



**Submission on
BusConnects Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign
December 2019**



Introduction

Celbridge Community Council was established as a voluntary community group in 1975 and has for almost forty-five years been actively involved in many aspects of community life in Celbridge. Our goal is to promote and improve community life and to influence in a positive way the physical development of the area for the benefit of all those who live and work there. As a voluntary group and representative voice for the community, Celbridge Community Council welcomes this opportunity to make a submission as part of the public consultation on the BusConnects Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign.

Celbridge Community Council's membership spans a diverse cross-section of the population and, since the 2017 announcement of BusConnects, has actively engaged with members of the community to understand their public transport needs. We hosted an information evening and workshop for the community on 28th November 2019¹ and are using outputs from this (see Appendix A) in addition to insights acquired over the last number of years to inform our feedback to the NTA.

Celbridge Community Council is a strong advocate for sustainable transport and welcomes any enhancements to public transport provision for our town. We, along with many in the community, are delighted that the NTA took on board our concerns relating to last year's proposals for radial services; these concerns would have seen the routing of all buses between Celbridge and Dublin through Leixlip and the abolition of express bus services. By responding as it has, the NTA's new proposals resolve the burning issues that large numbers of Dublin Bus passengers had with last year's proposals. Some issues remain for a small number of existing Dublin Bus passengers but the real measure of the success of the BusConnects Network Redesign will come from the number of new passengers who can use the bus services for their transport needs. Ireland's targets for reducing carbon dioxide emissions will not be easy to achieve. As a town situated in the Dublin Metropolitan Area, Celbridge has a disproportionately high rate of car dependency and this has knock-on effects on traffic congestion, safety of pedestrians and cyclists and on drivers' stress levels.

In this submission, Celbridge Community Council urges the NTA to consider seriously the needs of not just the thousands who travel to Dublin city and suburbs daily from Celbridge but also those who travel to other locations for a myriad of purposes such as medical appointments, shopping, entertainment, socialising and visiting friends or family. Celbridge Community Council is calling on the NTA to identify opportunities and to translate these opportunities into bus services to facilitate journeys to useful destinations.

¹ See narrated slides and workshop outputs @ <https://youtu.be/qfdLRPrUyJA>

Assessment of Network Redesign Proposals

Celbridge Community Council recognises the value of the network redesign for the Dublin area and welcomes many aspects of it including the connectivity to previously unserved areas of North Kildare and West Dublin (259 and W8) and the continuation of the level of service on which current 67 and 67X users travelling between Celbridge and Dublin rely.

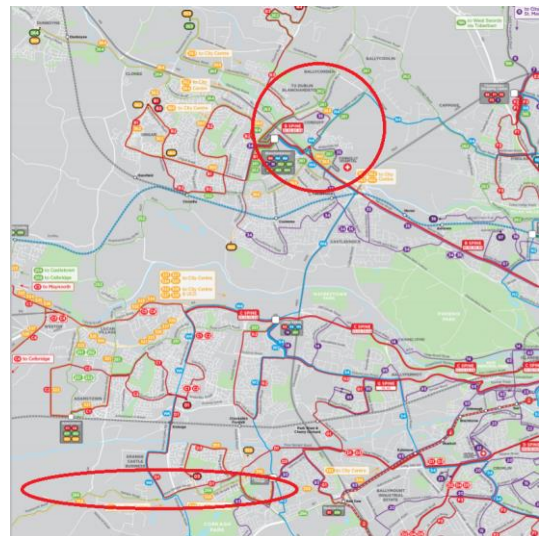
Celbridge Community Council commends the NTA for all the positives but equally, recognises the limitations of the interchange experience that Celbridge, at the furthest reaches of the Dublin Bus network, can expect. An infrequent radial service to and from Celbridge (C4) coupled with interchange opportunities to similarly infrequent routes (259, W8, W4, C1, C2) or even more infrequent routes (252, 256, 356, etc.) mean that the theoretically useful interchanges in the proposed network may be impracticable. Interchanges between two buses that run at 30-minute frequencies are likely to result in unacceptably long average interchange times so the experience will be in marked contrast to the experience that those interchanging between more frequent routes closer to the city centre will enjoy. The network would need higher frequency on routes to address these limitations.

