

5 CONSULTATION

Introduction

- 5.1 Effective consultation was seen as a key element of the study. As a result consultation made a significant contribution to all stages of the study and in particular the problem identification and option appraisal phases. In view of the scale and scope of the study a variety of consultation techniques were adopted to engage the general public, specific interest groups and officials of Kildare C.C.
- 5.2 A detailed consultation plan was prepared and set out at the Inception Meeting. The consultation activities identified and developed for the study comprised three main elements; namely:
- Kildare County Council Officials;
 - Key Stakeholders; and
 - Residents of Celbridge.
- 5.3 The following sections detail the consultation process undertaken and reports on the outcome of the consultants activities.

Kildare County Council Officials

- 5.4 TPi staff visited Celbridge on 14th May 2007 as part of a Steering Group meeting, visiting again on 7th June 2007 with the Kildare County Council Area Engineer, Cyril Buggy. These visits highlighted a number of traffic and transportation related problems and issues in the town. TPi also attended a meeting of the Celbridge Area Committee on 20th April in the Council Chambers. Amongst other things the area members and officers aired these concerns in respect of transport issues in Celbridge:

Pedestrians

- 'Traffic arrangements at Castletown Gate in order to cater, in particular, for the safe movement of pedestrians and school going children'. It is acknowledged that there are 'limited options open to the Council in view of the close proximity of preserved buildings'.
- The pedestrian signals on Main Street in the vicinity of the school need to be modified to bring the signal poles closer to the edge of the carriageway.^②
- The wall opposite Celbridge Abbey limits pedestrian access and obstructs visibility for those attempting to cross Clane Road at this point.
- Tactile paving in various locations also needs to be revised for compliance with current guidelines.

Public Transport

- There is a need for boarding kerbs at bus stops to allow access for the disabled.
- Illegal parking at bus stops (Plate 4) is a problem which may need to be addressed through the construction of appropriate buildouts.
- Lack of passenger facilities and information.

^② Quick Win Scheme completed during the preparation of this report.



Plate 4: Parking in the bus stop, English Row, Celbridge

Road Safety

- There is considered to be a need for 'speed limitation on Shackleton Road'.
- Stoplines at a number of junctions, including Castletown Gates (Plate 5) are set back beyond sightlines, meaning that drivers are forced to edge forward into oncoming traffic before making a turn.
- There is general congestion in the vicinity of schools at both ends of the school day.

