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Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy

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Observations:

8. Planning for Sustainable Transport

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8.7 Filtered Permeability

The promotion of filtered permeability for new developments is welcomed, however, retrofitting permeability measures into existing developments should also be heavily promoted for any locations where a modal change to active travel modes might be achievable as a result of such measures.

8.9 Urban Design and Placemaking

Measure PLAN14 (Reallocation of Road Space) would benefit from rephrasing to highlight that the introduction of one-way systems is an appropriate measure to achieve the walking and cycling improvements and that it should be given appropriate consideration

8.10 Local Transport Plans

Celbridge Community Council notes with interest the Area Based Study for North Kildare commissioned by the NTA as part of the review of the GDA Transport Strategy. The study examines a number of options and makes proposals for GDA Cycle Network changes, bus route changes, and provision of Park & Rides.

The examination of geographical sub-areas within the Greater Dublin Area that cover multiple towns with interdependencies using area-based studies on Outer Metropolitan segments has resulted in proposals for a transport strategy but the documents do not constitute strategies in and of themselves.

Some proposals from the Area Based Study for North Kildare appear to be addressed in the Draft GDA Transport Strategy but other proposals are not mentioned. If the GDA Transport Strategy is the only strategy into which these area-based studies feed, then a number of the proposals have been lost in the final strategy.

A transport strategy for an area larger than that covered by a local area plan but smaller than the whole of the Greater Dublin Area would

- Complement strategies for radial routes in the corridors to Dublin city by addressing mobility needs between towns, industrial areas, medical facilities, and colleges within and between Outer Metropolitan segments
- Possibly cross local authority boundaries

- Complement local transport plans for each large town by taking a more holistic view

Celbridge Community Council recommends that the Area-based Transport Assessments that were commissioned as part of this review of the GDA Transport Strategy form the basis for area transport strategies. The GDA Transport Strategy should either dedicate a section to each area or these should stand as transport strategies in their own right.

9. Integration and Inclusion

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9.4. Park & Ride and Interchanges

Rail Park & Ride

The Area Based Study for North Kildare proposals for a rail-based Park & Ride to encourage motorists onto public transport (Options 8 & 9) appear to have been distilled into a choice between a rail-based park+ride at either Collinstown (Intel, Leixlip) or west of Maynooth (DART+ depot near Kilcock) in **Section 9.4 Park & Ride and Interchanges**.

Celbridge Community Council agrees with the study's assertion that a Park & Ride option near Kilcock would capture strategic demand off the M4 before it enters North Kildare proper whereas the Collinstown option would attract local residents thereby necessitating significant capacity to cater for both strategic trips (i.e. getting longer distance journeys off the motorway) and local demand from Celbridge and Leixlip.

Bus Park & Ride

The proposal for North Kildare appears to be for a bus-based Park & Ride at one or other of Junction 5 or Junction 6 on the N4/M4. Locating the bus-based Park & Ride close to Junction 5 would appear to offer the greatest scope in terms of servicing the Park & Ride site with bus services. A rethink of routes would be important to have more Dublin-bound routes take the Lucan By-pass to ensure attractive journey times.

9.6. Next Generation Ticketing

Operational silos between transport operators should be invisible to the population who should be able to avail of multi-modal transport seamlessly and in a cost-competitive manner.

The recently introduced 90-minute fare under BusConnects does not include regional bus routes so someone boarding the 120 GoAhead bus on the Clane Road in Celbridge who needs to take a bus, Luas or train, once they get to Dublin city, would incur high charges. Fare structures should be set to minimise the cost of public transport as an essential measure to ensure that public transport is an attractive alternative to car dependency. Innovation in the area of ticketing would benefit hugely from the application of Human-Centred Design techniques.

9.7 Mobility as a Service

Celbridge Community Council welcomes the inclusion of Measure INT8 recognising the role that Mobility As A Service (MaaS) might play in the GDA transport system.

9.8. Behavioural Change

Measures INT9, INT10 & INT11 relating to Behavioural Change are essential to ensure that citizens capitalise on investments in transport infrastructure and make the shift from car dependency to active modes of transport and/or public transport. However, provision of enabling infrastructure first is crucial before these efforts can enjoy success.

9.8.1 Smarter Travel Workplaces and Campuses - The location of zoned areas for future employment campuses needs to be aligned with existing public transport services to ensure that companies can commence smarter travel practices from the get-go. Allowing the development of future employment campuses based on future public transport services in locations that lack existing facilities on the doorstep is not an appropriate practice.

10. Walking, Accessibility and Public Realm

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Provision for walking in Celbridge falls short of meeting national standards at a number of pinch-point locations where footpaths are insufficiently wide to cater for buggies, wheelchairs, etc. let alone the cyclists who use them in the absence of safe cycling infrastructure. Some footpaths are also cluttered with obstacles such as lamp-posts. The only option for distancing from other pedestrians during the pandemic or for passing a buggy or wheelchair is to walk on the road along stretches where vehicles are travelling at speed - this is frightening with young children.