Development plans for Celbridge are for aggressive growth as part of the Greater Dublin Area Metropolitan Region (population to grow from 21,000 to over 30,000 in the next decade), yet public transport connectivity and commute times are not reflective of what would be expected in a metropolitan area. Given how Celbridge's rate of dependency on cars for journeys to Dublin sits at almost 70%, Celbridge Community Council would like those who make journeys to and from Celbridge to have a solid public transport alternative to encouraging a significant modal shift. Unfortunately, while the network itself may theoretically have a lot of potential, the proposed level of service on the routes falls far short of being the game changer that people travelling to and from Celbridge need. The proposed level of service falls far short of significantly expanding the ability of residents of Celbridge to get to more places, sooner by public transport.

In light of connections to Maynooth and Leixlip already being proposed and in the spirit of connecting places that are closer together, Celbridge Community Council feels that Blanchardstown and Nangor Road/ Clondalkin stand out as destinations to which better connections to/ from Celbridge should be provided. These locations could be more widely considered for employment / study opportunities if they were more easily accessible on public transport.

Frequency of bus routes in suburban areas is typically lower so, where increased frequency cannot be justified, the alternative is to minimise interchanges for passengers travelling on the peripheries through the provision of more direct routes. Unless there are direct routes or there is sufficient frequency on interchange routes, public transport will not be viable.

There is unlikely to be another opportunity like the BusConnects Network Redesign public consultation for many years to come so it is extremely important that the views expressed in this public consultation feed into something constructive.





