

Our Case Number: ACP-323851-25



Celbridge Community Council
The Mill Celbridge Community Centre
Celbridge
Co. Kildare
W23 P6P5

Date: 16 January 2026

Re: Proposed construction of the Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor
Celbridge Town, County Kildare

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Coimisiún Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

Please note that the proposed development shall not be carried out unless the Commission has approved it with or without modifications.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Commission at laps@pleanala.ie

Please quote the above mentioned An Coimisiún Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Commission.

Yours faithfully,

Kevin McGettigan
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737263

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Celbridge Community Council
The Mill Celbridge Community Centre
Celbridge
Co. Kildare
W23 P6P5

4 January 2026

The Secretary,
Local Authority Projects Section,
An Coimisiún Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1, D01 V902

Submission Regarding the Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor Section 177 AE Planning Application (An Coimisiún Pleanála Case Reference: JP09.323851)

To Whom it May Concern

Celbridge Community Council (CCC) was established as a voluntary community group in 1975 and has for fifty years been actively involved in many aspects of community life in Celbridge. Our goal is to promote and improve community life and to influence in a positive way the physical development of the area for the benefit of all those who live and work there. For further details, please see <http://celbridgecommunitycouncil.ie/>.

As a voluntary group and a voice for the community, Celbridge Community Council wishes to make a submission on [the Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor Section 177 AE Planning Application](#).

Celbridge Community Council's Overall Position on the Celbridge Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor Project

A second vehicular crossing of the River Liffey in Celbridge has long been a key infrastructure gap for Celbridge. Celbridge Community Council supports the broad aims of this project, providing that bridge, but also with improved connectivity with Hazelhatch train station. In line with Celbridge Community Council's vision of a sustainable transport network for Celbridge, we also support the multimodal aspects of the proposal, encouraging pedestrians and cyclists to use the new bridge and link road. The choice of routing has clearly involved trade-offs between reductions in traffic congestion, encouraging more sustainable choices in modes of transport, impact on heritage and cost. However, Celbridge Community Council is supportive of the final route selection.



There are issues with the detailed design of the cycling and bus infrastructure and with impacts on the visual amenity of the adjoining River Liffey strategic spaces. Below are proposed changes to the design to address these.

We would request that An Coimisiún Pleanála grants permission for this project to proceed but makes that permission conditional on several design changes as proposed in this submission.

Cycling Infrastructure, Sustainable Transport

Traffic congestion is a major issue for Celbridge. By providing additional quick connectivity to Hazelhatch Train station and, ultimately, DART+, this project helps to drive the modal shift away from commuting by private vehicle.

However, the corridor itself should help encourage modal shifts for travel *within* Celbridge. It will provide connectivity immediately for residential estates south-east of the river with St. Wolstan's Community School, North Kildare Educate Together National School, two sports clubs and (in some cases) with Scoil na Mainstreach, Salesian College and Celbridge Community School. For residential estates north-west of the river, connectivity will be provided with the GAA and tennis clubs.

These destinations are all exclusively or heavily child and youth focused. Travel for these purposes is a significant contributor to traffic congestion in Celbridge. This project needs to contribute to the solution through encouragement of the use of cycling and bus transport.

The provision of cycling infrastructure in this project is therefore to be welcomed. Segregated cycleways, full set-back with lower-priority side entrances, and connectivity with both the Hazelhatch Road cycleway and Hazelhatch train station are important project features.

However, that provision could be further improved. The NTA's Cycle Design Manual¹ provides guidance as to the best practice for the design of new cycling infrastructure. However, many of the crossings and junctions in this project proposal fall short of that guidance and should be revised. See Figure 1 for the location of each of the issues discussed below.

In addition, we would propose that

- Given the number of deviations from the Cycle Design Manual, a full review of the cycling infrastructure should be undertaken prior to proceeding to the next stage of design.

¹ National Transport Agency, *Cycle Design Manual*, <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/publications/cycle-design-manual/>, 2023.

