

Appendix C: Strategic Policy Context Review

There is a significant need for a transport solution along the North Dublin transport corridor. In this Appendix, a more detailed overview of Government policies in the areas of transport, sustainability and land use development relevant to the business case for MetroLink, is provided. European and national policies focus on the need for greater sustainability of transport networks and a shift from private car travel to public transport, whilst, regional and local policies specifically set out priorities for public transport development and compatible land use development that is of direct relevance to the proposed MetroLink.

Policy type	Relevant policy (ies) / policy elements	Relevance to proposed MetroLink
European / Sustainability / Transport	The EU Transport White Paper 6 (2011) ⁵² focussed on the reduction of emissions from transport and a series of target actions have been established for Member States, including supporting increasing demand for mobility whilst meeting the 60% emission reduction target. The White Paper sets out a specific objective that by 2050, all core network airports will be connected to the rail network.	Modal shift to high capacity, electrified light rail solution will contribute to this policy objective: The proposed MetroLink scheme will be an electrified light rail solution, but its biggest contribution to climate change targets is a combination of its ability to attract and achieve modal shift through its operation as a high frequency, fast, efficient and sustainable public transport system and its high carrying capacity. A metro system can carry large numbers of people daily and that's what brings down carbon emissions per person travelling. In addition, passenger movements on high capacity (urban rail systems such as a metro require less than a tenth of the energy needed to move individuals by car.
European / Sustainability / Transport	The European Union Green Deal ⁵³ launched a new growth strategy for the EU that aims to transform the EU improving the quality of life, with a modern, resource-efficient and competitive economy where there are no net emissions of greenhouse gases in 2050. Transport accounts for a quarter of the Union's greenhouse gas emissions and these continue to grow. To achieve climate neutrality, a 90% reduction in transport emissions is needed by 2050. Reaching this target, includes actions such as: including; investing in environmentally friendly technologies; and the roll out of roll out of cleaner, cheaper and healthier forms of private and public transport	Electrified light rail solution will contribute to this policy objective: MetroLink supports and is aligned to the ambitious objectives set out by the Green Deal. The scheme will be designed and delivered to support new and existing sustainability modes that can reduce congestion and pollution in Dublin, especially in the urban environment. Transport in Dublin is thus on a path to become less polluting and more sustainable. Furthermore, MetroLink will assist Dublin in reaching the stringent air pollutant emissions standards of the EU that are set to be tightened by June 2021.
Sustainability / Social inclusion	The UN Sustainable Development Goals are the centre piece of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, adopted by UN Member States in 2015. These goals reflect economic, social and environment dimensions of sustainable development, with an ultimate goal of "leave no one behind."	Relating directly to the provision of MetroLink are the SDGs of Sustainable Cities and Communities and Climate Action. However, other goals such as Good Health and Well-Being and Reduced Inequality are also woven into the social inclusion mission of the MetroLink project as it will connect communities, which previously had little to no access, with Dublin City where they can access a

⁵² European Commission: Roadmap to a Single European Transport Area – Towards a competitive and resource efficient transport system, 2011

⁵³ Sustainable Mobility: European Union Green Deal, 2019

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		host of social services unavailable in surrounding areas.
Sustainability	The EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 is a set of commitments and actions agreed to by EU member states which aim to build the resilience of societies against current and future environment related threats.	As an EU member state funded project, MetroLink will need to keep policies such as the EU Biodiversity Strategy 2030 in mind when delivering this piece of infrastructure. TII will aim to deliver MetroLink in a way which will not do further harm to the Irish ecosystem. Additionally, with MetroLink expected to divert approximately 6.8 million car trips per annum in the early years and growing to 12 million per annum by 2045., GHG emissions will be reduced.
National / Sustainability / Transport / Regional	The Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework is Ireland's strategic planning framework and was released in 2018, alongside Ireland's 10-year National Development 2018-2027.	See Chapter 3 for a detailed assessment of the positive alignment that MetroLink has to the national strategic outcomes set out in the Project Ireland 2040 National Planning Framework.
National / Sustainability / Transport	Part of Project Ireland 2040, The National Development Plan 2018-2027 is Ireland's €116bn investment plan over the next decade to contribute towards achieving the ten strategic outcomes under the NPF. Major national infrastructure projects which are specifically called out for investment under "Sustainable Mobility" include MetroLink, BusConnects and the DART Expansion Programme.	<p>The National Development Plan recognises the collective importance of a sustainable integrated transport network and for this reason includes projects such as MetroLink, DART Expansion Programme, BusConnects, delivery of a Park-and-Ride Programme and a comprehensive cycling and walking network. Projects such as the proposed MetroLink are vital to Ireland achieving the national strategic outcomes.</p> <p>The proposed MetroLink system is taking full advantage of the opportunity to integrate with other major transport hubs, such as two major Iamród Éireann lines – the north-western line from Sligo/Maynooth to Dublin, and the south-western commuter line from Newbridge / Hazelhatch to Grand Canal Dock, as well as Dublin Airport. In addition to this, the proposed MetroLink scheme will also connect with DART and Iamród Éireann services at Tara Street, as well as providing interchanges with the Luas Green Line at Charlemont, O'Connell Street, and St. Stephen's Green, and the Luas Red line at Abbey Street.</p>
National / Sustainability / Transport	The 2020 Programme for Government provides an overview of the current Government's vision for the country over the coming years. Specifically, MetroLink and other key transport projects are called out under the Government's Mission of "A Better Quality of Life for All," where a focus on improving the wellbeing of the Irish people and society is of critical importance. The current Government has committed to a 2:1 ratio of expenditure between new public transport infrastructure and new roads over its lifetime, highlighting the important role that public transport will play in the Government's policies and budgets.	The Government has pledged to prioritise plans for the delivery of MetroLink during its tenure. MetroLink will build upon Dublin's current integrated public transport network, providing an additional reliable transport option and reducing the nation's reliance on emissions heavy cars for daily transport needs. The inclusion of a park-and-ride facility at the northern terminus of MetroLink is also in direct alignment with the Government's tasking of the NTA with a park and ride implementation plan for each of the country's major cities. This park and ride facility will reduce congestion, journey times and transport related emissions.