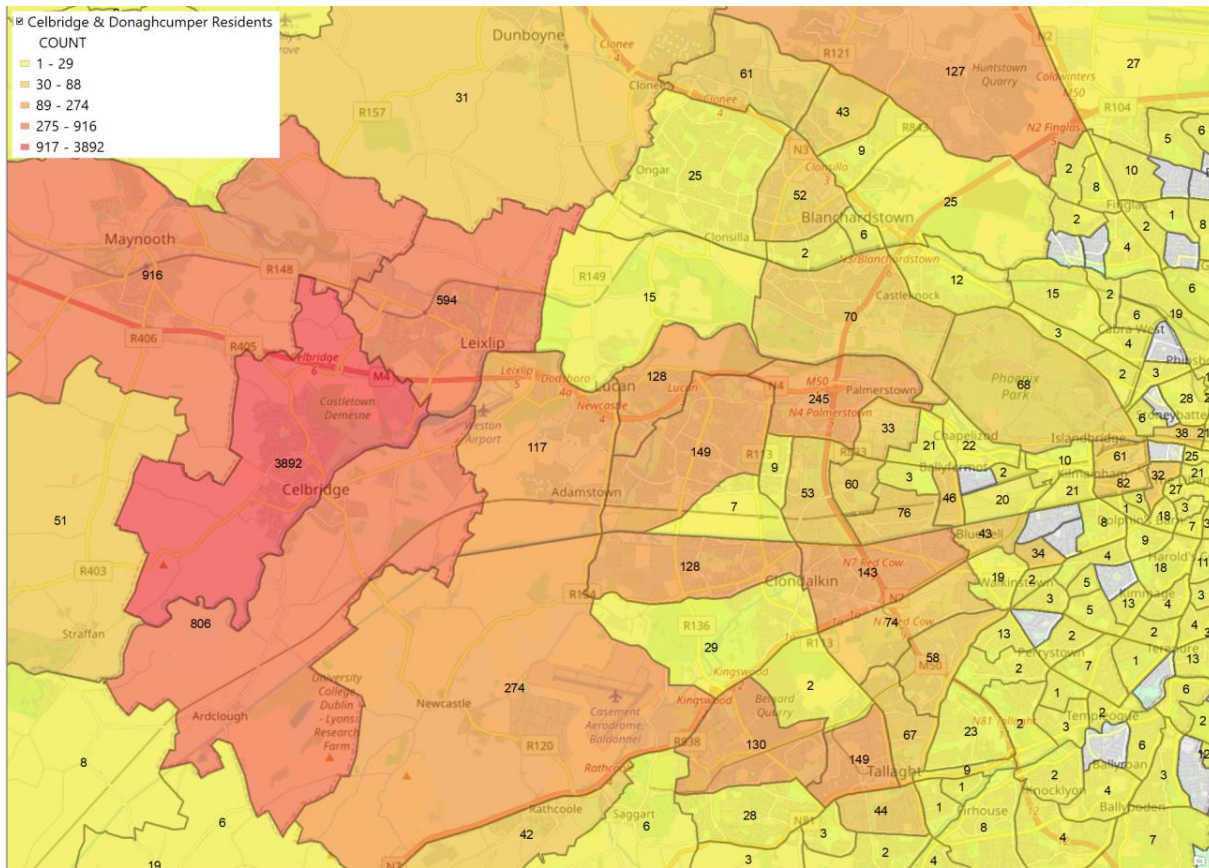
Positives

Celbridge Community Council is pleased that

- the Dublin bound C4 will no longer detour through Leixlip – the C4 replaces the 67 but will be faster as it will take the Chapelizod Bypass
- the 327 & 328 express bus services to/ from UCD will replace the 67X at peak times and, like the 67X, these will bypass both Lucan and Chapelizod
- there will be scheduled bus services to Hazelhatch train station from both
 - the Maynooth Road (W8) and
 - the Aghard's, Shackleton and Clane Roads (259)
- the W8 Maynooth–Tallaght orbital route will open up many opportunities by serving
 - Newcastle (including Greenogue and Aerodrome Business Parks)
 - Saggart passing close to the Red Luas line
 - Citywest
 - Tallaght – employment destinations, TU Dublin campus, Tallaght Hospital, Tallaght Leisure Centre, transport interchange, etc.
- The network ***theoretically*** has scope for interchange with other bus services (there's a but here though!)
- the 259 will connect Celbridge with our nearest neighbour Leixlip
- there will be an increase in public transport options for secondary school students with
 - the local 259 bus service from Hazelhatch to Leixlip passing close to all three secondary schools
 - both the C4 and W8 routes serving the Salesian College and Celbridge Community School
- the new 90 minute fare will facilitate interchange between bus, Luas and rail without financial penalty

Missed Opportunities

The following map of Census 2016 employment and study destinations for people from the Celbridge and Donaghcumper Electoral Districts highlights desire lines to Blanchardstown, North West Dublin and Clondalkin that the BusConnects Network Redesign proposals do not easily meet. The COUNT on each Electoral District is the number of residents from Celbridge and Donaghcumper Electoral Districts who travel to it.



Electoral District POWSCAR Destinations for residents of Celbridge and Donaghcumper Electoral Districts

Built from CSO's 2016 Commuting Data File²

Guided by the above map and by the overarching importance of reducing car dependency in light of the Climate Emergency and traffic congestion both in our town and beyond it (N4, etc.), Celbridge Community Council is

- Concerned about the 30-minute frequency of the 259 local bus route as the average time needed to interchange with the train at Hazelhatch or with other buses (C4, W8) would be too long

Proposal:

- increase the frequency on the 259 to incentivise usage of the train and interchange with other buses, particularly at peak times
 - drop-offs at Hazelhatch train station should be **every 15 minutes** between 06:20 and 09:20
 - Pickups from Hazelhatch train station by the 259 local bus should be **every 15 minutes** between 16:45 and 19:35 and the bus should wait for slightly delayed trains to arrive where possible

² https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/census/census2016/powscar/Commuting_data.zip



- Concerned that the Maynooth-bound W8 will have insufficient capacity in the mornings from Celbridge – this concern arises from the fact that the Maynooth-bound 67 bus experiences capacity problems for a few weeks every autumn once demand from secondary school and university students resumes until Dublin Bus supplements the service

Proposal:

