

Chapter 5: Sustainable Mobility and Transport

The CDP refers to: A sustainable transport system is one that is accessible, safe, environmentally-friendly, and affordable. (ECMT 2004) This definition indicates the need for a balance between social, economic, and environmental goals, policies, and objectives.

As we are in the midst of a climate and biodiversity crisis, we recommend the CDP moves away from quoting the 'Triple Bottom Line' approach and moves towards a 'Doughnut Economics' approach that recognises that the planet does not depend on the economy, however the economy is completely dependent on the natural world. (See: Doughnut Economics: <https://doughnuteconomics.org/about-doughnut-economics>)

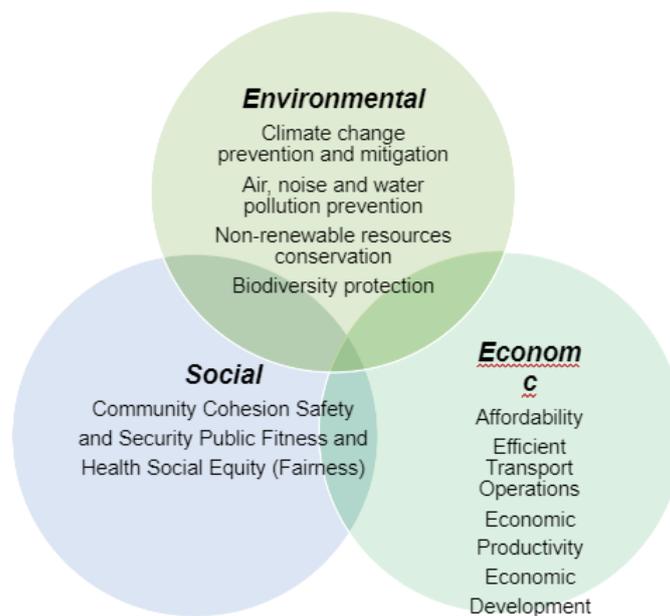


Figure 1 Triple Bottom Line



Figure 2 Doughnut Economics

In contrast to agriculture and energy, transport is the area where a local authority can have the greatest impact on climate change. We welcome the support for sustainable transport including walking and cycling and the lesser role envisaged for car-based travel. However, we consider that the County Development Plan should explicitly state that a significant reduction in car use is an essential requirement for a sustainable future. Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) design requirements specify that planners design for increased number of vehicles in the future which is incompatible with decarbonising of transport and avoiding climate change.

We strongly support the concept of a 10-minute settlement although the distance covered by a 10-minute journey by foot, by bicycle and by public transport varies significantly. Kildare towns and villages are relatively small by international standards with none having dedicated local public transport. Active travel is feasible if made attractive to people who drive their cars for short journeys.

We support the recognition that traffic congestion is reduced by more active travel rather than the traditional solution of more roads and more road space.

We welcome the (January 2029) targets for modal change. However, the targets should be broken down into individual urban areas and for rural areas county wide. Following on from the County Development Plan, the targets should also propose 2030 targets which is a key date for Ireland's international commitment on climate action. Targets which involve a change in travel mode from private cars should also be quoted in terms of number of commuting vehicles so that Kildare's impact on the Climate Action Plan commitment of 51% reduction in fossil fuelled vehicles can be quantified.

It is disappointing that many of the objectives and policies refer to promotion and feasibility. The plan would be more progressive and definitive if it referred to achieving and/or enabling. In particular, the statement:

Kildare County Council will endeavour to deliver a reduction in private car usage broadly in line with the 51% reduction in emissions by the end of this decade ...

- lacks ambition and recognition of the seriousness of climate action.

5.3 Overarching Goals, Policies and Objectives

We commend the CDP in referring to the prioritisation of walking, cycling and public transport in policy statement **TM P1**.

TM P1 - *Promote sustainable development through facilitating movement to, from, and within the County that is accessible to all and prioritises walking, cycling and public transport.*

- Will an action be included to set out the criteria, and how it will be applied, to ensure this prioritisation occurs?

We note the following objectives and actions and suggest insertions and amendments, as outlined here:

TM O6 - ~~Support and encourage~~ Require employers to develop and implement Workplace Travel Plans which deliver modal change based on the NTA's Workplace Travel Plans: A Guide for Implementers (2013).

TM 07 - Introduce measures to reduce traffic congestion in town centres such as pedestrianisation, pedestrian priority and/or improved pedestrian/cyclist facilities, in particular increasing the number of safe crossings.

In relation to car shedding and consideration of how to travel, three key moments are when people get a new job, buy a new house or have a new person in their household. In light of this, please insert an additional objective as follows:

Additional Objective - Encourage new employees, house buyers and parents to consider active and sustainable travel in conjunction with Kildare stakeholders.

5.4 Sustainable Movement

We note objective **TM 011** here and suggest the following additional changes:

TM 011 - Investigate the feasibility of developing high-quality, suitable, safe, and sustainable cycling pathways:

- i. from Leixlip, Maynooth and Naas into Dublin; and
- ii. between Naas and Newbridge,
- iii. Kildare town to Newbridge and westwards towards Portlaoise as far as the Kildare county boundary, and
- iv. Kildare Town to Monasterevin.
- v. Enfield to Edenderry disused railway line.
- vi. Along a Kildare section of the Trans-European Transport Network (TEN-T).

- Additionally, how is 'feasibility' defined?
- Can trialling be included as part of these feasibility studies to ensure time is not lost on reports?

