



The Secretary
An Bord Pleanála
61-64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	058628-22
ABP-	
28 OCT 2022	
Fee: €	50.00
Type:	cheque
Time:	
By:	hand

Friday, 28 October 2022

[By Hand]

Dear Secretary,

RE: SUBMISSION IN RELATION TO THE MAKING OF THE DART+ WEST DRAFT RAILWAY ORDER

Sherwood Homes Limited¹ has retained Tom Phillips + Associates² to make a submission to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) regarding the non-consideration of our Client's lands at Newtown, Maynooth in the *DART West Railway Order Environmental Impact Assessment* within the Examination of Alternatives' chapter. As to how access could be provided to facilitate, expedite and integrate the DART+ West proposal with delivery of the Maynooth Outer Orbital Route.

During the public consultation of the DART + Scheme, we invited Iarnród Éireann to consider greater linkage to integrate more fully with the proposed Maynooth Outer Orbital Route (MOOR).

No mention of the Newtown Lands was mentioned in the DART West's EIA in the examination of alternatives.

We refer to the *Environmental Protection Agency Guidelines on the information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* in the context of the examination of alternatives, whereby the EIA Directive requires an EIAR to contain:

"A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of project design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects."

*"The objective is for the developer to present a **representative range of the practicable alternatives** considered. The alternatives should be described with 'an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option'. It is generally sufficient to provide a broad description of each main alternative and the key issues associated with each, showing how environmental considerations were taken into account in deciding on the selected option."*

[our emphasis]

No reasons were given for the discounting of this site as an alternative for development as part of the DART West Scheme.

Please find enclosed with this submission, the prescribed €50 fee for the submission.

Furthermore, we enclose a copy of our previous public consultation submission titled "Submission to Iarnród Éireann's DART + West Scheme (Maynooth) from Iarnród Éireann's Public Consultation", submitted to Iarnród Éireann's Wednesday, 6 October 2021, as an appendix for reference.

