



CELBRIDGE HAZELHATCH MOBILITY CORRIDOR

Section 177AE and CPO Planning Report



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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

RPS have prepared this Planning Report ("the Report") on behalf of Kildare County Council (KCC) ("the Applicant") to accompany the application ("the Application") for the proposed development ("the Development") and Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) submitted to An Coimisiún Pleanála (ACP) for approximately 2km of single carriageway with cycle path and footpath from a proposed junction on the R403 on Clane Road to the R405 Hazelhatch Road and continuing the last 0.275km south along the R405 to Loughlinstown Road roundabout near Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station. The proposed development comprises the Celbridge to Hazelhatch Link Mobility Corridor (CHMC).

1.2 Scheme Location and Extent

The town of Celbridge is in north-eastern Kildare and lies within the Greater Dublin Area (GDA), c. 20km to the west of Dublin city centre. The Hazelhatch and Celbridge train station is located c. 2km from Celbridge town centre and sits on the border between Counties Kildare and Dublin. The Kildare towns of Leixlip and Maynooth are situated approximately 4km and 6km to the north respectively and are separated from Celbridge by the M4 motorway. Naas, Sallins and Clane are located within 20km to the southwest. The River Liffey flows through the centre of Celbridge and is currently only served by one crossing which connects the northern and southern sections of the town.

The proposed development, and to which the CPO relates, includes a new river crossing to the south of Celbridge town centre and a new mobility corridor of approximately 2km providing access for cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Station. The CHMC will connect the predominantly residential areas to the south-west of the town centre to the townland of Simmonstown, a mostly greenfield area currently in agricultural use, which is identified within *Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017 – 2023* (LAP) as Key Development Area 5 (KDA).

1.3 Legislative Context

This application for approval is being made to ACP under 177AE of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as 'the Act'). Section 177AE of the Act states:

"(1) Where an appropriate assessment is required in respect of development —

(a) by a local authority that is a planning authority, whether in its capacity as planning authority or in any other capacity, or

(b) by some other person on behalf of, or jointly or in partnership with, such a local authority, pursuant to a contract entered into by that local authority whether in its capacity as a planning authority or in any other capacity,

within the functional area of the local authority concerned, (hereinafter in this section referred to as 'proposed development'), the local authority shall prepare, or cause to be prepared, a Natura impact statement in respect thereof.

(2) Proposed development in respect of which an appropriate assessment is required shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it with or without modifications.

(3) Where a Natura impact statement has been prepared pursuant to subsection (1), the local authority shall apply to the Board for approval and the provisions of Part XAB shall apply to the carrying out of the appropriate assessment."

The application has followed the procedural requirements of Section 177AE(4) of the Act and Article 249 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) (hereafter referred to as 'the Regulations'). The documents and drawings enclosed as part of this application have also been prepared and checked in accordance with the Act and the Regulations. The contents of this application are set out in the schedule of enclosures appended to the cover letter.

1.4 Purpose and Structure of Report

This report sets out the context for the development by describing the proposed development and the relevant up-to-date planning policy framework. It then assesses the proposals against the identified policy framework and the key material considerations, concluding that the CHMC is supported by the national, regional and local planning policy context. The Planning Report is set out as follows:

- **Section 2** describes the proposed development in detail and provides a background for its location and need;
- **Section 3** reviews the relevant policy context at national, regional and local levels, and then assesses the proposed development against this policy;
- **Section 4** provides a brief overview of relevant planning history for the proposed development's location and adjacent areas.
- **Section 5** reviews the various consultations which took place during the design stage of the project, both with the public and a wide range of prescribed bodies.
- **Section 6** reviews additional assessments and screenings which were undertaken as part of the project, including a Flood Risk Assessment, Environmental Impact Assessment Screening, Appropriate Assessment / Natura Impact Statement, Road Safety Audit and Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment.
- **Section 7** briefly summarises the key contents of this Report and outlines the need for the CHMC.

2 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 Project Location

The project is situated in the southwest of Celbridge, County Kildare. Please refer to drawing **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-IX0001** (Scheme Location Plan) and **Figure 2-1** below.

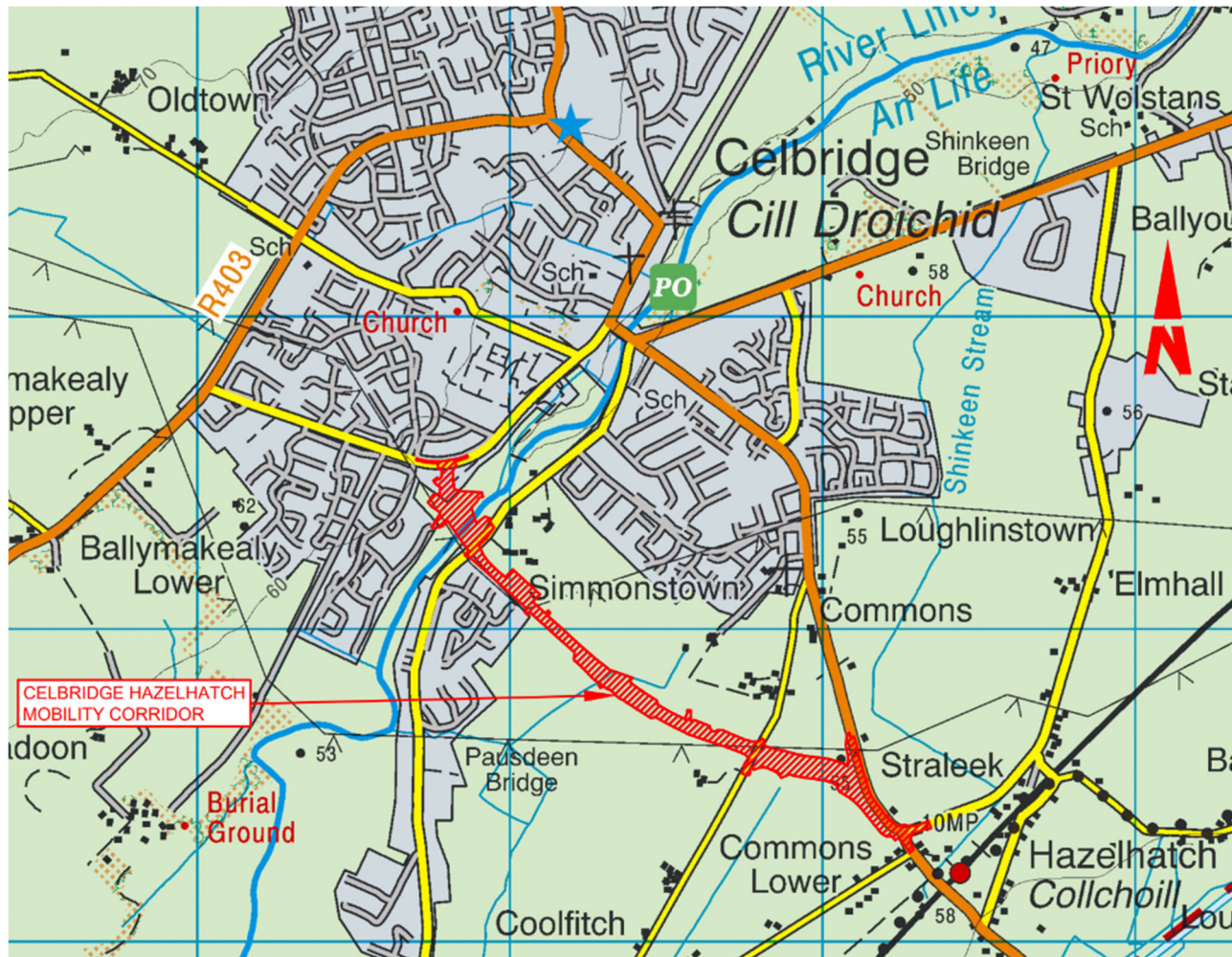


Figure 2-1 Site Location

2.2 Project Background and Need

In recent decades there has been very significant population growth within Ireland, particularly within the GDA.

Located on the River Liffey in northern Kildare, Celbridge is an important regional town within Kildare and also functions as a commuter town for Dublin and other significant employment centres in the region. Celbridge has seen significant growth since the middle of the 20th century with census population data indicating a more than doubling of the population in the past 30 years.

The northern and southern sections of the town are divided by the River Liffey and connected by an existing narrow two-lane stone masonry bridge dating from between 1780 and 1820 and listed as a Protected Structure (B11-103, NIAH 11805054). With over 70% of the population of Celbridge living north of the river, this single crossing constrains the movement of people within the town.

Celbridge is served by commuter rail at Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station approximately 3km to the south of the town centre. The current rail service provides a connection to Dublin City Centre with capacity of c. 5,000 passengers per hour per direction and this will significantly increase following the delivery of DART+ South West. Current poor access to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station and the lack of high-quality

cycling/pedestrian facilities along the existing route appear to hinder the attractiveness of train services for commuters, particularly for residents living north of the river.

A second River Liffey Crossing and link road to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station will improve the transport network capacity for all pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic, will encourage a modal shift to more sustainable modes and ameliorate the urban realm in the town centre.

2.3 General Description of Project

The proposed route is approximately 2km long, beginning at a proposed junction with Clane Road and routing in a south easterly direction through predominantly greenfield lands until it joins the existing R405 Hazelhatch Road, before terminating at the existing Loughlinstown Road Roundabout near Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station. The route also includes proposed junctions with Newtown Road, Simmonstown Manor Road and R405 Hazelhatch Road. A new bridge crossing over the River Liffey is also proposed, located approximately 200m south of the beginning of the route at Clane Road.

The route includes dedicated cycle and pedestrian infrastructure on the entire length of the route. 2.0m wide one-way cycle tracks and 2.0m wide footpaths are proposed on both sides of the road. The portion of the route between the Hazelhatch Road junction and Loughlinstown Road roundabout includes a 2.0m wide footpath and 3.0m wide two-way cycleway on the northbound side of the road only due to space restrictions and desire line requirements.

On both sides of the mainline, it is typically proposed to provide a 2.0m wide grassed verge between the cycle facility and the carriageway, and 1.0m wide grassed verge between the back of the footpath and adjacent earthwork slopes. The exception to this is across the proposed River Liffey bridge, where no additional verge width is proposed between the cycle tracks and the carriageway or between the footpaths and bridge parapets.

The proposed road cross-section for the project's mainline is a single carriageway with 3.5m wide lanes in each direction for a total pavement width of 7.0m.

A proposed typical cross section is shown on **Figure 2-2**.

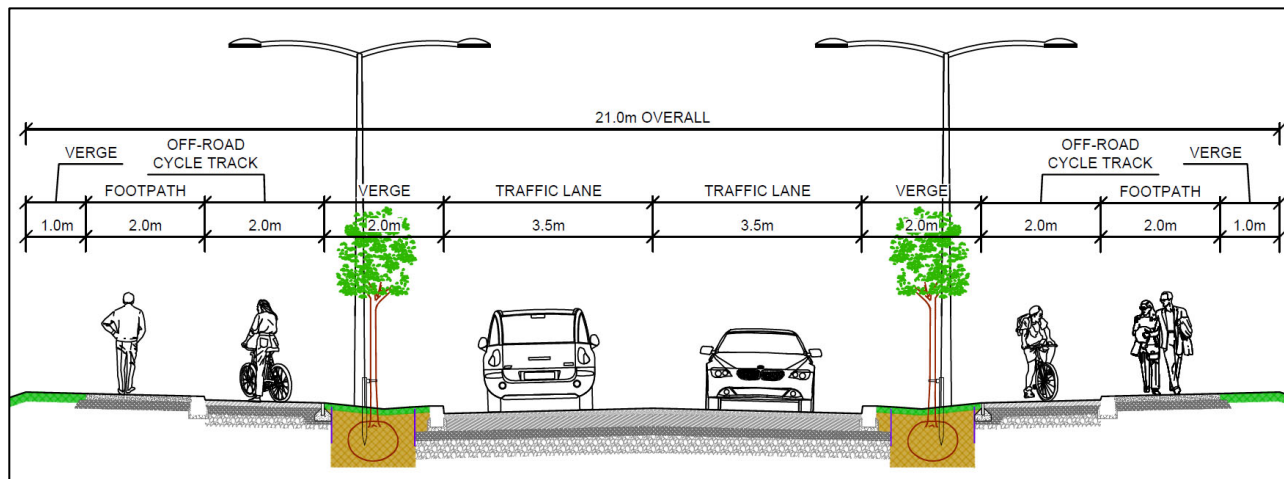


Figure 2-2 Typical Cross Section

2.4 Junctions

Junctions are proposed where the new road interfaces with the following existing roads:

- **Clane Road (R403):** At the start of the route, a 3-arm signalised junction is proposed with the existing regional road;
- **Newtown Road (L1016):** A 4-arm signalised junction is proposed with the existing local road;
- **Simmonstown Manor Road (L5062):** A priority junction is proposed with the L5062 on the northbound side of the proposed new road. On the southbound side of the road, it is proposed to terminate the existing road with a turning head to be provided at the end of the cul-de-sac;

- **Hazelhatch Road (R405):** A 3-arm signalised junction is proposed with the existing regional road;
- **Loughlinstown Road (L5061):** At the end of the route, minor improvements are proposed to the existing roundabout junction.