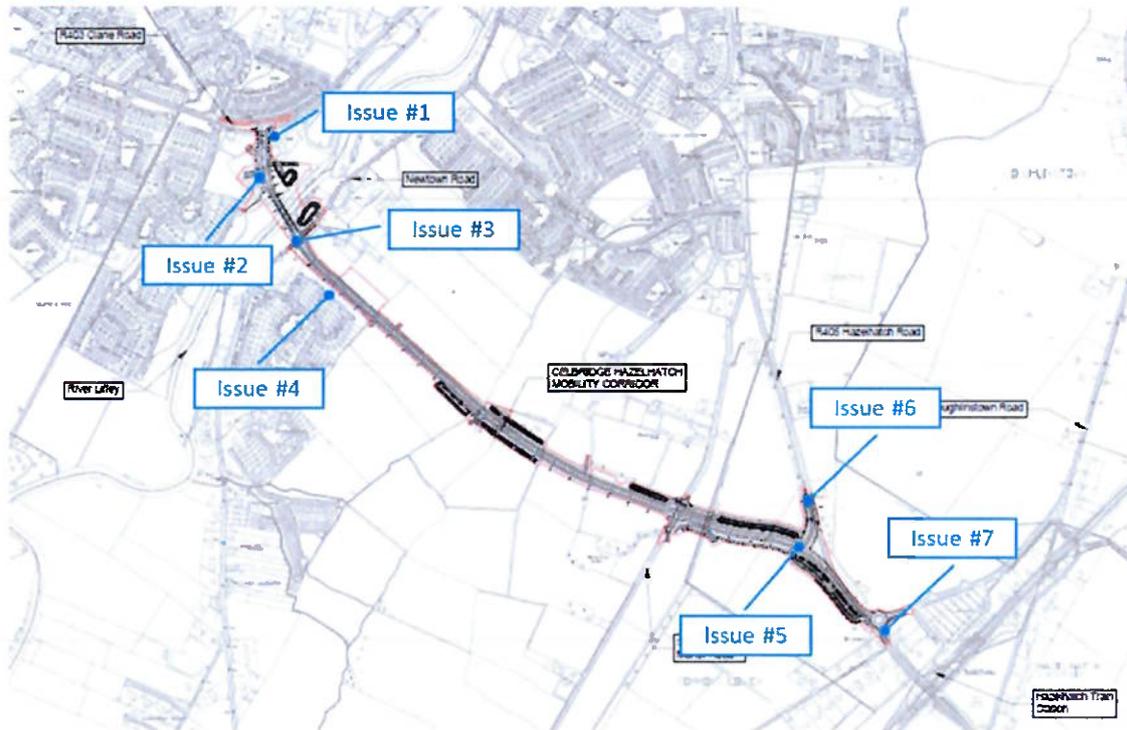


Figure 1: Location of cycling infrastructure issues

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #1: Clane Road junction.

This is a more complex junction than first appears, with a petrol station forecourt and two residential estates in close proximity.

There are a number of problems with the proposed design:

1. Zero provision for cyclists on two of three legs of this junction. This is very surprising given the importance of cycling as a sustainable mode of transport in this project.
2. The signalized toucan pedestrian/cyclist crossing uses a shared-space approach, rather than segregated crossing lanes. This is odd given the expected heavy traffic levels at this junction and deviates from best practice, as outlined in the NTA's Cycle Design Manual.

The result is a junction where experienced and low-confidence cyclists will take a variety of non-marked, shared-traffic routes through the junction, increasing the likelihood of collisions with motorized traffic and pedestrians.



Figure 4: Views of proposed locations for a single lane cycle track along the Clane Road (a) from the pedestrian crossing between Texaco and Abbey Farm and (b) from the new Clane Road junction towards St John of God's St Raphaels campus.

While not a perfect solution, it provides safe routes to/from the junction, guiding cyclists away from motorized traffic, pedestrians and a busy petrol station forecourt. The endpoints for the Clane Road cycle lanes are two signal-controlled pedestrian crossings, giving safe crossing points away from the junction, for less confident cyclists.

In the longer term, the Celbridge Hazelhatch mobility corridor needs to be part of a coherent cycle track network for Celbridge, for example, in line with the NTA's Great Dublin Cycle Network.² This suggests further extension of the cycle tracks along the length of the Clane Road beyond the proposed limited approach in this submission.

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #2: Pedestrian crossing at the Abbey Farm pedestrian link

The "General Arrangement Sheet 2" map indicates that there are traffic signals controlling this crossing. However, the expected label is missing ("Signalised Toucan Pedestrian/Cycle Crossing With Raised Table").

