VSB VERKFRÆÐISTOFA

MINNISBLAÐ

Verkheiti:	Hjólanetsgreining fyrir Kársnes	*Verknúmer:*	25224
Höfundar:	Thijs Kreukels	*dags.:*	27.11.2025

1 Introduction and Purpose

This memo has been prepared on behalf of Útivistarsamtök Kársness, which expressed the need to explore opportunities to improve the local cycling network within Kársnes. The purpose of this document is not to present a detailed engineering design, but rather to:

- motivate the need for a safe and comfortable cycling network in Kársnes,
- identify which streets are most suitable for local cycling connections,
- assess what types of cycling infrastructure (blönduð umferð, hjólareinar, hjólastígar) could be appropriate
- review planning context, safety data, and spatial conditions

This memo operates at a conceptual and exploratory level. Further studies, including parking use, technical feasibility, alignment design, cost estimation and stakeholder engagement, will be required before any implementation decisions can be made.

2 Planning Context: Aðalskipulag Kópavogs 2019–2040

The development of a strengthened local cycling network in Kársnes is fully aligned with the strategic planning framework set out in Aðalskipulag Kópavogs 2019–2040[1].

The Aðalskipulag emphasises:

- strengthening sustainable mobility,
- reducing car dependence,
- ensuring safe and direct walking and cycling links between homes, schools, services and public transport,
- and supporting Borgarlína connections.

Kársnes is designated as a key development area, with approx. 1,390 new dwellings planned (approx. 3,400–3,500 new residents). This growth, along with increased density, increased services, and changing travel patterns, reinforces the need for a safe, well-connected and accessible cycling system.The introduction of Borgarlína, with three future stations planned in Kársnes and including the Fossvogsbrú, further boosts Kársnes' role as a mobility node. A local cycling network must therefore connect effectively with this regional infrastructure.

[1] Aðalskipulag Kópavogs 2019–2040 – stefnur og markmið um sjálfbærar samgöngur.

3 Cycling Safety Analysis (2020–2025)

Accident data from Samgöngustofa[2] covering the years 2020–2025 shows that cycling safety in Kársnes requires attention. During this five-year period, 21 bicycle-related accidents were recorded. Of these, six resulted in serious injuries (alvarleg slys), typically occurring on streets with higher speeds or where cyclists were required to mix with motor traffic. A further seven incidents involved minor injuries (slys með litlum meiðslum), while eight cases were classified as non-injury collisions (óhapp án meiðsla)

Although many incidents did not involve injuries, they still indicate that cycling conditions in Kársnes are not fully safe or predictable and that improvements are needed to support safer day-to-day cycling.

The numbers below (Tafla 3-1) underlines the need for a safer, better-structured local cycling network.

Tafla 3-1 Number of incidents in Kársness[i]

	Number of incidents
Alvarleg slys	6
Slys með litlum meiðslum	7
Óhapp án meiðsla	8
Total	**21**

4 Review of Planned Cycling Projects

Two major cycling projects are currently underway around Kársnes, both of which primarily strengthen regional cycling connections rather than supporting everyday mobility within the neighbourhood itself.

On the southern side of Kársnes, the suggested coastal route (Skipulagsgátt 2025/1514[3]) will upgrade the coastal path and link with the future Fossvogsbrú, mainly improving the route for through-traffic and recreational cycling. On the eastern side, the upgraded stofnstígur along Kópavogsháls (Skipulagsgátt 2025/583[4]) will form a high-standard route parallel to Hafnarfjarðarvegur. Despite their value, both projects are situated along the outskirts of Kársnes and provide limited connection to local streets, schools and services.

As a result, they do not meet the objectives of Aðalskipulag, which emphasises strong, safe and direct cycling links within neighbourhoods as mentioned in chapter 2. Therefore, additional investments within Kársnes are needed to support safe and convenient everyday cycling.

[2] Samgöngustofa Slysakort - https://island.is/slysakort

[3] https://skipulagsgatt.is/issues/2025/1514

[4] https://skipulagsgatt.is/issues/2024/583

5 Need for a Local Cycling Network

When the strategic goals of Aðalskipulag Kópavogs 2019–2040, such as strengthening sustainable mobility, improving safety, and ensuring direct connections between homes, schools, services and public transport, are viewed alongside the planning context of Kársnes, a clear need for a local cycling network emerges. The area is expected to grow substantially, with new housing, more residents, expanding services and the future arrival of Borgarlína, all of which will increase local travel demand and place greater pressure on internal streets.

