

galwaycyclists@yahoo.ie
<http://www.eirbyte.com/gcc>

Irish Bicycle Planning

A reversion to the dark days of
the 1930's?

Shane Foran M.Sc.
Galway Cycling Campaign

German bicycle planning 1890 -1920

Separate cycle tracks:

As elsewhere –

- Initially based around remedying problems caused by unmetalled road surfaces.**
- Creation of recreational routes for cyclists.**
- In many cases probably motivated by a desire to reduce conflicts with pedestrians/horse-drawn traffic.**

German bicycle planning 1920 - 1930

- Calls start for cyclists to be cleared off the streets so as to benefit motorised traffic.**
- Dr Henneking – Magdeburg Urban Construction Office**
- STUFA – Research Association for Roads for Automobiles**

German bicycle planning 1930 - 1940

- **National Socialists come to power.**
- **Mass motorisation is central to Nazi party policy.**
- **Organisation Todt: Mass construction of Autobahns**
- **KDF- Wagen (VW Beetle) A car for every German family**

German bicycle planning 1930 - 1940

- Construction of cycle tracks is central to Nazi propaganda**
- Construction of cycle tracks is identified as an important pre-requisite for switch to mass-motorisation.**

HJ Schacht

- 1933 thesis uses arguments regarding road safety and efficiency to justify the "removal of cyclists from all roads on which fast traffic plays a significant role"
- 1934 Appointed director of the National Socialist "Committee for cycle track construction"

Nazi propaganda - 1936 Olympics

"Let us show the marvelling foreigners proof of an up-and-coming Germany; a Germany where the motorist has bicycle-free and safe access not only to the autobahns but to all roads".

From

Germany to the UK

1930's: Response of UK cyclists

- CTC rejects imposition of cycle tracks and/or compulsory use legislation
- Mass meetings organised to voice cyclists opposition

1930's: Response of UK cyclists

"The danger of right-hand crossings discounts any presupposed safety obtained by partial traffic segregation; and it has been admitted that where cycle tracks are in being, motoring speeds on the carriageway will increase, to the consequent danger of the cyclists [...] Cycle tracks are a palliative at best, and in my opinion a dangerous one."

Frank Urry: CTC rep on UK DOT advisory council 1938

1930's Germany

- 1934 Road Traffic Regulations of the Reich = Compulsory use
- National Socialists outlaw cyclists associations.

German bicycle planning 1940's, 50's, 60's

- Primary goal of cycle planning is to achieve unhindered travel of motorised traffic.
- 1963 Guidelines - “Disturbances” caused by cyclists at junctions to be eliminated

From

Germany to Ireland

1970's: Irish National Research Institute considers cycling

- **The Bicycle: A Study of Efficiency, Usage and Safety, D.F. Moore, An Foras Forbatha Teoranta, 1975.**
- **Bicycle Travel in Galway City, M.J. Brennan, RS 242, An Foras Forbartha, 1979.**

1975: Moore report

- Acknowledges that most collisions occur at junctions
- Separate cycle-path/cycle way systems only an option where new streets/towns being planned
- Considers that separate traffic signals would be necessary
- Questions whether separate system of cycle lanes is a practical proposition in existing urban areas.
- Considers that primary goal must be the enforcement of traffic regulations

1975: Moore report

- Accepts UK finding from 1940's that cycle-tracks reduce casualties

BUT

- Enters important caveat

1975: Moore report

"the provision of separate bicycle lanes alongside the main traffic flow is self defeating if no additional provision is made at intersections - because the very real risk of collisions in the merging phase adds to the overloading effect".

The Bicycle: A Study of Efficiency, Usage and Safety, D.F. Moore, An Foras Forbatha Teoranta, 1975.

