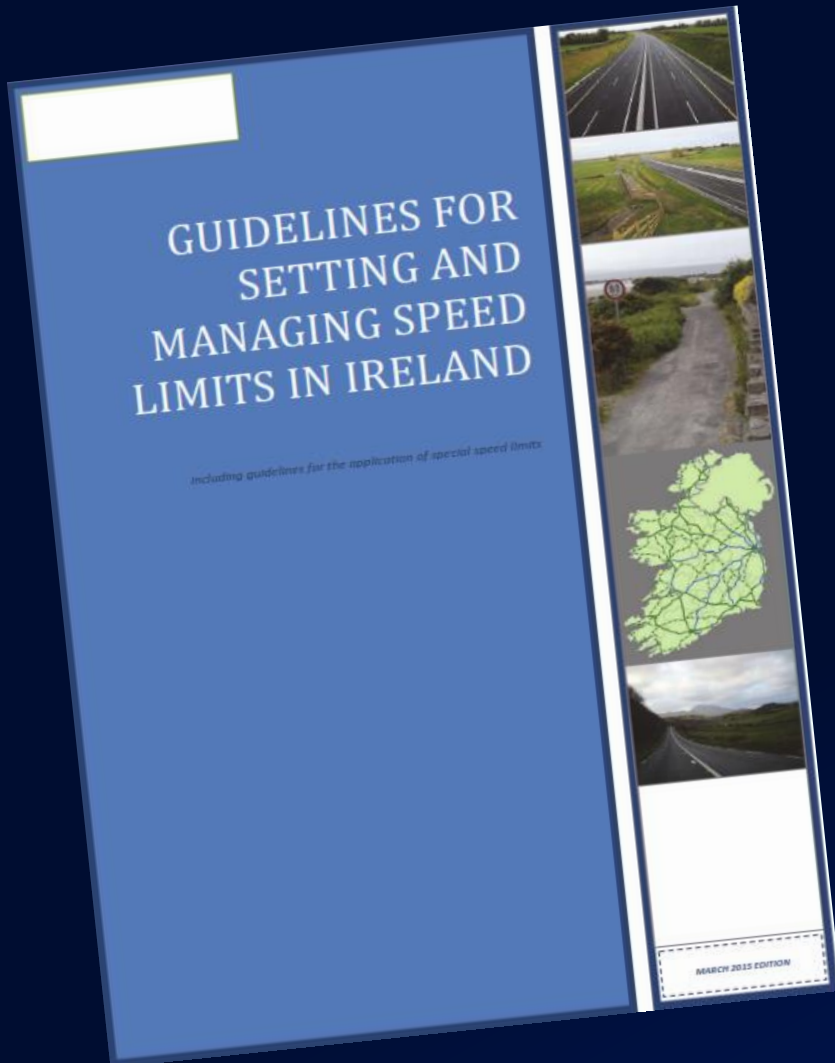


## Phase 1 – Rural Local Roads (Default 60km/h)

- Default speed limit decreased from 80km/hr to 60km/hr
- 83,000km nationally
- 40,000 poles and 60,000 signs
- €20-Million



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits



## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/h

- Updates to the Guidelines
- Regional Workshops
- Feedback

# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/h

### Question:

*Is the 30km/h urban speed limit to be introduced by way of a 'default speed limit' or 'special speed limit bye-laws'?*

### Answer:

- *Special Speed Limit Bye-Laws*
- *Statutory Public Consultation*
- *Reserved Function*





# Session 4 :Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/h

### Question:

*Is it the case that all urban roads that currently have a 50km/h speed limit should be reduced to a 30km/h?*

### Answer:

- *No!*
- *Credible and self-regulating.*
- *Conservative approach recommended.*



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/h

### Question:

*There may be pressure from Elected Members to reduce the speed limit in small rural villages to 30km/h, where it might not be appropriate. Can additional guidance be provided?*

### Answer:

- *Determine existing mean speeds*
- *Engineering initiatives*
- *30km/h equates to just 18miles/h*



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/hr

### Question:

*What is the plan in relation to speed limits on roads adjacent schools?*

### Answer:

- *Schools in urban areas - 30km/h*
- *Schools in rural areas - 50km/h*
- *Periodic speed limits*





# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

## Phase 2 – Urbans 30km/h

### Question:

*What are the next steps for the proposed introduction of these changes?*

### Answer:

- *Finalisation of Guidelines*
- *Ministerial Review and Approval*
- *Circular*



## Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

# THANK YOU

[bernard.rennick@transport.gov.ie](mailto:bernard.rennick@transport.gov.ie)

# Safety Impact of Changing a Speed Limit

## Other Impacts?

Dr.Suzanne Meade, Transport Infrastructure Ireland



## Falls above two metres

Where the fall height is two metres or more, appropriate action must be taken to prevent falls. When selecting work equipment, the expectation is that guard-rails and working platforms will be used. These are always the preferred measures to



# human body has a limited physical ability to withstand force

Common hazards related to falls from height include

4 5 :

- Paralysis of the body
- Broken bones
- Traumatic brain damage
- Spinal injuries
- Damage to vital organs



# Speed of a fall – Vertical force exerted on the body



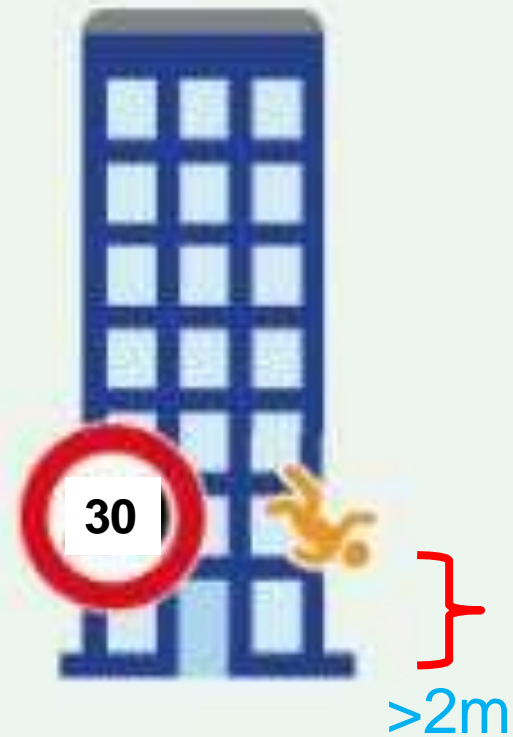
6th floor fall

80/90% Fatal



3rd floor fall

50% Fatal



1st floor fall

10% Fatal

## 3 SAFE SYSTEMS PRINCIPLES

1. People make mistakes

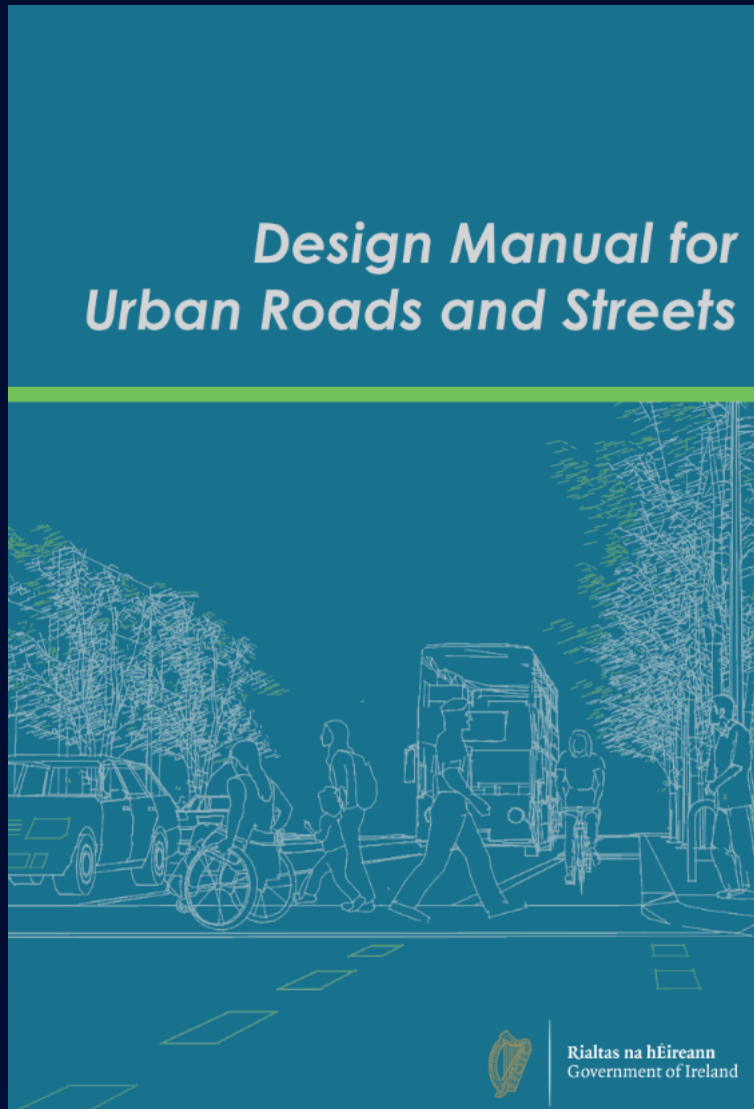
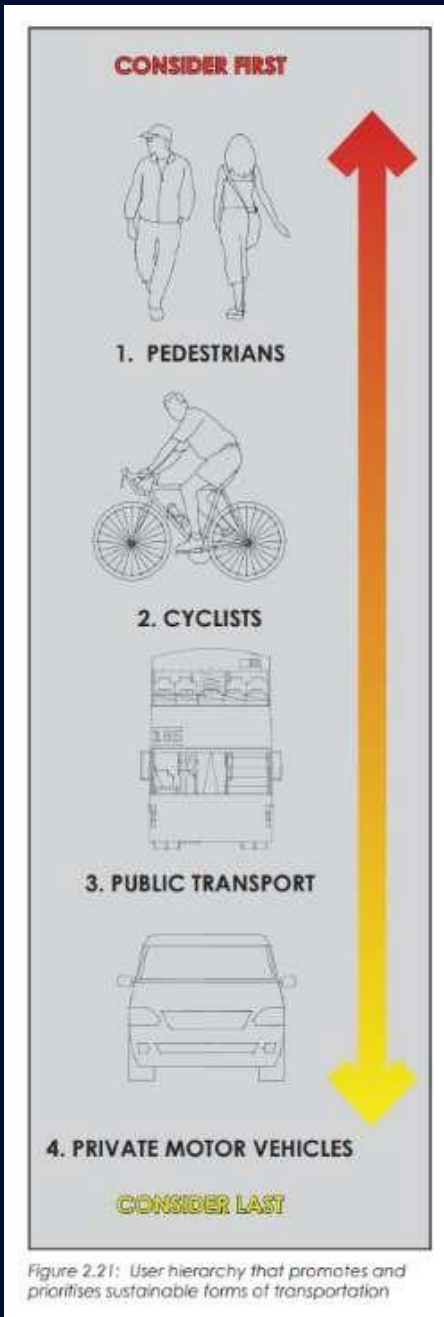