Proposed change:

- Add an appropriate label ("Signalised Toucan Pedestrian/Cycle Crossing With Raised Table") to the documentation, at the pedestrian crossing near the Abbey Farm pedestrian link.

² National Transport Agency, 2022 Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network, <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2023/01/2022-GDA-Cycle-Network.pdf>, 2022

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #3: Newtown Road signalized junction

It is notable that priority is not given to the cycle track crossing this junction. This presumably is due to the level of traffic on the Newtown Road. However, if the traffic is at such a level, then the junction itself should not have a shared space between cyclists and pedestrians. Mode separation on the three crossings, such as that shown in “TL501 Protected Junction” from the Cycle Design Manual and in Figure 5, should be deployed.

Proposed change:

- Separate pedestrian and cyclist spaces at the Newtown Road junction crossings, as per the Cycle Design Manual best practice.

TL501 Protected Junction

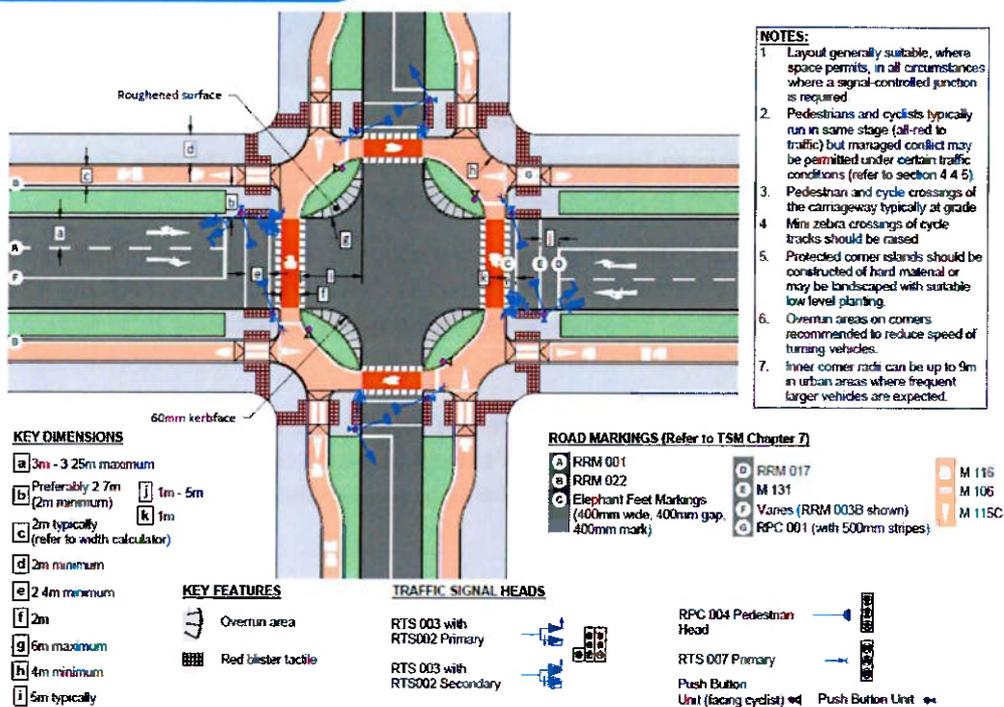


Figure 5: Protected junction from the NTA's Cycle Design Manual, 2023.

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #4: Pedestrian/cycling permeability into the Temple Manor residential estate

It is surprising that there is no pedestrian/cycling access from the Temple Manor residential estate on to the new mobility corridor road.



Cycling Infrastructure Issue #5: Hazelhatch Road signalized junction

The issue here is similar to that at the Newtown Road junction, except now there are six cycle tracks and four pedestrian paths converging at two shared spaces. Mode separation, utilizing the principles given in Figure 5, is absolutely essential here. Furthermore, there is enough room for such a modification.

