



Kildare County Council
Via website

Date: 28th November 2023

Dear Sir/Madam,

RE: Newbridge Local Area Plan

1.0 INTRODUCTION

County Kildare Chamber is the business organisation in Kildare, proactively working to identify and progress developments that are facilitative of economic and sustainable growth. Representing an employer base of 400 businesses and over 42,000 employees across the county, County Kildare Chamber is the largest business organisation in the mid-east region of Ireland.

Given the significant breadth and depth of our membership, and our representation on various bodies at local and national level, County Kildare Chamber constitutes the representative voice for business in Kildare.

County Kildare Chamber is committed to improving the business environment and quality of life in Kildare and the wider region, and strongly supports the vision of growth contained within the National Planning Framework (NPF) and the Mid-Eastern Enterprise Plan. With this in mind, County Kildare Chamber welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Proposed Newbridge Local Area Plan 2025-2031.

As a business organisation, County Kildare Chamber believes that long term planning and development, and specific project delivery such as this within key towns and villages creates a more diverse and resilient County.

2.0 SUBMISSION

County Kildare Chamber welcomes the opportunity to contribute to the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2025-2031 process as set out by Kildare County Council.

County Kildare Chamber are committed to each stage in the preparation of the Local Area Plan for the Newbridge area and look forward to your engagement with County Kildare Chamber as part of the next steps in the process.

Our ambition, as the 'Voice of Business in Kildare', is to see Kildare and in this context Newbridge develop in a sustainable way that:

- (i) helps us achieve the UN sustainable development goal targets;
- (ii) delivers on enterprise development ambitions by creating and retaining high value sustainable jobs attracting foreign direct investment;
- (iii) provides affordable urban housing options;
- (iv) supports the development of our 3rd level institutions;
- (v) promotes a culture of innovation and research; and

To support all this activity, we need to reorient how we move through and around Newbridge, much of which is already laid out in the previous Local Area Plan, launched in 2013. We welcome this timely initiative by Kildare County Council and look forward to playing a role in the preparation of the Newbridge Local Area Plan 2025 – 2031.

County Kildare Chamber acknowledge that you are at the early stages of developing the Plan and that consultation to date is focussed on information gathering and engagement with all sectors and communities. Having regard for the area and the scope of previous plans, we have outlined a number of points and objectives we believe should be a part of the 2025-2031 Local Area Plan.

Population Growth & Housing

- There needs to be a commitment in the Plan to look at the centre of the town through mixed development including housing, lands around the train station to also be considered for residential, small enterprise incubation hubs, Work from Home hubs etc.,
- The Plan will need to support choice, affordability, and sustainability. This means addressing barriers such as building costs, unit density and unit types being driven by actual data rather than historical demand. Flexibility in planning permissions allowing for the development of multi-use buildings rather than single use.
- Newbridge is targeted for an additional 1,061 new homes to be built between 2023 and 2028 under the CDP. However, it is requested that the number of new homes for the LAP be expanded to include the additional three years of the LAP period which will run from 2025-2031. It is submitted that, the number of new

homes required has been under-estimated and should be addressed in the Newbridge LAP 2025-2031.

- How are we addressing an aging population? Appropriate residential housing in both town and suburbs needs 'Inclusion' as a key element. An initiative development like McAuley Place could be replicated in Newbridge very easily, particularly to the North and South of Military Road.

Transport and Sustainable Mobility

- Consideration should be given to the application of the '15 Minute City' model, as outlined in the County Development Plan 2024-2030.
- The Plan needs to look (i) inward to all public service vehicles and (ii) Kildare County Council should add the stipulation for all service providers, that they sub-contract to, to have a fully electric fleet.
- Needs more detail around Climate Action, as well as pedestrian and cycle modes of transport for a growing community.
- We would like to particularly highlight the need for traffic calming, a one-way system within the town,
- Inclusion of provision for the second river crossing/bridge for Newbridge to be included within this plan. The completion of the Southern Relief Road (and 2nd Bridge) to extend to link up with the M7 Motorway.
- That a site-specific location be identified at the Train Station for the provision of a main bus depot.

Education

- That we would like to see included in the LAP to provide adequate primary and secondary level schools to address the educational needs of all students in the Newbridge area.
- That a site-specific location for a secondary school be identified within this plan, to accommodate planned for population increases.
- That it becomes an objective of this plan that all future school and pre-schools be co-located to reduce traffic movement, encourage permeability, and allow for the sharing of facilities.

Open Space and Amenity

- That land be identified for the provision of community sports hub with Newbridge to provide additional recreational opportunities for existing sports clubs.
- That the land that was previously the site of the old swimming pool at the Ryston be de-zoned and rezoned F, Open Space and Amenities
- That the plan identifies a site-specific objective for a playground at Lakeside Park and other locations.
- That land be identified for the provision of a swimming pool for community use.

Economic Development

- The objective of this plan is to strategically position all forthcoming industrial applications on the outskirts of the town, aiming to minimise substantial traffic flow through the town centre.
- The plan strives to designate ample and appropriate land for employment opportunities and innovative entrepreneurial endeavours. It should also identify vacant commercial units, promoting their transformation/ rezoning into potential economic, community, or residential spaces.
- There is a need to pinpoint a suitable location for a town centre hotel, acknowledging the demand for overnight accommodation in Newbridge and Kildare more generally as a close location to Dublin.

3.0 CONCLUSION

County Kildare Chamber welcomes the chance to comment on the Newbridge Local Area Plan. This plan will also feed into the County Development Plan and other Government priorities to create a more seamless, whole approach for the sustainable development of Newbridge and its surrounding areas.

We trust that the contents of this submission will be taken into consideration by Kildare County Council, and we are available at all times for consultation, discussion and support. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any queries regarding this submission.

Yours faithfully,



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