At the same time, the accident analysis reveals several conflict points where cyclists already face challenges, and the ongoing projects around the peninsula primarily serve regional travel rather than everyday mobility within the neighbourhood. Taken together, these factors show that Kársnes currently lacks a safe, well-connected and practical cycling network to support daily trips for residents of all ages.

For these reasons, the development of a safe, coherent and comfortable local cycling network is essential. Such a network should be easy to understand, direct, and aligned with everyday destinations, enabling residents of all ages to cycle safely and confidently.

6 Potential Corridors for a Local Network

Kársnes has a network of narrow residential streets, alleyways and one-way sections, most of which offer neither the width nor the clarity needed for strategic cycling routes. Within this urban structure, three streets stand out as the most logical route for a local bicycle network: Kársnessbraut, Kópavogsbraut and Urðarbraut (see mynd 1).

These streets offer more space than the surrounding roads and connect key destinations. Together, they have the potential to form a clear “inner ring” for cycling through Kársnes.

Kópavogsbraut directly serves one of the primary school buildings, a daycare and links with the improving north–south cycling corridor along Hafnarfjarðarvegur. Urðarbraut is also connected with one of the two school buildings, local shops at Hofgerði, the swimming pool and the southern route along the coast. Kársnessbraut, meanwhile, plays a crucial east–west role and carries the highest volumes of traffic entering and exiting Kársnes and is in direct connection with both Kópavogsbraut and Urðarbraut.

These aspects position the three streets as the most logical of a future local cycling network.

Current Conditions on Key Streets

Although all these three streets currently function mainly as 30 km/h zones, their widths, traffic compositions, and roadside conditions vary significantly, and these differences directly influence which solutions are feasible.

Kársnessbraut is the widest of the three, with sections ranging from 7 to 10,5 metres. It accommodates the highest traffic volumes and speeds, given its role as a primary access road for Kársnes. The eastern part contains lightly used parallel parking, while the western part also includes perpendicular parking bays and numerous driveways.

Kópavogsbraut is narrower, between 6,5 and 7,5 metres, and is a more residential street, with many driveways and sections of parallel parking. Although speeds are generally lower, the number of access points and parking movements creates considerable interaction between cyclists and cars.

Urðarbraut has a width of roughly 7–7,5 metres and no on-street parking, making it different among these three corridors. It functions as a key north–south route with connections to several side streets. The absence of parking frees up more flexibility for reallocating space, including the option to convert green verge areas into dedicated cycling infrastructure if needed.

Mynd 1 Key corridors identified for a potential local cycling network in Kársnes

7 Design Considerations for Selecting Infrastructure Types

National design guidelines[5] outline the principles for choosing appropriate cycling facilities. The choice depends on factors such as traffic volume, speed, street function and adjacent land uses such as schools and playgrounds.

- Mixed traffic is appropriate only on low-volume, low-speed streets where cyclists can comfortably share the roadway. This is not the case on any of the three key corridors.
- Hjólarein require sufficient carriageway width and safe clearance from parked cars. Parking next to a hjólarein is discouraged. If parking is permitted, it should only be combined with a buffer strip.
- Protected cycle tracks, either one-way or two-way, offer the highest level of safety and comfort, especially in environments with schools, heavy turning movements or frequent driveways. They also require the most space.

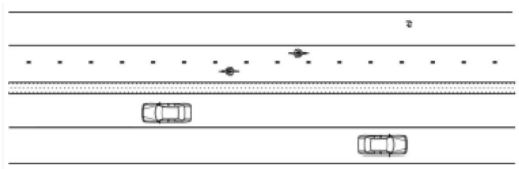
These three principles form the basis for recommendations for each corridor.

[5] Hönnunarleiðbeiningar fyrir hjólreiðar, 2019

8 Recommended Infrastructure per Corridor

Kársnessbraut

The eastern section of Kársnessbraut has enough space to accommodate a two-way protected cycle track on the north side. This provides a direct continuation of the existing cycle path and links seamlessly to the regional north–south route along Hafnarfjarðarvegur. It also creates a safe, welcoming entrance to Kársnes and can integrate with future cycling infrastructure planned along Vesturvör.