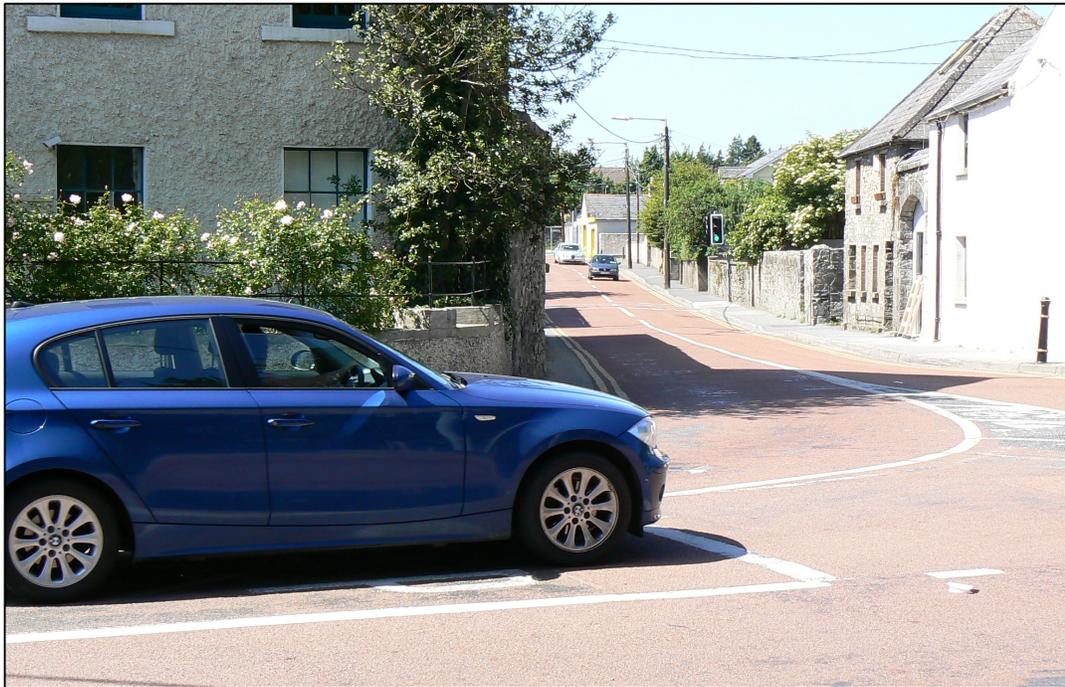


Plate 5: Limited visibility to the left at the stopline at Castletown Gates, Celbridge

Road Network and Junctions

- 'The feasibility or otherwise, of a right-hand turn into Celbridge at Aldi from Aghards Road'.
- It was reported that it is now difficult to turn right out of priority junctions, including those from housing estates, onto Maynooth Road.
- The traffic signals at the junction of Clane Road and Shackleton Road need to be altered to allow use by HGVs without over-running of footways and verges.

Parking

- On-Street parking charges were introduced in the town centre on 16th April 2007. The bylaws are now being enforced by a private contractor.
- Much of the available parking is in private off-street car parks on the Main Street's backlands. This is often accessed through narrow passageways, meaning the vehicles cross the footway with little notice (Plate 6).

The Bridge

- Traffic conditions in the vicinity of the bridge were reported to have improved following the opening of the link road from the R403 Dublin Road to the R405 Hazelhatch Road. The Area Engineer believes that further improvements could be expected with the imminent opening of the link from the R405 Hazelhatch Road to Newtown Road.
- Parking on Main Street in the vicinity of the junction was reported as a problem, in particular in the vicinity of cash machines.
- The junction on the south side of the bridge is particularly problematic, vehicles turning right from the bridge onto both Hazelhatch Road and Newtown Road. Movements at this junction are difficult to interpret for drivers unfamiliar with local practice.
- The link road improvements may allow traffic signals to be reinstated at the bridge.
- It was reported that an additional bridge had been considered in the past at the north end of Main Street.



Plate 6: Access across the footway on Main Street to the Celbridge Clinic Car Park

Traffic Signing

- Traffic signing, and in particular directional signing, has developed organically over several years (Plate 7). There is recognition that this needs to be improved.
- Many roads also lack 'road name' signing, and are called by up to three different names resulting in unnecessary confusion.

Constraints

- Congestion is reported to peak at between 09:00 and 09:30.
- It is understood that a large water main runs under the footway across the bridge, which would affect any major works.



Plate 7: Signing clutter on the south side of the bridge, Celbridge

Consultation with Key Stakeholders

5.5 Three stakeholder workshops were arranged and facilitated by TPI. The first stage consultation workshops were held at 14:00 and 20:00 on Monday 18th June 2007 at Celbridge Community Centre. These were focused at engaging with stakeholders to elicit traffic and transportation related problems and ideas for potential solutions rather than only responses to set questions. A list of those stakeholders agreed by the client and formally invited is included as Appendix A of this report. At the request of the Area Engineer, informal invitations were also extended to a number of businesses. Fourteen stakeholders participated with enthusiasm throughout the day, including but not limited to:

- Kevin Byrne – Councillor;
- Katie Ridge – Councillor;
- Franco Magliocco - Project Architects;;
- David Trost - St. Wolstan, Celbridge Community Council
- Clare Spellman - Scoil Na Mainistreach;
- Linda Carr - Scoil Brid;
- Samantha Ludlow - Scoil Mochua;

