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25th January 2015



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Re. Preparation of the Municipal District Local Area Plans

Dear Mr Hind,

In respect of the consultation documents prepared for the Municipal District local area plans, the National Transport Authority (the Authority) welcomes the opportunity to comment and would note the comprehensive approach that has been taken in their preparation, much of which, in the Cork Metropolitan Area, is evidently based upon the detailed work, already undertaken in the preparation of the various framework masterplans and land use / transportation studies for key development locations.

The Authority has been consulted on a number of these plans over the last few years and has worked with the County Council in conjunction with other agencies on the development of sustainable transport solutions. This has been undertaken in part, through its transport investment function (Sustainable Transport Investment Framework 2013-2017) within the Metropolitan Area as well as its statutory functions in the planning and regulation of public transport services.

The Authority's overall approach to the integration of land use and transport planning has been set out in detail over a number of submissions made since 2013, at various stages in the preparation of the current County Development Plan, numerous local area plans and framework masterplans. These submissions, set out the general principles which the Authority considered should inform the achievement of more sustainable development, including:

- A Metropolitan Area-wide approach to the prioritisation of development locations / development consolidation;
- Development layouts, permeability and accessibility to services at the local level;
- The determination and application of appropriate development densities which support the provision of public transport services;
- Transport demand management / management of strategic transport assets, including national roads; and
- An integrated approach to transport network planning and investment across all modes.

Whilst these principles were presented in the context of development within the Cork Metropolitan Area settlements, they are, by and large, also applicable to the larger settlements across the County as a whole.

The Authority would therefore recommend that the review of the local area plans is informed by these principles and in particular that the Council ensures that:

- Development location is prioritised and the sequencing of development, informed by the need to promote and provide for the development of public transport services, accessibility to services at the local level and the delivery of supporting sustainable transport infrastructure;
- The protection of the strategic transport infrastructure assets, including the national road network, through the appropriate location of development and the provision of alternative network options and modes of transport;
- An integrated approach to land use and transport planning throughout the County is undertaken, to provide a stronger basis for the use of non-car modes, the development of improved public transport services and the provision of supporting infrastructure.

With this in mind, in devising a sustainable development strategy for each local area plan area, the Authority would welcome an opportunity to meet with the Planning Authority, to discuss in more detail, a range of transport issues relating to each of the local area plan areas and the application of the principles set out above.

In doing so, a particular focus on the following locations is recommended:

- All of the Metropolitan Area settlements and other strategically important development areas;
- The CASP Ring Towns and other larger settlements outside of the CASP area;

In relation to public transport service provision, transport network planning and investment, a strong focus in these discussions, on the following, is recommended:

- The examination of existing transport deficiencies and possible solutions;
- The assessment of transport demand arising from proposed development objectives and associated population and employment growth / distribution;
- Likely transport investment requirements and priorities over the period of the local area plans;
- Bus network planning over the period of the local area plans
 - City/ environs Bus Network
 - Commuter Bus services within the Metropolitan Area ;
 - Longer distance services connecting Cork City with CASP Ring Towns and other settlements outside of the CASP area
- Rural Bus Transport Provision;
- Walking and Cycle network planning.

The Authority looks forward to meeting with the Planning Authority to collaborate on the above matters, during the course of the local area plans' preparation.

Yours sincerely,



Michael Mac Aree
Head of Planning and Data Analysis