All junctions include dedicated facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

2.5 River Liffey Bridge Crossing

A new bridge crossing over the River Liffey is proposed as part of the CHMC and will be located approximately 200m south of the beginning of the route at Clane Road.

The proposed bridge design is shown on drawing **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-BR1002** and in **Figure 2-3** below. As the proposed bridge is a single span structure, no works will be required within the river channel.

The CHMC shall help to relieve traffic pressure on the only other existing river crossing in Celbridge, located in the town centre.



Figure 2-3 CGI of the proposed CHMC River Liffey Bridge – Year 10

Source: VP06 Riverview - Abbey Farm Photomontage View (Year 10)

2.6 Drainage

The proposed surface water drainage layouts are illustrated on the drawings **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-C-DR0000 - DR0007** prepared by RPS.

The proposed road cross section limits the ability to utilise soft Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS) features at the road edge (filter strips, grass channels) as the primary surface water collection method. As the carriageway is kerbed, the surface water will be collected from the carriageway using kerb and gully drainage systems which may include traditional gully systems, or by combined kerb & drainage systems (CKDS). However, once the surface water is collected, various SUDS features (bio-retention trenches, swales, attenuation basins, infiltration trenches) will treat and attenuate the surface water run-off before it discharges to the receiving watercourse at greenfield run-off rates.

2.7 Lighting

New public lighting will be provided for the full extent of the proposed project. The proposed lighting columns are shown on drawings **MDT902- RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-GA0001 – GA0015** prepared by RPS.

The lighting will be provided by energy efficient light emitting diode (LED) lanterns providing a neutral white output with each mounted-on lighting columns that will be designed to the minimum height required. All lanterns will be fully cut-off type to minimise light spill and ensure that light is concentrated on the proposed roads, cycleways and footpaths. All cables for the lighting installation will be ducted underground.

2.8 Site Clearance

The proposed development site will be cleared of any obstructions prior to the construction of the project.

Existing buildings and polytunnels currently used for horticulture purposes within the proposed development site will be removed.

The following lengths of existing walls are to be removed:

- Approximately 23m of stone wall to be removed at R403 Clane Road; and
- Approximately 92m of stone and blockwork walls to be removed at Newtown Road.

The *Arboricultural Impact Assessment* (AIA) prepared by RPS has identified that 126 no. individual trees, c. 0.4446 ha groups of trees, 445m length of hedgerow and 135m² of scrub are to be removed.

The tree protection and removal plans are illustrated on drawings **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-LA1000-LA1007** prepared by RPS.

2.9 Landscaping

A preliminary landscape design has been prepared by RPS for the scheme and is illustrated on drawings **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-LA0000-LA0008** prepared by RPS.

The landscape design for the CHMC was developed with regard for the existing landscape character and to mitigate adverse landscape and visual effects. The scheme features native species woodland and hedgerow planting along with standard trees and was designed to link in with existing retained vegetation. The proposed development's design has aimed to minimise vegetation losses. The landscape scheme details serve to enhance biodiversity and incorporate sustainable drainage features.

Where drainage bio-retention trenches are proposed, trees will be planted at c. 25m spacing within the grassed verge between the proposed road and cycleways. It is also proposed to provide tree and vegetation planting in other available green spaces, ensuring this will not impact on sightlines and safe operation of the scheme, or maintenance requirements.

The proposed planting comprises:

- Standard Trees: 219 No.;
- Hedge (linear metres): 2,207m;
- Woodland (hectares): 0.72 ha;
- Woodland (damp conditions, hectares): 0.42 ha; and
- Shrub mix near overhead lines (hectares): 0.14 ha.

2.10 Construction of the Proposed Development

2.10.1 Site Access

It is expected that HGV site access, e.g. for import of earthworks material, shall generally be limited to the R403 Clane Road for site access north of the River Liffey, and the R405 Hazelhatch Road for site access south of the river.

2.10.2 Construction Compound

It is proposed that main compound will be located on the south-east side of Newtown Road. This compound will include welfare facilities and vehicle parking for site staff and will allow for the storage of materials. Temporary land take has been included to accommodate this and the compound will remain in place for the duration of the works. The compound will have appropriate levels of security. The Contractor will be required to manage parking and deliveries at the compound and other areas in such a manner as to ensure that there is no obstruction to general traffic or sightlines during construction.

It is likely that an additional smaller compound will be required for the site to the north of the River Liffey. Also, localised welfare facilities and vehicle parking for site staff may be provided along the scheme.

Following completion of the proposed scheme, the site compounds will be decommissioned, and all materials removed from the site. The temporary land take will be returned to its original use.

The locations of the site compounds are illustrated on drawings **MDT0902-RPS-01-XX-DR-Z-LH0001-LH0003** prepared by RPS.

2.10.3 Construction Timeline

It is estimated that the overall duration of the construction programme will be approximately 24 months. The exact sequencing of the works will be dictated by the Contractor's methodology and programme.

3 POLICY CONTEXT

This section provides an assessment of the proposed development against the relevant planning policies at national, regional and local levels.

3.1 National Policy Context

3.1.1 National Planning Framework

The *Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework* (NPF) was published in February 2018 and sets out the long-term context for Ireland's physical development and associated progress in economic, social and environmental terms. The NPF has been revised in the period 2023 – 2025 and in April 2025 the Government approved the *National Planning Framework First Revision* (NPF First Revision).

The NPF First Revision details ten National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs).

The CHMC is compatible with all of these outcomes and directly supports a number of the outcomes:

“NSO 1: Compact Growth – *Carefully managing the sustainable growth of compact cities, towns and villages will add value and create more attractive places in which people can live and work.*”

A second river crossing and link road to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station will transform the potential for sustainable, compact growth in Celbridge over the coming years. The LAP identifies KDAs with capacity to accommodate significant growth over the LAP period. KDA 5 Simmonstown, located south of the River Liffey, is directly dependant on the provision of a new river crossing. For further detail see **Section 3.3**.

“NSO 2: Enhanced Regional Accessibility – *A co-priority is to enhance accessibility between key urban centres of population and their regions.*”

Celbridge is located in the GDA, less than 20 kilometres from Dublin City Centre, and maintains strong economic and social links to Dublin.

The provision of enhanced pedestrian, cycling and vehicular route between Celbridge and Hazelhatch not alone better links these urban centres but enhances access between Celbridge and the Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station. Services to Dublin City Centre can be boarded at Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station and the DART+ South West Project (**ACP Ref. 316119**) will enable increased rail services on the Kildare Line from the current 12 trains per hour per direction to 26 trains per hour per direction. This will increase the capacity on the line from the current 5,000 passengers per hour per direction to 20,000 passengers per hour per direction.

“NSO 4: Sustainable Mobility – *In line with Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2024 and National Sustainable Mobility Policy, we need to progressively change the way we travel, by reducing our car usage to the extent possible, and increasing the number of journeys taken by sustainable modes of transport, namely walking, cycling and public shared transport.*”

The project is consistent with this strategic objective in that one of its core aims is to facilitate active travel and enhance connectivity to planned electrified rail services.

“NSO 8 Transition to a Carbon Neutral and Climate Resilient Society - *The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act was enacted in 2021 with a commitment to a legally binding target to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 51%.*”

The project is consistent with this strategic objective in that it will deliver a new cycle and pedestrian route and enhance connectivity to the Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station the rail line to which is to be electrified as part of the DART+ South West Project.

“NSO 10 Access to Quality Childcare, Educational and Health Services – *Good access to a range of quality education and health services, relative to the scale of a region, city, town, neighbourhood or community is a defining characteristic of attractive, successful and competitive places.*”

The majority of community facilities within Celbridge are located north of the river, including all churches and most health facilities. Six of the eight schools in the town, including all secondary schools, are also located north of the river. At present, access to these facilities is limited to a single bridge crossing. By improving the transport network in Celbridge and facilitating the development of KDAs south of the River Liffey, the project

will enhance access to all community facilities and services within the town thus fulfilling the objective of NSO 10.

The NPF First Revision seeks to incrementally improve regional accessibility. Building on a more compact approach to urban development requirements and enhancing connectivity between centres of population of scale will support the objectives of the NPF First Revision. The proposed CHMC is compatible with a number of the NPF NSOs, as outlined above, and will enable the sustainable development of Celbridge over the coming years and enhance the liveability and quality of life for the 20,000+ residents of Celbridge.

3.1.2 National Development Plan Review 2025

The *National Development Plan Review 2025* (NDP), which was published on the 22nd of July 2025¹ sets out departmental capital ceilings and the investment priorities that will underpin the implementation of the NPF up to the year 2030.

As set out in the NDP transport is one of the priority sectors for investment and €24.33 billion is to be invested in transport. This represents a significant increase in funding for transport projects. The NDP specifically identifies only a very limited number of projects and over the coming months, individual Ministers will set out their priority programmes and projects within their capital allocations, however the NDP notes the Government has identified the need to provide support for the development of low carbon transport projects.

The development of the proposed river crossing and link road including dedicated cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station will enhance the utility of the proposed DART+ South West expansion of rail service for Celbridge residents, supports active and public transport and is compatible with the NDP Review.

3.1.3 National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) 2021

The *National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland* (NIFTI) 2021 is the Department of Transport's high-level strategic framework for future investment in the land transport network. Its role in the policy hierarchy is shown in **Figure 3-1** below taken from NIFTI.

¹ National Development Plan Review 2025 available at: https://assets.gov.ie/static/documents/NDP_Review_document_-_22_July_2025_1025.pdf

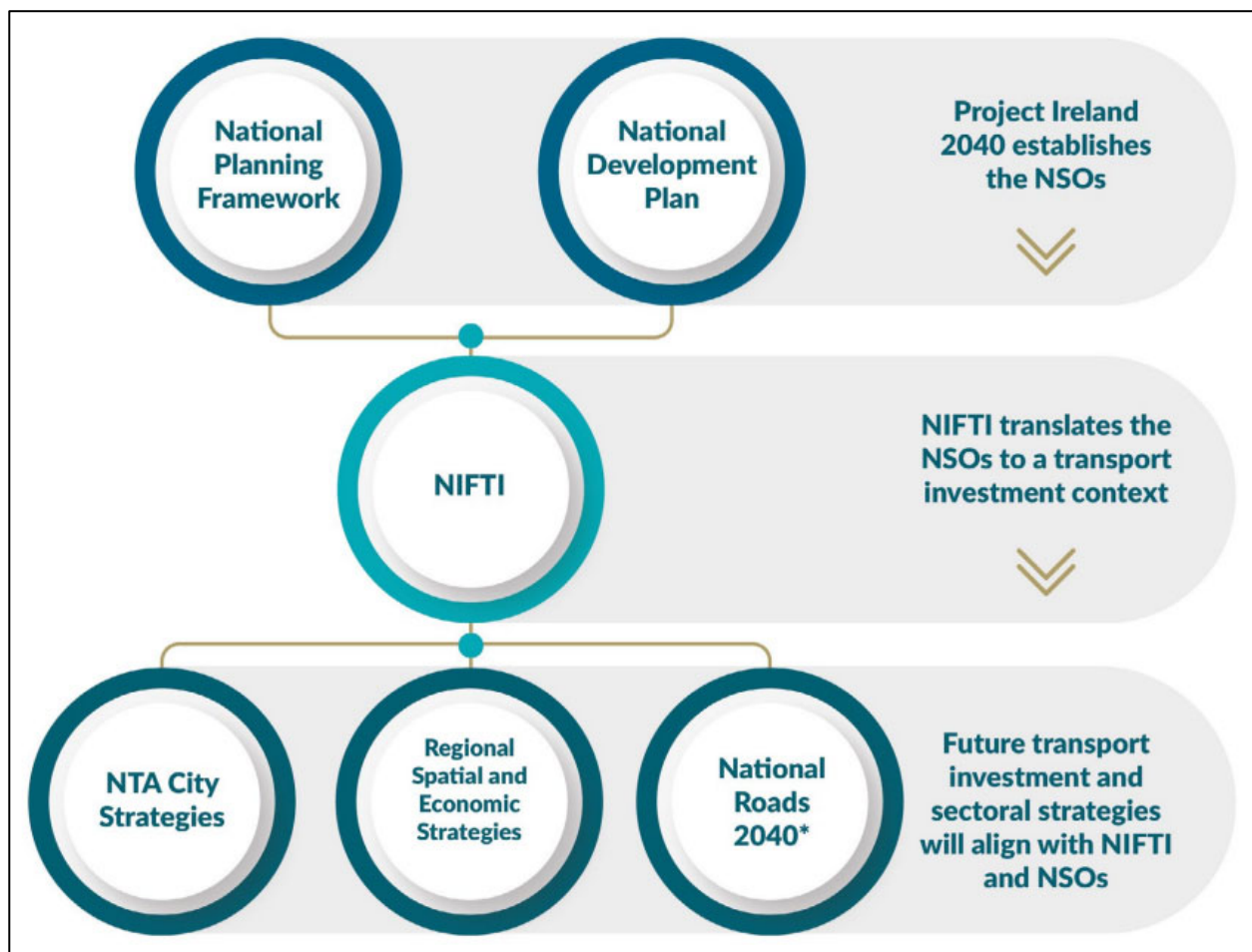


Figure 3-1 Policy Hierarchy

Source: NIFTI, Figure 1

NIFTI states that “for future transport investment to support the delivery of the National Planning Framework and address the challenges we face, it will be necessary to give priority to certain types of investment over others”. The NIFTI Investment priorities identify the types of transport interventions that will be given precedence under the framework. These priorities are supplemented by Modal and Intervention Hierarchies, which will ensure that the most appropriate solution to a given problem or opportunity is deployed. The four NIFTI Investment priorities are set out below.