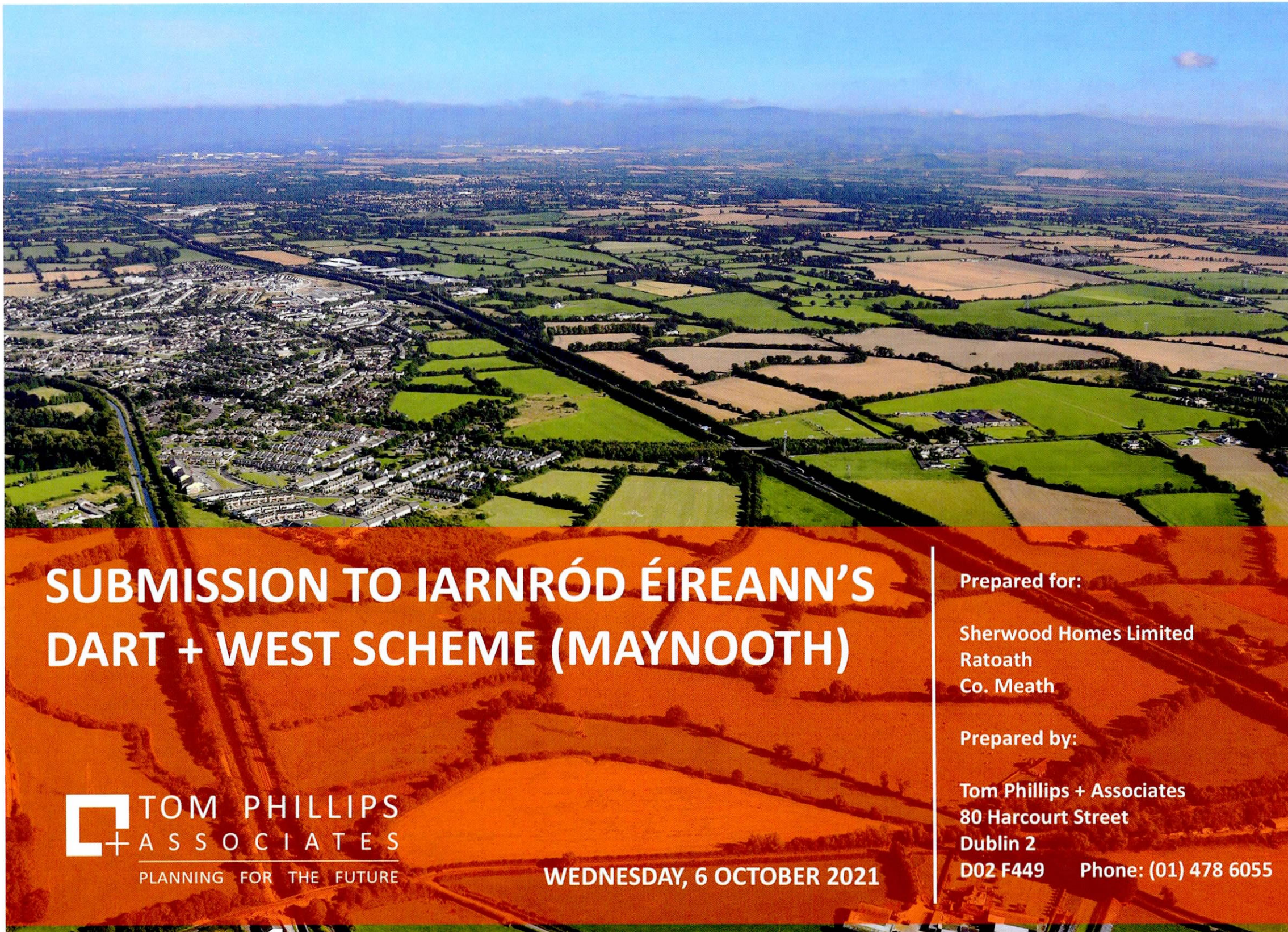
Yours faithfully

Tom Phillips
Managing Director
Tom Phillips + Associates
Encl.

¹ Sherwood Homes Limited, Rathoath, Co. Meath.

² No. 80 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2, D02 F449.

APPENDIX A: Submission to Iarnród Éireann's DART + West Scheme (Maynooth) from Iarnród Éireann's Public Consultation, submitted Wednesday, 6 October 2021.



**SUBMISSION TO IARNRÓD ÉIREANN'S
DART + WEST SCHEME (MAYNOOTH)**

**TOM PHILLIPS
+ ASSOCIATES**
PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

WEDNESDAY, 6 OCTOBER 2021

Prepared for:
Sherwood Homes Limited
Ratoath
Co. Meath

Prepared by:
Tom Phillips + Associates
80 Harcourt Street
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DART + West
Iarnród Éireann
Inchicore Works
Inchicore Parade
Dublin 8
D08 K6Y3

Wednesday, 6 October 2021

[By Email: dartwest@irishrail.ie]

Dear Sir / Madam

RE: DART + West - Maynooth

1.0 INTRODUCTION - SUBMISSION BY MAJOR LANDOWNER AFFECTED

1.1 Overview of outcome sought: EIA process necessitates a thorough review of options including potential for linkage to the Maynooth Outer Orbital Route (MOOR)

Sherwood Homes Limited¹ (SHL) has retained Tom Phillips + Associates² in association with John Fleming Architects³ and DBFL⁴ to make a submission in respect of the Iarnród Éireann's (IE) proposals in so far as they affect our Client's lands at Newtown, Maynooth. (The SHL Lands.)

Our Client's lands are illustrated in Figure 1.1. (See also Appendix A.)



Figure 1.1: Sherwood Homes Landholding at Newtown Maynooth. (Extract from the current *Maynooth Local Area Plan Zoning Map* with the SHL Lands delineated in black.)

¹ Sherwood Homes Limited, Ratoath, Co. Meath.

² Tom Phillips + Associates, 80 Harcourt Street, Dublin 2. D02 F449.

In summary, we are disappointed that to date, with respect, there appears to be a disconnect between IE and KCC with regards to the delivery of both parties' aspirations (i.e. the upgrading of the DART rail infrastructure for IE, and for Kildare County Council the Outer Orbital Route (OOR) and traffic alleviation in Maynooth Town Centre). Such a disconnect could prove unnecessarily costly.