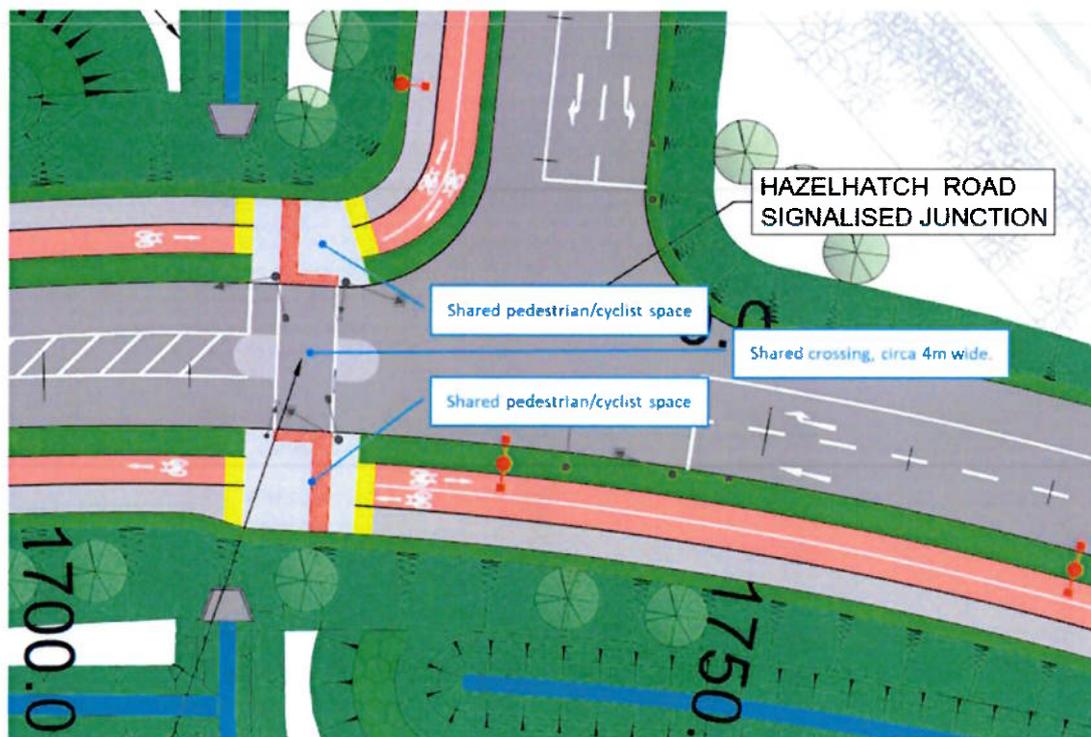


Figure 6: Hazelhatch Road signalized junction with six cycle tracks and four pedestrian points converging on two shared spaces connected by a shared (circa) 4m-wide crossing.

Proposed change:

- Separate pedestrian and cyclist spaces at the Hazelhatch Road junction crossings, as per the Cycle Design Manual best practice.

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #6: Transition to the new two-way cycle track on the Hazelhatch Road

To enter the new two-way cycle track on the Hazelhatch Road, southbound cyclists are expected to take control of the southbound vehicular lane and wait for a safe gap in northbound traffic before entering the new two-way cycle track. This is a manoeuvre for a confident cyclist only. Crossing dismounted, on foot, is an alternative approach, but will be very challenging in peak hour traffic.

Proposed change:

- A signalized crossing for southbound cyclists to join the two-way cycle track as per “TL608 Signalized Cycle Crossing” in the National Transport Agency’s Cycle Design Manual and shown in Figure 7.