NIFTI Investment Priority – Decarbonisation

The CHMC will contribute to decarbonisation of the transport section by:

- Reducing carbon emissions by the provision of sustainable transport infrastructure to facilitate a reduction in car trips; and
- Ensuring the future developments proposed for areas of Celbridge located south of the river Liffey are fully accessible by sustainable modes, thereby helping to limit the future growth in car trips.

NIFTI Investment Priority – Protection and Renewal

The CHMC aligns with the NIFTI investment priorities as:

- Whilst this scheme delivers new infrastructure it will enhance the quality of the public realm in Celbridge by reducing traffic and therefore protecting the existing bridge and road infrastructure. The scheme will also improve safety and provide enhanced accessibility and connectivity between the town centre and existing and proposed residential areas south of the river.

NIFTI Investment Priority – Mobility of People and Goods in Urban Areas

The CHMC aligns with the NIFTI investment priorities as:

- The scheme is a sustainable transport route which includes cycle lanes and high-quality pedestrian infrastructure. It will offer an alternative to car travel and therefore encourage modal shift to sustainable forms of travel; and
- The scheme will provide a sustainable transport route to unlock the significant development potential south of the river Liffey, ensuring that growth will be both compact and sustainable.

Modal Hierarchy

NIFTI sets out a modal hierarchy as shown in **Figure 3-2** below. The scheme delivers new dedicated pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The scheme also significantly enhances connectivity with Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station. While the CHMC does provide for vehicular traffic, this will result in reductions in traffic flow in the town and it is considered that the proposed development accords with the modal hierarchy.

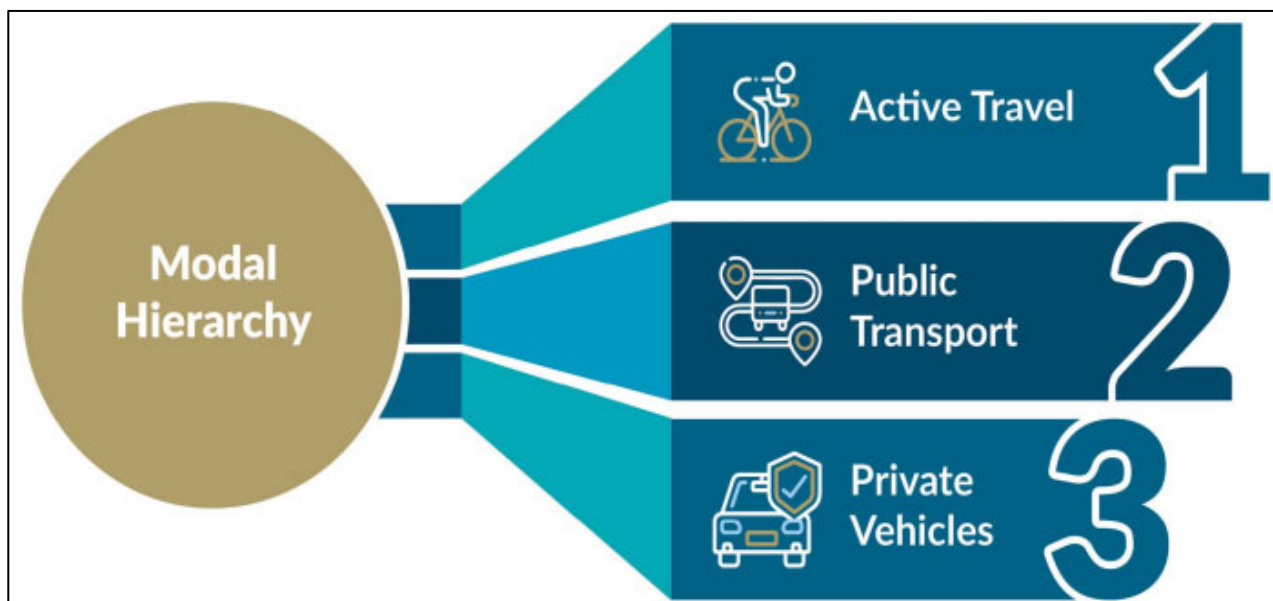


Figure 3-2 NIFTI Modal Hierarchy

3.1.4 National Sustainable Mobility Policy 2022

The *National Sustainable Mobility Policy* (NSMP) 2022 sets out a strategic framework up to 2030 for active travel and public transport journeys to help Ireland meet its climate obligations and to achieve a 51% reduction in carbon emissions by the end of this decade, targeting at least 500,000 additional daily active travel and public transport journeys by 2030. The policy is guided by three key principles, which are underpinned by ten high level goals as detailed below in **Table 3.1**.

Table 3.1: Principles and Goals of the National Sustainable Mobility Policy

Principle	Goal
Safe and Green Mobility	1. Improve mobility safety 2. Decarbonise public transport 3. Expand availability of sustainable mobility in metropolitan areas. 4. Expand availability of sustainable mobility in regional and rural areas. 5. Encourage people to choose sustainable mobility over the private car
People Focused Mobility	6. Take a whole of journey approach to mobility, promoting inclusive access for all. 7. Design infrastructure according to Universal Design Principles and the Hierarchy of Road Users model. 8. Promote sustainable mobility through research and citizen engagement
Better Integrated Mobility	9. Better integrate land use and transport planning at all levels. 10. Promote smart and integrated mobility through innovative technologies and development of appropriate regulation.

The CHMC directly addresses Goals 1, 3, 5, 7, 9 and is consistent with all of these principles and goals as it provides additional sustainable options for travel in Celbridge.

The DART+ Programme is identified as a key focus for the GDA. The proposed development shall enhance connectivity to the Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station which is part of the DART+ South West Project.

3.1.5 Climate Action Plan 2025

The *Climate Action Plan 2025* (CAP25) is the third annual update to Ireland's Climate Action Plan 2019. CAP25 was approved by the government on 15th April 2025.

CAP25 implements the carbon budgets and sectoral emissions ceilings and sets out a roadmap for taking decisive action to halve our emissions by 2030 and reach net zero no later than 2050, as committed to in the Programme for Government. CAP25 builds on the previous plan, outlining how Ireland can accelerate the actions that are required to respond to the climate crisis, putting climate solutions at the centre of Ireland's social and economic development. The provision of pedestrian and cycle facilities and enhancing connectivity with Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station accords fully with the overarching aim of CAP 2025. Relevant policies and objectives for the CHMC in CAP25 include:

- **Action TR/25/7 (TF)** states it is a goal of the CAP25 to “*Advance roll-out of walking/cycling infrastructure in line with National Cycle Network and Cycle Connects plans.*” The CHMC's design provides for walking and cycling use.

3.1.6 Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland 2021

Housing for All - a New Housing Plan for Ireland (Housing for All) is the government's housing plan up to 2030.

It is a multi-annual, multi-billion euro plan which will improve Ireland's housing system and deliver more homes of all types for people with different housing needs.

The government's vision for the housing system over the longer term is to achieve a steady supply of housing in the right locations with economic, social and environmental sustainability built into the system.

Housing for All provides four pathways to achieving four overarching objectives:

- Supporting Homeownership and Increasing Affordability;
- Eradicating Homelessness, Increasing Social Housing Delivery and Supporting Social Inclusion;
- Increasing New Housing Supply; and
- Addressing Vacancy and Efficient Use of Existing Stock.

The first steps described in the Policy for achieving an Increased Supply Objective include: ‘*focus on adequate supply of serviced zoned lands to meet housing need*’.

The CHMC project does not in itself deliver housing, however it does support the Housing for All objective of increasing new housing supply by providing sustainable access and opening KDAs south of the river Liffey in Celbridge. The lands at KDA Simmonstown cannot be developed without the proposed road and second river crossing as stated in the Celbridge LAP. Providing a second bridge along the River Liffey as well as providing a high quality pedestrian / cycle / vehicle route through the KDA will facilitate the use of the 35ha of zoned lands for provision of estimated 1,050 residential units.

3.2 Regional Policy Context

3.2.1 Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy for the Eastern and Midland Region

The *Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031 for the Eastern and Midland Region* (RSES) is a strategic planning and investment framework to shape the future development of the region to 2031 and beyond. The RSES outlines 16 Regional Strategic Outcomes (RSOs), which align with national planning policy. The CHMC is directly compatible with the following RSOs and Regional Policy Objective (RPO):

RSO 2 Compact Growth and Urban Regeneration

RSO 2 is derived from NSO 1 Compact Growth of the NPF and seeks to ensure compact growth and urban regeneration is achieved at a regional level. The CHMC will transform the potential for sustainable, compact growth in Celbridge over the coming years. The construction of a second bridge and link road to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station will assist in unlocking the development potential of Simmonstown KDA south of the River Liffey with an estimated capacity of 1,050 residential units as stated in the LAP. The project aims to alleviate town centre congestion which will help unlock significant potential for town centre development and public realm improvements.

RSO 4 Healthy Communities

RSO 4 is closely related to NSO 10 of the NPF which aims to ensure good access to a range of quality education and health services. RSO 4 also has the objective of protecting and enhancing the quality of our built and natural environment to support active lifestyles including walking and cycling and ensuring cleaner air. The project will include the provision of high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure in accordance with current design standards and best practice which will increase the attractiveness of these active travel modes.

By providing a second bridge crossing, the project will also significantly improve permeability and circulation in the transport network. This will increase the catchment for pedestrians and cyclists, providing them with more direct routes and reducing journey times, all of which will further increase the attractiveness of these modes for all trip types. The reduction of town centre congestion will improve air quality and provide the opportunity for increased protection and enhancement of the built heritage within the town centre.

RSO 6 Integrated Transport and Land Use

By providing improved permeability within the town and improving access to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station, the project aims to provide the opportunity to significantly increase the modal share of those using active travel and public transport. The CHMC is being delivered in a coherent manner and is linked to the development of the Simmonstown KDA

RSO 9 Support the Transition to Low Carbon and Clean Energy

The CHMC will promote active travel and use of public transport. As such it will support the transition to a low carbon and clean energy economy.

In addition to supporting the achievement of a number of RSOs, the CHMC is also consistent with several transport strategy objectives as outlined in the RSES.

RPO 8.8 supports the DART+ South West Project with the following rail projects noted in the associated Table 8.2 of the RSES: *“DART Expansion Programme- new infrastructure and electrification of existing lines, including provision of electrified services to Drogheda or further north on the Northern Line, Celbridge-Hazelhatch or further south on the Kildare, Maynooth and M3 Parkway...”*

The expansion of DART to Celbridge-Hazelhatch is identified as a *“key enabler”* for the *“South western corridor”*.

The CHMC provides enhanced pedestrian, cyclist and vehicular access to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station.

3.2.2 Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area, 2022-2042

The *Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022 -2042* (the Transport Strategy) provides a framework for the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services in the GDA until 2042. It also provides a transport planning policy around which other agencies involved in land use planning, environmental protection, and delivery of other infrastructure such as housing, water and power can align their investment priorities. It is, therefore, an essential component, along with investment programmes in other sectors, for the orderly development of the GDA over the next 20 years.