SHL has previously liaised at length with both KCC and IE individually at every opportunity available, but this mutually-beneficial potential has not materialised.

In short we submit that the SHL lands can offer a solution to the aspirations of both IE and KCC and as such create a large economic benefit.

These benefits are as follows:

1. SHL is prepared to cede immediately the land required for the planned KCC Outer Orbital Road from Rathcoffey Road at Newtown to the proposed new bridge over the railway line and canal at Jacksons Bridge, thus allowing a major section of the Outer Orbital Road to be constructed, thereby negating the necessity for IE's proposals to build a second bridge further west.

IE would be able to have immediate access to the Depot from the SHL section of the Orbital Road (i.e. - the section linking the Rathcoffey Road in the south) thus taking away any risk of further delay to the regionally strategic rail project.

The connecting piece of the Orbital Road to the Galway Road in the north (owned by Maynooth College) can be built now if funding is available or later thus fulfilling IE's connection aspirations onto the Galway Road and saving millions from the construction of an extra bridge.

2. The new IE depot could then be accessed from the new Maynooth Outer Orbital Route (MOOR) at Newtown. (Sherwood Homes Ltd is again very open to working with Iarnród Éireann to facilitate this.)
3. Having viewed the extent of land IE requires for flood alleviation, we submit that this would function equally well if used as a Park and Ride if appropriate SUDS engineering was incorporated into its construction. Sherwood Homes Ltd is also very open to working with Iarnród Éireann to accommodate such a Park & Ride facility within its lands at Newtown.

³ John Fleming Architects, The Tree House, Richview Office Park, Belfield, Clonskeagh, Co. Dublin, D14 XR82.

⁴ DBFL Consulting Engineers, Ormond House, Ormond Quay Upper, Dublin, D07 W704.

4. We also believe that a DART stop could be facilitated within the SHL lands, which could be linked to this Park & Ride thereby reducing rail related traffic trips into an already traffic congested town centre and also maximising the public infrastructure investment of this rail project.
5. SHL is also prepared to cede the required lands for an on-ramp to the Rathcoffey Road from the M4 thus allowing direct motorway access to the proposed Orbital Road. This would allow IE to connect its new depot directly to the M4 Motorway via a new Motorway Interchange Bridge at Newtown.

SHL would be happy to work with relevant stakeholders to bring this about.

If a motorway on-ramp at Newtown is not seen as an ideal location, we believe that the adjacent farmer (Mr. Flood) may be open to accommodating a ramp further west within his lands.

Ultimately, the aspirations of connection to the motorway can become part of future strategic planning by KCC and the NRA, which is essential to alleviate traffic congestion in Maynooth Town Centre.

Ultimately we seek that those alternatives are considered fully, whereby IE considers the role of the Newtown Lands to facilitate IE's objectives as part of its Examination of Alternatives' section of the requisite Environmental Impact Assessment.

