



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: KCC-C55-410

Údar: Celbridge Community Council

Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht: Celbridge and the County Development Plan

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

4.27 Heritage Tourism

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 4. Resilient Economy & Job
Creation

4.27 Heritage Tourism

Given the richness of built and natural heritage in Celbridge and the fact that heritage and tourism are the only **explicit** economic opportunities called out in section 7.3 ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT of the Celbridge LAP 2017-2023

- **Policy ED1 – Enterprise and Economic Development**

It is the policy of the Council to support sustainable economic development in Celbridge, optimising on the town's location in the North Kildare Economic Cluster and the Metropolitan Area of Dublin and its potential as a heritage and tourism destination

- **Policy ED2 – Tourism**

It is a policy of the Council to promote the significant heritage and tourism potential of Celbridge and to support sustainable tourism development.

the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 needs to include extremely strong protection and a strategy for all heritage assets of Celbridge whether they are currently used for tourism purposes or not. Much important built and natural heritage in Celbridge is either not easily accessed by the public or totally inaccessible to the public.

Objective RE O142 would benefit from the underlined addition

Ensure heritage assets (built and natural) that are or have the potential to become the focus for tourism development, are appropriately managed and their special interest conserved from potential adverse effects from visitors or development in general and that best practice standards in relation to the environmental management of tourism enterprises are adhered to.

Section 4.27 **must include an additional objective** that expands on the concern regarding "*potential adverse effects from ... development*" expressed in **Objective RE O142** to explicitly address how the need for heritage conservation will be balanced with the Town Centre First policy / need for towns to develop as 10-minute towns. Protections are needed in the Kildare County Development Plan 2023-2029 to ensure that negative impacts on the fabric or setting of Kildare's built and natural heritage assets cannot be masked as adherence to the Town Centre First policy. Pending the development of a detailed and credible tourism strategy that addresses how all built and natural heritage assets within each heritage town (regardless of current public ownership) will contribute to a tourism economy for the town and the preparation of guidelines for balancing development at sensitive heritage locations with the Town Centre First policy, it would be judicious to prevent development at sites

- Containing Protected Structures (including the entire curtilage)
- Within Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
- Within Landscape Character Areas with sensitivity classified as High Sensitivity (3), Special (4) or Unique (5)
- Adjacent to protected structures, ACAs and Landscape Character Areas with sensitivity class 3, 4 or 5

Objective RE O145 should be expanded to include Celbridge Abbey, Oakley Park and the Liffey Valley. It should also address how Celbridge can be promoted as a gateway to Castletown House given the location of car parking off the M4. Celbridge loses significant tourism revenue by virtue of the fact that visitors to Castletown House from outside Celbridge tend not to visit Celbridge town.

Objective RE O100 to "*Direct the provision of tourist related facilities such as information offices and cultural centres, into town and village locations to support and strengthen the existing economic infrastructure of such centres.*" might be expanded to suggest that such information offices may be co-located with other public information offices/ centres such as Citizen's Information, Libraries, etc. to make the provision of such facilities more feasible.

The protections afforded to Castletown House by **Objective RE O144** are welcomed but the objective should explicitly name the historic demesnes of Donaghcumper and St. Wolstan's as the designed landscapes of all three demesnes collectively form the landscape setting of Castletown House and its grounds.

Objective RE O146 is welcome but would benefit from calling out the integrations that would be most strategic for Heritage Tourism such as connecting the Grand Canal and Royal Canal with the Liffey in Celbridge and with Castletown House.

In addition to **Action RE A7** "*To prepare an integrated public amenity park and tourism destination at The Wonderful Barn and associated lands, to be informed by a detailed conservation and management plan.*", there should be actions relating to other priority projects identified through the Town Renewal Plan processes that have potential to positively contribute to heritage tourism in Kildare towns. For example, Project 3 in the outcomes from the Celbridge Town Renewal Plan consultation proposes the creation of a green route along the Liffey, through the grounds of Celbridge Abbey and the Mill, to Donaghcumper and on to Castletown House.

Documents Attached: Níl