2. Human physical frailty



3. Shared responsibility





**SS Principle 2 - Limited physical collision/force tolerance.**

	Head-on crashes	70 km/h
	Junction crashes	50 km/h
	Run-off road crashes	40 km/h
	Pedestrians and cyclists in car crashes	30 km/h

Source: Jeanne-Breen-Towards-Zero-via-a-Safe-System-approach





Rialtas na hÉireann  
Government of Ireland

## National Sustainable Mobility Policy



**Goal 1: Improve mobility safety**

**30km/hr Action 5 & Action 6  
RSS**



### • Safe Systems PILLARS



**Safe  
Speeds**



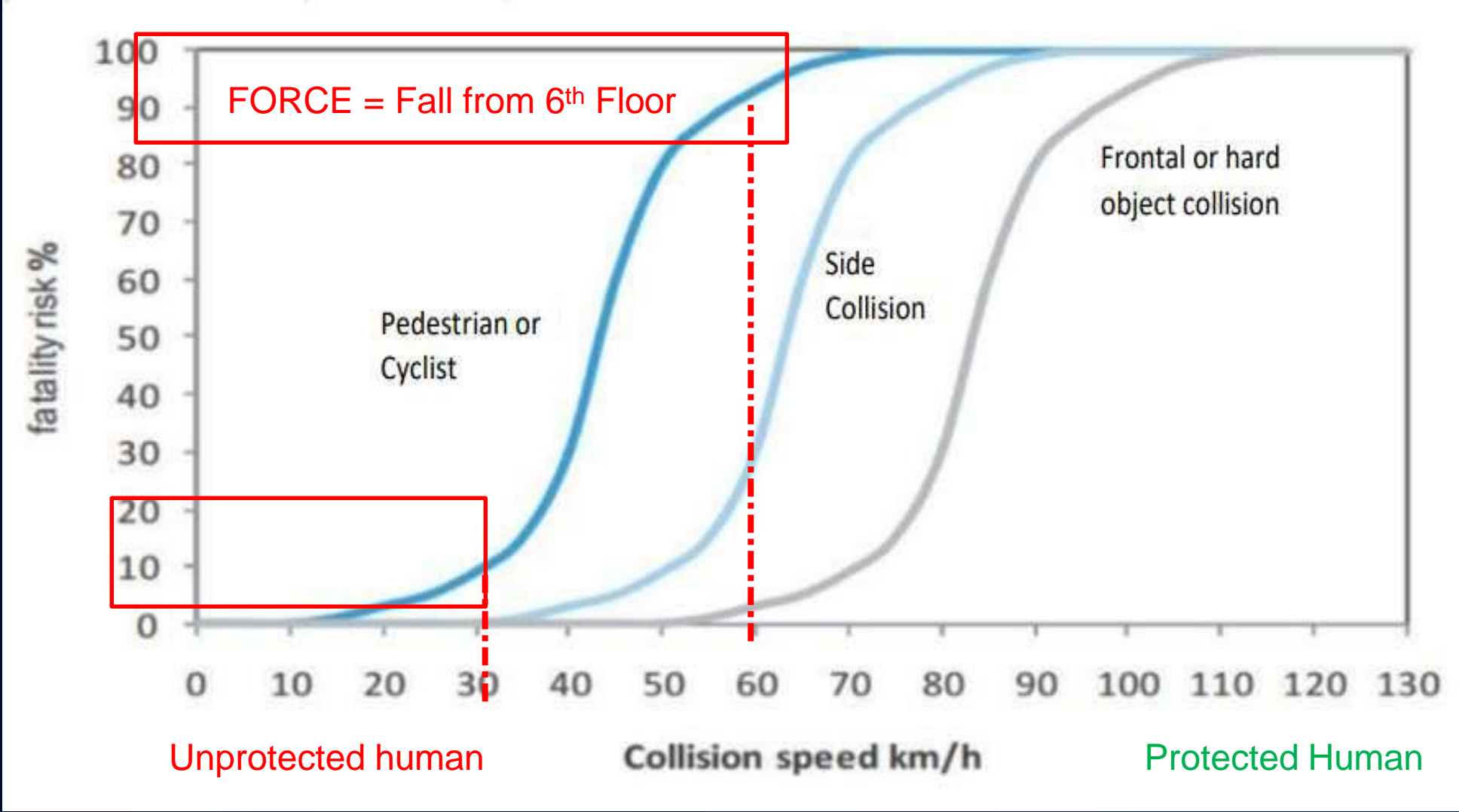
**Safe  
Road Use**



**Safe and  
Healthy  
Modes  
of Travel**



The risk of being killed is much greater for collisions between a car and a vulnerable road user at 50 km/h compared to the same type of collision at 30 km/h (Kröyer et al., 2014).

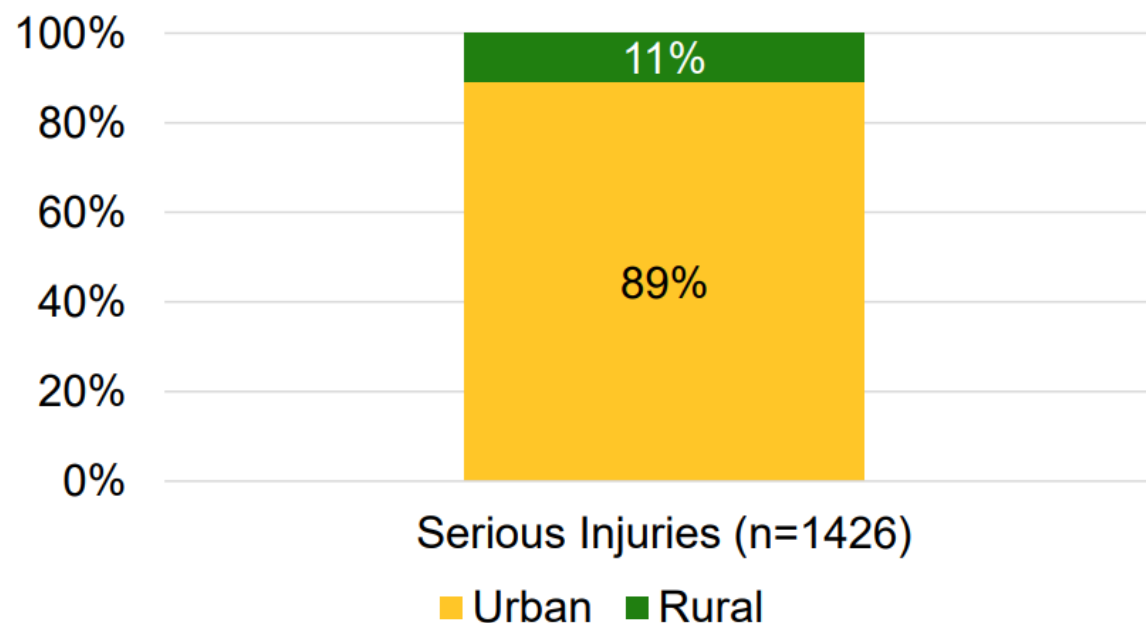
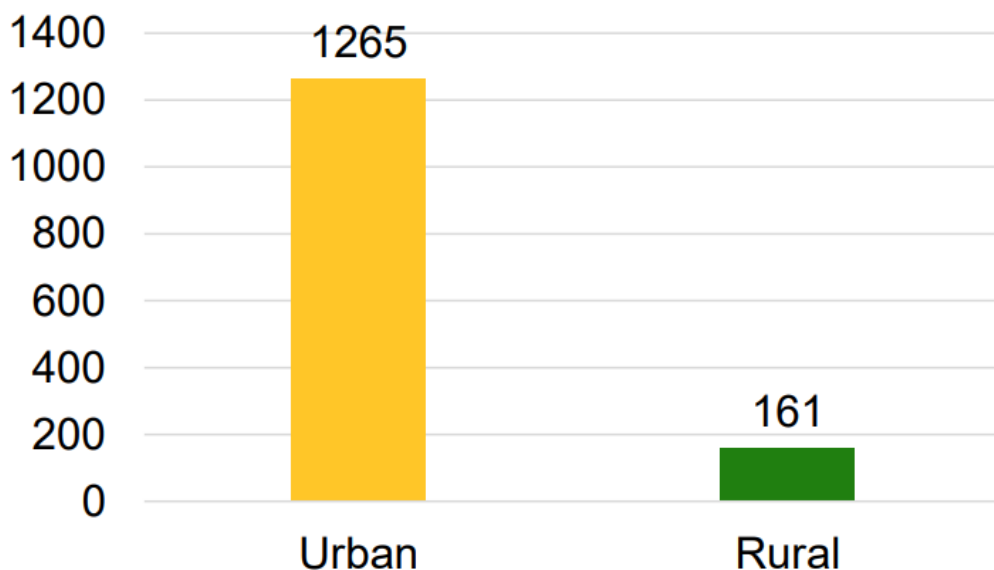




Safe and Healthy  
Modes of Travel

# Pedestrian serious injuries by urban/rural road

2019-2023



VISION  
ZERO

RSA

An urban road has a speed limit of **60km/h or less**, while a rural road has a speed limit of **80km/h or more**.