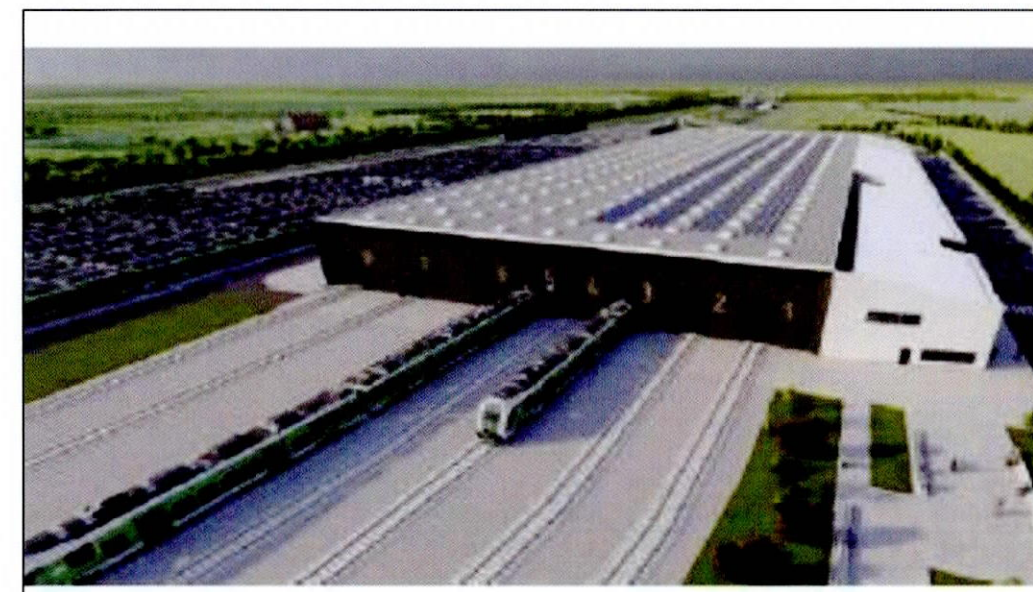


Figure 1.2: Proposed Dart and Maynooth terminal. (Source: Iarnróid Éireann.)

1.2 Response to IE's specific questions

In terms of IE's specific questions on the Project Website, the following arises:

- Q1. Yes, our Client owns property located within the vicinity of the proposed project.
- Q2. Yes, we support the scheme in principle, but subject to the issues raised in this submission.
- Q3. The geographical position of the site is Maynooth. (See IE's Option Selection Land Uses (Educational, Community and Commercial uses) (Sheet 8 of 11) included as Figure 1.3.)
- Q4. The elements of interest are the potential to link with KCC's objectives for the Maynooth OOR.
- Q5. In terms of the options presented we enclose suggested revisions.
- Q6. Increased public transport facilities are welcomed.
- Q7. Our Client heard from a local Councillor.
- Q8. Yes – we wish to remain informed on: tom@tpa.ie.

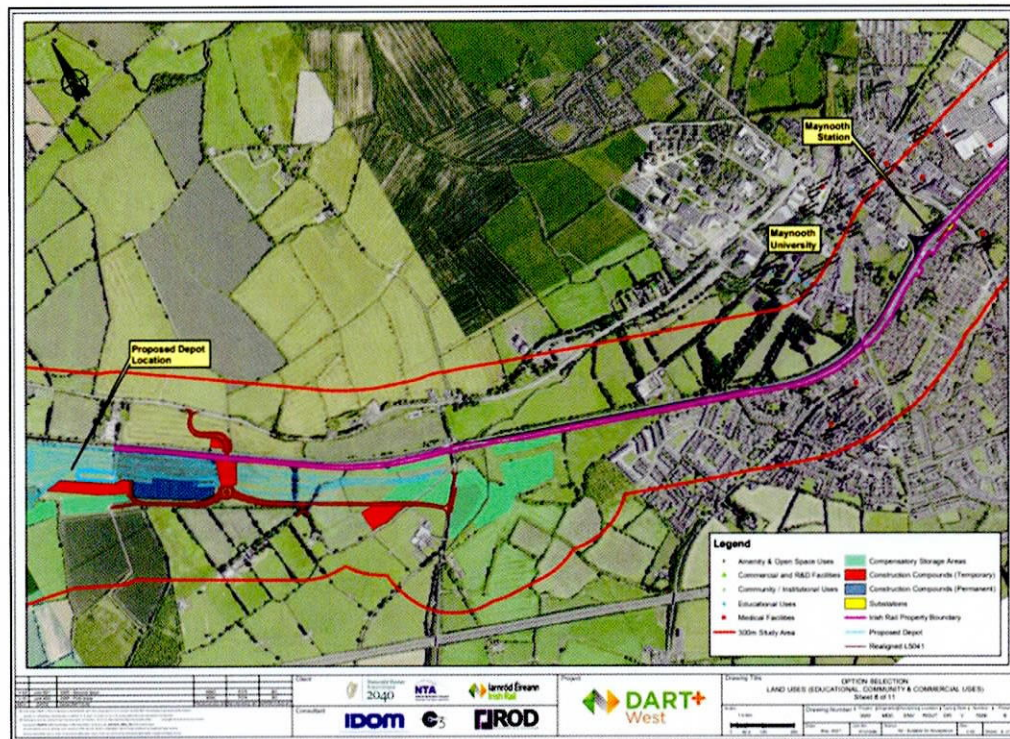


Figure 1.3: Option Selection Land Uses (Educational, Community and Commercial Uses). (Source: Dart + West Project Sheet 8 of 11, by IDOM, C3 and ROD.)