- Caroline Perry - Scoil Na Mainistreach;
 - Derry O'Leary – Dublin Bus;
 - Lorna Murphy - Primrose Hill;
 - Brenda Carroll - Parent Association, Scoil Na Mainistreach; and
 - Jane Craig - Beatty Grove Residents and other residents committees
- 5.6 Written responses were also received from Celbridge Chamber of Commerce, Catherine Murphy, Independent TD, Celbridge Residents Association, Castle Village Residents Association, Thornhill Residents Committee, An Garda Síochána and, Kildare Network of People with Disabilities.
- 5.7 The following represents a summary of the problems and issues, and potential solutions raised by stakeholders:

Walking & the Disabled

- Concerns were raised in relation to missing sections of footway adjacent to the Aldi store going towards the Ashgrove estate. This was identified as a route to Aghards School, and as such was thought to be particularly important for the safety of children.
- Footways are missing from the eastern side of the Maynooth Road between the entrance to the Church of Ireland Rectory and 'Hawthorn' House.
- Pavements were reported to be narrow on Maynooth Road and signal controlled pedestrian crossings were requested for The Drive (Castletown Estate) entrance onto the Maynooth Road.
- A footway was requested around the inside of the corner from Main Street onto Maynooth Road.^③ A school crossing patrol was also requested at this location.
- There is no crossing for pedestrians opposite the entrance to the Mill. The Community Centre is used for many children's activities and by older people.
- Egress from the metal pedestrian footbridge over the Liffey across both English Row and Newtown Road is difficult. Controlled pedestrian crossings were requested.
- A request was made for a second pedestrian bridge over the River Liffey
- There is no footpath on a section of Clane Road opposite Celbridge Abbey.
- The very busy roads around Tesco make it more difficult for pedestrian to cross the road. The new pedestrian signals have encouraged walking, but the introduction of a continental style roundabout proposed by Tesco was thought to be a retrograde step. Improvements were requested at the junction, but not in the form of a roundabout^④.
- It was reported that there is no safe place to cross the Main Street from the car park at St. Raphael's
- At St. Patrick's Park junction onto Main Street, it is dangerous for pedestrians when traffic is coming from 3 different directions.

Cycling

- Many of the cycle routes were reported to be both discontinuous and too narrow to use by parents with children.
- There is also a lack secure cycle parking, both on, and in the vicinity of, Main Street.
- There needs to be a complete cycle track from the centre of Celbridge to the train station.
- Provision of cycle lockers was requested at Hazelhatch Station.

^③Quick Win Scheme implemented during the preparation of this report

^④The proposed 'Continental Style' roundabout was refused planning permission by Kildare County Council

- A request was made for cycle tracks to all schools, and secure cycle parking at all schools.

Public Transport

- The limited frequency of the 67A bus service was considered to be a problem.
- The Dublin Bus route was reported to not serve the whole population of Celbridge.
- Improvements to bus services, were requested, at weekends, particularly Sundays, and on Bank Holidays
- Bus drivers were reported not to be happy with speed humps in the area, and have requested road narrowing or chicanes, as a better solution.
- Iarnród Éireann have recently provided extra car parking spaces at Hazelhatch Station, but a lack of parking at the station was still reported to be an issue.
- A bus service links the town centre with Hazelhatch Station, but the bus timetable was reported '*not to be well publicised*' and not to be particularly consistent with the arrival and departure of rail services. It is thought that the lack of a guaranteed rail/bus connection is a particular problem.
- A lack of marketing and awareness of feeder bus services to Maynooth Station were also raised as an issue.
- Lack of passenger facilities and information, however Bus Éireann reported that funding has been approved for bus stops and shelters improvements in Celbridge.
- School Travel
- The lack of signing in the vicinity of schools, particularly 'school warning' and 'children crossing' signing. 'To motorists there looks like there are no schools in Celbridge'.
- Parking or 'set down areas' were requested outside each school.
- 3700 pupils 'commute' to Primary and Secondary schools in Celbridge. It was suggested that changes are needed to cope with this.
- There is no continuous footpath along Oldtown Mill estate to Scoil Mochua stopping children from walking to school.
- A request was made to reduce the speed limit in the general vicinity of schools to 30km/h.
- School traffic warden and school crossing needs to be put in place at Primrose Hill School
- Issues with the signal staging at the Shackleton Road/Oldtown Road junction. During school times traffic ends up in the yellow box. Complaints have been made to Gardai about motorists at these lights, to try to prevent an accident involving school children trying to cross.
- Improvements should be made to footpath in the general area of St. Wolstan's Community School for Girls
- The routes to schools from many housing estates in the area need to be improved.
- Bus stops need to be clearly segregated from other traffic.