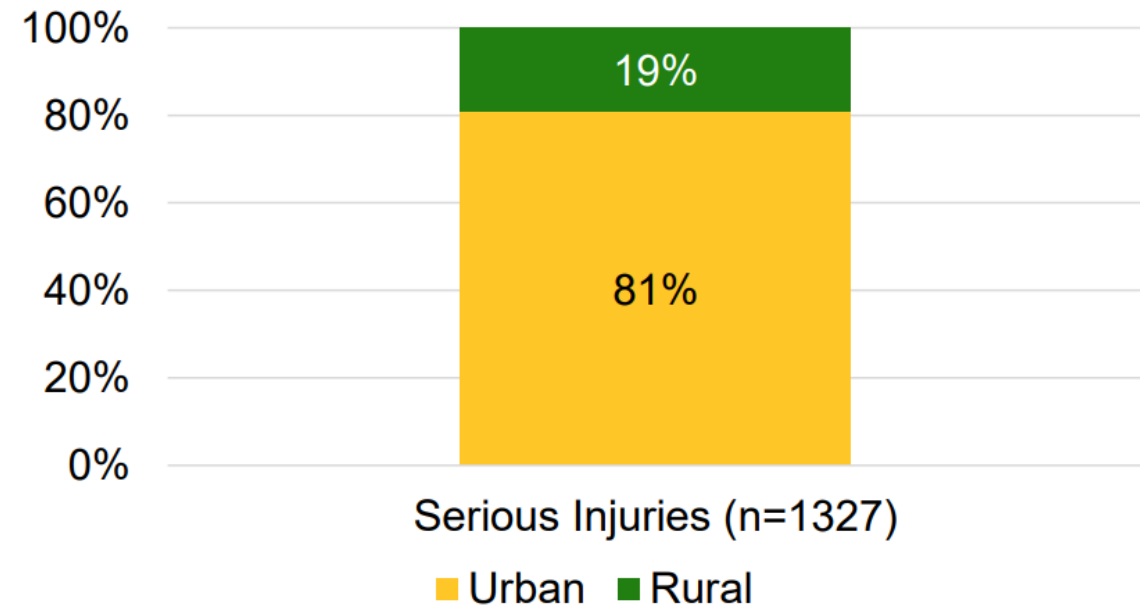
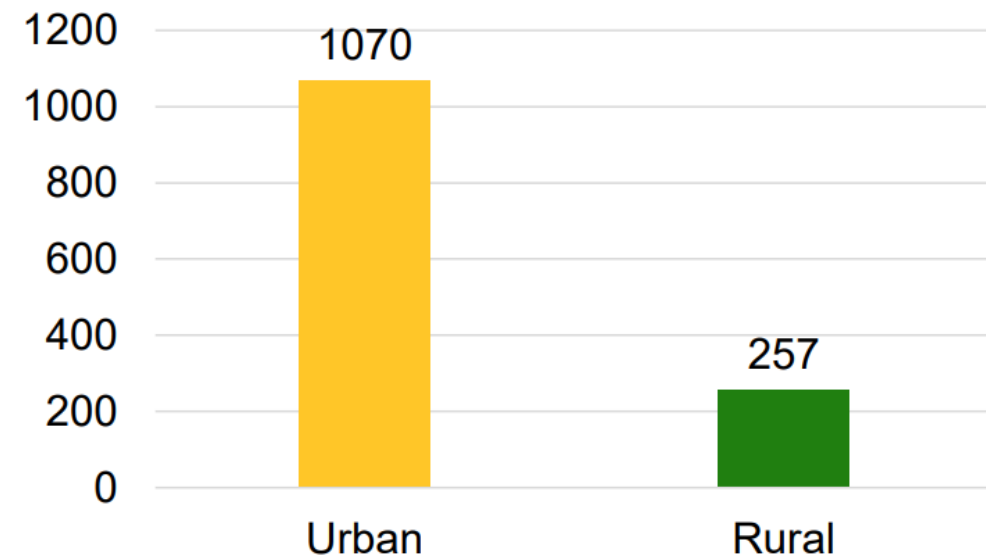
Safe and Healthy  
Modes of Travel

VISION  
ZERO



# Cyclist serious injuries by urban/rural road

2018-2022



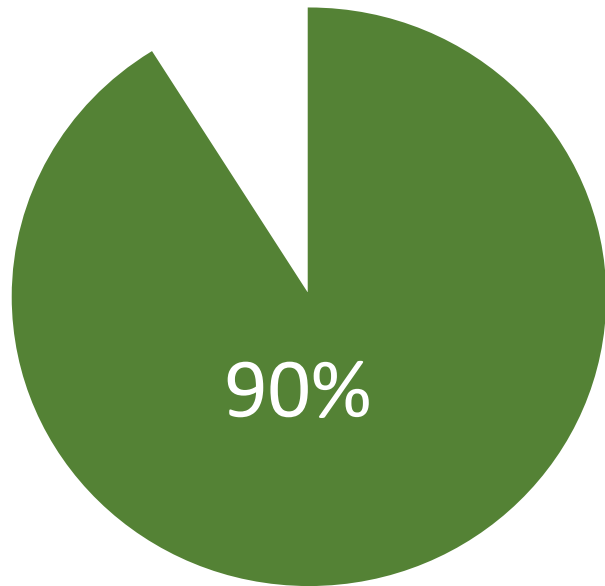
An urban road has a speed limit of **60km/h or less**, while a rural road has a speed limit of **80km/h or more**.



- 7 : 10 (69%) child casualties
  - are injured on urban roads (1)
- 
- 21% (almost 60 per year) pedestrian serious injuries are children (2)

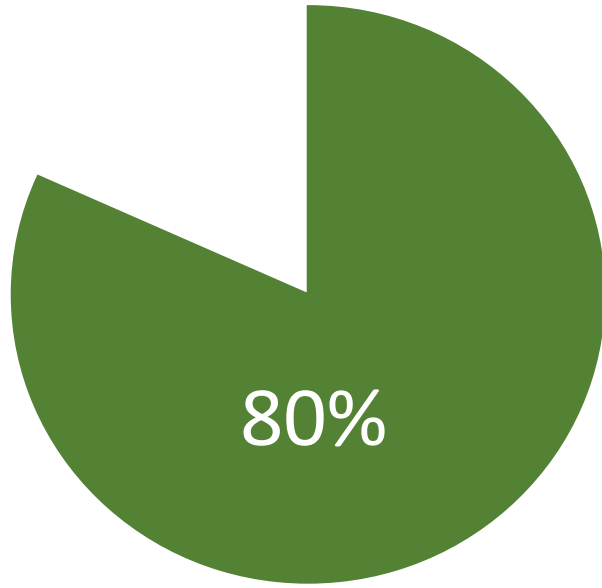






- 9 : 10 pedestrian
- serious injuries happens on
- urban roads (1)





- 4 : 5 (214 per year)
  - seriously injured
  - cyclists occurred
  - on urban roads
- 
- +50% occurred in Dublin (1)
- 
- 2 to 3 hospitalised for each cyclist recorded by police (2)

Alamy Stock | 449102717



30 km/hr*	58%
50 km/hr	46%
60 km/hr	49%
80 km/hr	33%
100 km/hr	30%
120 km/hr	17%

\* Cork and Dublin sample & 21% exceed +10km/hr

% Exceeding the  
Speed Limit?





## November 2024 Survey

+ 60 % of people  
have some  
awareness of 30  
km/hr speed limit  
changes



# Pre Campaign Support for Urban 30km/hr ?



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52% Support in Rural areas

46% in Urban Areas

---

Women (54%) & Older age (61%)  
categories

Statistically higher support levels

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27% Object (Statistically higher  
among younger male  
respondents)

*Road safety thematic report*  
Speeding





# European Road Safety Observatory Report (2020)

- **Numerous studies** - when speed limits are decreased, average speed also decreases - leads to a reduction of the number of casualties.
- **Many EU cities have 30km/h zones in the city centre/core** - Munich, Helsinki, Bilbao, Brussels, Madrid and Grenoble.
- Up to 67% reduction in pedestrian fatalities **on streets where the speed limit was reduced from 40 to 30 km/h.**

Review

# Review of City-Wide 30 km/h Speed Limit Benefits in Europe

George Yannis  and Eva Michelaraki \* 

Department of Transportation Planning and Engineering  
Polytechniou Str., 15773 Athens, Greece; geyannis@centr  
\* Correspondence: evamich@mail.ntua.gr

**Abstract:** To date, more and more European cities are implementing a portion of their street network with a speed limit of 30 km/h. This paper describes the effectiveness of city-wide 30 km/h speed limit implementation. The outputs, a quantitative approach along with qualitative data, are described. The changes in safety, environment, energy consumption, and urban space are described.

2024 Research  
40 EU Cities



8 in France, 7 in UK  
4 in Belgium and Spain, 3 in Germany  
2 in Austria, Italy and Netherlands  
1 in Denmark, Finland, Ireland, Luxembourg, Scotland, Slovenia, Sweden and Switzerland

33 for improved **safety**  
17 for improved **active mobility**  
17 for increased **liveability**  
13 for reduced **noise**  
11 for more **urban space**  
9 for reduced **air pollution**  
5 for reduced **traffic congestion**  
3 for improved **health**



# Typical Impacts

- **Safety Impacts:**

- 23% reduction in all collisions,
- 37% reduction in fatal collisions,
- 38% reduction in injury collisions.



**Safe  
Speeds**



**Safe  
Road Use**



**Safe and  
Healthy  
Modes  
of Travel**

- **Wider Impacts:**



Air Pollution improved on average by 18%

Noise pollution levels by 2.5 dB

Reduced Fuel consumption by 7%

Increased Active Travel Mode Share







Effective 1st January 2024

Population: 819,297 (2025)

Enforcement campaign - 122 Days

Results after 1 year ???