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National / Sustainability	The Climate Action Plan 2019 is the previous Government's commitment/ plan for tackling the climate crisis and de-carbonising the Irish economy. Key targets contained within the plan include reducing non-ETS sector greenhouse gas emissions by 30%, relative to 2005, by 2030; and support for an ambition emerging from the European Union of net zero Greenhouse Gas emissions by 2050.	With a huge focus on reducing the number of people who are reliant on cars in their daily lives, sustainable-mobility projects are at the forefront of the Climate Action Plan and are categorised as Critical Infrastructure. The implementation of MetroLink is specifically called out in the Climate Action Plan as a necessary step towards achieving climate related targets for modal shift and will encourage the shift to more sustainable transport usage with its integration with current transport modes such as LUAS, Irish Rail, BusConnects, and cycling and walking paths.
National / Sustainability / Transport	TII's Environmental Strategy outlines the Authority's vision to "ensure that Ireland's national road and light rail infrastructure is safe, sustainable and resilient."	As part of this document, TII outlines its Environmental Sustainability Delivery Framework which ensures that sustainability is at the heart of all stages of infrastructure delivery: planning, construction, implementation and post implementation reviews. TII will use this framework while delivering MetroLink to ensure that
Regional / Transport / Economic Development / Sustainability	Eastern & Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy 2019-2031: The Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly developed this plan identifying regional assets, opportunities and pressures and recommends relevant policy to better manage spatial planning and economic development. The three key principles include Healthy Placemaking, Climate Action and Economic Opportunity. The strategy will be implemented for the purpose of supporting Project Ireland 2040 and the Government's planning and economic framework for the development of the region.	This RSES specifically discusses MetroLink in the context of expanded residential development, economic development, and enabling infrastructure. As a key sustainable transport project included in Project Ireland 2040, the MetroLink transport corridor will become a hub of residential and subsequent economic development in the area north of Dublin city centre, including Finglas, Swords, and Dublin Airport. Becoming more well-connected with reliable transport options, towns such as Swords will attract a larger set of potential residents, allowing for growth in all aspects of the local economy.
Economic development plans and transport strategies	Fingal County Council Development Plan (2017-2023) Future Swords Dublin City Council Development Plan (2016-2022) Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (2016-2035) The above development plans for Dublin and its surrounding areas focus on the recognition of the need to integrate land use and transport to facilitate long term growth. All the strategies focus on the expansion of integrated public transport options to allow for greater ease of travel in the region, with a heavy focus on the provision of a Metro.	MetroLink will provide areas in need of economic development with transportation needed to allow passengers to easily travel to and from different areas in the Greater Dublin Area. Many of these development plans specifically rely on the development and provision of a Metro connecting the city centre to areas north of Dublin City. MetroLink would bring footfall to areas such as Swords that would not have previously had such an easy connection to city centre. This would allow for the development of business in the area while also providing an easier commute for those working in the city, and greater access to social services such as hospitals which may have proven more challenging to access in the past.

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National / Transport / Economic Development / Sustainability	Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 – 2035: The NTA developed this strategy for the purpose of contributing to the economic, social and cultural progress of the Greater Dublin Area through the provision of efficient, effective and sustainable movement of people and goods. The strategy sets out the goals, current situation, patterns and trends, development of the strategy and anticipated 2035 transport network of the Greater Dublin Area. With a heavy focus on the promotion of public transport and provision of a system that reduces the number of individual car journeys undertaken.	The Transport strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 – 2035 specifically proposes New Metro North, a previous iteration of MetroLink. A metro system connecting Swords, Dublin Airport, city centre, and other areas in North Dublin will directly support the strategy's goals of supporting economic, social, and cultural progress in the Greater Dublin Area in an efficient, effective and sustainable way. Sustainability plays a key role in the development of MetroLink, with both this transport strategy and MetroLink aiming to reduce the share of trips undertaken by car and a proportional increase in the use of public transport and other sustainable means of travel.
Transport	RSA Road Safety Strategy 2013 – 2020: The government has adopted a highly ambitious vision for road safety in Ireland and for the remainder of the decade. The aim is to raise Ireland's road safety performance to that of comparator countries and to continue the progress that TII has made in the past.	Public transport systems, especially mass-fast transport systems such as MetroLink are a safer form of travel than travelling by road ²⁴ . The introduction of this scheme into Ireland's existing transport system will assist Ireland into reaching future road safety goals by taking cars off the road.
Transport	Smarter Travel: Smarter Travel sets out a broad vision for the future and establishes a national transport vision and objectives. The main objectives focus on reducing the dependency on the private car by increasing public transport mode share and encouraging walking and cycling. The policy contains a target to increase the number of commuters travelling to work to such a level that leads to a drop in the total share of car commuting from 65% to 45%. This policy is under review and expected to be updated during 2021.	The provision of an integrated, reliable public transport option such as MetroLink will directly tie into the Department of Transport's Smarter Travel initiative. The reliance on private cars can often be attributed to a lack of options, reliability or speed regarding public transport options. MetroLink will ensure that travellers have a reliable public transport option which will reduce their journey time, allowing them to reduce their dependence on private cars.