1979: Brennan report

- Notes absence of accident data to support claims of increased safety for segregated cycle facilities
- Issue of junctions as pre-eminent collision location.
- Acknowledges issue of one way streets
- Recommends contraflow cycling on one-way streets
- Raised issues regarding roundabouts

1980's to 1990's

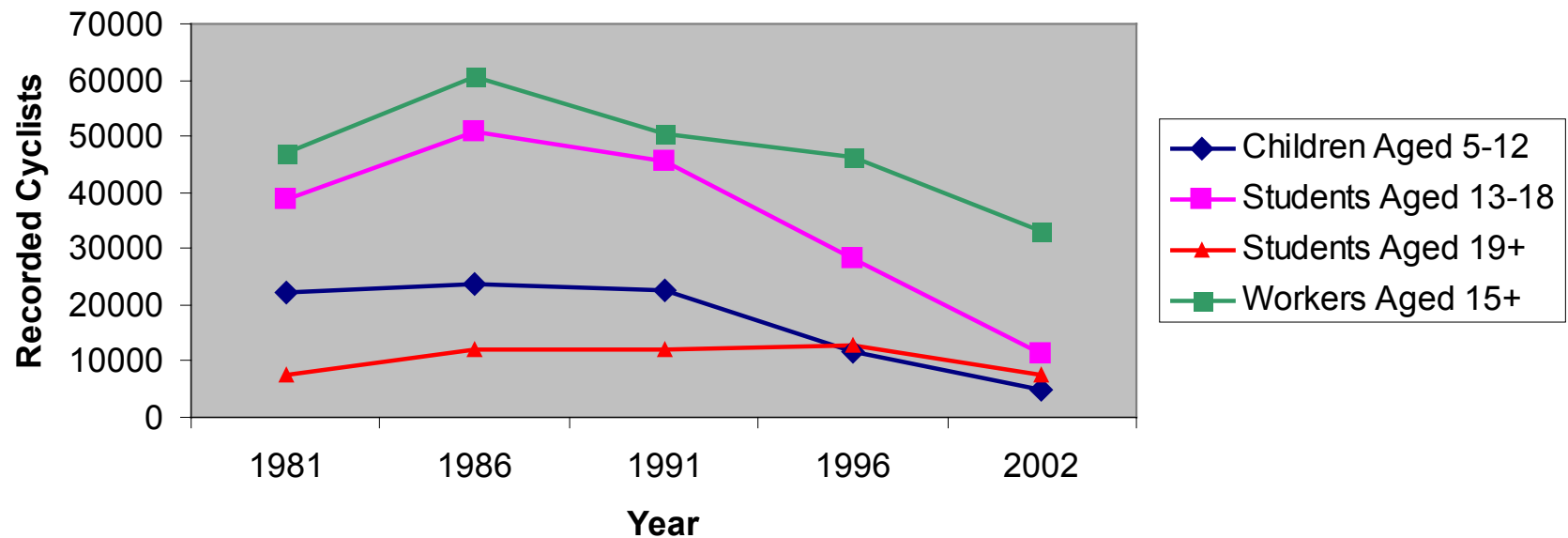
Cycling in Ireland

Bicycle use Ireland 1981- 1991

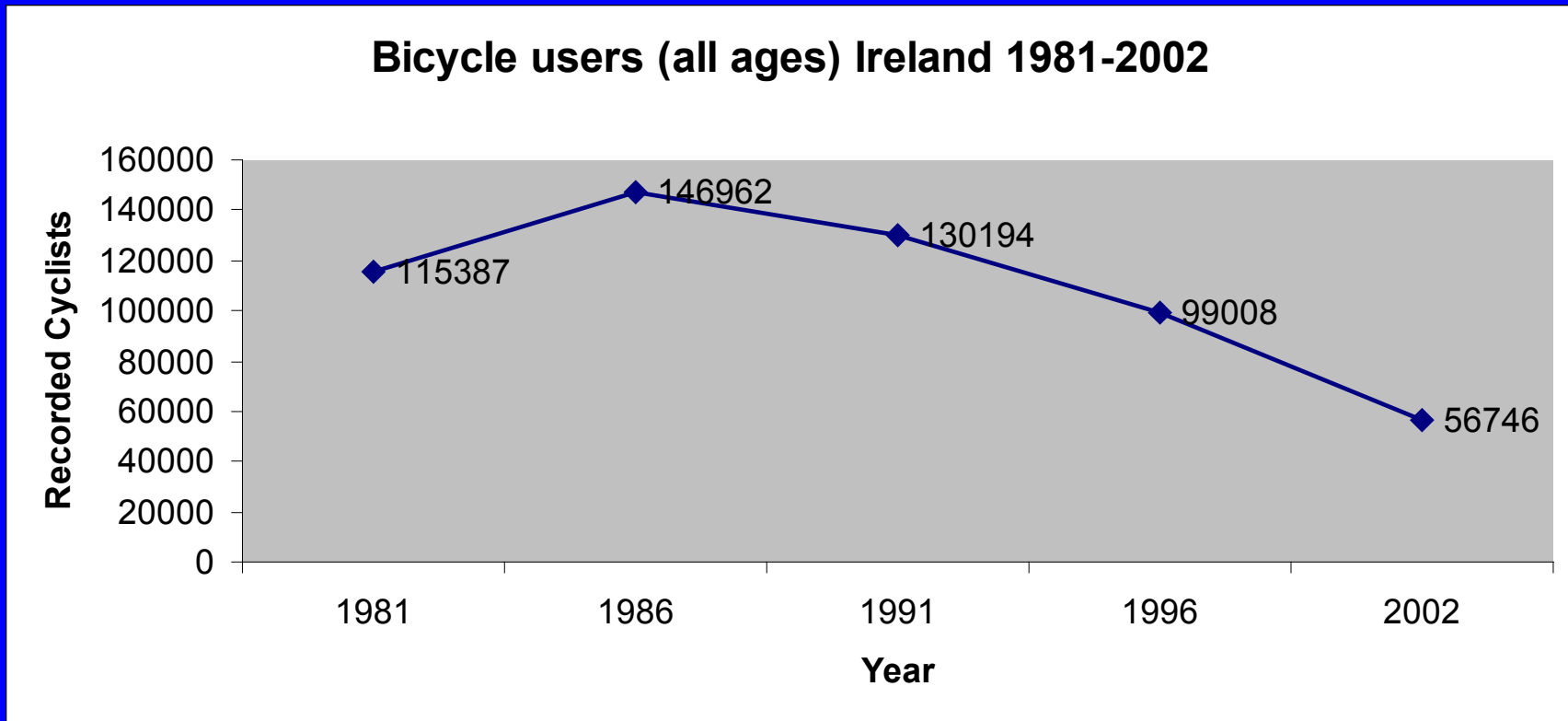
- Between 1986 and 1986 Ireland experiences 27% growth in bicycle use without any government intervention.**
- Some fallback by 1991 but overall growth is maintained**
- Compared with 1981, cycling levels in 1991 higher for all measured groups: Workers, Students and Schoolchildren**

Bicycle use Ireland 1981-2002

Bicycle users by age group Ireland 1981-2002



Bicycle use Ireland 1981-2002



Cycling in Ireland in the 1990's

1990's: Safety problems of segregated "cycle-facilities" confirmed

- **1991 Sweden: "Russian Roulette" turns spotlight of criticism on cycleways, Proceedings of conference 'Sicherheit rund ums Radfahren', Vienna**
- **1994 USA: Risk factors for bicycle-motor vehicle collisions at intersections, A. Wachtel and D. Lewiston, Journal of the Institute of Transportation Engineers**

1990's: Environmental Issues for Irish Cyclists

- Official denial of cyclists as a normal part of traffic.
- Failure to implement standard European speed limit practice.
- Non enforcement of speed limits in urban areas.
- Seatbelt legislation.

Free Speeds of Traffic on Urban Roads

Urban Main Roads (standard limit 30 mph)

- Average free speed of cars is 45 mph.
- 99% of cars exceeded the 30 mph limit
- 72% were travelling at in excess of 40 mph in the 30 mile zone.