- run the W8 at a higher frequency during peak times or supplement with a peak-only service between Newcastle and Maynooth (possibly via west Celbridge)
- Disappointed that there are no proposals to supplement the radial C4 bus service in order to get the people of Celbridge to the start of the fast, frequent bus service on the C-spine (Woodies Lucan-Ringsend) or better still, as far as the major interchange at Liffey Valley. There are no additional local services proposed and no increased frequency on the C4 proposed. In 2017, on seeing the BusConnects suggestions for a fast spine with high frequency to Woodies Lucan and a bus Park and Ride at Junction 5 on the N4, Celbridge Community Council felt that the main challenge would be getting as many as possible to the fast spine without streams of single occupancy cars congesting the roads. Since the local 259 and orbital W8 routes intersect the C3 and C4 radials from Dublin too far out from the C-spine, they will not be of assistance for feeding residents of Celbridge to and from the higher capacity/ frequency services on the spine.

Proposal:

- Increase frequency of the C4 or consider supplementary local/ secondary radial routes between Liffey Valley and North Kildare that give residents of North Kildare an alternative to waiting almost 30 minutes for the next bus to their destination when interchanging
- Disappointed that no timeframes have been set for the rollout of the new 259 and W8 services

Proposal:

- Expedite rollout of the 259 and W8 services as soon as possible
- Disappointed that the proposed number of 327 & 328 express buses reflects the pre-25th November 2019 (inadequate) level of 67X service – i.e.
 - 5 x 327 morning services (Aghards Road & Clane Road)
 - 4 x 328 morning services (Main St & Maynooth Road)
 - 4 x 327 evening services (Aghards Road & Clane Road)
 - 4 x 328 evening services (Main St & Maynooth Road)rather than **at least** the higher level of service that was deployed on 25th November 2019 – i.e.
 - 6 x 327 morning services (Aghards Road & Clane Road)
 - 5 x 328 morning services (Main St & Maynooth Road)
 - 5 x 327 evening services (Aghards Road & Clane Road)
 - 5 x 328 evening services (Main St & Maynooth Road)

Proposals:

- schedule peak-time services before 07:00 (to at least match the new morning services since 25th November 2019 which leave at 06:40 and 06:50 though more early services may be needed)
- schedule peak-time services later in the evening (to at least match the new evening services since 25th November 2019 leave from Merrion Square at 17:50 and 18:00 though a later bus from UCD leaving at, for example, 17:45 would be beneficial and later ones from the city centre may also be needed)
- increase the level of peak-time services beyond what meets current demand in tandem with a publicity campaign to encourage a modal shift away from private car usage towards a frequent service with sufficient capacity to be considered reliable

- Disappointed that the local 259 bus route does not cater for the most desired destinations of the residents of Celbridge - though a welcome connection to Hazelhatch and to Leixlip town centre, the 259 bus does not connect our residents to the places that Celbridge residents need to get to in Leixlip, for example
 - Intel
 - Leixlip Louisa Bridge train station (this is an important “springboard” for onward travel to all sorts of destinations that are not easily accessible from Celbridge directly. Many from Celbridge use this station for rail travel already. Leixlip Confey train station is not a suitable substitute for Louisa Bridge train station, as it would take the bus too long to get there due to congestion in Leixlip town centre!
 - Liffey Business Park (HP)
 - Coláiste Chiaráin

Proposals:

- reroute the 259 to serve Intel, Leixlip Amenities and Louisa Bridge (in conjunction with rerouting the C3 along the route of the current 66E to serve the needs of the Gleneaston/Green Lane area of Leixlip in accordance with the below proposal from the **Strategic Transport Assessment** prepared by AECOM for Kildare County Council to accompany the **Leixlip Local Area Plan**³ (see excerpt below). While this would not be the most direct route and it would add a small number of additional minutes to the C3 journey time, residents of both Maynooth and the Leixlip Louisa Bridge areas have the choice of using rail for a fast route to the city so this trade-off may be well worth it in order to serve the sizeable and growing population of the Gleneaston area.

2.3.2 Bus Strategy

The bus strategy MCA identified three bus options which should be progressed (Figure 2.4):

- **Option 1:** Bus priority (rush-call) for town centre signalised junction (R148 / R149)
- **Option 2:** Bus gates on both approaches to Cope Bridge prior to the construction of a new two-way bridge, seeking to advance stop lines as far forward as practical to achieve improved signalised operation.
- **Option 3:** Merge 66e and 66 bus services and rerouting via Green Lane (prior to BusConnects implementation) to provide a commutable public transport service on Green Lane.