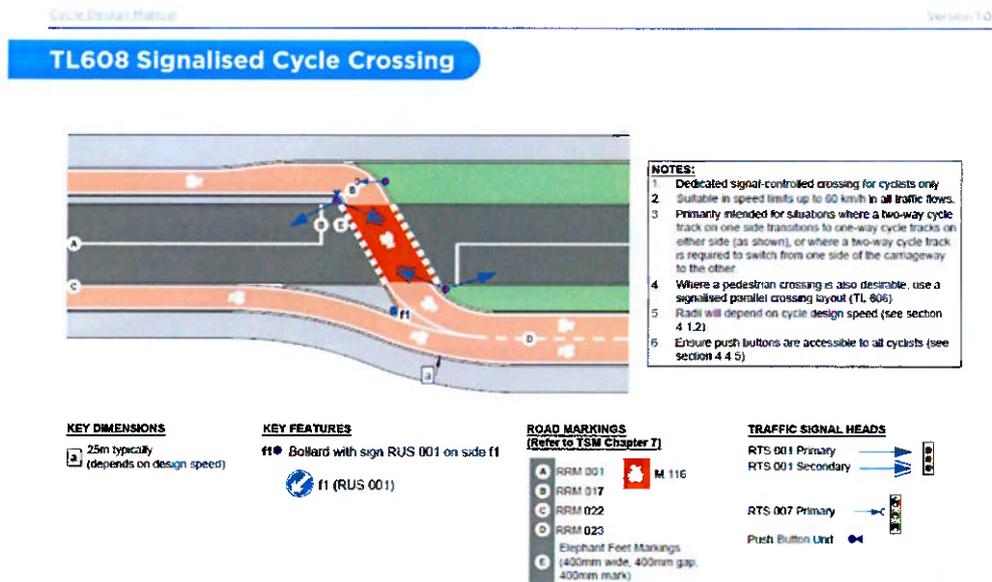


Figure 7: Signalized cycle crossing to a two-way cycle track, as given in the NTA’s Cycle Design Manual, 2023.

Cycling Infrastructure Issue #7: Signalized crossing on the Loughlinstown Roundabout

Here, there are four cycle tracks and four pedestrian paths converging at two shared spaces. Mode separation in the crossing, such as that shown in “TL606 Signalized Parallel Crossing” from the Cycle Design Manual and in Figure 8, is absolutely essential here. Furthermore, there is enough room for such a modification.

TL606 Signalled Parallel Crossing

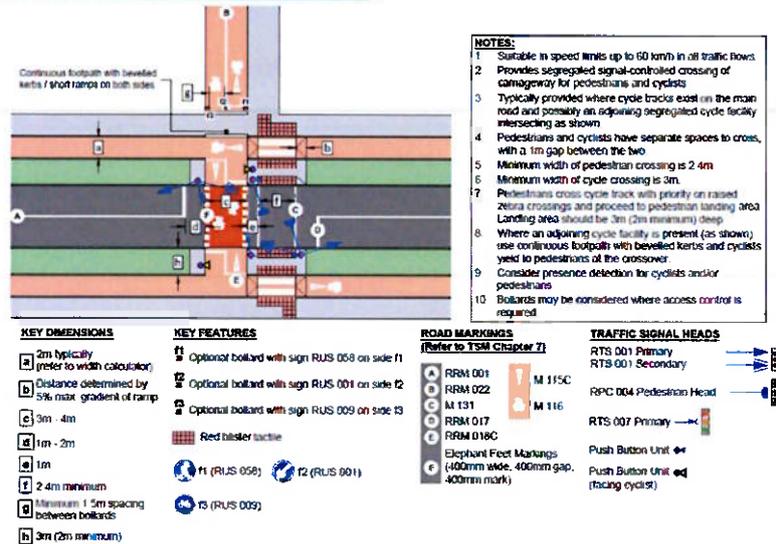


Figure 8: Signalized parallel crossing as given in the NTA's Cycle Design Manual, 2023.

It is also worth noting that that this crossing is close to the Grand Canal Greenway. It will be less than 800m from the crossing (along the R504 running south from the roundabout) to the nearest access to the greenway.

Proposed changes:

- Separate pedestrian and cyclist spaces at the Hazelhatch Road junction crossings, as per the Cycle Design Manual best practice.
- Provide appropriate tie-ins at the crossing for cyclists on the R504 south towards the Grand Canal Greenway.

Bus Network Infrastructure Issue: Lack of Bus Stops

New routes and diversion of existing routes are to be expected for the Celbridge Hazelhatch mobility corridor. The objective would be for these bus services to act as feeders for the train services that run from the train station. It is clearly beyond the scope of this planning application to give the plans for such bus services changes. However, the application should address, where feasible, the necessary roadside infrastructure.

No bus network infrastructure is included in the plans.

With no plans available for the Simmonstown KDA (Key Development Area, as outlined in KCC's *Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023*) to the north of the mobility corridor, it is understandable that bus stops are difficult to plan in, along that road. However, with no permeability planned from the Temple Manor residential estate, there is a clear value proposition for inbound and outbound bus stops on the mobility corridor link road, close to the Newtown Road junction. These bus stops would service the existing



residential housing on the Newtown Road and potentially at least some of those in any new housing within the Simmonstown KDA.