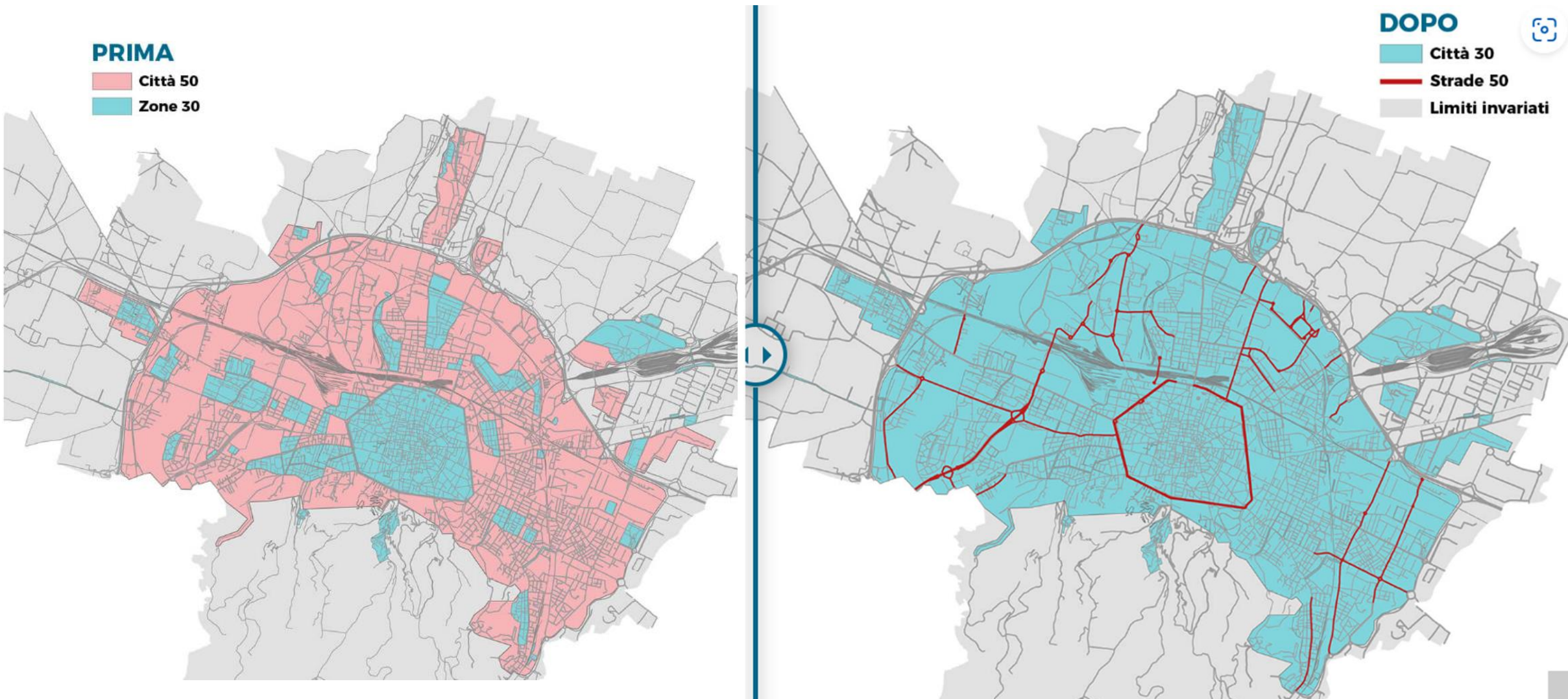
# "Go slowly, save a life"

at the centre of the communication campaign of Bologna Città 30.



30 km/h across 70% of the streets of the entire city. The percentage almost 90% if we consider only the urban core

### Area Treated = defining the USLZ



## Results (Jan 2025)

- **Safety Impacts:**

- Road deaths 50% reduction
- 11% reduction in injury collisions.
- No pedestrian deaths - first time since 1991!



- **Wider Impacts:**

- “pollution most related to urban traffic” down by almost a 1/3 -
  - ( lowest figures in 10 years!)
- Vehicle traffic reduced by 5%
- Bike trips increased by 10%



Bike trips increased by 10%  
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Bike trips increased by 10%



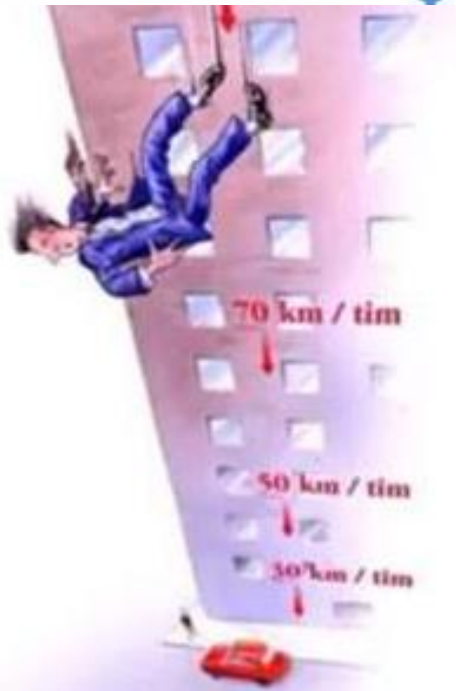
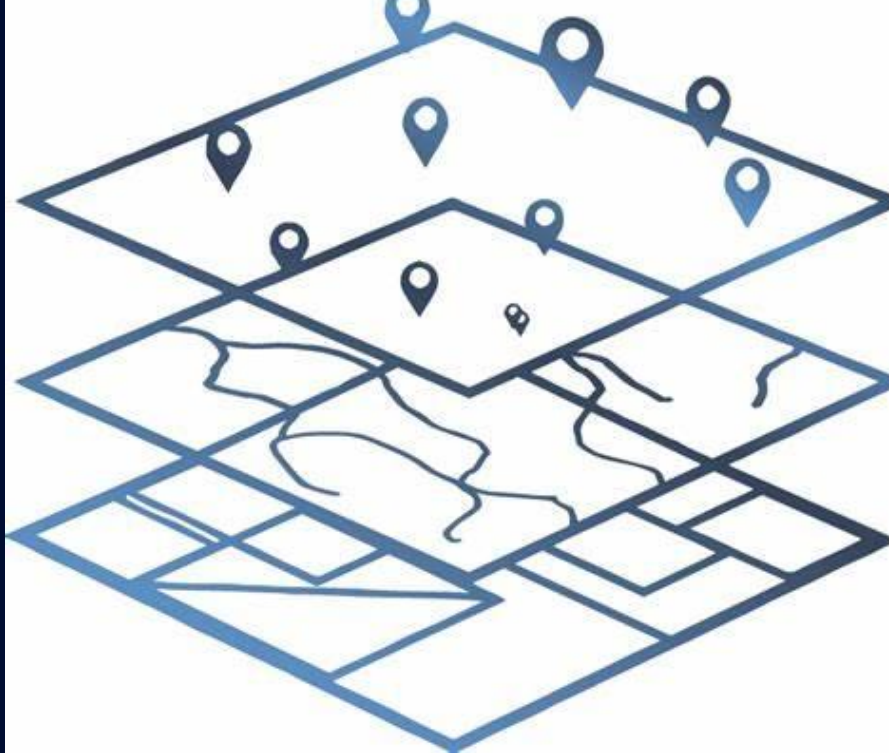
## Country wide Example

**Wales** became the first UK country to adopt a **20 mph (~30 km/h) default in 2023**, 100 fewer people killed or seriously injured and fell by 28%.



### 3 Safe Systems Principles

1. People make mistakes
2. Human physical frailty  
(*limited ability to withstand force*)
3. Shared responsibility



### Treatment

- 1 Reduce speed limit of road/street inside the USLZ
- 2 Reduce force within zone caused by speed.

**Outcome** – reduce average operating speed in USLZ

**Impact** – Reduce Collision number & severity inside USLZ ( esp. VRU)

Wider impacts



## Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/h and Urban 30km/h Speed Limits

# THANK YOU

Dr.Suzanne Meade, Transport Infrastructure Ireland

# Working Example - Athenry

Stephen Barry, Arup



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway

Town Centre



Caherroyn Road



Industrial Estate / Commercial



R347 from Craughwell



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 1 (a)



OS Mapping



Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway



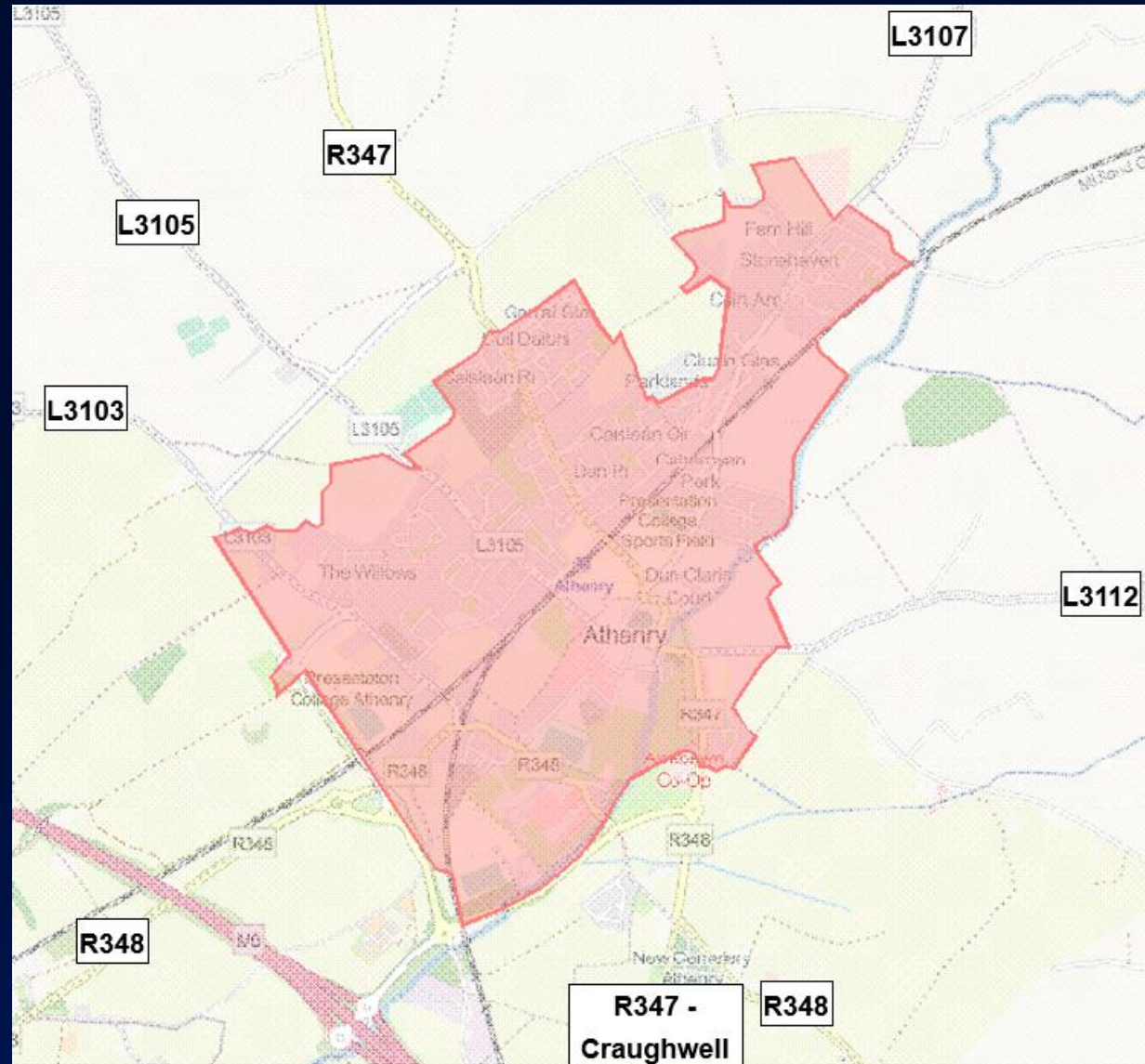
## Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 1 (b)