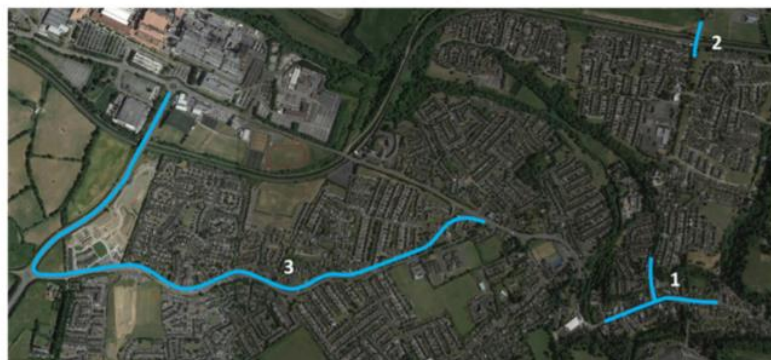


Figure 2.4 – Location of bus options

Rerouting the 66 via Green Lane would expand the catchment for frequent public transport services to this rapidly developing area. This will be essential to reducing car dependency as residents along Green Lane do not currently have a weekend or all-day bus service. As this area is furthest from the town centre for active modes, and has few local services, the provision of a frequent bus route is essential to provide a viable sustainable travel alternative to the private car for these residents.

Prepared for: Kildare County Council

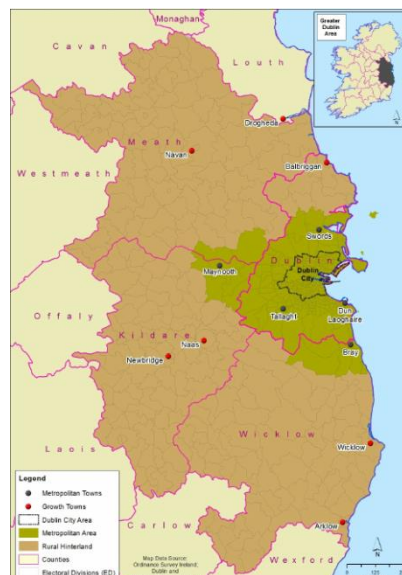
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³ <http://www.kildare.ie/CountyCouncil/Planning/DevelopmentPlans/LocalAreaPlans/LeixlipLocalAreaPlan2020-2026/20190503%20%20Leixlip%20STA%20%20Non%20Technical%20Summary%202020%20%202026.pdf>

- extend the 258 local route from Liffey Business Park (HP) to South Celbridge (Dublin Road, Ardclough Road, Hazelhatch Park, Hazelhatch Road) and Hazelhatch
- Disappointed that the 90 minute fare will not include Bus Éireann 120/123 between Celbridge and Dublin (soon to be operated by GoAhead) or TFI 139 to TU Dublin campus in Blanchardstown from Maynooth/Leixlip due, we believe, to differing fare structures on commuter buses

Proposals:

- Prioritise the passenger experience and focus on what it would take to entice more use of public transport then find a way to agree an attractive capped fare for passengers who must use a commuter bus for travel within the Dublin Metropolitan Area (boarding and alighting in the DMA)
- The 90 minute fare should be extended to include all public transport services that operate within the Metropolitan part of the Greater Dublin Area as shown in the green area of the following map⁴:



- Disappointed that there is no proposed bus service from the western side of Celbridge to Maynooth as the time needed to walk to the W8 or to interchange between the 259 and W8 will not encourage a modal shift to public transport

Proposal:

- provide a local service linking the west of Celbridge with Maynooth –a service that runs at peak-times may be enough
- Disappointed that it will not be easier for residents of Celbridge to get to key destinations in the Blanchardstown area such as TU Dublin campus, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, National Aquatic Centre, Ballycoolin, etc. by public transport – these destinations would only be possible under the proposals by taking three or four buses most of which operate at 30 minute frequencies or worse, for example
 - (259 +) C4 + W4 + 261/262/35
 - or
 - (259 +) C4 + 252 + 261/262/35