10.4 Improved Footpaths

COVID-19 restrictions limiting cafes and restaurants to outdoor dining highlighted the lack of footpath width to allow many establishments to implement outdoor dining. Improvements in footpaths need to consider the incorporation of sufficient width to implement outdoor dining.

Measure WALK2 regarding the implementation of footpath improvement schemes is of particular importance for Celbridge due to issues with insufficient widths and unnecessary clutter.

11: Cycling and Personal Mobility Devices

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Provision for cycling in Celbridge falls far short of meeting national standards so cycling is an unattractive option for the less confident and younger cyclists who use footpaths in the absence of safe cycling infrastructure well into their teenaged years. People need to be able to **move about safely using active modes** before they will consider them.

11.3. GDA Cycle Network Plan

We note the proposed cycle routes on p.7 of the Draft 2021 GDA Cycle Network Plan (Set 2). We welcome the change to the GDA Cycle Network for North Kildare including an inter-urban route between Celbridge & Maynooth on the R405, the proposal of a River Liffey crossing point for cyclists near the Slip in Celbridge and the proposed crossing of the M4 from Castletown Parklands via the Liffey Business Campus to the Wonderful Barn.

Since many routes marked on the GDA Cycle Network for Celbridge cannot accommodate both 2-way traffic and infrastructure for active modes of transport, initiatives to make space for cyclists in Celbridge are likely to be costly. While some initiatives might be completed without incurring significant cost, costly infrastructure projects such as a second river crossing and a ring road to divert traffic away from the heart of the town seem unavoidable in order to make more space for active modes of transport on radial routes to/from Celbridge town centre.

11.5 Cycle Parking

Lack of appropriate cycle parking and badly located cycle parking is a big issue on main streets and centres of towns which discourages cycling. The provision and relocation of cycle parking to areas with good levels of passive surveillance is key to promoting residents to cycling to their main streets/centres. Cycle parking provided near outdoor dining should be heavily promoted.

11.8. Emerging Personal Mobility Modes

Measures CYC9, CYC10 & CYC11 relating to e-Bikes, Electric Scooters and Other Emerging Personal Mobility Modes are welcomed but the rise in personal mobility is inevitable so the challenge of providing space for personal mobility users whilst protecting pedestrians and other vulnerable transport infrastructure users is one that needs to be addressed urgently.

Given the permanency of transport infrastructure, waiting for the inevitable to happen and for the slow passage of legislation before responding with suitable infrastructure design does not appear prudent.

12. Public Transport (Bus, Light & Heavy Rail)

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12.2. Bus

BusConnects Network Redesign

The rollout of the current BusConnects routes providing improved radial routes (C-Spine) and the provision of local routes is welcomed and will assist in the promotion of public transport for residents of commuter towns like Celbridge. To further promote public transport in commuter towns like Celbridge the implementation of the BusConnects Orbital routes connecting to employment areas to the north (i.e Blanchardstown) and south (i.e Citywest) need to be a priority for implementation. The provision of Orbital routes would have a dramatic impact in terms of encouraging residents to use public transport rather than driving to work due to a more comparable or potentially reduced journey time.

Celbridge Community Council looks forward to the delivery of the W6 Orbital route connecting Tallaght to Maynooth via Celbridge but the Draft GDA Transport Strategy fails to address enhancements or adaptations to services after initial rollout (C-Spine and related routes were introduced in November 2021 for North Kildare). The GDA Transport Strategy needs to outline the mechanism by which the NTA will seek public feedback regarding the delivered bus services and understand the needs of each area to effectuate enhancements to services to best meet the needs of each area. The BusConnects Network Redesign is based on a broad-stroke analysis of the whole of the Dublin Metropolitan Area and dated intelligence (Census 2011).

Enhancements to the C4, L58, L59 and W6 services can be identified from passengers' experiences with the new

services, from the area based transport assessment for North Kildare already completed for this review of the GDA Transport Strategy and from local transport strategies developed in tandem with development plans.

Examples of enhancements that might be considered amongst others

- By serving Leixlip Louisa Bridge rather than Leixlip Confey station, the L59 would be an attractive option for commuters from the north of Celbridge who take the train from Louisa Bridge
- If a local bus route from Celbridge served Intel in Leixlip, then the number of buses running between Celbridge and Leixlip might be reduced and the long-term viability of the bus connection between the two towns would be better secured - as it stands, a private bus company runs buses between Celbridge and Intel on a limited timetable that does not offer employees any flexibility in their working hours and Dublin Bus runs the L59 but this which passes over 1km from Intel - Intel is the destination for a large number of workers who live in Celbridge
- By routing through Hazelhatch Park, Callenders Mill, Simmonstown Manor, Ardclough Road, and passing alongside the River Liffey, the L58 would serve more residents of Celbridge. It currently only passes by lightly populated areas so opportunities to serve more populous areas need to be explored.
- The challenge of how to cater for travel to trip generators identified by the Area Based Study for North Kildare should be addressed specifically for Celbridge - these include Maynooth University, Intel, Liffey Park Business Campus (former HP), Backweston, Maynooth Business Campus, Blanchardstown and other locations in West Dublin
- The Area Based Study for North Kildare's proposals for the following should be further explored
 - Connectivity between North Kildare and Blanchardstown (Options 3 & 4) so that residents of Celbridge have reliable public transport options with competitive journey times for getting to TU Dublin, James Connolly Memorial Hospital, Blanchardstown Shopping Centre and employment locations in the Blanchardstown area.
 - Changes to the C3, C4 & W6 routes (Options 5, 6 & 7) - if the C4 is to continue serving Maynooth and if it extends to Maynooth University, then it may make sense for the W6 to take a different route to Maynooth (Ballygoran Road via Maynooth Business Campus) before heading to Meadowbrook Road and approaching Maynooth town centre on the R408.

