



Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: KCC-C55-507

Údar: Brian McArdle

Stádas: Submitted

Aighneacht: 15 minute town

Comhairliúchán:

Draft Kildare County Development Plan 2023 - 2029

Tuairimí:

3. Housing

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 3.
Housing

Although section 3.7 mentions the crucial delivery of "the 10-minute settlement concept ('Guiding Principle' of the RSES)", it is not mentioned as a specific policy or objective in Housing. This should be corrected. This would help ensure that even with developer-led delivery of housing, facilities and services will be created alongside homes.

There is no mention of permeability for active travel modes throughout new and existing estates in any policy or object in housing. This should be corrected.

I strongly welcome HO O49.

Within new developments, guidelines should be set for native pollinator-friendly species to be used in landscaping. As well as a public open space, there should be dedicated biodiversity areas within developments for wildlife and pocket forests as amenities. For every tree felled as part of construction, at least one more should be replaced on the finished site, but as much of our existing natural heritage should be retained and protected.

While I believe it is a requirement to carry out a biodiversity study as part of a planning application for a new development, there is nothing to stop a developer removing hedgerows and trees in advance of a planning application. This loophole must be closed - destruction of any hedgerow or tree must be subject to licence, even in urban areas.

Incentivise homeowners to have more greenery - even if it's just grass. Widened driveways and astroturf are eliminating pockets of natural refuges across the county and beyond, and this needs to be reversed.

New developments should be a mix of housing types - low- to mid-rise apartment blocks with ground floor for elderly or people with disabilities and upper floors for singles and couples, duplexes for smaller families and houses for larger families.

Derelict and vacant buildings should be taxed. Only rich people can afford to leave a building lying derelict, tax it to make this uneconomical and force either development or a sale to someone who will develop it. Alternatively, the council should CPO derelict or vacant units, and lease them itself. The council should retain the freehold, and give long term leases to buyers. This allows the community to gain from future increases in land value and to reduce speculation. There are benefits for the leasee as well. Those leasing land do not have to pay the upfront cost of land, which reduces the entry barrier for developers.

5. Sustainable Mobility & Transport

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 5. Sustainable Mobility & Transport

I disagree with TM O4 ("Support the use of gas...") appearing when there is no objective to specifically support active travel, given that it is the primary policy (TM P1).

TM A3 (Identify filtered permeability measures...) should be mirrored or replicated in the housing section of the CDP to ensure it is considered in housing decisions.

I am confused as to why there is a list of Priority Road and Bridge Projects in Table 5.4, and a list of Regional Roads Identified for Improvement in Table 5.5, but no similar lists for active travel? This gives the impression that the council is ready and waiting to work on road projects as funding and resources become available, and that active travel projects are done on a case by case basis, waiting for the NTA or other bodies to provide motivation and options.

TM O71 does not support our emission-reducing objectives. Improving orbital roads for private motor transport will only induce demand and increase journeys by car.

I am happy to see no objective or action related to the widening of the M4.

30kph should be the default speed limit in all our urban areas. It's not only a road safety issue, lower speed limits also:

- * Ensure that traffic moves more smoothly with minimal effects on journey times
- * Reduce air and noise pollution
- * Reduce carbon emissions by increasing the number of people walking and cycling
- * Encourage young people to move about independently and encourage parents to permit their children to do so
- * Help combat rising levels of obesity by encouraging people of all ages to walk and cycle and by encouraging children to play outdoors
- * Transform our urban and village streets and residential estates from car dominated through-roads to vibrant living 'people-friendly' spaces
- * Bring us into line with the rest of Europe where 30km/h, (20 mph in the UK) is fast becoming the default urban speed limit.

(from <https://www.love30.ie/why-30kmh>)

These new limits should be demarcated clearly to alert drivers that they have entered an urban area - with extreme road narrowing, for example. Speed limits should be enforced by automatic cameras, both for road safety and to reduce noise pollution. KCC should lobby the DOT for the right to prosecute offenders in this regard.

The 'Roads' department (as cited on the KCC website) should be renamed Transportation, to reflect a broader approach which prioritises active travel.

There should be a levy on car parks that don't provide an equivalent number of secure bike stands (i.e. Sheffield stands), including space for disabled and cargo bikes. These should be close to the door or amenity for passive surveillance, with segregated access.

Discourage car use in every way possible - limited parking, pedestrian priority on village main streets, liberal use of zebra crossings. Main Streets should be for people, not cars. Put parking for town centres at the periphery, with cycling and walking prioritised in the core and parking limited to blue badge holders and loading bays.

Community facilities should be built with minimal parking - blue badge holders and loading bays only preferably, with coach parking if appropriate. Currently there is a funding to build a playground in Leixlip, coupled with car parking. Why is this funding not spent on building cycle tracks that are suitable for children to reach the playground instead? These facilities are by their nature used mainly by local residents, who are within walking or cycling distances.