Road Safety

- Speeding was reported on Shackleton Road, and the planting of trees close to junctions was said to limit visibility, particularly for those exiting side roads.
- Vehicle speeds were also raised as a concern on Maynooth Road and on Clane Road, contributing to problems experienced turning right onto these roads, for example from Beatty Grove and Hawthorne View.
- Drivers are reported to swing out to avoid hitting the speed hump outside Primrose Hill School on Hazelhatch Road. A request was made to relocate the hump further from the school.
- Requests were made to improve road markings at the bridge and around schools and public buildings, for example, the Community Centre.

Congestion

- It was reported to be almost impossible to turn right from Newtown Road onto Dublin Road.
- Congestion builds up quickly behind buses when they stop to pick up passengers.
- New parking meters have helped to reduce congestion.
- Haven Plant Hire vehicles cause a lot of delays when attempting to enter their site from Main Street.
- Congestion is reported to limit access onto Maynooth Road and Clane Road at peak times.
- Congestion was reported to be a problem at Castletown Gates.
- The bridge was reported to be consistently gridlocked due to volumes of traffic, with many drivers ignoring road markings.
- The junction on the Maynooth Road at the Aldi shop was not considered to be of sufficient capacity to deal with traffic exiting the various estates (Thornhill, Ballygoran View, Ash Grove & Castle Village), the Primary School and local shops.
- A request was made to restrict HGV access to the town centre at certain times.
- A request was also made to introduce a one-way system.

Parking

- The lack of parking spaces available within the town was reported as a problem.
- Parking at the train station is still a major issue although more spaces have recently been made available.
- Parking meters at AIB were reported to have been set too high.
- The parking near Aghards School was reported to be very congested, and children crossing the road at Thornhill Gardens often attempt to cross from behind parked cars.

Signing

- Some of the congestion at the bridge was thought to result from poor directional signing
- A request was made to upgrade road signs.
- Directional signs need to be installed to allow free and informed movement by tourists.

Future Developments

- Stakeholders present suggested that all new developments should have conditions set to provide relevant pedestrian, parking, cyclist and traffic improvements before gaining planning permission.
- The recent planning permission for Tesco to expand was discussed, as was its impact on traffic on the Maynooth Road.
- It was reported that a second school will open on Hazelhatch Road in September 2007, which will increase traffic flows on this road.
- With many planning applications being made for developments in the Celbridge area e.g. Business Technology Park at Castletown, St. Raphael's new town centre etc, Crodaun Business Park, continued construction of houses at Hazelhatch, Housing development at Chelmsford, expansion of Tesco, etc. The stakeholders expressed their concerns on how this would impact the already congested areas of their town.

5.8 The second stage consultation workshop was held at 19:00 on Monday 17th September 2007 at Celbridge Community Centre. The workshop focused on disseminating the results of the data collection exercise and discussing potential short term measures, including options to reduce traffic delays and improve conditions for pedestrians in the vicinity of the

bridge over the River Liffey. Those present supported the measures proposed and asked for the closure of Hazelhatch Road to be considered.