2.0 CONTEXT

2.1 Physical location of the lands

Sherwood Homes Ltd. controls c. 38 hectares (93 acres) of land at Newtown, Maynooth. (These are outlined in red in Figure 2.1 below.) Much of these lands lie within the development boundary of Maynooth and are bounded by the railway line / Canal to the north and the M4 Motorway to the south. (Figure 2.1.)



Figure 2.1: Concept layout for that section of the planned Maynooth Outer Orbital Route which is to run through Sherwood Homes Lands at Newtown. (Source: AECOM.)

The following is of note:

1. The majority portion of these lands lie within the development boundary of Maynooth (as defined under the current LAP.)
2. The site is bounded by the railway line, Canal and NUI Campus lands to the north.
3. To the east, lie the established residential neighbourhoods of Parsons Hall, Ashleigh Grove and Castle Dawson.
4. The M4 Motorway forms the southern boundary of the site.
5. Some 5 ha of these lands lie within the '91m M4 Motorway set back' area as defined under the LAP (demarcated by the yellow line on the map.)

6. There are no service or access restrictions pertaining to these lands.

2.2 The Planning Context – two Plans overlap – Dart + West and LAP Review

At the outset, it is important to note that the current *Maynooth Local Area Plan 2013-2019* (as amended) is under review, with a draft due to go on public display by February 2022.

The mooted Maynooth Outer Orbital Route (MOOR) has not materialised.

It is imperative that in its Environmental Impact Assessment 'Examination of Alternatives', that IE reviews how access could be provided to facilitate, expedite and integrate the Dart + West proposal with delivery of the MOOR.



Figure 2.2: Dart and Maynooth line (Source: Iarnróid Éireann.)

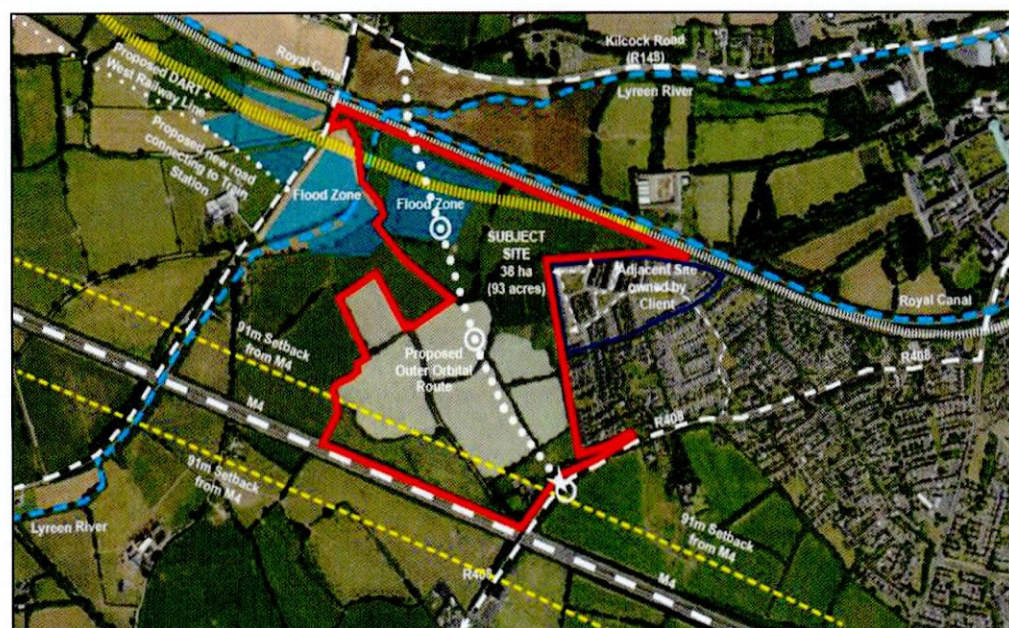


Figure 2.3: JFA's site analysis of the lands. (Source: JFA.)