The overall aim of the Transport Strategy is:

“To provide a sustainable, accessible and effective transport system for the Greater Dublin Area which meets the region’s climate change requirements, serves the needs of urban and rural communities, and supports the regional economy.”

The CHMC delivers enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure in accordance with a number of measures set out in the Transport Strategy:

“Measure WALK2 – Improved Footpaths The NTA, in conjunction with local authorities, will implement footpath improvement schemes across the GDA where required throughout the period of the Transport Strategy in order to ensure that they are of sufficient width, adequately lit, serve both sides of the road in urban areas (in most cases), are of good quality surfacing, provide for seating at appropriate locations, and are free of unnecessary clutter. Footpaths will also be maintained and improved in a manner which contributes positively to the public realm.

Measure CYC1 – GDA Cycle Network It is the intention of the NTA and the local authorities to deliver a safe, comprehensive, attractive and legible cycle network in accordance with the updated Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network

Measure CYC2 – Cycle Infrastructure Design It is the intention of the NTA to ensure that cycle infrastructure in the GDA provides an appropriate quality of service to all users, through the implementation of the design guidance contained in the latest version of the National Cycle Manual”

The Transport Strategy supports the delivery of the DART+ Programme. The CHMC enhances the benefits of the DART+ Programme by providing enhanced access to planned services at Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station.

The Transport Strategy prioritises active and public transport but does recognise the need for enhanced road infrastructure in certain circumstances. A key principle of road development is that they should proceed only where alternative solutions, such as public transport provision, traffic management or demand management measures, cannot effectively and satisfactorily address the particular circumstances prompting the road proposal or are not applicable or appropriate. This principle is particularly relevant to the current proposal. A number of previous transportation studies were undertaken for Celbridge and each of these studies has highlighted the need for a second vehicular river crossing in the town to adequately address the current traffic situation and improve the circulation of the road network. The single vehicular bridge crossing in Celbridge is inadequate for a town of its size. The congestion and a lack of circulation in the road network as a result of the single bridge crossing severely restricts the options available for alternative solutions to address the transportation issues in the town.

3.2.3 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan 2022

As part of the Transport Strategy for the GDA, a Cycle Network Plan (CNP) was prepared. The implementation of the cycle network is an intention (Measure CYC1) of the Transport Strategy. Celbridge is included in the CNP which sets out a vision for the development of the cycle network in the town over the coming years. **Figure 3-3** indicates the proposed additions to the Celbridge cycle network over the lifetime of the plan.

The proposed development forms an integral part of the plans for improvements to Celbridge's cycle network in line with CNP. The CHMC will allow for sustainable modes of travel, including cycling, between the town centre and Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station.

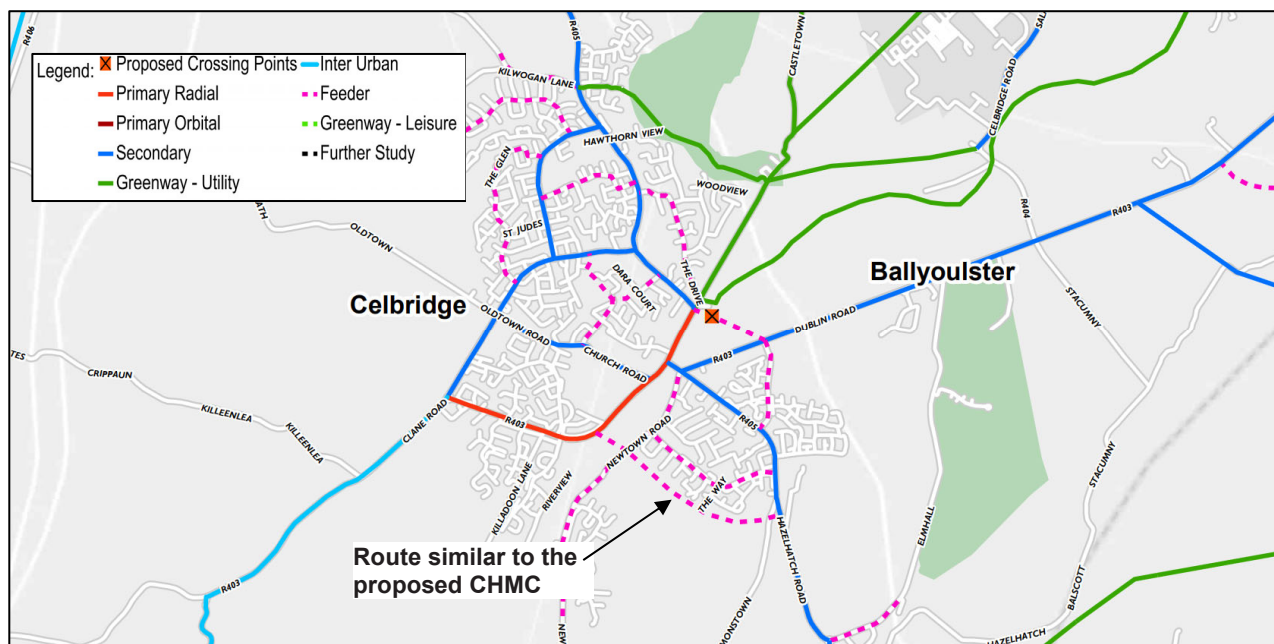


Figure 3-3 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan – Celbridge

Source: 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan

3.3 Local Policy Context

3.3.1 Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029

3.3.1.1 Core & Settlement Strategies

The *Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029* (CDP) sets out a strategic vision for the development of the county during the plan's lifetime. This is supported by policies and objectives which aim to promote balanced and sustainable development, strengthen the county's economic base, and develop an integrated transport network. The CDP describes these aims in its strategic vision:

“To build on the strengths of the county in order to improve the quality of life of all residents, through the creation of high-quality job opportunities, by the provision of high-quality residential development supported by adequate community infrastructure, through the provision of a high-quality sustainable transport network, by healthy placemaking and transformational regeneration, by supporting the transition to a low carbon climate resilient environment, by embracing inclusiveness and by enhancing our natural and built environment for future generations.”

Figure 3-4 below shows Kildare CDP's Core Strategy Map, with Celbridge located in the north-eastern corner of the county highlighted as a “Self-Sustaining Town”. The CDP's description for this settlement type is “high levels of population growth and a weak employment base”.

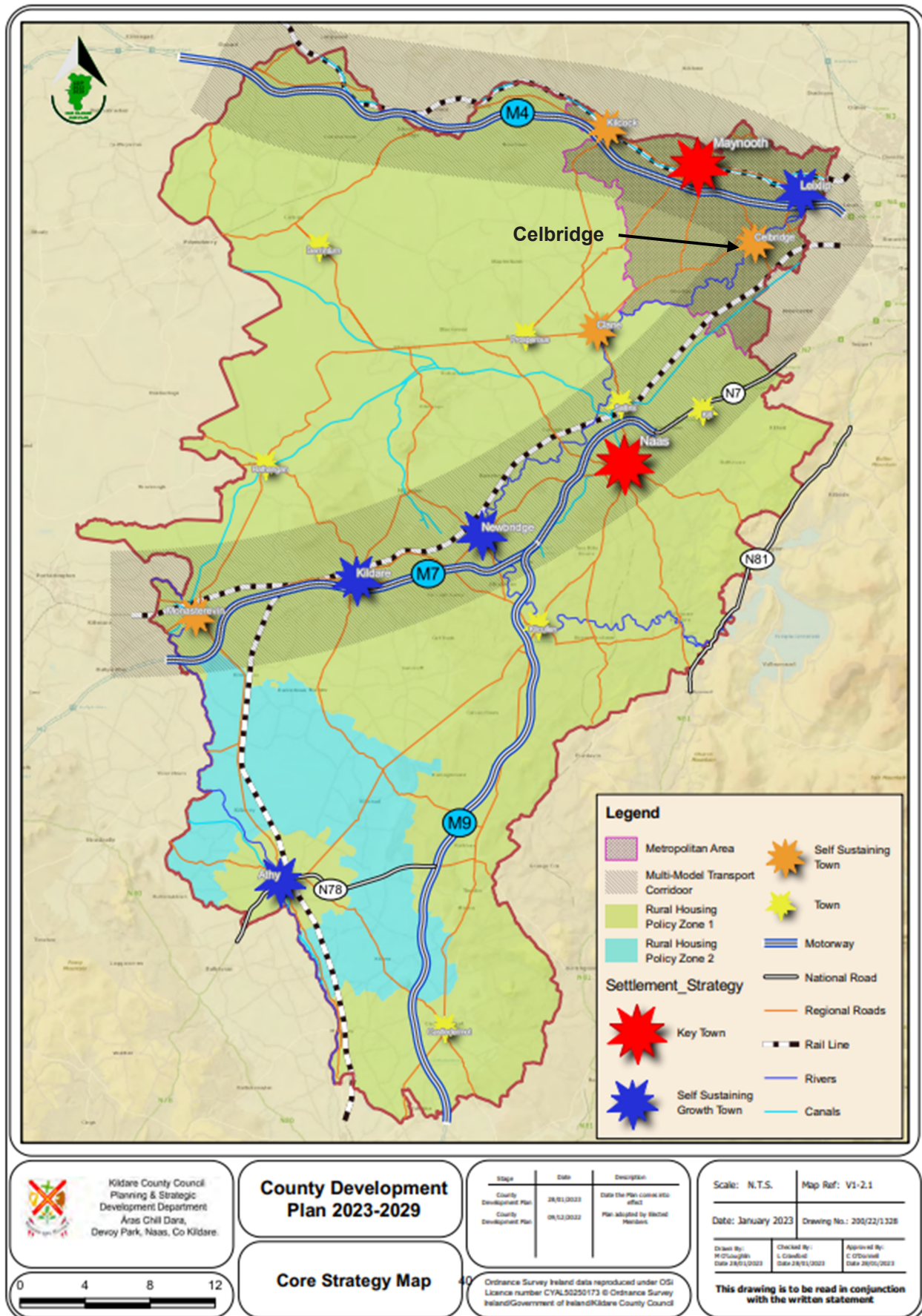


Figure 3-4 Kildare CDP 2023 – 2029 Core Strategy Map

3.3.1.2 Transport and Movement

The CHMC and proposed second river crossing are one of the 25 priority projects contained in Table 5.4: Priority Road and Bridge Projects of the CDP. The upgrade of the existing bridge in Celbridge for vulnerable road users is also listed as a priority project and will be facilitated by the construction of a second crossing.

Objective TM 066 states that it is an objective of KCC to:

“Secure the implementation of the Priority Road and Bridge Projects and the Regional Roads Identified for Improvement (Table 5.4 and 5.5, refer) and maintain corridors free from development to facilitate future roads, cycle facilities and other transport infrastructure improvement identified within this Plan and Local Area Plans.”

The proposed CHMC directly supports several policies included in *Chapter 5: Sustainable Mobility* of the CDP, across headings such as sustainable movement, walking and cycling, public transport, and the road and street network. The policies related to sustainable mobility are detailed below:

- **TM P1:** *“Promote sustainable development through facilitating movement to, from, through and within the County that is accessible to all and prioritises walking, cycling and public transport;*
- **TM P2:** *Prioritise and promote the development of high-quality, suitable, safe and sustainable walking and cycling pathways and facilities, both intercounty, intra-county (in consultation with all relevant stakeholders including neighbouring local authorities) and within the towns and settlements of County Kildare within a safe road/street environment that will encourage a shift to active travel that is accessible for all, regardless of age, physical mobility, or social disadvantage, subject to all relevant and cumulative environmental assessments and planning conditions. New projects (including greenways, blueways and cycleways) should first be subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection;*
- **TM P4:** *Ensure ongoing competitiveness and the efficient movement of people and goods in the county through the improvement and expansion of the road and street network within the county to support economic development and provide access to new and existing communities, employment areas and development, all while prioritising sustainable modes of transport. New roads and other transport infrastructure projects should first be subject to the undertaking of feasibility assessment. Where feasibility is established, a Corridor and Route Selection Process will be undertaken where appropriate, for relevant new road infrastructure in two stages: Stage 1 – Route Corridor Identification, Evaluation and Selection and Stage 2 – Route Identification, Evaluation and Selection;*
- **TM P8:** *Ensure that streets and roads within the county are designed to balance placemaking and movement to prioritise sustainable modes of transport and to provide a safe traffic calmed street environment in accordance with the principles set out in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019) while meeting the needs of road users of all ages and abilities;*
- **TM P9:** *Effectively manage and minimise the impacts of traffic in urban areas and prioritise the movement of pedestrians, cyclists, and public transport particularly at key junctions, while maximising the efficient use of existing resources.”*

The CHMC also indirectly supports other transport policies through the provision of improved connectivity to public transport:

- **TM P3:** *Promote the sustainable development of the county by supporting and guiding national agencies in delivering major improvements to the public transport network and to encourage a shift from car-based travel to public transport that is accessible for all, regardless of age, physical mobility, or social disadvantage;*

Cycling and walking facilities are a central component of the proposed CHMC design and will aid in the promotion of walking and cycling as safe and viable options in accessing both Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station and Celbridge town centre. New developments will connect with the proposed CHMC to maximise catchment areas and increase access for pedestrians and cyclists, thereby encouraging modal shift from car usage to walking and cycling. New cycling and pedestrian facilities will also allow safer access to schools and services in areas underserved by cycle amenities.