Proposed change:

- Add two new bus stops, one on either side of the new mobility corridor link road, roughly in the positions as shown in Figure 9.

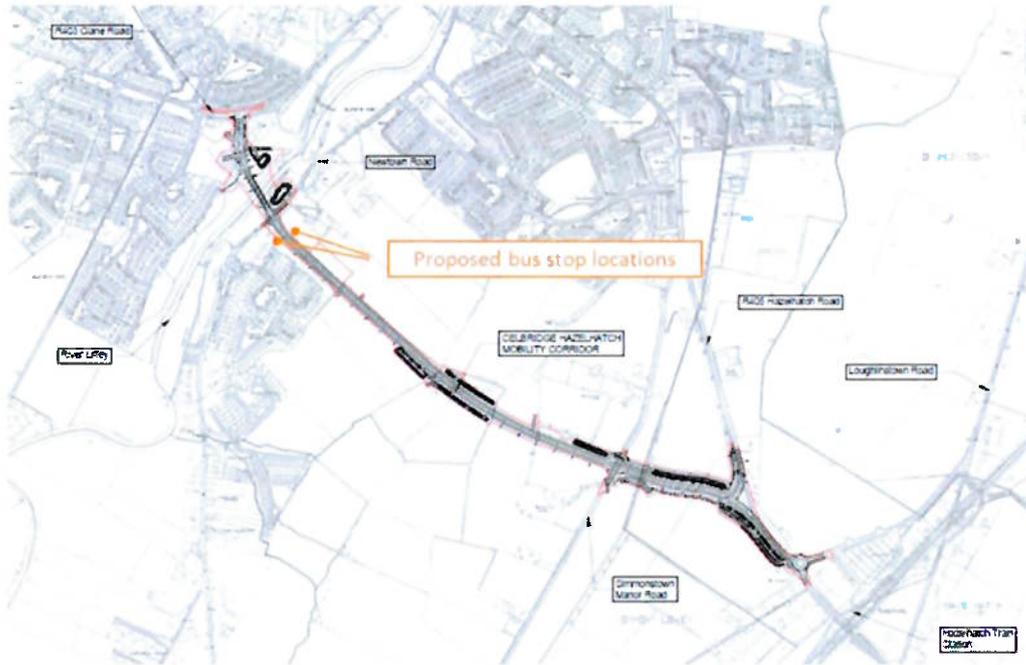


Figure 9: Proposed location for new bus stops, close to the Newtown Road junction.

Speed Limit Issue: Lack of Traffic Calming

As per the Section 177AE Environmental Report for the project, there is a transition from a 60km/hr speed limit to 50km/hr speed limit roughly 50m east of the Newtown Road junction. However, there are no visual or geometry features in the current design documentation to encourage compliance by west-bound drivers. There is a resulting risk of speeding through the Newtown Road junction and onwards on the bridge, areas of higher pedestrian use.

Proposed change:

- Add speed calming measures at the 60km/hr to 50km/hr speed limit transition.



Visual Impact in the River Liffey Strategic Open Space

The proposed bridge crossing the River Liffey will inevitably have a visual impact; however, the current design represents an unsympathetic intrusion into a highly sensitive riverside landscape. Without some redesign, both the bridge structure and the adjacent Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) features risk undermining the natural beauty and amenity value of this strategic open space.

Policy Context

The **Kildare County Development Plan 2023–2029** classifies the River Liffey corridor as a “**Class 4 (Special)**” landscape, where development can have significant adverse effects on landscape character.

The **Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017–2023** zones these riverside lands as ‘**F2: Strategic Open Space**’ and overlays them with a **Historic Landscape Area (HLA)** specific zoning objective, reinforcing the need for careful stewardship. The objectives of the F2 zoning are “*To preserve, provide for and improve recreational amenity, open space and green infrastructure networks*”. Objective **HLA01.1** is “*To protect the special landscape character of historic landscape areas and ensure that new development enhances the special character and visual setting of the historic landscapes outlined on **Map 13.1** and to prevent development that would have a negative impact on the character of the lands within the Historic Landscape Areas.*”.