As noted above, much of the lands are located within the development boundary of the *Maynooth Local Area Plan 2013-2029* (as amended). (Effective from 5 November 2018.)

The LAP sets out nine key challenges facing the town including Item V: “*delivering strategic transport improvements particularly the upgrading of the railway line and the completion of the Maynooth Outer Orbital Route*” (MOOR). (Item 4 (V), pg 22.)

Road Objective ‘TRO2’ under the Maynooth LAP seeks to facilitate the construction of the Maynooth OOR with TRO2 seeking to facilitate the future construction of that element between the Kilcock Road (F) and the Moyglare Road (G). A c.1km stretch of this planned orbital route (which will connect the Kilcock Road and Rathcoffey Road) bisects the SHL lands at Newtown (See Figure 2.3 above.)

2.3 Sherwood Homes’ proactive works to date

In 2017, SHL engaged AECOM Consulting Engineers to prepare a concept road layout for the 1km section of the OOR that is planned to run through the SHL lands at concept road alignment (which was prepared with reference to all relevant standards for roads and bridges) is shown in Figure 2.1 and shows links to the adjoining road network as follows:-

1. Via a three-arm roundabout junction with Newtown Road of 28m inscribed circle diameter (ICD); and
2. Via a three-arm priority junction with Kilcock Road.

AECOM recommended that this important distributor road should comprise a 6m carriageway, with 50kph design speed. Footways of 1.8m-2m in width should be provided on both sides of the road. Two roundabouts, each of 28m ICD, should be provided along the road to enable access to lands adjoining the road and to facilitate future development of adjoining lands in line with best practice, including DMURS principles, to encourage a high sustainable mode share.

It was also recommended by AECOM that the proposed road should cross the existing railway and Canal via a bridge approximately 150 metres from the junction with the Kilcock Road.

Previously, in 2008, Faber Maunsell Consulting Traffic Engineers (now AECOM) had prepared a separate Technical Note for the SHL lands at Newtown, which was submitted to Kildare County Council by way of a formal submission to the preparation of the 2009 *Maynooth Local Area Plan*.

As part of that Technical Note, AECOM proposed a transport strategy for the lands that would “*be a significant benefit to Maynooth Town*”. The elements of that transport strategy incorporated the following:

1. **Newtown Ring Road** linking Straffan Road to Moyglare Road and acting as an alternative route to the town centre.
2. **M4 Grade-Separated Interchange at Newtown Road** to remove the bottleneck on the Straffan Road and allow for more balanced dispersal of traffic to relieve the town centre.
3. **Straffan Road Link** running parallel to the M4 and linking Straffan Road to Newtown Road to relieve pressure on Meadowbrook Link Road and Town Centre.

The overall transport strategy proposed for the lands by AECOM in 2008 is shown in Figure 2.4 below. (SHL lands are shaded in grey.)

This drawing shows diagrammatically the three elements of the proposed transport strategy for the lands and how these would integrate into a wider transport strategy for the town (i.e. connecting in with the Western and Eastern Orbital Routes).