BusConnects Lucan CBC

Celbridge Community Council supports the introduction of a bus lane on the M50 overpass at Palmerstown to alleviate the bottleneck for buses but is concerned that convenient public transport alternatives may not be provided in a timely manner thereby ensuring that drivers have credible options before the replacement of the second traffic lane (inbound from the N4) with a bus lane. Park & Rides that serve the needs of drivers on the N4 corridor from Kildare, Meath, and beyond are essential to prevent gridlock on the approach to the M50 once the Lucan CBC is implemented.

12.4. DART+ and Rail

12.4.3 DART+ West & 12.4.4 DART+ South West

Celbridge Community Council welcomes the DART+ South West and DART+ West projects as both the Maynooth and Kildare train lines are used by commuters from Celbridge and the increased frequency of services and capacity should make travel by rail an extremely attractive alternative to driving.

Consideration should however be given to prioritising cycle infrastructure connecting Celbridge to Hazelhatch training station and to enhancing the routing of the L58 and L59 local bus routes that serve train Hazelhatch and

Confey train stations. See comments in Cycling and BusConnects sections.

12.4.8. DART+ Tunnel

Celbridge Community Council is disappointed that the only measures proposed at this time relating to DART+ Tunnel are the preservation and protection of an alignment to allow its *future delivery subsequent to the strategy period*.

Quantifying the merits of proceeding with DART+ Tunnel solely based on a belief "that the net increase of people using public transport as a result of the tunnel would only be in the order of 10,000 a day" (<https://www.nationaltransport.ie/nta-clarifies-gda-strategy-proposals>) disregards the onerous commutes of existing users of the Kildare line. It is the NTA's strategy to maximise rail travel from North Kildare but, given how far Hazelhatch train station is from the majority of Celbridge's population, the simplicity of the journey to the city centre for commuters, once they get to Hazelhatch, is key. Proceeding with DART+ Tunnel will get more people to more places to which they need to go without requiring further interchange. DART+ Tunnel would make a huge contribution to attracting passengers from Celbridge, Lucan, and many other places within 3-4 km of a train station where getting to and from the train station is a little awkward.

DART+ Tunnel must remain prominently in the roadmap for the Dublin rail network. The routing via Christchurch and St. Stephen's Green will get more south Dublin-bound commuters closer to their destinations faster. It currently takes about 30 minutes to travel from Park West to Pearse Station and DART Underground should see a reduction of 10-15 minutes from this so would be a real game-changer for the wellbeing of people living close to the Kildare rail line. In light of development plans in North Kildare, Adamstown, and Clonburris, the DART+ Tunnel has got to be a top priority for the NTA. Waiting for transport patterns to emerge before progressing the DART+ Tunnel is counterintuitive as delivery of this project promises to be a real driver for changes in transport patterns and, given the timeframe required to deliver a project of this scale, it should be progressed as a matter of urgency. This is a clear example of where supply would drive demand.

The number of passengers who would benefit from the DART+ Tunnel would far exceed 10,000 per day. This project would make a hugely positive contribution towards improving health and wellbeing among the people and communities that it would serve (Strategy Challenge 3.9).

13. Road

Chapter: Part B: The Strategy » 13. Road

13.2 Principles for Road Development

Principle 5 calling for reallocation of road space within bypassed urban areas to sustainable transport and/or public realm improvements for future road schemes is welcomed. It is imperative that the budget is allocated from the outset to allow the provision of these improvements in tandem with the provision of the road scheme. Lack of budget to allow the provision of these improvements will only lead to a car-centric road scheme against the policy of reduction of car growth.

13.5 Regional and Local Roads

It would seem more appropriate if the recommendation that ***confirmation of consistency with the Transport Strategy is obtained from the NTA in advance of a road authority seeking development consent for a particular road scheme*** is a requirement rather than a recommendation. Inability to access exchequer grants for road schemes that are not in accordance with the principles set out in Measure ROAD9 (Regional and Local Roads Policy) will hopefully prevent inappropriate road schemes but a mere “recommendation” may not be adequate to prevent all.

13.6 Urban Roads and Streets

The shift in focus to a place-based approach to urban streets is welcome.

Documents Attached: No

Boundaries Captured on Map: No