## CSO Boundary

## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway



**An Roinn Iompair**  
Department of Transport



## Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

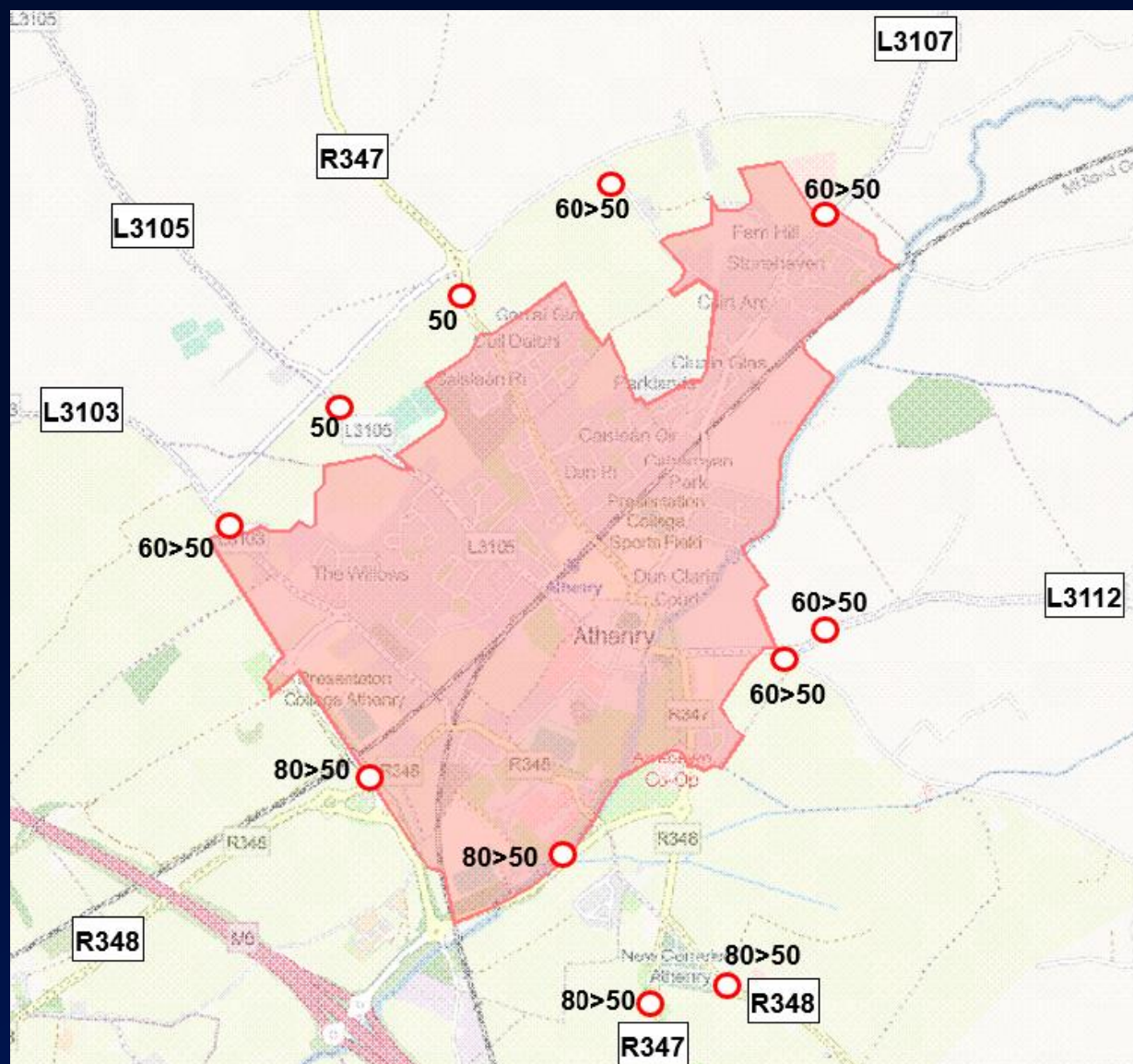
## Step 1 (c)



## CSO Boundary



## Existing Speed Limits



## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway



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**Department of Transport**

# Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 1 (d)