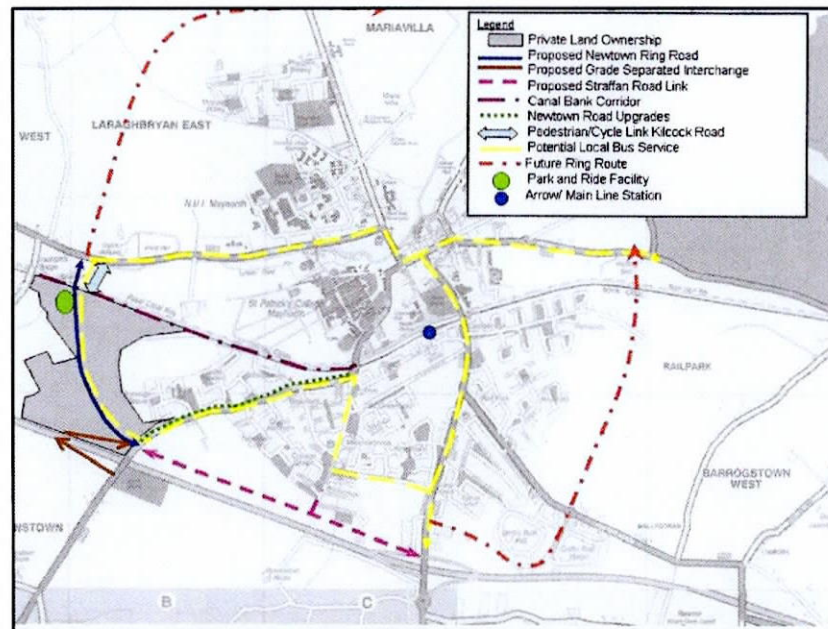


Figure 2.4: Concept layout of a proposed new M4 Motorway Interchange at Newtown Road.

Notwithstanding the fact that AECOM considered this transport strategy to be a viable and beneficial option for the town, no consideration has been given by KCC to this option to date.

As part of the review of the next *Maynooth Local Area Plan (2022/2022)*, it is SHL's intention to review the 2009 transport strategy for the lands at Newtown and to present our updated proposals to Kildare County Council.

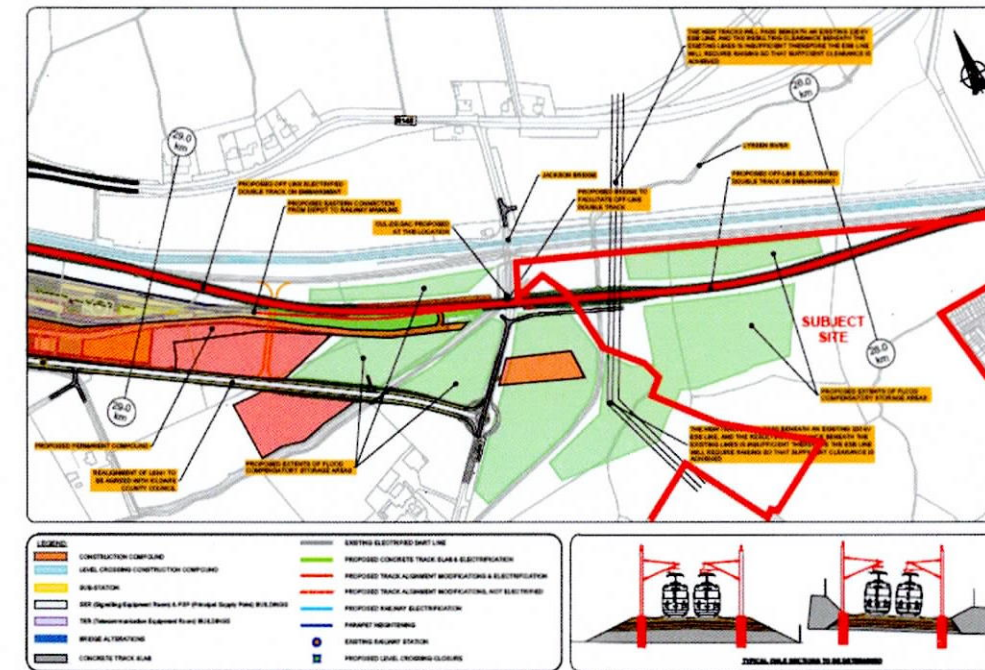


Figure 2.5: Dart + West Schematic Drawings, with the subject lands superimposed.

3.0 EIA EXAMINATION OF ALTERNATIVES

The Dart + West Scheme will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment.

The EIA legislation requires *inter alia* an “examination of alternatives.”

The EPA Guidelines on the Information to be contained in Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (Draft August 2017) – citing the EIA Directive requires an EIAR to contain:

“A description of the reasonable alternatives (for example in terms of project design, technology, location, size and scale) studied by the developer, which are relevant to the proposed project and its specific characteristics, and an indication of the main reasons for selecting the chosen option, including a comparison of the environmental effects”.

The Guidelines note that in some instances alternatives will not be applicable – for example “there may be no relevant ‘alternative location’ for the upgrading of an existing road”. However, that would not be a restriction in this instance.