Consultation with Residents of Celbridge

- 5.9 In agreement with the client, TPI produced, and distributed a newsletter (Figure 12) and created a website for the Celbridge Traffic Management Plan in advance of the aforementioned stakeholder workshops. Distribution was focused through public buildings such as the library, local services such as banks and the post office, and retail outlets such as convenience stores and petrol stations.
- 5.10 Written submissions have been received to date from eight residents. The following represents a summary of the problems and issues, and potential solutions raised by residents:

Crossing at the Bridge

'The most important issue is extra river crossings for traffic, my father came to live in Celbridge in 1960, when one bridge was fine...he would contend that after 1975 we needed a second Liffey bridge, and after 1990, we needed a third Liffey crossing to give all residents of the area some decent quality of movement around the town, and to and from work. Go and see Trim, Co. Meath, which has a smaller population than Celbridge and has four bridges over the Boyne.'

Parking

There is ample parking provision in Celbridge, behind pharmacy, behind XtraVision, behind Abbey Lodge Pub, behind Mucky Duck Pub. Parking in these areas should be encouraged more, and less parking could be made available on the Main Street. The Main Street could be improved in a *'similar fashion'* to the Main Street in Maynooth. The new parking charges have reduced available parking and have added taxation to residents of the area. *'Ask anyone trying to get parking there today – it just means KCC create additional revenue'*.

Walking

The footpath to Hazelhatch Station, needs to be improved firstly in the interest of public safety and secondly to encourage more pedestrian use, and therefore reduce the amount of people driving to the station. There is a clear division between the pedestrians and the traffic in Maynooth, whereas in Celbridge this needs to be addressed. Pedestrian crossings are urgently needed, particularly coming from Pedestrian Bridge to Main Street and next to the Aldi store going towards the Ashgrove estate. This is on the route to Aghards School so is particularly important for the safety of children.

Congestion

The bridge at Celbridge constantly becomes gridlocked because cars leaving town are turning right and stopping the flow. The only solution is to ban that right turn to Hazelhatch Road and force the traffic around the block. There would be residual traffic going sharp right along Newtown Road but it would greatly reduce the grid-lock. The primary school on Main Street adds greatly to the traffic chaos twice daily, again *'there was talk of moving to a green field site on Ardclough road, but then nothing was done'*.

Cycle Lanes

Cycle lane should be provided to the train station; this would encourage more cyclists and therefore reduce the need to drive to the station. At present Celbridge has some cycle lanes, on the Maynooth Road and also along the M4 slip road, however in order to encourage more cyclists an integrated cycle network is required. One of the difficulties is the lack of continuous pedestrian and cycle routes to and from different areas of the town.

Many of the cycle paths do not seem to provide complete routes (for example from Hawthorn View to Aghards School) and are too narrow to use with younger children. There should be more places to park cycles near to Main Street.

Public Transport

The feeder bus to the station could be improved to serve all trains and not just the rush hour services. More frequent and better advertised feeder buses to Hazelhatch, and also possibly Maynooth railway station, would ease this problem. Feeder bus to station should be in a distinctive colour or have distinctive markings so that people can see it approaching, this would speed up the process of stopping the bus, getting on the bus and would also help tourists in the area.

Road Safety

The exit from Beatty Grove has become very dangerous. Anyone exiting from this estate at peak time basically has to *'run the gauntlet'*. The road widening and improved surface has encouraged increased vehicle speeds. The ramp on Hazelhatch Road at Primrose Hill School should be relocated back in line with footpath to prevent cars from swinging in towards footpath to avoid crossing ramp. *'There have been several incidents of pedestrians having to jump clear of such cars!'* The lane opposite Primrose Hill School should be closed to prevent the dangerous practice of motorists leaving the line of traffic 100-150 meters up the road to access this lane.