The CHMC will help to address issues of safety and congestion in Celbridge by providing a high-quality facility, designed to current standards, which will redistribute traffic away from the town centre. The proposed

road will provide greater access to existing and future communities through integration with KDAs south of the River Liffey and by increasing permeability of traffic through the town. The CHMC will also provide easier access to employment areas within Celbridge and to commuter areas such as Dublin city through easier access to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station and the improvement in network permeability.

3.3.1.3 Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure

Chapter 12 of the CDP sets out KCC's policies and objectives with regard to biodiversity and green infrastructure. The aim of this chapter is to protect existing biodiversity and green infrastructure while also providing clear guidance for mitigation of impacts on the environment as a result of new development.

Objectives **BI 026**, **BI 027** and **BI 028** of the CDP refer to the protection of hedgerows, and where their removal is unavoidable, the need for mitigation planting.

- **BI 026:** *“Prevent, in the first instance, the removal of hedgerows to facilitate development. Where their removal is unavoidable, same must be clearly and satisfactorily demonstrated to the Planning Authority. In any event, removal shall be kept to an absolute minimum and there shall be a requirement for mitigation planting comprising a hedge of similar length and species composition to the original, established as close as is practicable to the original and where possible linking to existing adjacent hedges. Ideally, native plants of a local provenance and origin should be used for any such planting. Removal of hedgerows and trees prior to submitting a planning application will be viewed negatively by the planning authority and may result in an outright refusal;*
- **BI 027:** *Require the retention and appropriate management of hedgerows and to require infill or suitably sized transplanted planting where possible in order to ensure an uninterrupted green infrastructure network;*
- **BI 028:** *Promote the integration of boundary hedges within and along development sites into development design so as to avoid “trapped hedges” located to the boundary of houses within the development layout. Encourage the planting of woodlands, trees and hedgerows as part of new developments and as part of the Council’s own landscaping works ideally using native plants of local provenance and origin.”*

The proposed development of the CHMC includes the planting of 2,207m of new hedgerows and the removal of 445m of hedgerows. The proposed development will result in a net gain of 1,762m of hedgerow.

Objectives **BI 029**, **BI 030** and **BI 032** set out KCC's aims with regard to the protection of trees and necessary measures to ensure mitigation of impacts when tree felling is required for new development.

- **BI 029:** *“Require the undertaking of a comprehensive tree survey carried out by a suitably qualified arborist where development proposals require felling of mature trees; the tree survey shall assess the condition, ecological and amenity value of the tree stock proposed for removal as well as mitigation planting and a management scheme. It should be noted that rotting and decaying trees are an integral part of a woodland ecosystem and can host a range of fungi and invertebrates, important for biodiversity. While single or avenue trees that are decaying may be removed, others that are part of group or cluster may be subject to retention;*
- **BI 030:** *Ensure a Tree Management Plan is provided to ensure that trees are adequately protected during development and incorporated into the design of new developments;*
- **BI 032:** *Protect trees which are the subject of Tree Preservation Orders (see Table 12.3) and the 57 Champion and Heritage Trees in Kildare, which are identified on the Tree Register of Ireland.”*

It is proposed 219 no. trees be planted along the route of the CHMC. The construction of the CHMC will require the removal of 126 no. trees.

An AIA and *Tree Management Plan* for the proposed development have been prepared by RPS and are enclosed with this application. Of the 126 no. trees to be removed, 4 no. (3.2%) were categorised “Unsuitable for Retention” and 87 no. (69%) were categorised as “Low quality” by the AIA.

3.3.2 Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023

The Celbridge LAP was made and came into effect in 2017. It is stated on the KCC website that the Council “will have regard to the following adopted Local Area Plans until such time as they are reviewed or another plan made”². The Celbridge LAP is then listed below. A new Celbridge LAP has not yet been made and a new draft Celbridge LAP has not yet been published.

3.3.2.1 Core Strategies

The Strategic Objectives outlined in Section 3.2 of the Celbridge LAP underpin the overall vision for Celbridge and include the following strategic aims which either directly or indirectly support the CHMC:

- *“To accommodate 10% of Kildare’s housing growth over the period 2017-2023 in accordance with the County Development Plan Core Strategy;*
- *To enhance the quality, ambience and vitality of Celbridge Town Centre through renewal and extension and to promote its role as a vibrant retail, cultural and community centre that is integrated with the wider heritage assets of the town;*
- *To support and facilitate the development of high quality, integrated residential neighbourhoods and deliver social and community infrastructure and facilities in tandem with new housing.*
- *To enhance the existing transport network by increasing permeability and connectivity for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicles, in order to enable access to key land uses such as community facilities, public transport nodes and the town centre, as well as the crossing of the River Liffey;*
- *To phase future growth in line with the capacity of supporting physical infrastructure and to ensure that it occurs in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development;*
- *To protect and enhance the unique built and natural heritage as the defining character of Celbridge and a pillar for sustainable growth, by promoting the enhancement, management and understanding of these assets;*
- *To phase new development to ensure that it occurs in an orderly and efficient manner in accordance with proper planning and sustainable development.”*

Core Strategy Objectives

The CHMC accords with the following LAP objectives:

- **CSO1.2:** *“To support new residential development in Key Development Areas (KDAs) in tandem with the delivery of supporting physical and social infrastructure;*
- **CSO1.5:** *To support and facilitate the development on zoned lands based on the policies and objectives of the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023.”*

Housing and Community

Section 6: Housing and Community of the LAP details the following objectives supported by the scheme:

- **RDO1.1:** *“To promote and facilitate the phased development of identified Key Development Areas in accordance with the guidance;*
- **RDO1.4:** *To focus the majority of new housing in Celbridge within walking or cycling distance of a school cluster, the town centre, neighbourhood centre or transport routes.”*

Land Use Zoning

A zoning map from the LAP is provided below in **Figure 3-5**. The 2 no. potential “River Crossing Corridors” are shown on the map (blue circles), with the more southern corridor representing the CHMC proposal. The Simmonstown KDA is outlined in yellow to the south-east of the proposed river crossing, with most of the land inside being zoned as “New Residential” and 2 no. sites as “Community and Educational”. The map

² <https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/LocalAreaPlans/CurrentLocalAreaPlans/>

displays the strategic importance of the CHMC including a new river crossing, and its role in unlocking the potential of 35ha of zoned lands in Simmonstown KDA which could provide an estimated 1,050 residential units for Celbridge.

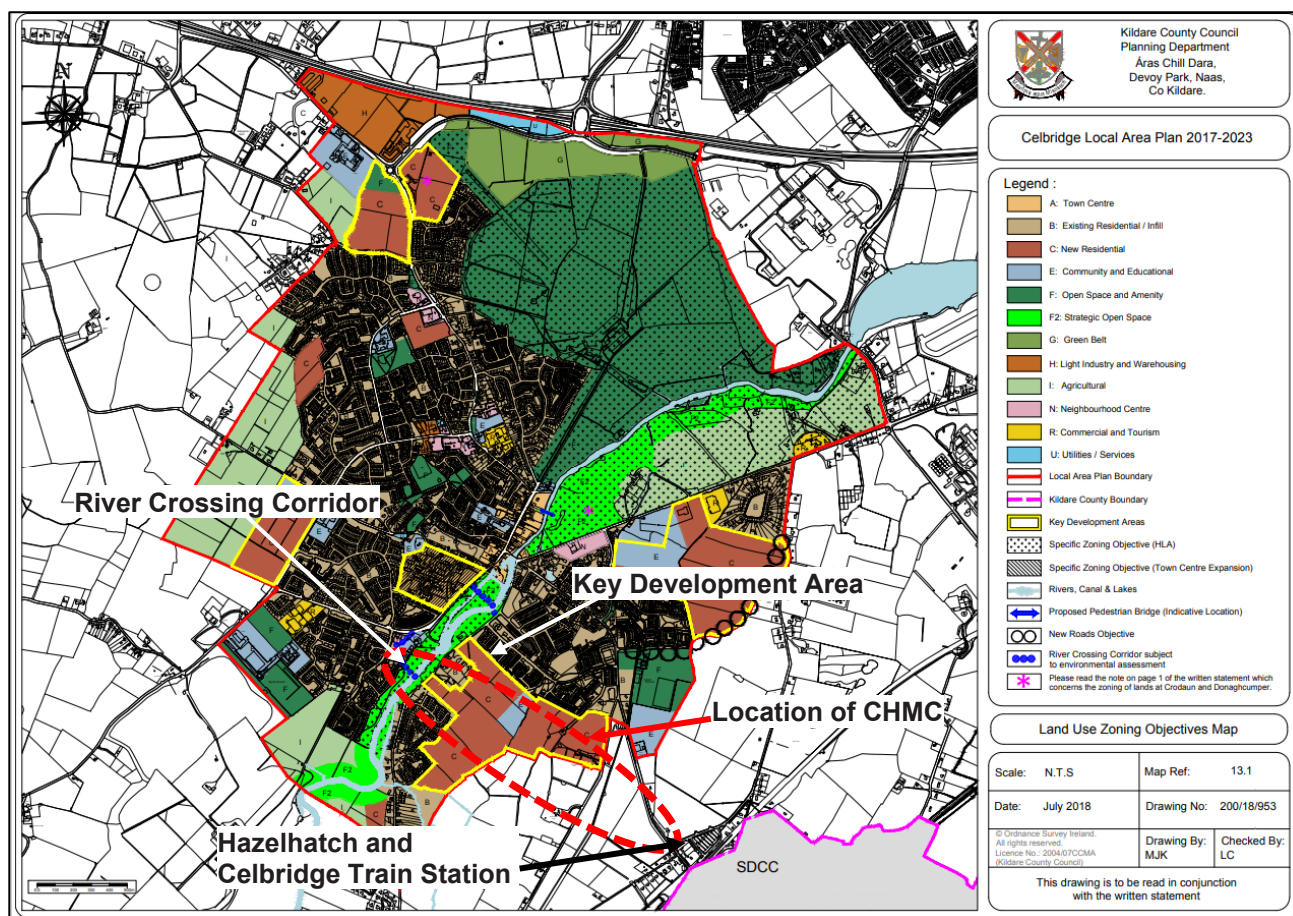


Figure 3-5 Land Use Zoning Objectives Map (Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023)

3.3.2.2 Transport Policy

One of the aims of the Celbridge LAP is to set out a framework for enhancement of the town's existing transport network by increasing permeability, particularly for sustainable modes of transport, improving access to public transport and providing a new Liffey crossing to relieve the current heavily trafficked crossing through the town centre.

Section 8.3 Roads and Street Network states that:

“Road infrastructure is being progressively improved throughout the town, but the bridge remains as a major cause of congestion to traffic flow in the town. Congestion is a significant problem in the town centre and one of the key priorities of this plan is the provision for enhanced crossings of the River Liffey. The transportation objectives provide for the upgrade of the existing bridge for pedestrians and the possible construction of two (one vehicular bridge and one pedestrian/cyclist bridge) new bridges in order to satisfy the need for a new river crossing. This would significantly relieve congestion issues, create improved connectivity within the urban environment and provide resilience for the town from a movement perspective.”

The Proposed Scheme will directly address the need for a new vehicular river crossing and will also include facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. The additional capacity added to the road network will contribute towards reducing traffic congestion issues, create improved connectivity within the urban environment and provide resilience for the town from a movement perspective.

A Transport and Movement Map from the LAP is shown below in **Figure 3-6**. Two potential “River Crossing Corridor” are shown on the map (pink circles), with the more southern corridor representing the CHMC proposal. Extending in a south-easterly direction from this proposed crossing is a “New Roads Objective”

(larger clear circles), of which the western section follows a route similar to the CHMC. These indicative routes convey the LAP's strategic goals of developing both a new river crossing and mobility corridor to unlock lands in the Simmonstown KDA and improving access to the south-eastern areas of Celbridge / Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station.