⁴ https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Greater-Dublin-Area-metropolitan-and-hinterland-areas_fig3_267358237



Proposal:

- introduce a local or western orbital that connects Celbridge with Blanchardstown or at the very least, prioritise making journeys to key destinations in Blanchardstown (TU Dublin Campus, NAC, Ballycoolin, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, etc.) possible from Celbridge on fewer than 3 buses
 - consider changes to the 252 route to have it commence in Celbridge
 - consider replacing one 261 per hour with a 252 that incorporates the 261 “loop”
 - improve frequencies to reduce time wasted interchanging between infrequent routes
- Disappointed that the proposed number of 356 services and the frequency of 256 services are unlikely to incentivise a modal shift through leveraging interchange opportunities at Newcastle. The 356 and the 256 serve a number of interesting destinations (we noted above that the network **theoretically** has scope for interchange with other bus services but this is an example where, on paper, interchange looks possible but the reality would not make it practicable due to insufficient services). There would only be one 356 in the mornings and one in the evenings and the frequency of the 256 would only be every 60 minutes.

Proposal:

- provide additional 356 services at peak-times to cater for not just Newcastle residents but also passengers who would interchange to it from the W8
- increase the frequency of the all-day 256 local service to cater not just for Newcastle residents but also for passengers who might interchange to it from the W8
- pay attention to interchange opportunities at Newcastle when scheduling W8, 256 and 356 services to minimise waiting times

Measuring Success

There does not appear to be anything in the network redesign report regarding how to measure the success of the project. There are references to usefulness measurements, that is, the useful destinations that populations will be able to access. While this is an essential measure for designers of the bus network, those with responsibility for rolling out the changes need defined targets. With targets in place, it is more likely that those responsible will engage in innovative approaches and publicity campaigns to ensure that the network’s potential is maximised. Targets might relate to increases in passenger numbers, reduction in car use, reductions in carbon dioxide emissions, etc.

Ireland has a target of at least an 80% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions (compared to 1990 figures) by 2050. Unfortunately, emissions from the transport sector in Ireland have increased dramatically since 1990 so even getting back to 1990 levels will be a struggle. In light of the needs to reduce drastically emissions from the transport sector, the failure to articulate success factors and how they will be measured was perceived by attendees at our workshop as a significant shortcoming of the BusConnects network redesign proposals.



Next Steps

Celbridge Community Council wishes to thank members of the National Transport Authority who engaged constructively with us during the consultation period to answer a number of our queries.

With our local knowledge of and connections in the Celbridge area, we feel that the members of Celbridge Community Council could bring many local insights to the table during deeper analysis of the public transport needs of North Kildare. Should you wish to involve us as stakeholders in co-creative activities to discover, define, develop and/ or prototype ideas now or in the future, please email info@celbridgecommunitycouncil.ie and we would be delighted to engage.



Appendix A – Outputs from Workshop 28/11/2019

Below are the outputs from the workshop we held with members of the community on 28th November 2019.

Analysis of Radial Services on the C-Spine

What is good?	What is bad?
Reliable departure times as C4 bus terminus in Celbridge	Since the C4 would terminate in Celbridge, residents of Dublin Road/ Ballyoulster will need to get 2 buses to get to Maynooth (C4&W8 or C4&C3)
C4 will bypass Chapelizod	C4 still goes through Lucan village – can take 10-15+ minutes longer than the Lucan Bypass
C4 routing via Weston (far better than 2018 proposed routing with detour through Leixlip)	
Terminus of C4 in Ringsend is well located for access to Grand Canal Dock Area / Bord Gais Energy Theatre and The Point	
327 & 328 will bypass Lucan & Chapelizod (like current 67X)	Proposed 327 & 328 level of service mirrors old (pre-25/11/2019) level of 67X service rather than current enhanced level of service
Existing level of service and frequency on 67 retained	
Separate numbering for 327 & 328 will give clarity regarding Celbridge routing of PM peak services	