Figure 3.1 from the Guidelines outlines the range of issues to be consider.

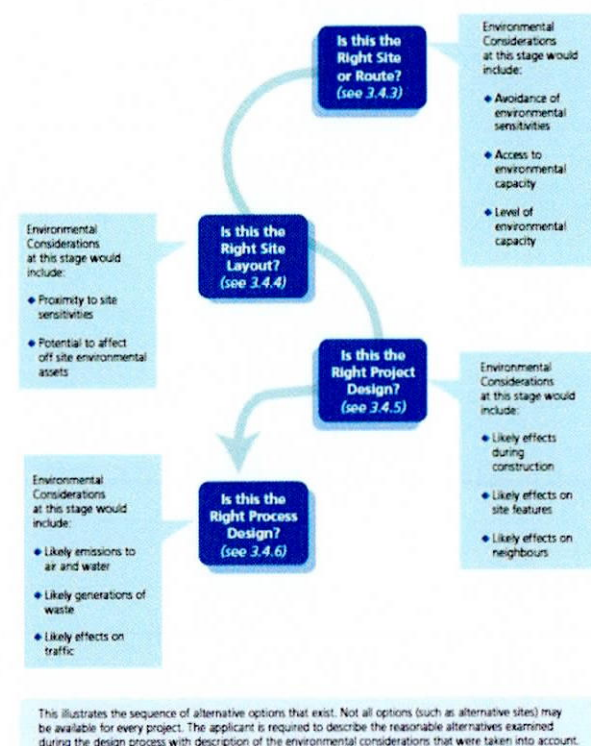


Figure 3.1. Consideration of Alternatives in an EIAR (Source: *Environmental Impact Assessment Reports* (Draft August 2017).)

On the specific issue of “Alternative Locations”, Section 3.4.3 states:

“Some locations have more inherent environmental sensitivities than others. Depending on the type of project and the range of alternatives which the developer can realistically consider, it may be possible to avoid such sites in favour of sites which have fewer constraints and more capacity to sustainably assimilate the project. It can be useful to ensure that a range of options, that may reasonably be available, are included in the evaluation”.

In this regard, we invite Iarnróid Éireann to consider greater linkage to integrate more fully with the proposed Maynooth Outer Orbital Route (MOOR).



4.0 CONCLUSION

1. SHL believes that the SHL lands can offer a solution to the aspirations of both parties and as such create a large economic benefit.
2. The present takes no account of the KCC LAP and Development Plan aspiration for an orbital road.
3. SHL is prepared to cede the land required for the planned KCC outer orbital road from Rathcoffey Road at Newtown to the proposed new bridge over the railway line and canal at Jacksons Bridge, thus allowing a major section of the outer orbital road to be constructed unlike IE's proposals to build a second bridge further west.
4. SHL is also prepared to cede the required lands for an on-ramp to the Rathcoffey Road from the M4 thus allowing direct motorway access to the proposed orbital road.
5. Having viewed the amount of land IE require for flood alleviation we believe this would function equally well if used as a park and ride if appropriate SUDS engineering was incorporated into its construction
6. We also believe that a DART stop could be facilitated within the SHL lands which could be linked to this Park & Ride thereby reducing trips into the town centre while maximising the public infrastructure investment of this rail project
7. If a motorway on-ramp at Newtown is not seen as an ideal location, we believe that the adjacent farmer Mr. Flood would accommodate a ramp further west within his lands.
8. IE can have immediate access to the Depot from the SHL section of the Orbital Road (i.e. - the section linking the Rathcoffey Road in the south) thus taking away any risk of hold ups to the regionally strategic rail project.
9. The connecting piece of the orbital road to the Galway Road in the north (owned by Maynooth College) can be built now if funding is available or later thus fulfilling IE connection aspirations onto the Galway Road and saving millions from the construction of an extra bridge.
10. The aspirations of connection to the motorway can become part of future strategic planning by KCC and the NRA, which is essential to alleviate traffic in Maynooth Town Centre.

Yours faithfully

Tom Phillips
Managing Director
Tom Phillips + Associates