Urban Residential Roads

- 68% of cars found to be speeding

1990's: Ireland becomes most dangerous country in Western Europe for child pedestrians

Ireland has highest child death rates in:

- 1997**
- 1998**
- 2001 (Reportedly)**
- 2002 Study finds Irish motorists have only 1:1400 chance of being caught speeding**
- As of 2004, only three fixed speed cameras and 20 fixed speed camera sites (boxes) in Ireland**

1990's: Infrastructural Issues for Irish Cyclists

- Hostile Road Designs
- Hostile Traffic Management Practices
- Hostile Town Planning Practices
- Other Issues i.e. Parking

1990's: Infrastructural Issues for Irish Cyclists

Hostile Road Designs

- Roundabouts
- Excessive Kerb radii
- Excessive visibility envelopes
- Slip roads, merges/diverges
- High speed geometries

Roundabouts

On roundabouts of the design favoured by Irish practice cyclists have an injury accident rate that is 14-16 times that of motorists.

1979: Report raises issue of cyclist safety and roundabouts proposed for Galway

1983: National road design manual cautions about using roundabouts.

1987: Report raises serious reservations about using roundabouts where two wheelers are present

1990's: Infrastructural Issues for Irish Cyclists

Hostile Traffic Management Practices

- One-way streets
- Use of storage lanes at traffic signals
- Left turn only lanes
- Left filters - free left turns
- Adaptive traffic control systems

1990's: Infrastructural Issues for Irish Cyclists

Hostile Town Planning Practices

- US Style layouts in residential areas - access planned only around use of private motor-car.**
- Local authorities favour low density, dispersed and isolated residential developments**

1990's: Infrastructural Issues for Irish Cyclists

Other issues

- Almost total absence of bicycle parking in urban areas**
- Deliberate exclusion of cyclists from public transport interchanges**
- Deliberate exclusion of cyclists from vehicle restricted zones**

1990's State of the Art in Bicycle Planning?

1996: CTC/IHT publish “Cycle Friendly Infrastructure”

Hierarchy of measures

- Traffic reduction
- Traffic calming
- Junction treatments and traffic management
- Reallocation of the carriageway
- Cycle lanes or cycle tracks

Ireland 1997: Getting rid of the cyclists?

- Irish authorities choose to view provision for cyclists as confined almost exclusively to the construction of “cycle routes”
- 1997 Publication of Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) cycle facilities guidelines.

Ireland 1997: Getting rid of the cyclists?

DTO design guidelines

- Fail to address established concerns regarding safety of roadside cycle tracks**
- Endorse designs associated with 12 fold (x12) increases in rate of car/bicycle collisions**
- Key designs - priority is deliberately removed from cyclists and given to motorists.**

Getting rid of the cyclists?

DTO design guidelines

- Assume a design cyclist with speed of 7-12 mph.
- Use of raised kerbs between cycle track and carriageway - found to be dangerous in 1970's
- Protective treatments at junctions omitted or diluted
- Cyclists to be directed between waiting bus and kerb (and passengers) at bus stops.
- Wheel gripper cycle parking

1997 Getting rid of the cyclists?

DTO design guidelines

DTO and Irish Authorities choose not to address wider cyclist-hostile traffic management practices including inter alia,

- Roundabouts,
 - Extensive one-way street systems,
 - Slip roads, filter lanes etc.
 - Hostile road geometries
- The Irish authorities also choose not to adopt the standard European hierarchy of speed limits and choose not to address widespread flouting of speed limits in urban areas.

DTO response to safety concerns of cyclists regarding new “cycle facilities”