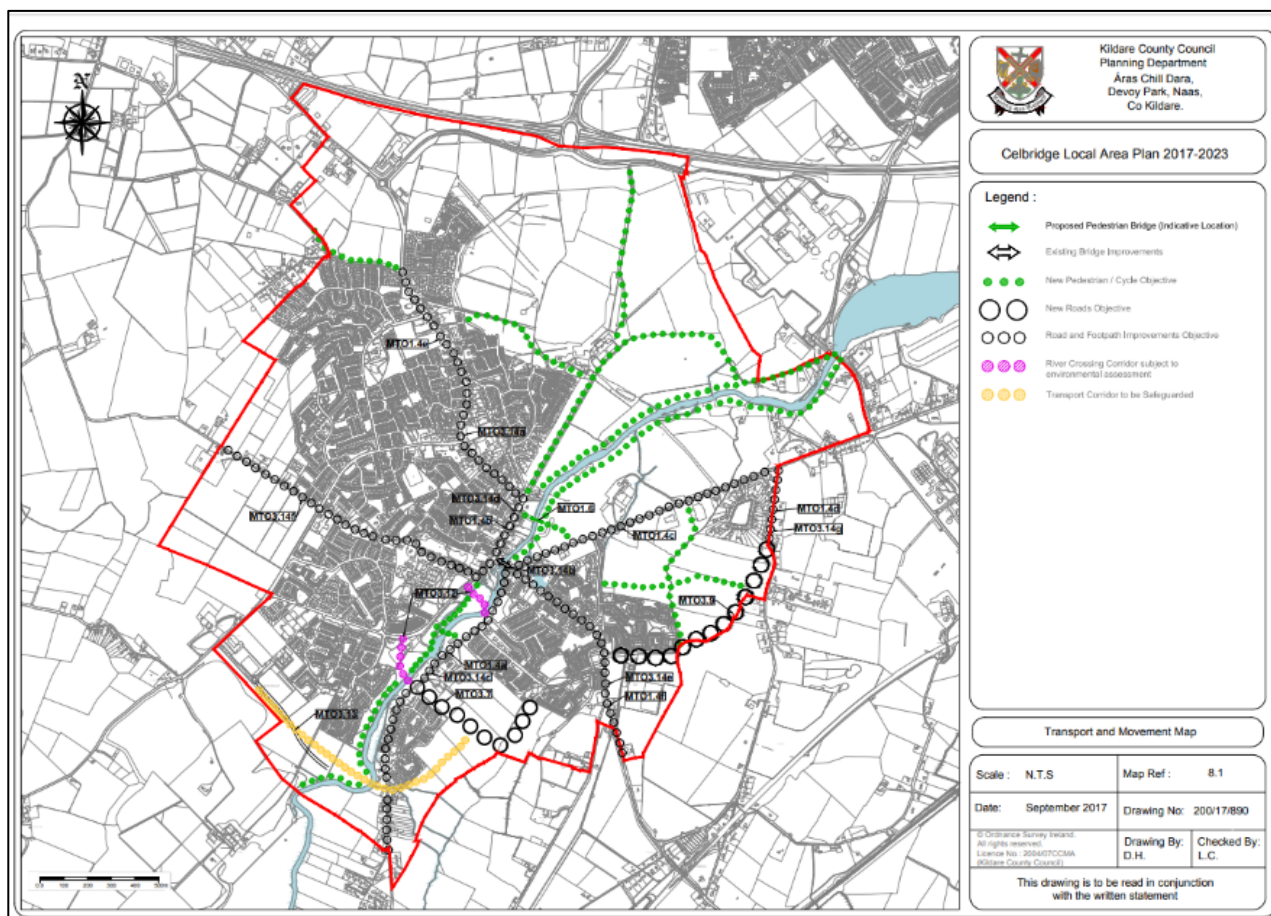


Figure 3-6 Transport and Movement Map (Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023)

Section 8: Movement & Transport of the LAP details the specific objectives of the council and includes the following objectives that are supported by the scheme:

Walking and Cycling

- **MTO 1.2:** “To facilitate and encourage cycle as a more convenient and safe method of transport through the development of new or improved cycle facilities in Celbridge with a particular focus on the routes identified in the National Transport Authority (NTA) Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan to link population, commercial, community facilities, schools and transport nodes;
- **MTO 1.7:** To promote enhanced permeability for pedestrians and cyclists within the urban environment in order to improve access to local shops, schools, public transport services and other amenities; and
- **MTO 1.9:** To upgrade existing pedestrian and cycle facilities across the River Liffey.”

The completion of a second river crossing and the CHMC would provide a much-needed expansion of cycle and pedestrian infrastructure in Celbridge. The new facilities would increase permeability for pedestrians and cyclists, would be direct, safer, and more amenable and would encourage greater take up of cycling and walking as a means of transport. By reducing congestion in the town centre, the CHMC would enable the upgrading of existing pedestrian facilities throughout the town.

Public Transport

- **MTO 2.1:** *“To create an interlinked public transport network that maximises the efficiency of existing services, reduces overall journey times and facilitates easy exchanges between modes and/or routes;*
- **MTO 2.4:** *To provide greater opportunities for modal shift to public transport through the appropriate management of development particularly in lands to the south of Celbridge Town Centre;*
- **MTO 2.5:** *To work with all agencies to improve and develop public transport facilities in the area and to link such facilities with Celbridge Town Centre and other nearby towns and to ensure that developments are carried out in accordance with the requirements of this plan and relevant legislation; and*
- **MTO 2.6:** *To promote alternative routes of the bus service to Hazelhatch Train Station so that it serves Main Street, Maynooth Road, Shackleton Road and Clane Road.”*

The Proposed Scheme would provide a new high-quality route from Celbridge town to Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station which would in turn generate further demand for public transport as a means to connect with rail services at Hazelhatch. The new route would allow alternative bus routes and additional services to service Celbridge and ensure public transport is accessible, efficient, and well connected, thereby providing opportunity for greater modal shift towards sustainable public transport.

Roads and Street Network

- **MTO 3.3:** *“To maintain, and improve as required, the local road network to ensure a high standard of road quality and safety in accordance with the requirements of this plan and relevant legislation;*
- **MTO 3.5:** *To secure the provision of the strategic road objectives identified on Map 8.1 (see figure below), which provides access to new communities and Key Development Areas within the town;*
- **MTO 3.9:** *To facilitate the construction of a road from Hazelhatch Park to Newtown Road in tandem with development of KDA 5 and in the interim to protect this route from development;*
- **MTO 3.10:** *To facilitate the construction of a road from Primrose Hill to Loughlinstown Road in tandem with the development of KDA 2 and in the interim to protect this route from development;*
- **MTO 3.12:** *To facilitate the construction of a new vehicular river crossing between the Clane Road and Newtown Road within either of the two protected corridors, as indicated on Map 8.1, subject to environmental assessment;*
- **MTO 3.13:** *To protect from development a route for a potential new road (including a new bridge over the River Liffey) between Clane Road (near the Celbridge North Kildare Educate Together School) and Hazelhatch Park; and*
- **MTO 3.16:** *To improve junctions and to upgrade traffic signals where appropriate throughout the town.”*

The CHMC would represent a significant improvement to the local road network in Celbridge and Hazelhatch. The proposed second river crossing and link between Celbridge town centre and Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station would drastically reduce congestion and provide increased permeability within the road network. Furthermore, the CHMC would ensure that the future development of KDAs like Simmonstown is supported by a high-quality road and street network.

4 RELEVANT PLANNING HISTORY

A desktop planning search of My Plan and ACP's planning enquiry system was undertaken to review granted planning applications and those currently under consideration within the last 5 years, and within a 100m buffer the proposed development. The results of this exercise are listed in the table hereunder. As can be seen most of the applications relate to small scale residential development within Celbridge.

Table 4.1: Planning Applications within the last five years

Ref. No.	Description of Development	Date Granted
ACP Ref. 316119	DART+ South West Electrified Heavy Railway Order - Hazelhatch & Celbridge Station to Heuston Station, and Heuston Station to Glasnevin	13/11/2024
24113	Conversion of existing attic space at 56 Priory Lodge, St. Raphael's Manor, Celbridge	16/05/2024
19581	Roof alterations for the conversion of the attic space to comprise the construction of a new gable wall to the side elevation at 48 Priory Lodge, Saint Raphael's Manor, Celbridge.	08/10/2019
24145	Development will consist of single storey extension to side and rear of existing house at 11 The Crescent, Temple Manor, Celbridge.	26/06/2024
23984	The conversion of the attic space into storage use with a projecting dormer window to the rear at 39 Priory Lodge, St Raphael's Manor, Celbridge.	13/12/2023

The applications identified above do not prejudice the delivery of the proposed scheme and the improved accessibility provided by the scheme will benefit the local community and supports the provision of enhanced rail services permitted in the DART+ South West Project.

5 CONSULTATION

5.1 Introduction

Comprehensive project consultations have informed the evolution of the proposed development via public information strategies, public consultations and engagement with Statutory Consultees.

5.2 Study Area & Constraints

A letter was issued to Statutory Consultees on 24th of August 2020 in relation to the Study Area and Constraints to inform the Constraints Study and to help inform the development of route options. A summary of responses received is provided below in **Table 5.1**:

Table 5.1: Summary of Consultation Responses at Constraints Stage

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
DAU (Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht)	Acknowledged receipt of Letter. No specific comments.
Geological Survey of Ireland	• Provided a list of online geo-data viewers/download links. • Requested copy of reports detailing any site investigations carried out. • Requested should any significant bedrock cuttings be created, that they will be designed to remain visible as rock exposure rather than covered with soil and vegetated, in accordance with safety guidelines and engineering constraints. In areas where natural exposures are few, or deeply weathered, this measure would permit on-going improvement of geological knowledge of the subsurface and could be included as additional sites of the geoheritage dataset, if appropriate.
Office of Public Works	• Reference should be made to the <i>Guidelines on the Planning System and Flood Risk Management</i> (DHPLG / OPW, Nov 2009) issued under Section 28 of the Planning Acts to ensure that the key principles of flood risk management and sustainable planning are adopted. • Recommended that the sequential approach to managing flood risk within the planning system should be considered at the earliest stage, and where uncertainty exists the precautionary approach should be taken or furthermore detailed assessment carried out before decisions are made. • The OPW advised that clear commitments and objectives regarding flood risk and the principles of the Guidelines be included, and that persons with the relevant expertise review any flood risk assessments. • The OPW highlighted specific flood risk management issues for consideration: ○ Full regard be given to the proposed development of a flood relief scheme in Celbridge, to ensure that development proposals support and do not impede or prevent the progression of these measures. ○ The project should have full regard to the protection, and the need for maintenance, of the flood relief schemes completed under the Arterial Drainage Acts, 1945-1995, including the Skinkeen Stream (Hazelhatch) Flood Relief Scheme. ○ Consideration of climate change impacts. ○ Consideration of Arterial Drainage Schemes and Drainage District, ensuring that that access requirements are preserved for the maintenance of such. ○ Land Protected by Agricultural Embankments. ○ Impacts on Other Areas - avoid increasing flood risk elsewhere. ○ Natural Water Retention Measures - take account of the opportunities for natural water retention measures to reduce runoff and provide other benefits such as to water quality, biodiversity, etc.

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
	○ Bridges and Culverts over Watercourses – appropriate consent from the Commissioners under Section 50 of the Arterial Drainage Act 1945 is required for the construction, replacement or alteration of bridges and culverts over any watercourse.
Inland Fisheries Ireland	• The Liffey and several of its tributaries are exceptional in the area in supporting Atlantic salmon (<i>Salmo salar</i>, listed under Annex II and V of the EU Habitats Directive) and Sea trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>) in addition to resident Brown trout (<i>Salmo trutta</i>) populations. • The Donaghcomper River supports a significant population of Brown trout and provides spawning habitat for a population of Atlantic salmon. The Shinkeen River supports a population of resident Brown trout and migratory Sea trout. This highlights the sensitivity of local watercourses and the Liffey catchment in general. • The Grand Canal at Hazelhatch supports significant populations of coarse fish not to mention a range of other freshwater aquatic species, plus all associated floral and faunal components in adjacent habitats. • IFI recommends the use of clear span structures on fisheries waters. • Disturbance of riparian habitats should be minimised. An undisturbed buffer zone between development area and river bank should be maximised (10m minimum). Riparian vegetation should be retained in as natural a state as possible at all times.
Health Service Executive	• Noted the Grand Canal is a proposed natural heritage area and protection of the amenity should be considered in the constraints study. • Notes that Celbridge is located in an identified Air Quality Zone as designated under the Air Quality Regulations (SI 180 of 2011) • The possible impact of increased air emissions in the study area should be considered in the constraints study. • EHS recommends all public and private water drinking supplies are identified and mapped as part of the constraints study. • All currently approved planning applications should be identified and avoided when identifying route selections. Cognisance should also be taken of the strategic objectives of both the Kildare County Development Plan 2017-2023 and the Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023. • The EHS considers St Patrick's National School and Elm Hall Nursing Home to be sensitive receptors, along with any residential development or recreational area along the final route selection. The potential impact of increased noise from the proposed roadway on the surrounding community and in particular on sensitive receptors should be considered in the route selection process. • The impact of the proposed road on the existing community in the context of the wider determinants of health and wellbeing should be considered as part of the route selection process. • The route selection should have cognisance of existing green spaces and the recreational use of land in the study area. Recommended that the conservation of existing biodiversity is a consideration in the route selection process. • An absence of dedicated pedestrian and cycle facilities should be considered a constraint in route selection. The provision and location of park and ride facilities, bus stops and the integration of the rural transport scheme should also inform the route selection process.
Irish Aviation Authority	• No observations
National Transport Authority	• Recommended that the preparation of the scheme be guided by the policies within the Transport Strategy, which support the consolidation of urban-generated development within existing urban areas, in complement with the integration of land use and transport planning. • Recommended that the preparation of the scheme is informed by NTA guidance available on the NTA website.