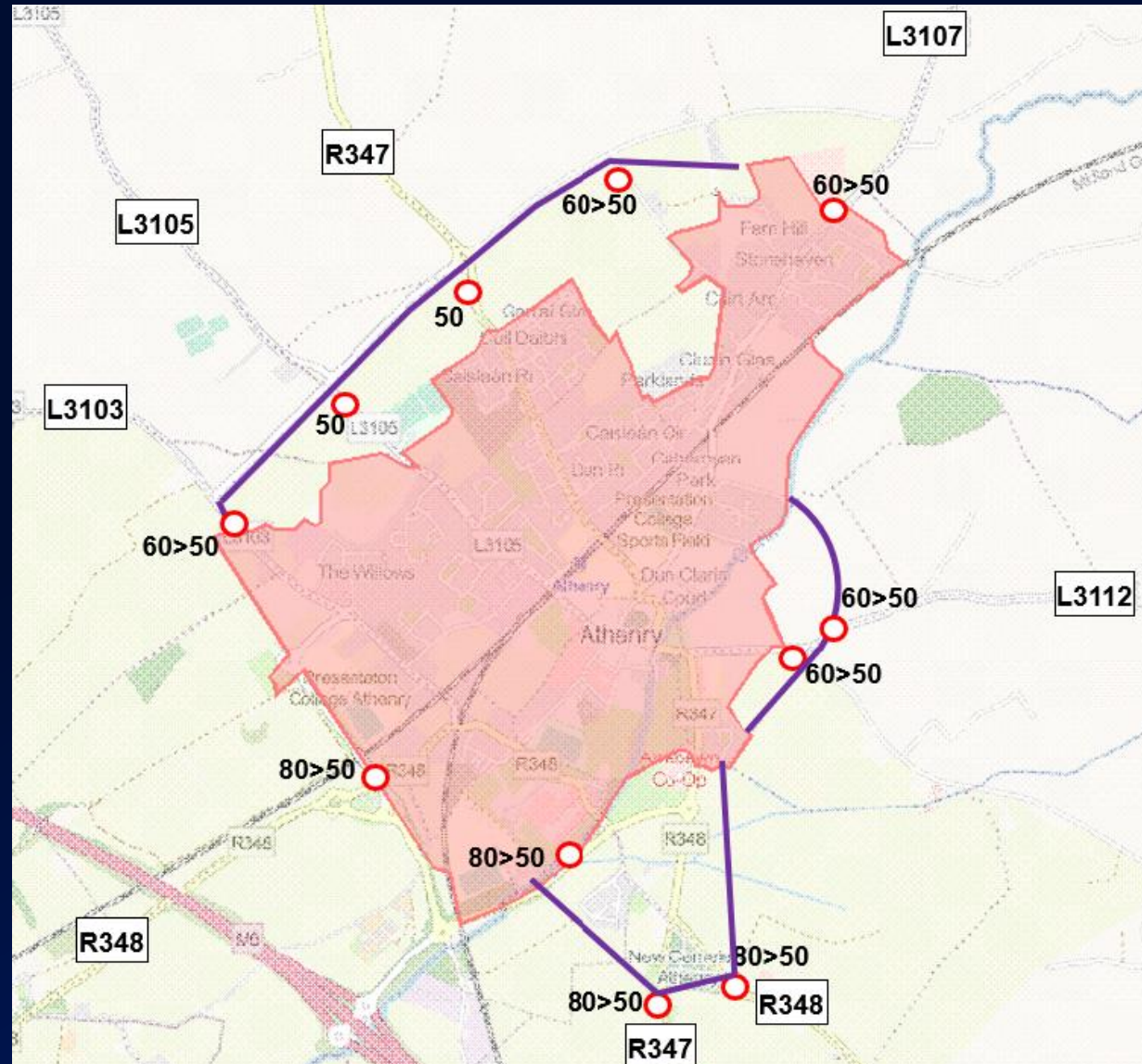
## CSO Boundary



## Existing Speed Limits



## Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ) Draft



## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway





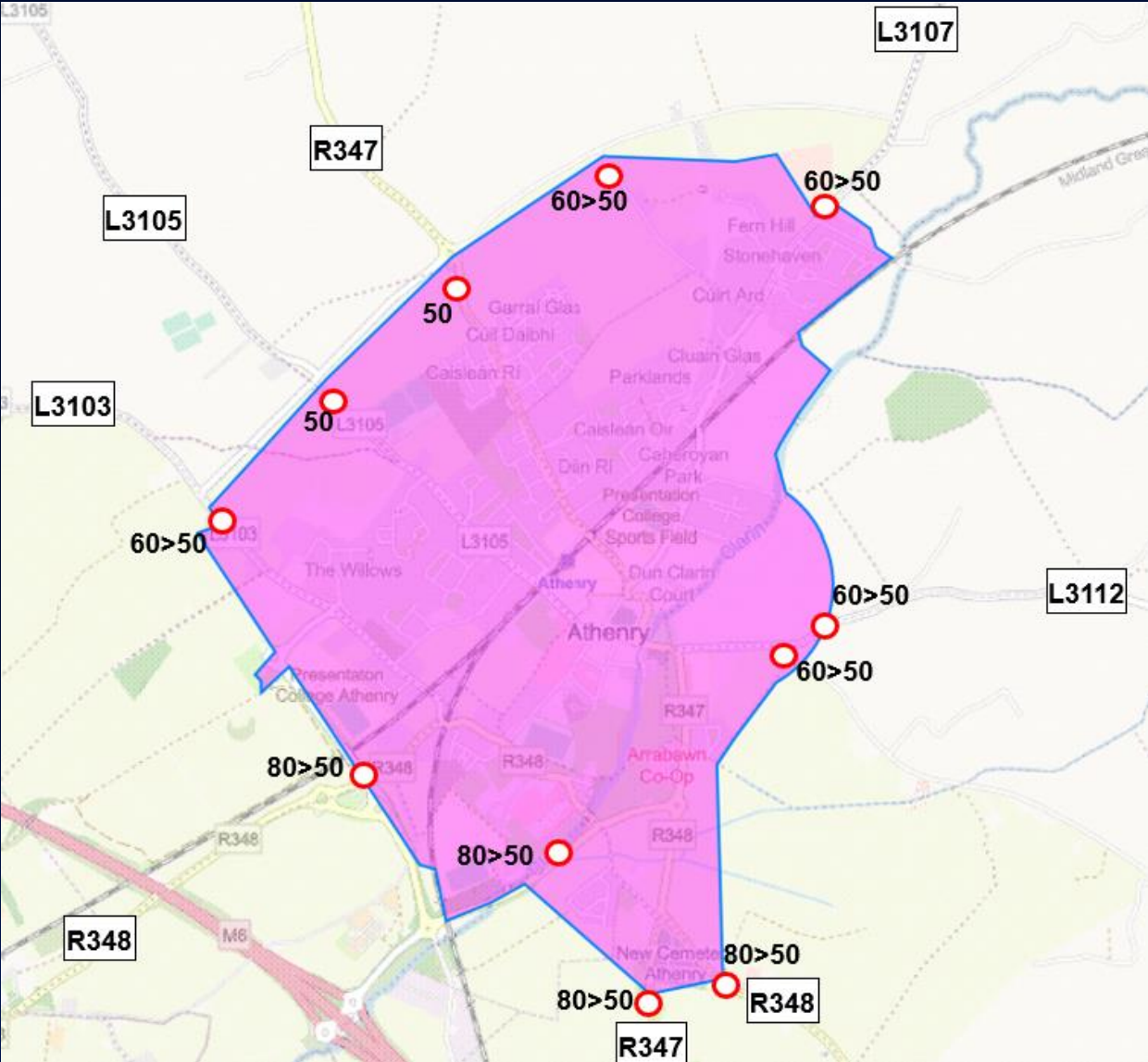
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Department of Transport



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 1 (e)




-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)

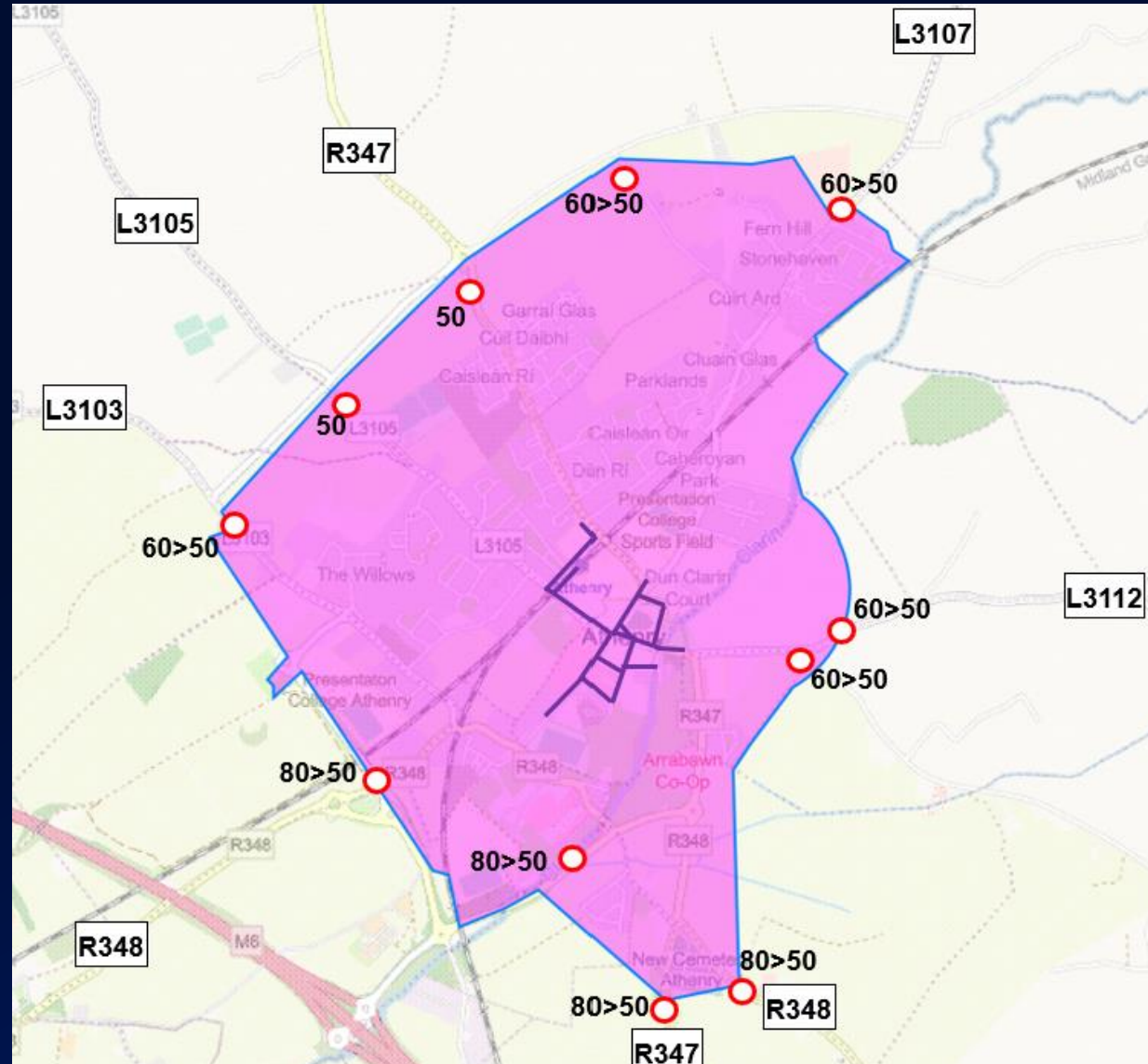


Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway

# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (a)





-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)

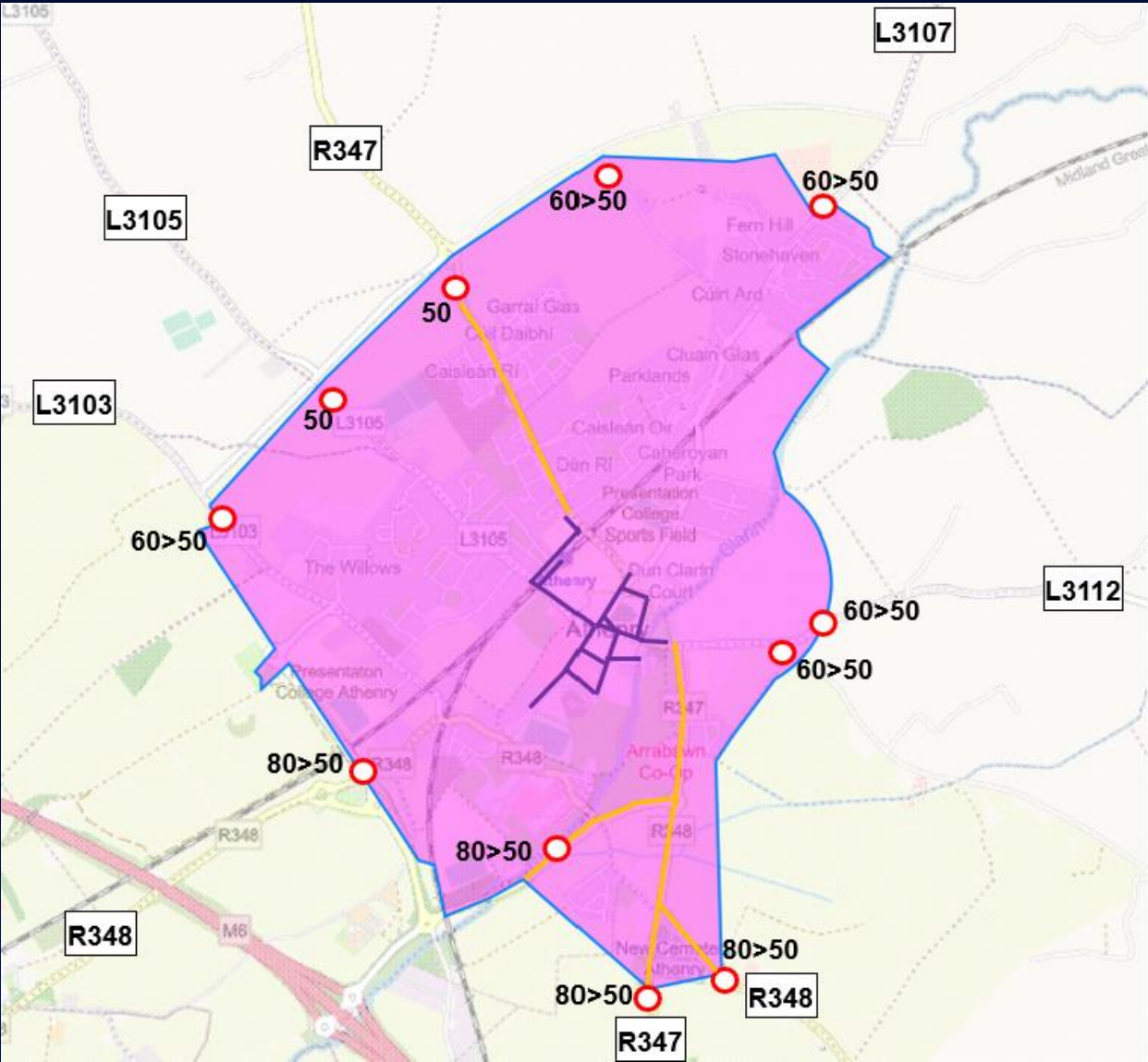


Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway

# Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (b)

-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)
-  Arterial (50km/h)