Suggestions for Improvements – Radial Services

Serve Lucan by a supplementary local bus service that terminates at Liffey Valley or a secondary radial route (rather than routing the C4 through Lucan)
327 & 328 express bus services should at least match the level of service in operation at cutover time
Start the 327 & 328 peak-time services earlier in the mornings
Run 327 & 328 peak-time services a little after 8am in the mornings
Run 327 & 328 peak-time services later in the evenings
Increase frequency of 256 local service and the number of 356 peak-time services to facilitate interchange at Newcastle (for passengers destined for Nangor Road, etc.)
Route C3 via Gleneaston/ Green Lane to serve more population



Analysis of Proposed Orbital & Local Services

What is good?	What is bad?
W8 & 259 scheduled connections to Hazelhatch	30 minute frequency of W8 & 259 to Hazelhatch at peak-times may deter modal shift to rail as average time to interchange may be too long
W8 connects Celbridge to opportunities for employment (Greenogue, Citywest, Maynooth, Tallaght, etc.), study (MU, TU Dublin campus) and other useful destinations (Tallaght hospital, The Square, etc.)	30 minute frequency of W8 to Maynooth is unlikely to provide sufficient capacity in the mornings and at school finishing time for residents of Celbridge - serves Salesian College, Celbridge Community School, Maynooth Education Campus (comprising MPP and MCC), MU, etc.
W8 connects Celbridge to opportunities for interchange to other transport services (Newcastle, Luas at Saggart, Tallaght, etc.)	Proposed frequencies of 256 and 356 do not cater for passengers interchanging from W8 at Newcastle
259 connection between Celbridge and Leixlip has potential to reduce car dependency	259 does not serve Louisa Bridge station
259 would serve Leixlip GAA on Green Lane, Leixlip town centre and Confey	259 does not serve Intel or Leixlip Amenities

Suggestions for Improvements – Orbital, Local & Rail Services

Introduce the 259 & W8 routes as soon as possible
Improve frequency & reliability of proposed services to provide a realistic alternative to cars
Increase frequency on W8 at peak-times and/ or supplement at least the Celbridge-Maynooth leg with a peak-only local service
Introduce local route connecting West Celbridge with Maynooth (at least at peak-times)
Prioritise serving destinations in Leixlip that residents of Celbridge most need to get to - route 259 via Intel, Leixlip Amenities & Louisa Bridge (in tandem with routing C3 via Gleneaston/ Green Lane to serve needs of that part of Leixlip)
Extend 258 via Ballyoulster to the bridge in Celbridge then onto Hazelhatch
Prioritise introduction of additional train services to/ from Hazelhatch at peak times to complement introduction of scheduled bus services to Hazelhatch to minimise delays interchanging between bus & train
Actively promote use of rail from Hazelhatch throughout the day once served by scheduled buses



Suggestions for Improvements – New Destinations

Introduce route from Celbridge to Blanchardstown/ Ballycoolin/ Airport

Prioritise making journeys to key destinations in Blanchardstown (TU Dublin Campus, NAC, Ballycoolin, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, etc.) possible from Celbridge on fewer than 3 buses to discourage car dependency

- consider changes to 252 route to have it commence in Celbridge
- consider replacing one 261 per hour with a 252 that incorporates the 261 “loop”

Suggestions for Improvements –Ticketing

Include BE 120 (GoAhead from early 2020) in 90-minute fare (between Celbridge & Dublin)

Include TFI 139 in 90-minute fare (between Maynooth & Blanchardstown)

Facilitate tapping on at bus stops or just inside the bus rather than having to wait for the driver

Introduce contactless payments using bank cards

Suggestions for Improvements – Infrastructure

Improve bus stops/ shelters

Build bus stations at interchange points to facilitate greater comfort, shelter & security

Bus prioritisation measures to be at the forefront of Transport Management Strategy for Celbridge

Suggestions for Improvements – Measuring Success

Articulate success factors of the new design clearly and quantitatively - they need to be measurable, for example

- Meet target % increase in passenger numbers
- Meet target % reduction in car use
- Meet carbon reduction targets for the transport sector
- Etc.