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
	- It is noted that it is an objective of the Celbridge LAP 2017 – 2023 to provide a River Crossing Corridor subject to environmental assessment as well as a road proposal linking the Hazelhatch Road to the Dublin Road. - The proposed road and bridge scheme should take cognisance of the existing and proposed bus services (under BusConnects Network Redesign). - Celbridge currently has commuter services to Dublin, serving Hazelhatch and Celbridge Station. The recently announced DART + programme will provide upgraded services on this line. - All proposals should ensure that accessibility to public transport services are protected and enhanced by the proposed project. The project should not result in severance between communities or result in more circuitous journeys for those wishing to access public transport by walking or cycling. - The proposed project should ensure that pedestrian and cycle networks are protected and enhanced as a priority. The proposed road should be designed in accordance with the principles of DMURS as well as the National Cycle Manual such that all routes are designed to ensure the safe movement of pedestrians and cyclists, in particular at junctions. - The proposed road should join with and enhance the pedestrian and cycle networks in Celbridge such that coherent, safe, efficient movement between residential areas and schools and services is maintained and improved.
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	- Acknowledges that this scheme is not a national road project. - Advises that the project should be developed by the Council to complement the strategic function of the national road network and should not undermine or compromise this function.

A Constraints Study which incorporated the feedback from the consultees was prepared by RPS in order to identify key constraints within the study area and to examine alternative options for the Proposed Scheme. These constraints and their assessment informed the decision-making process in terms of the preliminary options assessment and the appraisal of feasible options.

5.3 Consultation on Route Corridor Options

Stage 1 of the Option Selection process considered the constraints as identified in the Constraints Study in order to develop a range of feasible route corridors within the study area. This process led to the identification of ten route corridor options as part of Stage 1 of the options selection process. These initial route corridors were assessed under the three criteria of Engineering, Environment and Economy.

Five of these route corridors (A, A1, B, C and E) were shortlisted to proceed to Stage 2 of the Option Selection Process. The route corridors were presented to the public during a Non-Statutory Public Consultation period (PC 1) which ran from the 12th of February to 11th March 2021³. A letter was also issued to Statutory Consultees on 6th of April 2021 in relation to the Route Corridor Options to seek feedback on the five shortlisted Route Corridor Options identified for the scheme. A summary of the responses received from the statutory consultees is provided below in **Table 5.2**.

Table 5.2: Summary of Consultation Responses from Statutory Consultees on Route Corridor Options (PC1)

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
Office of Public Works	- Attached a map highlighting OPW maintained channels in the area concerned. - OPW drainage channels require a 10m strip along the edge of the channel measured out from the top bank edge of the channel. This strip should not be planted or paved in any way, which would prevent access for maintenance. Ensuring there is adequate flow in drainage channels and carrying out regular maintenance will assist in the prevention of flooding. This requirement should be applied for all drainage channels where possible to assist the prevention of flooding.

³ <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/en/consultation/celbridge-hazelhatch-link-road-public-consultation-scheme-options>

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
	New culverts/bridges on any watercourse or changes to existing structures will require Section 50 consent.
Royal Irish Academy Standing Committee for Archaeology	- Noted they are not a statutory consultee; they are a voluntary committee and are grateful for being consulted. - The proposed development should take due consideration of the potential for recorded and unknown archaeological features and for the need to engage appropriate expertise at the earliest possible opportunity to enable compliance with statutory requirements. - Suggest that our built and archaeological heritage has the potential to add a layer of appreciation of the surrounding landscape. - Recommends that special attention is taken with regard to any works adjacent to riverine and wetland locations given the high likelihood for the presence of archaeological objects in such areas and that archaeological mitigation is a central part of the project from the very beginning (including checking National Museum of Ireland Topographical files, cartographic evidence, modern and historic aerial photographic and archival research). The need for adequate conservation facilities for waterlogged material should also be considered. - Indirect impacts on the setting of monuments, their place in the landscape and views into and outwards from monuments should also be considered.
Uisce Éireann	- Note that the proposed routes would have the potential to be in close proximity to, or directly impact Irish Water assets at some locations. Irish Water assets would include both above and below grounds assets such as watermains, service connections, rising mains, foul and surface water sewers etc. Recommend early engagement with Irish Water as the preferred route emerges. - Any temporary connection throughout the construction phase is subject to a connection agreement with IW.
DAU (Department of Tourism, Culture, Arts, Gaeltacht, Sport and Media)	- Whichever route is chosen should be the subject of an archaeological assessment consisting of walkover and desktop surveys, as well as geophysical survey and test excavations. - Of the route options presented for consideration, routes B and C seem preferable, as they are the furthest away from areas with known archaeological potential. - Requested to send any further communications to the Development Applications Unit (DAU).
Health Service Executive	- An assessment of the significant impacts on population and human health should be carried out with regard to each specific route option. - Recommended that the needs of pedestrians/cyclists are considered and factored into the preferred route selection process. - Consider the impacts the preferred route option will have on the walking environment and the access of communities to recreational facilities or green spaces. Safe and direct pedestrian connectivity to any open and recreational space must be preserved. - The route selection should have cognisance of existing green spaces and the recreational use of land in the study area. It is recommended that the conservation of existing biodiversity is a consideration in the route selection process. - Predict the impact of traffic noise from the proposed route options and carry out an evaluation of the significance of this impact in line with the health based guidelines as outlined by the WHO.
Iarnród Éireann	Fully support the continued design process for the proposed scheme and has no specific comments on any of the route corridor options shortlisted to proceed to the next stage of assessment.

Consultee	Summary of Response Received
	• Iarnród Éireann is currently process of designing of the DART+ South West Project, which is seeking to significantly increase the capacity of the heavy network. This will benefit passengers in terms of service quality and frequency. • Iarnród Éireann will continue to engage with Kildare County Council during the design of our DART+ South West Project and your Celbridge to Hazelhatch Link Road. Delivery of both these infrastructural projects will have long lasting positive benefits to the resident communities.
Inland Fisheries Ireland	• IFI would like to highlight that we own the fishing rights on a section of the River Liffey which appears to end right at the point where options A and A1 cross the river and we would want to ensure that there is access to the river and along the bank here should option A be the preferred choice. • Option E has interactions with the Celbridge weir and millrace and it should be noted that the millrace contains salmonid species of fish. • Note, they have no specific preferred option apart from the one with the least interactions with local watercourses.
Garda Corporate Services Office	• Acknowledged receipt of correspondence dated 6th April 2021.
Geological Survey of Ireland	• No specific comment or observations to make on this matter at this time since their last response (Ref 20/112). • Recommend the use of our data sets available on their website.

The feedback received through this consultation on the five Route Corridor Options informed the route selection process. Using the feedback gained, a further detailed assessment of the five Route Corridor Options was carried out under the criteria of Economy, Safety, Environment, Accessibility & Social Inclusion, Integration, and Physical Activity.

Following the Appraisal process of all the shortlisted options, an Emerging Preferred Option was identified (Option C). This was presented to the public during the second non-statutory public consultation period which ran from 28th March until 6th May 2022 (PC 2)⁴. Statutory Consultees were invited to comment on the proposed Emerging Route Option. A summary of the responses received is provided below. The measures and actions taken in response to these comments are also outlined in **Table 5.3**.

Table 5.3: Summary of Consultation Responses from Statutory Consultees on the Emerging Preferred Option (PC2)

Consultee	Summary of Response Received	Measures/ Actions Taken
National Museum of Ireland	• The NMI Topographical files database within the National Museum of Ireland - Archaeology, Kildare Street, should be consulted as part of the development and assessment process to provide details on stray finds within the townland/townlands which may be impacted/affected by the proposed road scheme. • Recommend searching at townland and other levels to gain a broader understanding of the overall archaeological potential of the area. • The National Monuments Service (NMS) map viewer should also be consulted for the townland/townlands which may be affected. This could indicate monuments, and any subsurface	A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Report has been prepared (provided under separate cover). The assessment examines the potential effects during the construction and operational phases of the development. The evaluation of the archaeological and cultural heritage resource of the Proposed Scheme was based on a desk study of published and unpublished documentary and cartographic sources and a site inspection.

⁴ <https://consult.kildarecoco.ie/en/consultation/celbridge-hazelhatch-link-road-public-consultation-emerging-preferred-route>

Consultee	Summary of Response Received	Measures/ Actions Taken
	archaeology in their vicinity, which may be impacted by the scheme. - Note that the preferred route will cross a water course. It should be noted that within riverine and wetland locations there is a very high potential for the survival of archaeological features and finds. These can include stone, metal, and crucially, organic waterlogged material. Any changes to their current local conditions could have a severe negative impact on their survivability. Mitigation may be necessary to protect and/or recover any such archaeological finds to ensure their long-term preservation. - Mitigation/rescue excavations may be necessary to preserve by record any identified archaeological features, and recover any archaeological objects. Adequate funding for archaeological works (to include excavation and post-excavation works) should be agreed prior the commencement of any works.	
Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage (Development Applications Unit)	Archaeological observations / recommendations: - Recommend that an archaeo-geophysical survey, followed by archaeological centre-line test excavations should be carried out on the preferred route due to the scale of the proposed development and its proximity to a number of Recorded Monuments. - Based on the results of the assessment, archaeological mitigation strategies should be proposed, so that all archaeological issues can be addressed well in advance of construction.	An archaeological geophysical survey of the Preferred Route Corridor was carried out under licence to the DHLGH. The main aim of the survey was to identify any geophysical responses that may represent the remains of archaeological features along the Proposed Scheme route. The full Geophysical Survey Report is provided in Appendix E to the CHIA. A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Report has been prepared (provided under separate cover). The assessment examines the potential effects during the construction and operational phases of the development.
Dept of Environment, Climate and Communications (Environment Protection Division)	Recommended the respective Regional Waste Management Planning Office should be consulted regarding development of the final plans.	All waste materials arising from the construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme will be dealt with in a sustainable manner and in accordance with all relevant environmental legislation, guidance and policy documents. The contactor will develop and implement a Construction Waste Management Plan (CWMP) to ensure that waste arising on-site during the construction phase will be managed and disposed of in a way that ensures the provisions of the Waste Management Acts, 1996-2011 and associated Regulations (1996-2011) are complied with, to ensure that optimum levels of reduction, re-use and recycling are achieved, and with a goal of achieving the waste hierarchy in accordance with the relevant statutory provisions.