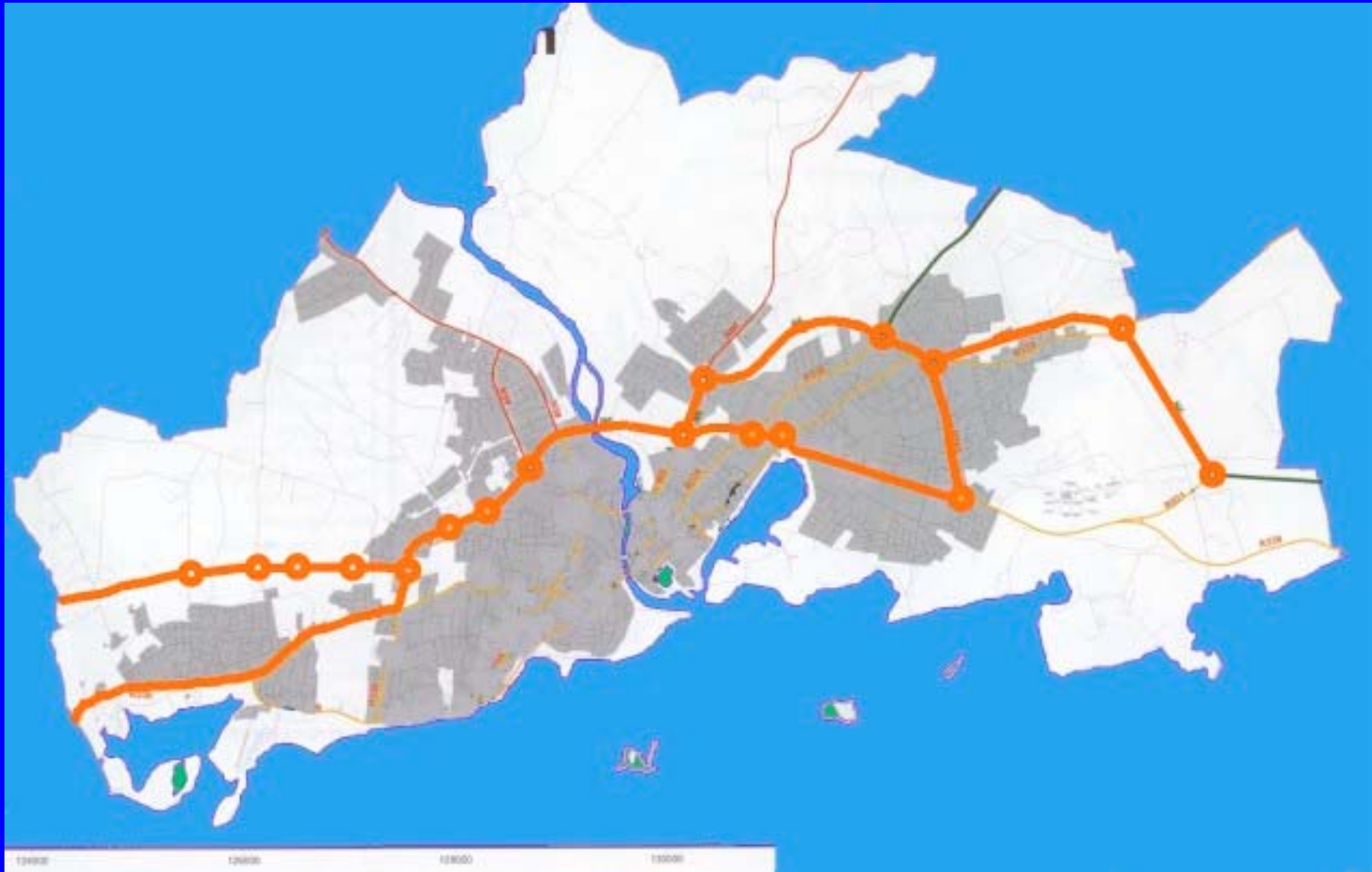
"It would help the cyclist immensely if he/she indicated to drivers behind them that they intended to go straight on across the junction by using the hand signal for going straight ahead".

- DTO neglects to indicate why such an unusual course of action might be recommended.
- Use of such a hand signal in such circumstances has no legal basis in Irish law.

Getting rid of the cyclists? DTO Hand-signal for going ahead



Galway Strategic Cycle Network ?



Presence of 15+ Roundabouts not mentioned by Galway City Council's "Consultants" in proposals for "Cycle network"

Ireland 2002: Getting rid of the cyclists?

- Ireland 2002: Cyclists shall “dismount and become pedestrians” at the junctions

Statement to public hearing by Galway City Council consultant engineer regarding proposed cycle facilities on Seamus Quirke Rd, Galway 2002.