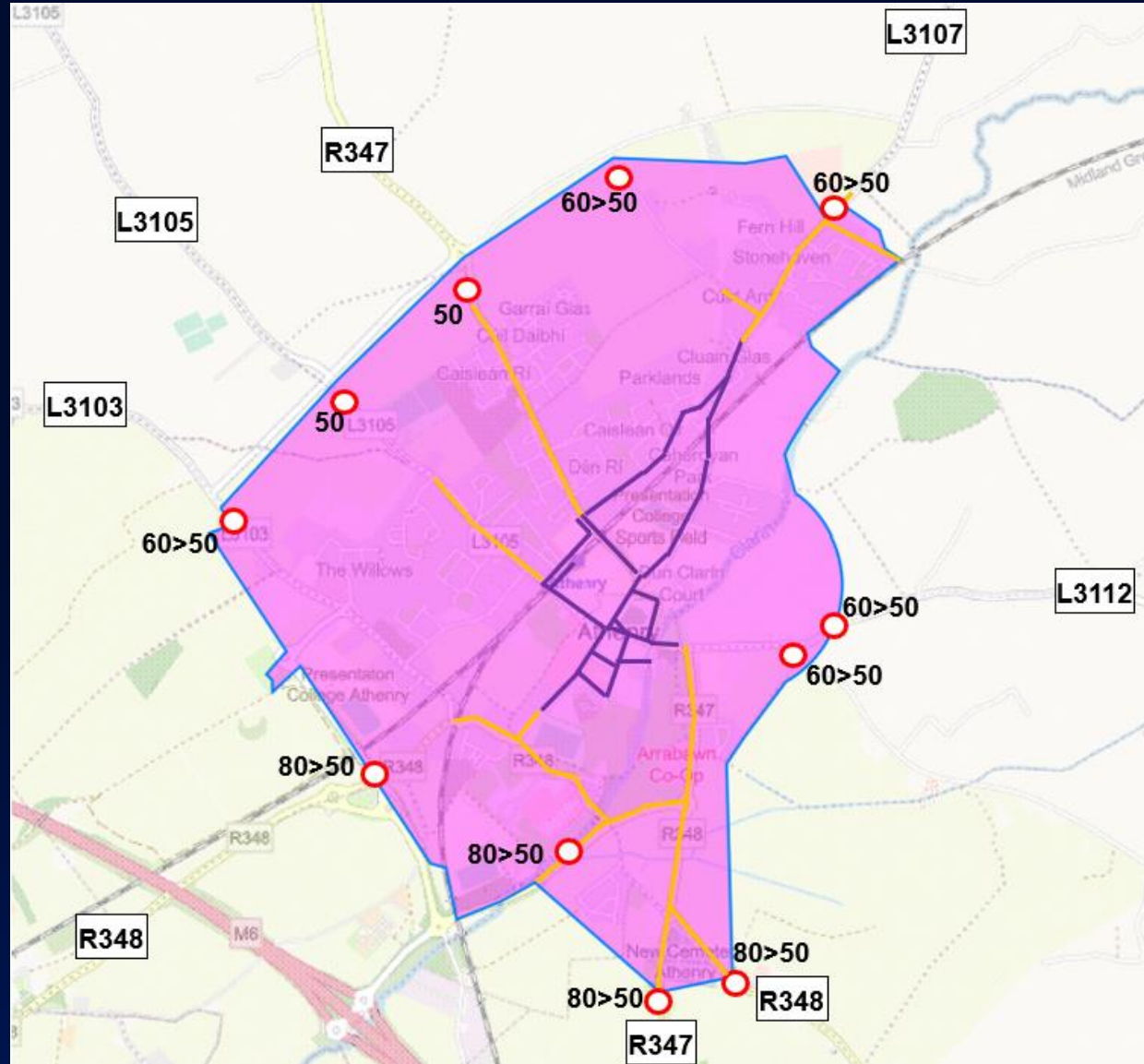
Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway



## Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (c)







-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)
-  Arterial (50km/h)
-  Link Neighbourhoods, Sub-urban (30km/h / 50km/h)
- 

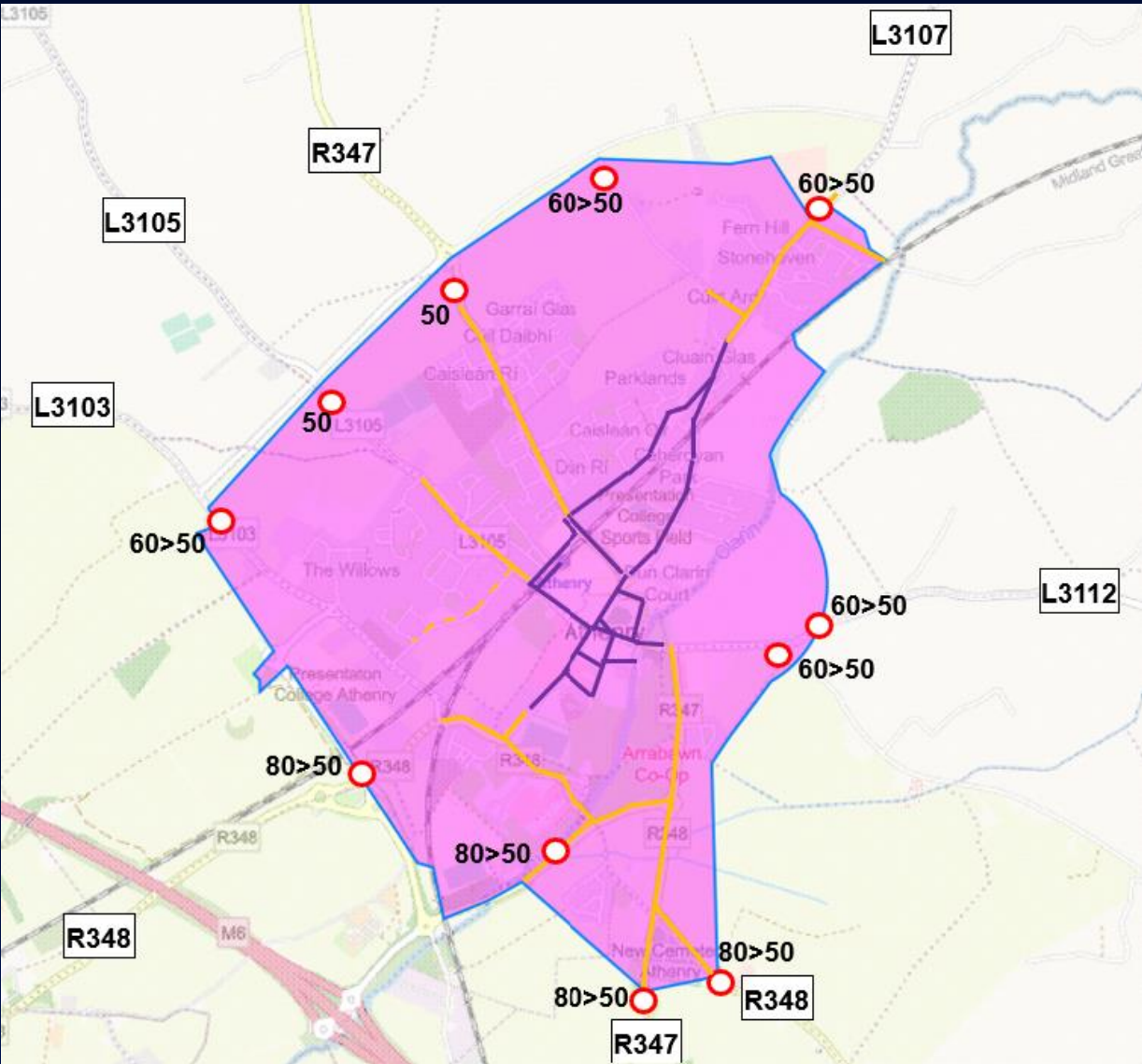


## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway

# Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (d)









-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)
-  Arterial (50km/h)
-  Link Neighbourhoods, Sub-urban (30km/h / 50km/h)
-  Link Business / Industrial (50km/h)

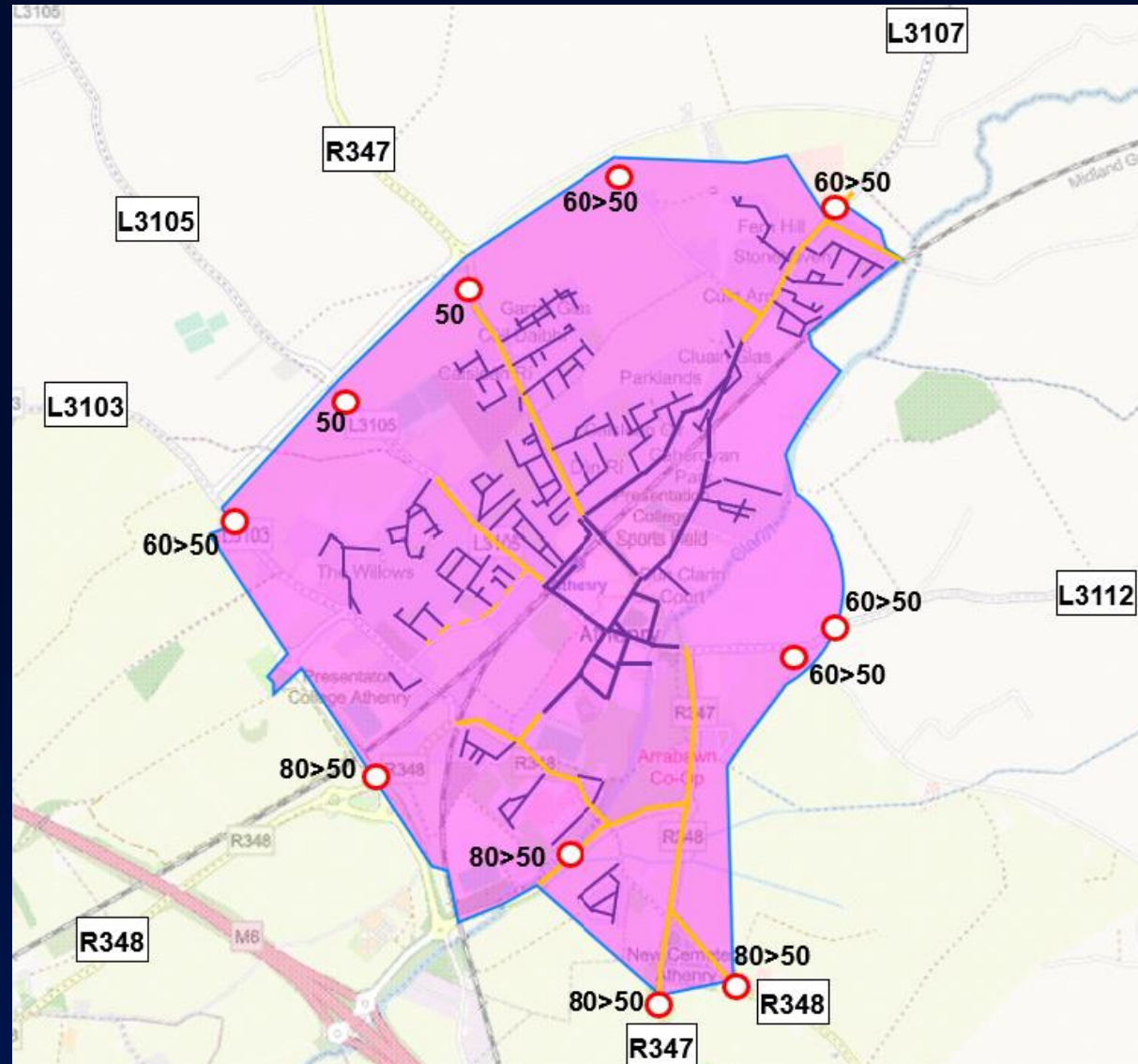


Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway

# Session 4: Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (e)

-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)
-  Arterial (50km/h)
-  Link Neighbourhoods, Sub-urban (30km/h / 50km/h)
- 
-  Link Business / Industrial (50km/h)
-  Housing Estates (30km/h)