Consultee	Summary of Response Received	Measures/ Actions Taken
Fáilte Ireland	Acknowledged receipt of correspondence. No specific comments received.	Noted.
Transport Infrastructure Ireland	Advises in the context of this road scheme, that Kildare county council should have cognizance of national roads projects in the area.	Noted.
Geological Survey of Ireland	No specific comment or observations to make on this matter at this time since their last response (Ref 20/112).	Noted.
Iarnród Éireann	- Fully support the Emerging Preferred Route and continued design process for the proposed Scheme. - Iarnród Éireann is currently process of designing of the DART+ South West Project, which is seeking to significantly increase the capacity of the heavy network. This will benefit passengers in terms of service quality and frequency. The provision of a new link road will significantly improve connectivity between the town and the train station and will support the use of the more sustainable, electrified train service being provided through the DART+ South West Project. - The Emerging Preferred Route does not appear to conflict with proposals currently being developed for the DART+ South West Project. - Suggested subject to demand levels, that the Emerging Preferred Route could be improved with the inclusion of a bus priority corridor to facilitate trips to the railway station by public transport and potentially further reduce the number of car journeys being made. - Iarnród Éireann will continue to engage with Kildare County Council during the design of our DART+ South West Project and your Celbridge to Hazelhatch Link Road. Delivery of both these infrastructural projects will have long lasting positive benefits to the resident communities.	The Proposed road cross section for the project's mainline is a single carriageway with 3,5m wide lanes in each direction for a total pavement width of 7.0m. Pedestrian and cyclist facilities are proposed alongside the new road as follows: - Ch. 0+000 to Ch. 1+720: 2.0m wide one-way cycle tracks and 2.0m wide footpaths on both sides of the road. - Ch. 1+720 to Ch. 1+1959: 2.0m wide footpath and 3.0m wide two-way cycleway on the northbound side of the road. No bus infrastructure is proposed as part of the Scheme. The design of the scheme allows for future provision of this infrastructure; however the locations will be dependent on delivery of future housing within the land of KDA Simmonstown.
Inland Fisheries Ireland	- Bridge works are located in the catchment of the River Liffey a nationally important salmonid system. It is exceptional among most urban rivers in the area in supporting Atlantic salmon and Sea trout in addition to resident Brown trout populations. - Surface waters from the development drain directly into the Liffey in this area. Thus, it is vital to note that salmonid waters constraints will apply to any development in this area and should not be impacted negatively as a result of proposed development. - IFI must be consulted with at all stages of works along with detailed design and method statements for the bridge construction over the River Liffey. - When structures are being designed for crossing fisheries waters, consideration must be given to the	The Proposed Bridge Crossing of the River Liffey will be clear span and therefore no instream works are proposed. The drainage design of the Scheme includes for bio-retention trenches, swales, attenuation basins, infiltration trenches which will treat and attenuate surface water run-off before it is discharged to the receiving watercourses. The Proposed Scheme includes for 3 no. culverts (1 no. pipe culvert and 2 no. box culverts). A Section 50 application report has been issued to the OPW for their approval and consent.

Consultee	Summary of Response Received	Measures/ Actions Taken
	following biological criteria: species of fish required to safely pass, size of fish required to pass (life stage), time of year in which fish passage is required, and high and low design passage flows etc. Bridges and bottomless culverts have the least impact on fish passage. Disturbance of riparian habitats should be minimised. An undisturbed buffer zone between development area and river bank should be maximised (10m minimum). Riparian vegetation should be retained in as natural a state as possible at all times.	
Office of Public Works (Heritage Services)	Submission made specifically with regards to the estate portfolio including heritage services. - OPW has reviewed documents with a view to assessing any impact of the proposed Scheme on Castletown House and Demesne. - Noted that part of the Castletown House and Estate (managed by the OPW) is located in the north east section of the study area. - Observed that the Scheme is located within the protected view of the Celbridge Avenue (also known as the main avenue) – refer to Objective AH023 in the Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029. Based on information available at present, the OPW is satisfied that the proposed road in itself will not have a negative impact on views from Castletown House and Demesne. - Noted that one of the purposes of the proposed road is to facilitate the development of zoned lands south of Celbridge town centre. OPW requests to be kept informed of / consulted on any future masterplans or policy objectives for this part of Celbridge by Kildare County Council.	A Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment (CHIA) Report and a Landscape and Visual Impact Assessment (LVIA) Report have been prepared for the scheme (provided under separate cover). These assessments examine the potential effects during the construction and operational phases of the development. The protected views of the Celbridge Avenue are not impacted by the Proposed Scheme. Four no. viewpoint locations for the purpose of the Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment have been assessed for impact on setting of heritage features.

Following Public Consultation No.2 the feedback received on the Emerging Preferred Route (Option C) was considered by the design team. Taking into consideration the feedback received from the members of the public, the presented Route Corridor Option C was subsequently adjusted on the northern end of the route between the service station and the garden centre adjacent to Celbridge Abbey. The adjustment allowed for a greater separation between the proposed road and the existing residential dwellings of the Abbeyfarm housing estate.

Adjusted Option C is the Final Preferred Option and preliminary design has been advanced for this option. The alignment in the application for which planning consent is sought represents this Preferred Option and has been informed by the comprehensive consultation process described above.

6 ADDITIONAL ASSESSMENTS

6.1 Flood Risk Assessment

A *Flood Risk Assessment* (FRA) was conducted by RPS and is included in the application documentation. The FRA undertaken accords with the *Planning System and Flood Risk Management Guidelines for Planning Authorities* (DoEHLG & OPW, 2009) and confirms that the development is in agreement with the core principles contained within. The FRA concludes:

- The desktop study undertaken identified fluvial flooding from the Hazelhatch Rivers as the primary source of flood risk to the proposed CHMC site. Potential fluvial flood risk was also identified for the River Liffey and Loughlinstown River Crossing. Fluvial Flooding caused by insufficient channel and/or hydraulic structures capacity contributing to out-of-bank flooding. Pluvial flooding was identified as a possible risk to the site due to the extent of the hardstanding area proposed for the development, and also due to GSI Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) seasonal flood map showing a low probability of localised pluvial flooding intersecting the proposed CHMC.
- The Stage 2 Initial Flood Risk Assessment completed in Section 5 concludes the design for the River Liffey and Loughlinstown River Crossings are adequate and does not pose a fluvial flood risk. The proposed CHMC drainage design improves the existing pluvial flood risk, and it also caters for the run-off from hardstanding areas and the discharge to receiving watercourses are limited to greenfield runoff rates. The fluvial flood risk from the Hazelhatch Rivers required further assessment and was progressed to Stage 3 Detailed Flood Risk Assessment.
- The Stage 3 Detailed Flood Risk Assessment completed in Section 6 concludes that the proposed CHMC with mitigation does not increase flood risk elsewhere. The results of the analysis showed the proposed CHMC provide an improved freeboard benefitting the most vulnerable residential dwellings located within proximity of the proposed CHMC.
- The proposed CHMC is considered an appropriate development of the site in accordance with the requirements of the Justification Test and the Planning Guidelines for Flood Risk Management (DoEHLG 2009).

6.2 EIA Screening

EIA requirements derive from EU Directive 85/337/EEC (as amended by Directives 97/11/EC, 2003/35/EC and 2009/31/EC, 2011/92/EU) as well as 2014/52/EU on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment. The primary objective of the EIA Directive is to ensure that projects which are likely to have 'significant effects' on the environment are subject to an assessment of their likely impacts. In the context of planning, the EIA Directive is given effect in Ireland through the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

The legislation relating to the requirement for an EIA for several types of developments is outlined in the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended.

Part 1 of Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) lists projects included in Annex I of the Directive which require mandatory EIA. No development types listed in Schedule 5 Part 1 would apply to this current Proposed Scheme.

Schedule 5 Part 2 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) identifies classes of development, per Annex II of the Directive, for which EIA must be carried out where such development would equal or exceed, as the case may be, any relevant quantity, area or other limit specified or, where no quantity, area or other limit is specified in the Part in respect of the development concerned. No development types listed in Schedule 5 Part 2 would apply to this current Proposed Scheme.

In relation to roads projects, the requirements of the pre 2014 EU Directives have been transposed into Irish legislation by, inter alia, Sections 50 and 51 of the Roads Act (1993 to 2007) and subsequent amendments to this Act. The proposed development does not comprise a class of development described under Section 50 (1)(a) of the Roads Act. Accordingly, EIA is not a mandatory requirement for the proposed development.

While EIA is not mandatory in this instance, KCC undertook an examination of the nature, size and location of the proposed development, pursuant to section 50(1)(c) and (d) of the Roads Act 1993 (as amended) to consider whether the “project” is likely to have significant effects on the environment, such that an EIAR is required.

In this regard RPS have prepared an *EIA Screening Report*. The report concludes that no significant effects on the environment are considered likely to arise. On this basis it is considered that the development does not require Environmental Impact Assessment and that an EIAR is not necessary. The *EIA Screening Report* is enclosed in the application documentation.

While an EIAR is not necessary, a separate Environmental Report has been prepared. In order to inform the Environment Report, a scoping exercise was undertaken to establish the key aspects of the environment to be considered and addressed further. The Environmental Report is included in the application documentation.

6.3 AA / NIS

A report to inform screening for Appropriate Assessment been prepared to assess the potential for likely significant effects arising from the Proposed Scheme. Through an assessment of the source-pathway-receptor model, which considered the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of effects from the Proposed Scheme and the potential in-combination effects with other plans or projects, the following findings were reported the following findings were reported in the report to inform screening for AA (RPS, 2024):

- The Proposed Scheme is not directly connected with or necessary to the management of any European Site; and
- The Proposed Scheme may give rise to likely significant effects on the qualifying interests of European Sites during the construction phase, in view of best scientific knowledge and in view of the conservation objectives of the sites concerned.

An NIS has subsequently been prepared for the proposed development and is provided with the application for approval. The NIS has been prepared following the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government guidance ‘Appropriate Assessment of Plans and Projects in Ireland - Guidance for Planning Authorities’ (DEHLG, 2010). A number of European Sites have been identified within the Zoi of the Proposed Scheme via the following effect pathways: Surface water pollution and Groundwater pollution.

Within the NIS, best practice construction and specific mitigation measures for surface water management, emergency responses and environmental training, and site management during construction and operation are proposed for the avoidance of adverse effects.

No potential for cumulative impacts to European sites arising from other plans and projects, in combination with the proposed development works, has been identified.

The NIS concludes that:

To avoid, reduce or remedy, the negative impacts on European Sites that are likely to arise as a result of the Proposed Scheme, mitigation measures have been proposed as part of the development (Section 7). These mitigation measures are proposed as part of the development for surface water management, emergency responses and environmental training, and site management during construction and operation of the Proposed Scheme. With the full implementation of mitigation measures proposed as part of the development and as imposed by way of Conditions and/or Restriction by the competent authority, it is concluded that there will be no significant residual effects on the integrity of any European Sites.

In conclusion, it is the opinion of RPS that in view of best scientific knowledge and applying the precautionary principle, and in light of the conservation objectives of the relevant European Sites, the Proposed Scheme, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, will not have an adverse effect on the integrity of any European Site(s).

6.4 Road Safety Audit

The scheme is subject to a Road Safety Audit (RSA) process through its development from concept to post-completion operation. Enclosed with the planning application is a *Stage 1 Road Safety Audit* prepared by RPS.

Six no. items were raised in the RSA and addressed through recommendations. All of these recommendations have been accepted and actioned by the design team.

6.5 Arboricultural Impact Assessment

An AIA was carried out by RPS to evaluate the impact of the Proposed Scheme on the trees in the study area and determine required tree removals, required pruning works and recommended measures to mitigate impacts. A *Tree Protection and Removal Plan* was produced identifying the trees to be removed, trees to be retained and recommended locations of temporary tree protection fencing. A *Tree Removal Schedule* was also produced listing the trees to be removed.

The AIA found that of the 126 no. trees to be removed, 87 no. (69%) were “Low Quality”, 28 no. (22.2%) were “Moderate Quality”, 4 no. (3.2%) were “Unsuitable for Retention”, while only 7 no. (5.6%) were “High Quality”.

6.6 Cultural Heritage Impact Assessment

A CHIA has been prepared by Courtney Deery Heritage Consultancy and is included in the Environmental Report. The CHIA identifies, describes and presents an assessment of the potential effects of the CHMC on archaeological, cultural and architectural heritage and is included in the application documentation.

The CHIA concludes that with the mitigation measures implemented in full, identified and previously unknown subsurface archaeological features that are identified will be resolved and recorded in full. The residual effects would be reduced to imperceptible. The CHIA also concludes there will be a residual positive effect resulting from the excavation of the archaeological sites within the proposed development, as the sites will be recorded and the results published, thus adding to the body of archaeological knowledge in this part of Celbridge.

7 CONCLUSION

The proposed CHMC is consistent with and supports the aims of relevant policies and objectives at national, regional and local levels, particularly in the delivery of enhanced pedestrian and cycle infrastructure and enhanced connectivity with Hazelhatch and Celbridge Train Station.

The CHMC meets explicit objectives of the *Kildare County Development Plan 2023 – 2029* and the *Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017 - 2023*.

In addition, the CHMC will enhance connectivity within Celbridge and directly supports the delivery of additional residential development on lands within Celbridge designated for new residential development in statutory planning policy documents.

The Proposed Scheme, to which the Compulsory Purchase Order relates, gives effect to and facilitates the implementation of planning policy at national, regional and local levels. All of the land for which compulsory purchase powers are sought is necessary, sufficient and suitable for implementation of the Proposed Scheme.

The Proposed Scheme is therefore considered to be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.