Mynd 2 Tvístefnu hjólastígur norðan við Kársnesbraut

Further west, where the street narrows, there is still considerable potential for cycling infrastructure if the parallel parking is reorganised or removed. In that case, the corridor could support several types of solutions, including hjólareinar, a one-way protected cycle track (einstefna hjólastígur) or even a two-way protected cycle track (tvístefna hjólastígur) depending on the chosen layout.

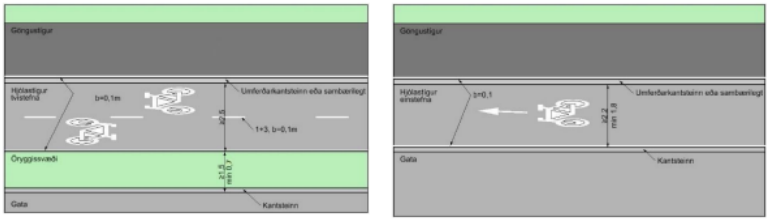
Kópavogsbraut

Kópavogsbraut also presents opportunities for cycling improvements, primarly if parallel parking can be reorganised or reduced. In that case, both hjólareinar and either a one-way or two-way protected cycle track (einstefna eða tvístefna hjólastígur) would be technically feasible.

Because the street has many driveways, further design work would be needed to ensure a safe design. With careful planning, Kópavogsbraut could become an important east–west link that supports school travel and connects directly to the improving north–south cycling corridor.

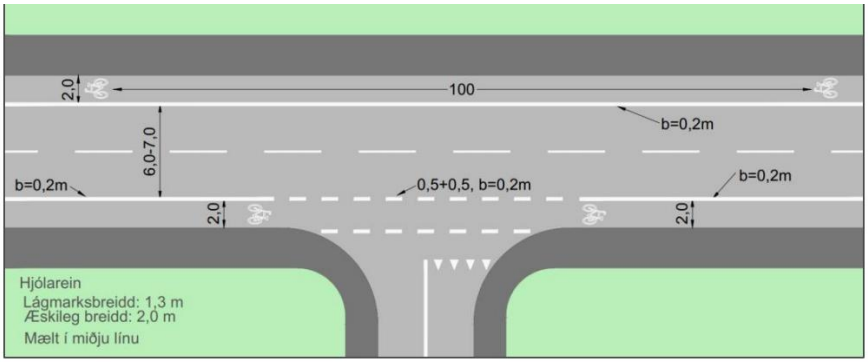
Urðarbraut

The absence of on-street parking, the limited number of driveways, and the presence of a green verge create favourable conditions for reallocating space. This makes it possible to design either a one-way or two-way protected cycle track, creating a safe and continuous north–south route that links key destinations such as schools, playgrounds, the swimming pool, local shops and the southern regional route.



Mynd 3 Tvístefnu og einstefnu hjólastígur

A hjólarein would also be a possible solution on Urðarbraut. However, this would also require a redesign of the street, as the current carriageway does not provide the necessary width to implement a standard hjólarein in accordance with guidelines (see mynd 4).



Mynd 4 Hjólarein

9 Conclusion

Kársnes is undergoing a period of significant development and transformation. With population growth, new housing, expanding services and the future arrival of Borgarlína, the need for a safe and coherent local cycling network is clearer than ever. The accident analysis reinforces this, showing multiple conflict points that affect cyclists.

While new regional connections are being developed or proposed around Kársnes, these do not directly meet the internal mobility needs of residents. A local cycling network, connecting homes, schools, services and public transport, is therefore essential.

This memo identifies Kársnessbraut, Kópavogsbraut and Urðarbraut as the most logical and promising corridors for a future local cycling network within Kársnes. While preliminary recommendations have been outlined for each street, further investigation is required before a clear and final proposal can be developed. In particular, several of the potential solutions depend on spatial constraints, the availability of roadway width, and the possibility of reallocating parking or verge space.

To determine which variants are truly feasible, the next steps should include:

- detailed parking utilisation studies,
- technical feasibility assessments,
- alignment and cross-section development,
- community engagement,

The findings presented here offer a strategic foundation for Útivistarsamtök Kársness and Kópavogsbær to advance toward a safer, better-connected and more sustainable mobility future for Kársnes.