



Críostóir

Ó Faoláin

Ionadaí Áitiúil i nDún Garbhán

Waterford City and County Development Plan

Transport and Mobility Submission

**Críostóir Ó Faoláin, Green Party Local Area Rep for Dungarvan
25th August 2021**

The decade in which this Development Plan will be implemented is the critical decade for climate action. The most recent IPCC report on Climate Change has underlined the need for strong, rapid and sustained climate action. The more that is done to transform our county into a low carbon climate resilient community during the lifetime of this development plan, the better the outcome will be for Waterford residents. Transport is one of the greatest sources of GHG emissions in Ireland and, as such, is an area that will need to be transformed if our climate targets are to be met. Transport is also, more than almost any other, an area in which Waterford City and County Council will be called on to play a crucial role in transforming the county. Driving these changes will require courage and dedication.

Currently in Waterford, as with much of the country, we have an unsustainable and unhealthy reliance on private motor vehicles for transport. Over $\frac{2}{3}$ of Waterford residents traveling to work and 60% of those travelling to school or college rely on private motor vehicles for their journey. This cannot continue. Realistic alternatives to the use of private motor vehicles must be provided, and the use of private motor vehicles must be reduced. Waterford City and County Council must prioritise the rapid development of public and active transport infrastructure in Waterford to facilitate a significant modal shift in transport use.

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In relation to the publication of the Draft City and County Development Plan, I welcome:

- The recognition of the 10-minute town concept as a core strategic objective of the Council's transport and mobility policy.
- The strategic policy setting out the need for a significant shift toward public transport, walking and cycling, prioritising active and sustainable transport and reducing car dependency across the City and County.
- The adoption of a transport led approach to development by ensuring that land use zonings are aligned with the provision and development of high quality/capacity public transport systems.
- The commitment to permeability within new developments, and where possible retrofitting permeability measures into existing developments.
- The acceptance by the Council of the proposal to prepare a County Transport Plan. I would ask that a time line for the completion of this plan be included in the next draft.

In addition to these points, I call on the Council to:

- Commit to specific targets for modal shift to be achieved within the lifetime of this development plan. Specific objectives to grow the proportion of walking, cycling and public transport journeys, and to reduce the number of journeys taken in private motor vehicles are needed. Despite reference in 'Trans 01' to targets for modal shift set out in Table 5.0, no such targets can be found in Table 5.0. Note 25 on page 115 of the Draft Development Plan suggests that the Council will push an unfulfilled Smarter Travel 2009-2020 target out to 2040. Such an approach is not compatible with the scale of ambition needed to meet our climate targets. The Council should set out how it intends to achieve the unfulfilled 2020 target as quickly as possible, and no later than within the lifetime of this development plan. The Council should also set new and more ambitious targets in Table 5.0 which demonstrate the Council's ambition in terms of modal shift, as well as setting out the actions that will be taken to achieve these targets. 'Green Modes' in Table 5.0 should be broken down into walking and cycling, and targets for each should be set.
- Adopt an objective to deliver the infrastructural requirements for an effective, attractive, and affordable public transport service in urban and rural locations through the County Transport Plan.
- Invest in significantly upgrading walking and cycling infrastructure in all settlements in the county, drawing on best practice in active transport design, to provide an uninterrupted network of safe footpaths and cycle tracks.

- Create a specific plan for private car use which will outline how the use of private vehicles will be disincentivised and reduced during the lifetime of this development plan. Building new roads is not compatible with meeting climate targets. At a minimum, the development plan should commit to scrapping any new road projects in the county which would increase carrying capacity on the road network.
- Reduce the speed limit in city/town/village centres, school zones, and in residential areas to 30km/hr.
- Adopt car parking management and enforcement practices to discourage the inappropriate and unsustainable use of private motor vehicles, while protecting access for vulnerable road users. The amount of parking space in town/village centres, especially on-street parking, should be significantly reduced with this space being reallocated for active travel/public transport infrastructure, outdoor dining, and other public realm enhancement works. Vehicles should be actively prevented from parking on footpaths. Access to parking space in urban centres should be prioritised for the disabled, the elderly, pregnant women, parents with young children, and other vulnerable road users.
- Prepare a remedial works programme to improve access to footpaths from designated disabled parking spaces, and to ensure that designated disabled parking spaces meet the recommended requirements in terms of their design. Many existing disabled spaces are no bigger than standard spaces, and thus lack the necessary room for wheelchair access.
- Increase the number of designated disabled parking spaces, and refrain from reallocating a disabled parking space either on a temporary or permanent basis, without first providing a suitable and properly marked alternative parking space.
- Further develop the Waterford Greenway by extending the Greenway into Dungarvan town centre, and bring forward plans to extend the Greenway to the west of Dungarvan via Lismore and Ballyduff. The Council should also investigate the development of link-greenways to connect other settlements throughout the county such as An Rinn, Ardmore, Clashmore, Kilmeaden, Portlaw, Stradbally, and Dunmore East, to the Waterford Greenway.
- Develop carparking space at the edge of Dungarvan which is linked to the centre of town via a cycle track and footpath which are segregated from one another, and from traffic, in line with best practice. This would provide a park and ride/stride facility for people from the surrounding countryside allowing them to finish their journey on foot or by bicycle. This would reduce the need for parking in the centre of town, allowing this space to be reallocated for public/active transport, outdoor dining and other public realm enhancement works making the centre of Dungarvan an attractive destination rather than a storage area for private vehicles. Such a facility would require the provision of safe and secure sheltered cycle storage in which a bike can be left overnight, both at the carpark and in the town centre.

- Provide an Active Transport Hub, including secure sheltered bicycle storage facilities, repair facilities, and changing/shower facilities in a central location in each of the main urban areas of the county. Furthermore, these hubs could also feature a 'Changing Places Facility' with enhanced amenities for disabled persons.
- Give priority to the accessibility of developments by more than just private motor vehicles. Connectivity to public transport, and the availability of active transport options linking the development with the adjoining settlement should be carefully considered. Planning applications for new developments should be required to demonstrate the proposal's accessibility and permeability for pedestrians and cyclists. The Council should require the provision of appropriate, well-designed footpaths and cycle tracks for residential development proposals to link with amenities and facilities. When assessing the ability of developments to satisfy site suitability the availability of access to active transport networks should be considered. In light of this, the zoning of land to the north of Southways in Abbesside, Dungarvan, as R1.3 – New/Proposed Residential raises some concerns. There is a lack of public transport/active transport connectivity on the adjoining road (L3162) despite the existence of large residential developments at Cruachán/Pinewood Lawn. There is only a narrow footpath along this road, and no cycle infrastructure. Further development in this area should only be considered once these deficiencies have been rectified.
- Prioritise access for persons with disabilities and mobility impairments at all times, both in the consideration of applications for new developments and in public realm improvement works to the existing built environment.

Conclusion

The former county development plan identified an overreliance and increasing dependency on the private motor vehicle. The modal split was then and is now increasingly unsustainable. A significant modal shift in transport use is required as a matter of urgency. Waterford City and County Council has a central role to play in achieving this modal shift by committing itself to the delivery of improved and expanded active transport infrastructure and public transport services, while disincentivising the use of private motor vehicles.

Le dea-mhéin



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