5.4.1 Walking and Cycling

We note the following objectives and suggest insertions and amendments, as outlined here:

TM 016 - Ensure regular maintenance, including winter maintenance, of walking and cycling routes and ensure that all roads in new developments are designed in accordance with the principles, approaches and standards contained in the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2019, the National Cycle Manual (NTA, 2011 – or the pending update) and the Draft GDA Cycle Network Plan (NTA, 2021).

TM 019 - ~~Investigate the feasibility of dedicating~~ Dedicate a street(s) to pedestrian only activity on certain days of the week or at certain times of the day, in a pilot town, in each municipal district, during the life of this Plan.

TM O32 - ~~Promote and encourage~~ Support the use of the Toolkit for School Travel (2019) by teachers, parents and others and promote and encourage, in consultation with the Department of Education, substantial changes in relation to the items that learners are expected to bring to and from school daily to encourage more learners to cycle to school

TM A7 - Investigate the feasibility of providing a ~~footpath connection~~ dedicated shared path from Maynooth to Celbridge.

~~**TM A13** - Prepare a Cycle Network Study for each of the key towns in County Kildare consisting of the primary links identified in the NTA's Draft Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (2021), connections between the major towns and surrounding settlements, key strategic cycle routes, greenways and local links, all in accordance with the National Cycle Manual. The study will include draft widths, level of services and identify local targets.~~

Revised TM A13 - Prepare a Cycle Strategy for each of the key towns in County Kildare consisting of the primary links identified in the NTA's Draft Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (2021), local links and links to surrounding settlements; include key strategic cycle routes, greenways connecting the major towns, all in accordance with the National Cycle Manual. The study will include draft widths, levels of service and identify local targets.

TM A16 - Provide new or ~~upgraded~~ dynamic lighting for all footpath and cycle track schemes subject to the consideration of ecology and impacts on wildlife. Appropriate environmental assessments will be required and may result in unlit sections which may include some parts of the county's Greenways.

Additionally, please insert additional action, as follows:

Additional Action - Design separate facilities for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicle drivers unless vehicle speeds and levels of activity are low. If numbers are high, shared space will result in a poor level of service for all.

5.5 Road and Street Network

We note objective TM O58 the following amendment:

TM O58 - Secure the implementation and maintain corridors free from development to facilitate future roads, cycle facilities and other transport infrastructure improvement identified within this Plan (Tables 5.4 & 5.5) and Local Area Plans. The further progression of the road projects is subject to assessment against the National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland (NIFTI) 'Principles of Road Development' criteria set out in Section 13.2 of the Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022-2042. Where the road project is an orbital road around a town centre, the development must be accompanied by enhanced public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities in the relevant centre, as required by Section 13.5

5.6 Motorways

Delete this objective **TM071** as it is incompatible with government Climate Change objectives.

~~**TM 071** – Support and facilitate enhanced orbital movement between the N3, the N4 and N7 national roads, by the widening of existing roads and/or the development of new road links, for the purpose of providing resilience to the operation of the M50 and incorporating provision for sustainable transport as provided for in the NTAs Draft Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2022–2042 and the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy~~

5.8 Regional Roads

In relation to **TM 085**, please note Table 5.5 includes 44 regional roads (virtually every regional road in the county). This is in addition to some 20 priority road projects listed in Table 5.4 (Section 5.1 Roads and Street Network).

TM 085 - Progress the regional roads identified for improvement as set out in Table 5.5 subject to funding. During the life of this Plan, select a (section of) regional road linking two urban settlements in each of the municipal districts and investigate the feasibility of providing a segregated shared path adjoining it.

5.10 Road and Street Design

We note objective **TM 098** and suggest the following amendments:

TM 098 - Set and apply speed limits taking into account the function of the road or street, the characteristics of the surrounding area, the design of the street environment and the presence of potential vulnerable users. The speed limits shall be in accordance with the Road Traffic Act 2004 (as amended) and ~~shall be subject to the requirements of the Guidelines for Setting and Managing Speed Limits in Ireland (2015)~~ in accordance with the Stockholm Declaration.

Please insert **Additional Action**, as follows:

Additional Objective - Reduce motorised traffic in town centres where alternative routes exist so as to promote walking and cycling in the interests of road safety.

5.12 Car Parking

We note objective **TM 0107** and suggest the following amendment:

TM 0107 - ~~Seek to reduce~~ Reduce the level of on-street parking with a view to the reallocation of the roadspace to sustainable modes and to investigate the feasibility of delivering parking on suitable backland sites that would not jeopardise the vitality and vibrancy of the relevant town/village centre.

Targets

TM T1 - *As a minimum, reduce the current car-based trips to work from 74% to 50% and the car-based trips to education from 50% to 40% by the end of this Plan period.*

- This target is underwhelming given the scale of the crisis. If a 2:1 approach is to be taken as per Government plans, the targets, at a minimum should be:
- *As a minimum, reduce the current car-based trips to work **from 74% to 33.3%** and the car-based trips to education **from 50% to 33.3%** by the end of this Plan period.*

In response to the below targets:

- **TM T2** - *As a minimum, increase the current modal shares of trips to work by walking to 20% and cycling to 10% during the lifetime of this Plan and*
- **TM T3** - *As a minimum, increase the current modal shares of trips to education by walking to 50% and cycling to 15% during the lifetime of this Plan.*
- **TM T4** - *As a minimum, increase the current modal shares of work trips by bus to 13% and train to 14% during the lifetime of this Plan.*

These targets are hugely underwhelming given the scale of the crisis. If a 2:1 approach is to be taken as per Government plans, the targets should collectively be aiming for walking and cycling to make up at least 66% of all trips to both work and education.