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31st March 2015

Re: Celbridge (incl. Castletown) Local Area Plan 2016-2022 – Background Issues Paper.

Dear Sir/Madam,

The National Transport Authority (“the Authority”) welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Celbridge (incl. Castletown) Local Area Plan 2016-2022 – Background Issues Paper, at the current Pre-Draft Public Consultation Stage.

Section 31E(1) of the Planning and Development Act 2000¹ assigns the Authority certain functions in the preparation of a local area plan, including preparation and submission to the relevant planning authority, of a report on the issues which, in its opinion, should be considered by the planning authority in the review of its existing local area plan and the preparation of a new local area plan (LAP).

Among other issues, such reports should address the following:

- (a) the transport investment priorities for the period of the local area plan,*
- (b) the scope, if any, to maximise the performance of the transport system by effective land use planning, and*
- (d) recommendations on the matters to be addressed in the local area plan to ensure the effective integration of transport and land use planning.*

The National Transport Authority (the Authority) therefore submits the following observations on the making of the Celbridge LAP 2016-2022, and on the material presented in the background Issues Paper.

Transport Investment Priorities

This section deals with transport investment priorities for the period of the Celbridge LAP 2016-2022. The Authority’s Integrated Implementation Plan sets out an infrastructure investment

¹ As inserted by Section 95 of the Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008

programme which identifies the key regional objectives and outputs to be pursued by the Authority from 2013-2018, while the ongoing work between the Authority and Kildare County Council on the Sustainable Transport Measures Grants Programme comprises the implementation of these objectives on a local scale on a rolling annual basis. The next Government Capital Investment Programme and Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy will also frame investment in Co. Kildare over the period of the LAP. Certainty as to the content of these documents is not likely to emerge until later in 2015.

In advance of the next capital programme and transport strategy, and based on the plans which are currently in force, the Authority requests that the new Celbridge LAP 2016-2022 facilitates the priorities and objectives of the Authority which are set out below.

GDA Cycle Network

The Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan was published in April 2014. The planned network, consists of primary, secondary and Greenway routes (through parks, along waterways etc.), and comprises a mix of cycle tracks and lanes, cycleways and infrastructure-free cycle routes in low traffic environments. This plan will inform the next decade of NTA investment in cycling across seven local authority areas in the region.

The Authority requests that those elements of the GDA Cycle Network Plan which apply to the Celbridge area are reflected in the new LAP, as follows:

- Route C1 – From Main Street along the R405 Newcastle Road to Hazelhatch Station and the Grand Canal Greenway;
- Route C2 – Clane Road to Main Street;
- Route C3 – Oldtown (Ring) Road to Church Road;
- Route C4 – R403 Clane Road and Oldtown Road to Maynooth Road;
- Route C5 - Willowbrook Road;
- Route C6 – R405 Maynooth Road, from Main Street to Salesian College;
- Route C7 – R449 Celbridge to Leixlip Link Road (from Maynooth Road junction across M4 Junction 6);
- Route C8/C8a/C8b – Castletown Demesne Greenways to Barnhall Road, Main Street and links to C6 & C7; and
- Liffey Greenway, which is planned to start at the Main Street / Maynooth Road junction.

Bus Network

The Celbridge LAP area is served by the public bus network, and the core public transport provision into and within the LAP area will continue to be bus-based. The Authority will seek the improvement of bus stopping areas with upgraded waiting and boarding facilities, and secure cycle parking and travel information. In order to capitalise on this investment, the LAP should contain objectives to maximise the ease of bus movement within the town, with a focus on the town centre and the access points to it, as well as bus stopping locations that serve the wider catchment area.

Rail Network

Celbridge is served by Commuter Rail Services at Hazelhatch and Celbridge station, operating at present to and from Heuston Station in Dublin. It is intended that certain commuter services will

serve Connolly and Grand Canal Dock stations in Dublin City Centre from 2016 onwards, via the Phoenix Park Tunnel line. Improvements to the connectivity to Hazelhatch and Celbridge station, from Celbridge town centre and the residential areas of the town, are required in order to provide the highest level of accessibility to commuter rail services. It is recommended that the LAP contains objectives for bus, cycling and pedestrian infrastructure that will improve that connectivity.

Traffic Management

The Authority is required to prepare and adopt strategic traffic management plan for the Greater Dublin Area, which will present principles for local-level traffic management that will serve to complement sustainable travel. In the interim, the draft LAP should include objectives for the town centre that maximise the efficiency of allocations of street space and time to different users for deliveries, parking (including disabled parking), taxi ranks and access for local residents.

General Land Use Recommendations

The Authority's Integrated Implementation Plan outlines the key principles for the integration of land use and transport and the Authority requests that these principles are reflected in the objectives of the LAP, as amended as follows:

- The role and function of the town centre should be supported and promoted in order to exploit the levels of accessibility offered by public transport, walking and cycling;
- All non-residential development proposals should be subject to maximum parking standards and should vary spatially on the basis of centrality and the level of public transport provision;
- The strategic transport function of national roads, including motorways, should be maintained by limiting the extent of development, including residential development, that would give rise to the generation of local car-based traffic on the national road network;
- For all major employment developments and all new and extended schools, travel plans should be conditioned as part of planning permissions and be carried out in a manner consistent with NTA guidance documents – “Toolkit for School Travel” and “Workplace Travel Plans – A Guide for Implementers”. The LAP should contain a clear policy reflecting this requirement;
- To the extent practicable, residential development should be carried out sequentially, whereby lands which are, or will be, most accessible by walking, cycling and public transport - including infill and brownfield sites - are prioritised;
- Residential development located proximate to high capacity public transport, such as commuter rail, should be prioritised over development in less accessible locations;
- Planning at the local level should promote walking, cycling and public transport by maximising the number of people living within walking and cycling distance of their town centre, public transport services and other services at the local level such as schools through, for example, the application of Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas from the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, whereby the highest densities of development are focussed on the town centre and locations served by public transport;
- New development areas should be fully permeable for walking and cycling and the retrospective implementation of walking and cycling facilities should be undertaken where practicable in existing neighbourhoods. Where possible, developments should provide for filtered permeability. This would provide for walking, cycling, public transport and private

vehicle access but at the same time would restrict or discourage private car through trips. This would give a competitive advantage to these modes and encourage their use as an alternative to the private car; and

- To the extent practicable, proposals for right of way extinguishments should only be considered where these do not result in more circuitous walking and cycling trips for local residents accessing public transport, or local destinations.

To conclude, the Authority welcomes the intention, expressed in the background issues paper, that the LAP will promote integrated land-use and transportation planning to further support and encourage more sustainable modes of travel, and look forward to seeing how these are given expression via policies and objectives in the draft LAP. The Authority will continue to work with Kildare County Council in the implementation of schemes which will enhance the public transport, walking and cycling environment in Celbridge.

Yours sincerely,



Michael MacAree

Head of Integrated Strategic Planning.