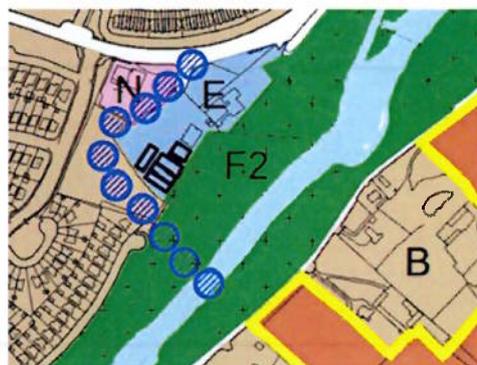


Figure 10: Zoning map for the lands around the proposed new bridge. Source: KCC's Celbridge Local Area Plan 2017-2023.

The river Liffey is identified as Celbridge’s key natural asset and both the Celbridge LAP and Kildare CDP emphasise the need to protect and enhance open spaces and natural heritage assets. Refer to the following:

- **Celbridge LAP**:- Strategic Vision, objective OSO1.1, policy HLA1 and objective HLA01.1, objective OSO1.2 + Map 13.1 Land Use Zoning, objective OSO1.4, objective EDO2.3
- **Kildare CDP**:- RE O115, RE O155, RE P27, RE O170, LR O65, LR A15

KCC’s **Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance** document requires SuDS to maximise amenity and biodiversity, not restrict public access.³

Issues

The proposed designs raise several concerns regarding visual impact and suitability for a sensitive urban and heritage landscape setting:

³ A. McCloy, K. Barton, “Kildare County Council Sustainable Drainage Systems: Guidance Document”, <https://kildarecoco.ie/AllServices/Planning/DevelopmentGuidelines/SustainableDrainageGuidelines/KCC%20Sustainable%20Drainage%20Systems%20Guidance%20%20Single%20page.pdf>, 2024.



1. The proposed bridge would traverse an historic landscape area only 500m from the centre of an expanding heritage town. The scheme would pass between Temple Mills upstream, and Celbridge Abbey and Celbridge Mill downstream. Development of infrastructure at this location ***demands a design response that respects its unique setting*** - this location cannot be treated like a site on agricultural land in a rural area.



Figure 11: Rough positioning (in magenta) of the proposed Celbridge Hazelhatch mobility corridor in the context of the Liffey Valley parkland, looking northeast, from Temple Mills House (right) to Abbey Farm (left) and Celbridge Abbey grounds (top).

2. The prime location of the site for the proposed bridge close to the ***future town centre expansion*** (KDA1: Oakley Park), the ***existing neighbourhood centre*** on the Clane Road, and the future Simmonstown KDA, means that it will evolve as a hub for movement of people between residential areas and new retail / services.

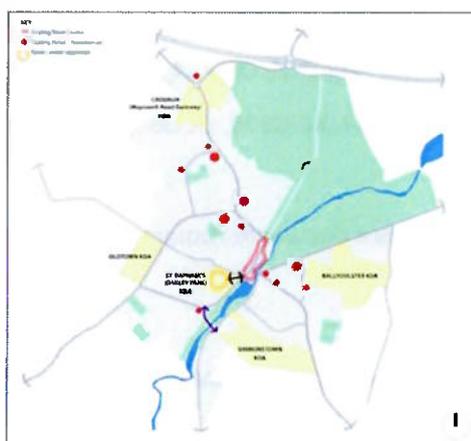


Figure 5: Town Centre Extension Concept

Figure 12: The purple arrow overlays future movements of people onto Figure 5 from the Celbridge LAP.



3. The current **SuDS design** proposals prioritise engineering over amenity, failing to integrate public use or ecological enhancement, contrary to Kildare County Council’s own Sustainable Drainage Systems Guidance, which emphasises multi-functional benefits. There is a genuine concern that the proposals may be implemented like the following examples from the Adamstown–Celbridge Link Road.



Figure 13: SuDS in the Adamstown–Celbridge Link Road scheme.