The principle of induced demand is well understood by now, so any new through roads should be counterbalanced by removing access elsewhere - e.g. the new Celbridge-Hazelhatch bridge is designed to remove congestion from Celbridge village. Thus Celbridge village should be pedestrianised with a high quality two-way cycle lane, with deliveries allowed before 11am or similar arrangements. With the large amount of people who walk in the grounds of Castletown House, this will encourage them to walk through the village also and shop and eat there. This would also be a boon for air quality and the safety of students at St Brigids. Likewise with Maynooth relief roads and any ring roads in Naas.

8 - Urban Centres & Retail

Caibidil: Volume 1 - chapters » 8 - Urban Centres & Retail

Shops on the Main Street cannot compete with online businesses for convenience or cost, but they can on experience. We must make shopping in our main streets a pleasant experience. Pedestrian areas where one can linger without feeling claustrophobic from noisy, polluting motor traffic, but instead wander from shop to shop and sit outside in fine weather - under canopies when needed.

Every Main Street in Kildare should have a car-free day once a month. Small businesses will find it hard to get a foot in the door without a shop front. Closing the Main Street once a month on a weekend day for pop-up stalls and get people supporting small local businesses and give opportunity for new business ideas to be tried on stalls. Keep people in local towns at weekends rather than trips to Dublin, etc. This would allow local businesses to cheaply advertise their existence and their services, even if they are mostly an online offering. For instance, in Leixlip, the LAP shows Arthur Guinness square being used for civic purposes instead of car parking. Combine that area with the Main Street from Captain's Hill to Buckley's Lane, and a very inviting event can be put on.

When bypasses or major new roads are opened (e.g. Naas bypass, Maynooth bypass, new Celbridge bridge), the town centres should be restricted in some way for private motor traffic while still allowing deliveries, active travel and public transport.

12 - Biodiversity & Green Infrastructure

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KCC should have a Biodiversity Officer role, and preferably an environmental officer in every Municipal District.

We have a lot of protection for trees and hedgerows on agricultural land, but little for our towns and villages. Felling in urban areas should be limited and licensed only if necessary. Plant pocket forests and greenery on every space patch of land - roadsides, public lawns, etc. - to promote biodiversity and carbon capture. Existing trees and hedgerows should be preserved as much as possible, to protect biodiversity as well as the carbon already sequestered therein.

Dedicated wild/green areas are needed across the county. Not just grassy greens, but wild forest areas of native species with a few paths that are mostly left to go wild and act as lungs for the county. Protection for existing trees and hedgerows - felling in urban areas should be limited and licensed if necessary. Plant pocket forests and greenery on every space patch of land - roadsides, public lawns, etc. - to promote biodiversity and carbon capture.

Within new developments, guidelines should be set for native pollinator-friendly species to be used in landscaping. As well as a public open space, there should be dedicated biodiversity areas within developments for wildlife and pocket forests as amenities. For every tree felled as part of construction, at least one more should be replaced on the finished site, but as much of our existing natural heritage should be retained and protected.

The end of peat extraction from our bogs means there is a huge opportunity to repurpose them as biodiversity areas, carbon sinks and a natural amenity for residents and tourists alike. There is potential of using existing Bord na Mona railways as “peat-ways” to link greenways and blueways is incredible. They could also to act as a network of green roads across the midlands linking rewetted cutaways and transforming them into a de facto national park stretching across Kildare and Offaly, showcasing the bogs and our industrial heritage.

13 - Landscape, Recreation & Amenity

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We have as a country committed to the 30 by 30 campaign - 30% of our land to be managed for nature, by the year 2030. That's 30% of bogs to be rewetted, and 30% of fields that should be replanted with native species. Every town should have a 100 acre wood within 15mins active travel.

Has the Council fully implemented the 2000 European Landscape Convention as ratified in 2008? If not, this should be a priority so that residents can ensure their local areas are protected.

Tree preservation orders should be more widely used. At present it is unclear how one should apply to KCC for one, and thus an endangered tree is unlikely to be saved in time.

There are not enough parks in any of our towns. Celbridge has no park apart from Castletown House which has no playground or open areas for ball games, and for west Leixlip using active travel to get to St Catherine's Park means running the gauntlet of Main Street and then a steep climb along the Black Avenue. Create more parks!

14 - Urban Design, Placemaking & Regeneration

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Existing buildings should be repurposed and redeveloped as much as possible, rather than demolishing and developing new structures. The embodied carbon footprint of existing buildings must be maintained, and this should be calculated as part of planning applications that propose any demolition. Those that discard large amounts of embodied carbon should not be granted.

To encourage a more active and healthy lifestyle, we must remove car dependency and car dominance from our towns. The same should be done even between our towns. The likes of Maynooth, Leixlip and Celbridge are only a few kilometres apart, and should have dedicated segregated cycle facilities between them. The M4 is there for motor traffic access, we should encourage and provide for active travel on all other routes.

Put in more one-way systems for motor traffic in towns and villages, and use the freed up space to create segregated two-cycle lanes. People have rediscovered their local area during Covid 5k restrictions, so let's help them keep going.

Documents Attached: Níl

Teorainneacha Gafa ar an léarscáil: Níl