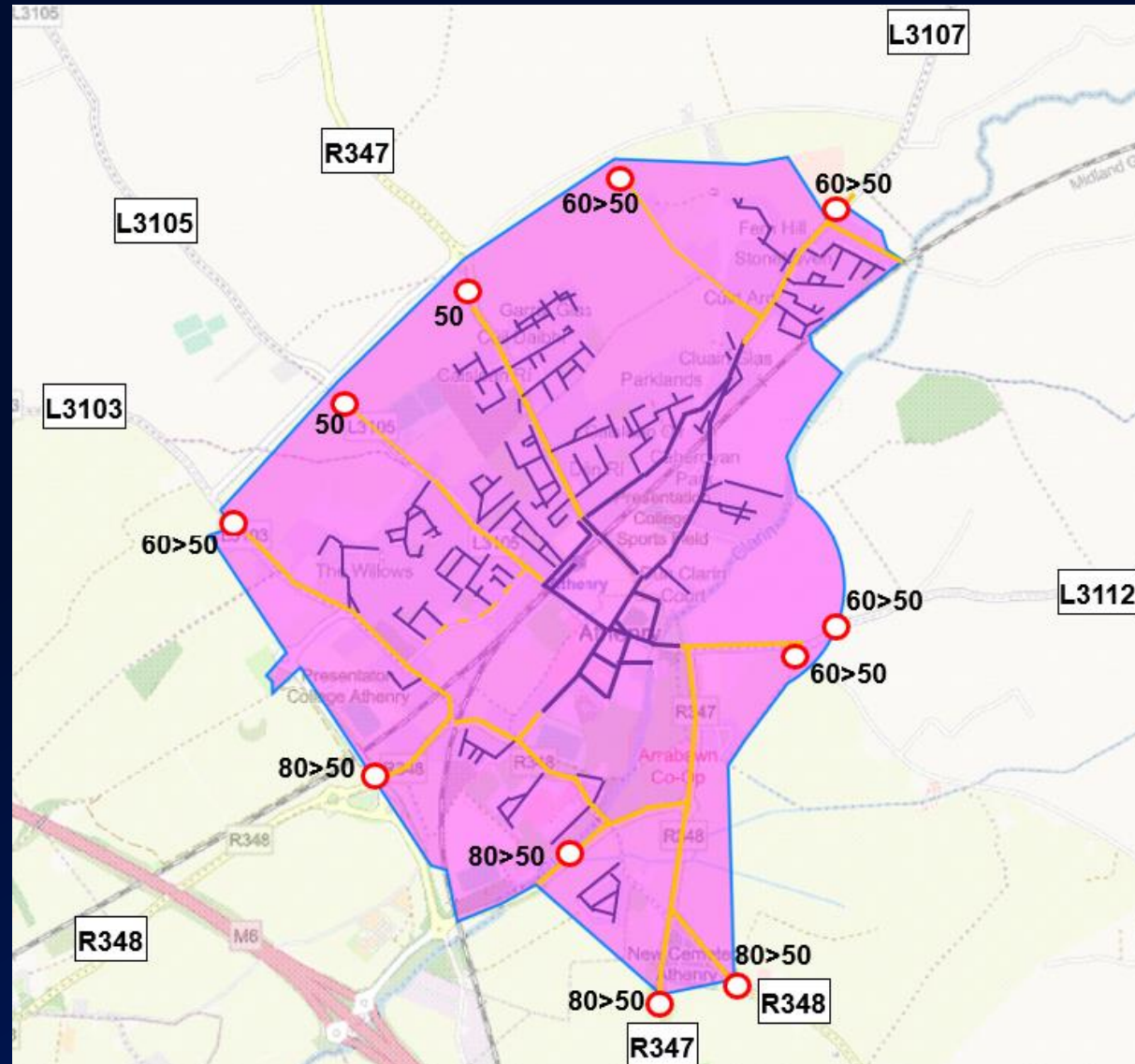
## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway



# Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (f)

- Existing Speed Limits
- Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
- Urban Core (30km/h)
- Arterial (50km/h)
- Link Neighbourhoods, Sub-urban (30km/h / 50km/h)
- Link Business / Industrial (50km/h)
- Housing Estates (30km/h)
- Link / Urban Fringe (50km/h)











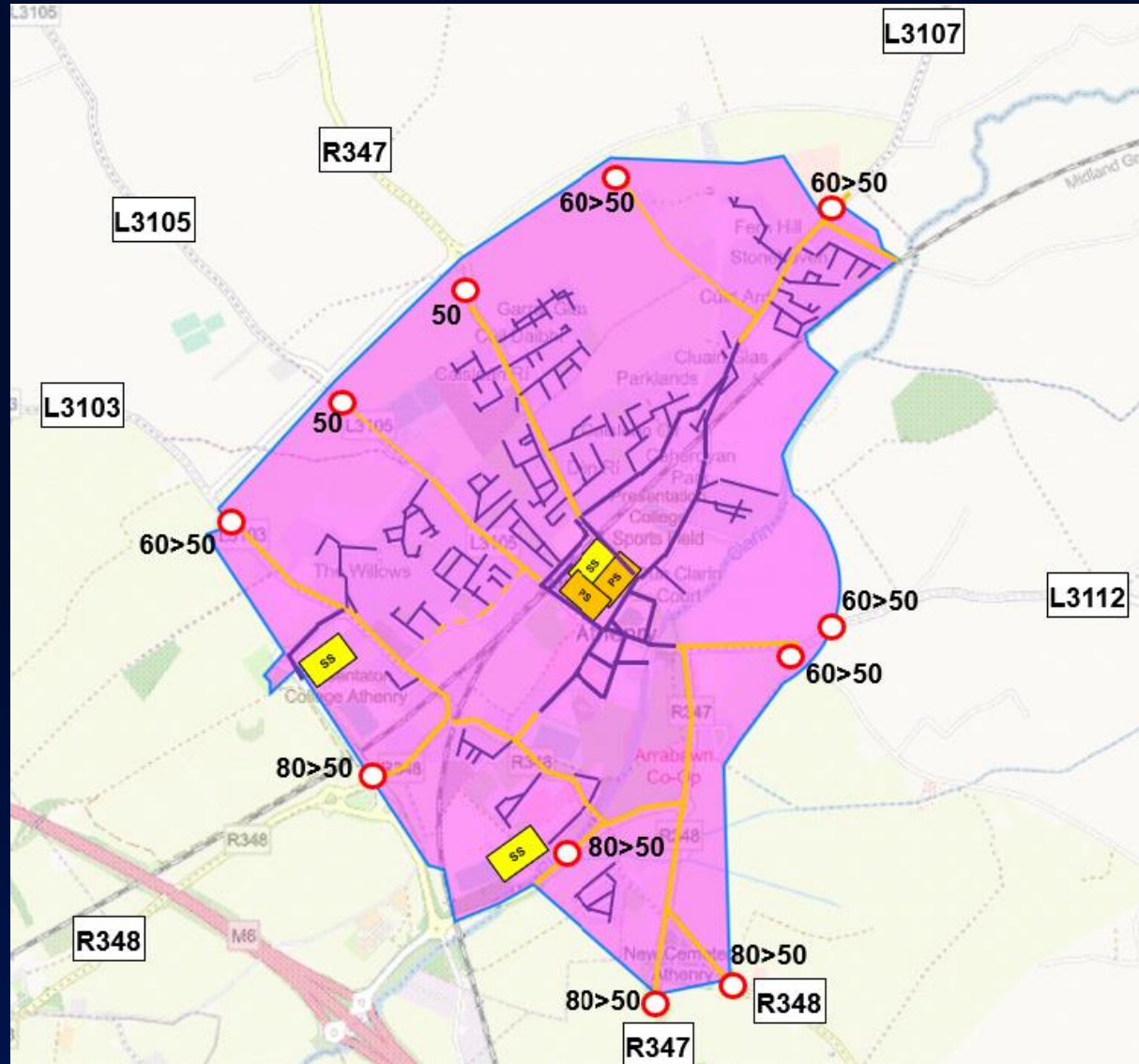
Worked Example:  
Athenry,  
County Galway



## Session 4 : Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

## Step 2 (g) - Schools

-  Existing Speed Limits
-  Urban Speed Limit Zone (USLZ)
-  Urban Core (30km/h)
-  Arterial (50km/h)
-  Link Neighbourhoods, Sub-urban (30km/h / 50km/h)
-  Link Business / Industrial (50km/h)
-  Housing Estates (30km/h)
-  Link / Urban Fringe (50km/h)
-  Secondary School (30km/h)
-  Primary School (30km/h)



## Worked Example: Athenry, County Galway

# Session Implementing Rural Local Roads 60km/hr and Urban 30km/hr Speed Limits

Stephen Barry

# THANK YOU

**Join the Q&A session at  
Slido.com and enter 3873601  
or via the QR Code.  
Questions must include name  
and associated Local Authority  
to be considered by the panel.**