- The use of paladin-style security fencing and gates around SuDS attenuation basins on heritage landscapes is visually intrusive and undermines the intended amenity and ecological value of these open spaces.
 - The scheme as currently proposed would diminish the character of the River Liffey corridor and risks sterilising valuable open space in west Celbridge, which is already underserved by parklands and recreational spaces.
4. The current **bridge design** proposals focus on engineering solutions, with little evidence of creativity or concern for aesthetics.
 - The photomontages provided only show the bridge from a single viewpoint and during full foliage, which does not accurately represent year-round visibility or the true extent of visual impact.
 - The design features—walled abutments, and arched weathered steel girders—result in an imposing, utilitarian structure that blocks landscape views and creates a sense of enclosure beneath the bridge.



Figure 14: Day 1 Photomontage (VP06 Riverview - Abbey Farm)



Figure 15: Year 10 Photomontage (VP06 Riverview - Abbey Farm)

- The mesh covered parapet, guardrail, and street lighting are more appropriate for a motorway overpass than for a bridge in a sensitive landscape, as seen in recent unsuitable examples like the bridge over the Lyreen River in Maynooth.



Figure 16: Mariavilla bridge over the Lyreen River in Maynooth

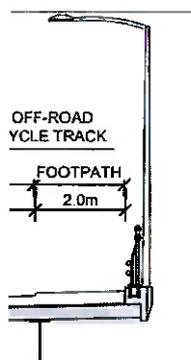


Figure 17: Cross-section including proposed lighting from SHEET 3 General Arrangement

- The focus appears to be on engineering and maintenance efficiency, with little evidence of consideration for aesthetics or integration with the surrounding environment.

Positives

The following are welcomed:

Chair: Liam O'Dwyer; Secretary: Francis Mullany; Treasurer: André Silva
Registered Charity Number: 20012342 Charitable Tax (CHY) Exemption Number: 6564



- The single-span design as it will limit impact on the river channel.
- Planting of native species woodland and standard trees in these areas.
- Inclusion in the design of provision for the possibility of a future greenway / active travel route along the banks of the Liffey (**SHEET 02 [General Arrangement](#) and Section 2.6 in the [Section 177AE Environmental Report](#)**).

Recommendations

Redesigns of both the bridge and SuDS elements should be requested as further information, and planning conditions should be imposed to ensure compliance.

We acknowledge the extensive option selection process that happened prior to this planning application, agree with the route selection and recognise that some measures contrary to the **strategic open space** zoning and **heritage landscape** objectives are necessary to deliver a river crossing. However, the degree of incompatibility of the development with the land use zoning and objectives can be noticeably reduced.

Both redesigns need to

- Enhance, not detract from, the sensitive character and amenity of the riverside **Strategic Open Space** / heritage landscape setting - propose an appropriate aesthetic for the receiving environment
- Align with development plan objectives for landscape protection, amenity, and biodiversity.

The redesign of the bridge and its features needs to

- Achieve a context-sensitive aesthetic.
- Ensure a less dominant form and a more sympathetic appearance, including parapets, guardrails, and lighting.
- Consider the safety of cyclists and pedestrians using the underpass with a more open feel.
- Include photomontages from multiple extra viewpoints, including within open spaces and during winter, to provide a realistic assessment of visual impact from all angles.



Figure 18: Suggested viewpoints for photomontages.



The SuDS redesign needs to

- Align with the SuDS Design Objectives by meeting all four pillars of SuDS design and apply best practices, prioritising multi-functional use, integrating amenity / ongoing community access and biodiversity with drainage.
- Prefer nature-based solutions or "softer" engineering approaches (e.g., unfenced swales, rain gardens, grassed basins) to fenced-in attenuation basins. Take a **safety by design** approach, avoiding excessive fencing with, at most, low toddler fences only if absolutely unavoidable.
- Ensure that redress of long-standing deficits in parkland and playspace provision for west Celbridge will be feasible through avoidance of sterilisation of land with unsympathetic SuDS measures - the open spaces need to remain attractive, accessible, and ecologically valuable for the community.

Conclusion

We consider that a redesign of several elements of the proposed scheme, as outlined in this submission, are necessary for the proper planning and sustainable development within the area of the proposed Celbridge-Hazelhatch Mobility Corridor.

Redesigns need to adhere to the NTA's Cycle Design Manual, KCC's Sustainable Drainage Guidance, and to minimise the impact of development that is contrary to the primary purposes of the **Strategic Open Space** zoning and the **Historic Landscape Area** objective.

Yours faithfully

Francis Mullany

Secretary, Celbridge Community Council