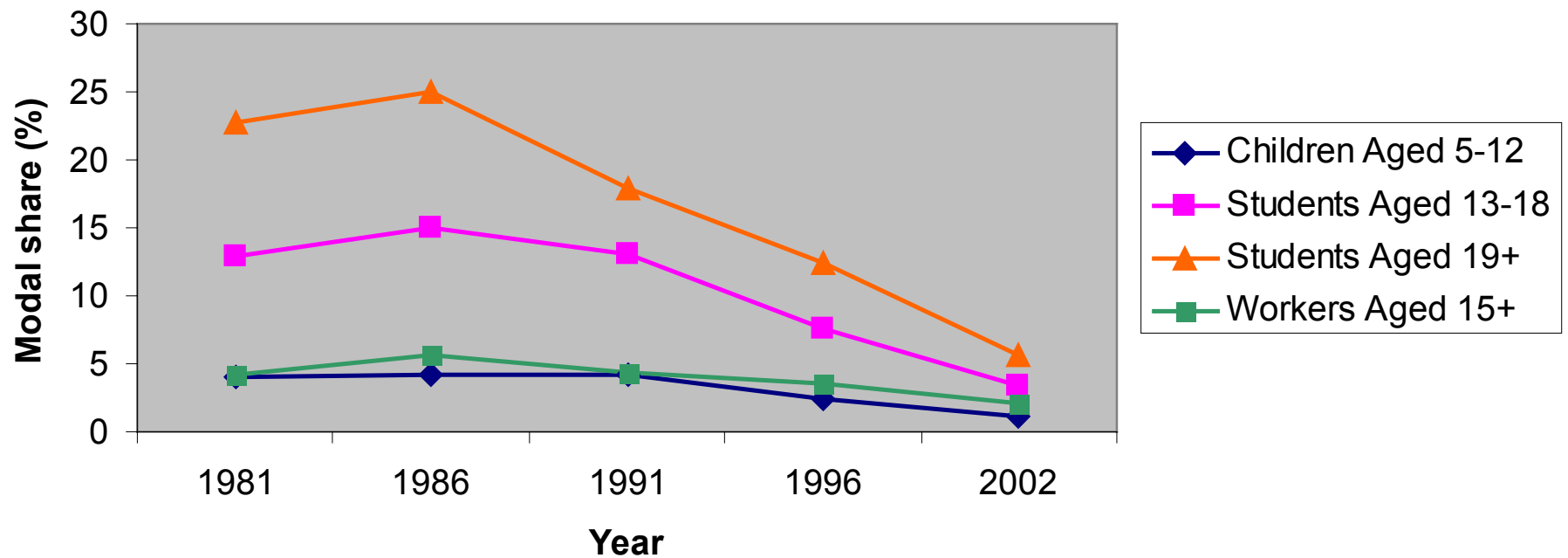
Results of the Dublin Strategic Cycle Network 320km 1996 - 2002

Cycling levels in Dublin: National census data

- Workers down 15%
- Third level students down 44%
- Secondary school students down 40%

Bicycle use: Modal Share

Share of bicycle travel by age group Ireland 1981-2002



Further reading on the web

Cycle tracks for the expansion of motorised traffic

http://www.eirbyte.com/gcc/info/vbriese_abstract.html

On the decline of a mass means of transport

http://www.eirbyte.com/gcc/info/bhorn_abstract.html

The 1935 mass cyclists demonstrations

<http://www.thebikezone.org.uk/thebikezone/thinkingcyclist/1935.html>

Getting rid of the Cyclists: Frank Urry and the 1938 DoT Advisory Committee

<http://www.bikereader.com/BikeReader/contributors/parker/gettingrid.html>

Information sheets on Irish junction design practice, one-way streets, road narrowings, roundabouts etc.

<http://www.eirbyte.com/gcc/info/index.html>

Overview and detailed review of the DTO "Cycle Facilities Design Manual"

<http://www.eirbyte.com/gcc/news2.html#story1>

End