Junctions

A set of traffic lights should be placed at the junction on the Maynooth Road at the Aldi shop. Traffic leaving the various estates (Thornhill, Ballygoran View, Ash Grove & Castle Village) as well as the Primary School and local shops complex, all converge on this junction. The left turn has been widened in the past 12 months and works quite well. However if traffic is turning right towards the town centre there are always tail backs as the traffic on the Maynooth Road has priority. The slip-way off the M4 has encouraged a great amount of traffic into Celbridge routing to the Clane Road. Unfortunately the junction at Maxol cannot cope and has become another problem at peak times with traffic sometimes backing all the way back to the roundabout and on some occasions nearly to the M4 itself! This needs to be addressed with a ring-road around Celbridge to join the Clane Road.

Outcomes of Consultation Activities

- 5.11 Throughout the course of the project the consultation team sought to disseminate the study to a wider audience. This dissemination of information involved the creation of a website, hosted on the TPI website (see Figure 12), the distribution of newsletters and local newspaper articles to ensure information regarding the study, together with contact address was disseminated as widely as possible. This method, together with the stakeholder workshops helped to ensure that the public was included within the study process and thereby increasing the credibility and acceptance of the recommendations.
- 5.12 Throughout the course of the study the following consultation successes were noted:
- 500 Newsletters distributed throughout Celbridge;
 - Dedicated website set up;
 - A total of 14 people attended the 'Stakeholder Workshops';
 - 8 residents responded with written submissions; and
 - In order to measure the effectiveness of the 'Stakeholder Workshops' a monitoring form was distributed to all those attending. The form requested responses on such points as:

- clarity of issues;
- enough time;
- ability to express views; and
- other relevant issues.

5.13 The returned forms indicated that overall the stakeholders attending the workshops found them to be a very positive and a worthwhile experience.

Conclusions

5.14 The overall conclusion was that the various aspects of the consultation process formed a very strong link in the progression of the study. The dissemination of information to the residents of Celbridge by use of both the website and a newsletter contributed to increasing the public's knowledge of the study. The use of workshops to elicit ideas from the key stakeholders proved extremely beneficial and many of the suggestions have been incorporated into the recommendations.

Transportation Planning International Limited (TPI) on behalf of Kildare County Council, have recently started working with partners and stakeholders to develop a new **Traffic Management Plan for Celbridge**.

The Traffic Management Plan is aimed at securing long-lasting improvements for those living in Celbridge whilst making sure that we can accommodate journeys to and from planned and future developments in a sustainable manner.

Development of the Traffic Management Plan includes a number of **key stages**:

- Review existing information
- Identify traffic related problems and issues
- Undertake traffic and inventory surveys
- Develop traffic models
- Assess scheme options
- Produce Traffic Management Strategies.

Consultation, including: newsletters; information in the local press; a website; and, workshops with key stakeholders, is an important and continuing part of the development of the Traffic Management Plan.

Traffic and parking surveys will soon be undertaken in your local area. We are working to make sure that these surveys do not create delays.

We are now seeking your views on traffic and transport related problems in Celbridge, **and your thoughts** on improvements which could be made.

Problems initially suggested include:

- Traffic from planned developments
- Congestion at the river crossing
- The number of road traffic accidents
- Safety near to schools
- The safety of pedestrians and cyclists, particularly at Castletown Gates
- Missing sections of footways
- Cycle routes and cycle parking
- Inconsistent road and directional signing
- Parking controls
- Access to, and parking at stations.

Do you think that these problems are important and need to be addressed?

Do you have a specific problem that you want to tell us about?

Do you think that another problem is more important?

If you have answered “yes” to any of these questions, please let us have your views and thoughts.

By letter to:

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By e-mail to:

info@tpi-world.com

By telephone on:

01 459 6533

Via the internet:

<http://www.tpi-world.com/celbridge/>



Figure 12: Consultation Newsletter - Issue 1, Celbridge