

Executive Summary of the Draft Urban Design Strategy for the Hebron Road, Kilkenny City

August 2017

Kilkenny County Council



Hebron Road Urban Design Strategy

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Draft Hebron Road Urban Design Strategy

1. Introduction

In early 2017, Kilkenny County Council appointed Loci Consultations to prepare an Urban Design Strategy for the Hebron Road. The purpose of the Strategy is to provide a coherent approach to the planning, design and implementation of improvements to the character and fabric of the Hebron Road Strategy area. The Strategy has been prepared to meet an objective (Z3) of the current Kilkenny City and Environs Development Plan (2014-2020).

The Strategy comprises two key elements; a framework, which sets out an integrated approach to land use, movement and development, and guidelines for the improvement of the street and the development of key sites on the road. This framework and guidelines is not a mandatory document but will be used by Kilkenny County Council to prioritise street improvements and to inform decisions on future planning applications within the Strategy area.

2. Consultation

A local consultation workshop was held in February 2017 at the offices of Kilkenny County Council. The workshop was attended by representatives of the County Council, the project consultants, local residents and business owners. In addition, the Planning Department engaged separately with Comhairle na nÓg specifically examining the issue of pedestrian connectivity.

The consultation exercises in general highlighted issues around movement, character and opportunities for the area. The outcome of the two public consultation exercises fed into the Draft Strategy. Movement is examined in detail in Section 2.4 of the Draft Strategy and Character is dealt with in some detail in Section 2.5.

3. Movement

The main recommended improvements relating to movement are:

- Improved cycle and pedestrian facilities with extended cycle tracks and lanes, and improved footpaths;
- Improved pedestrian crossing facilities;
- Provide for new local streets in the industrial estate to improve local permeability;
- Replacement of roundabouts (Excluding Ring Road) with signal junctions in the longer term, subject to Transport Impact Assessment;
- A new access route to the Hebron industrial estate directly from the N10, east of the Ring Road;
- New traffic management for Heavy Goods Vehicles and larger commercial vehicles.

4. Built Form

The built form concept sets out a longer-term spatial vision for development on the road derived from an understanding of the current weaknesses and opportunities that the Hebron Road presents.

The key recommendations in this regard are:

- Giving a coherence of physical elements, including buildings, boundaries and landscape,
- Giving continuity to streets and spaces,
- Remedial action to 'dead' frontages such as extensive solid walls,
- New and consistent building lines,
- Strong building definition at corners,
- Junctions to enclose the focal spaces,
- Identification of priority development/redevelopment sites.

This will be realised incrementally through the development and redevelopment of key sites.

Section four of the document gives illustrations of how these concepts could be developed. The illustrations are intended to be guidance and to be achieved incrementally as development opportunities arise. Improvements to the public realm will also be secured through redevelopment opportunities and through the Council's own capital programme as resources and finances permit.

The illustrations and diagrams are preliminary in nature and additional survey, planning and design will be required prior to the improvements being undertaken.

5. Green Infrastructure

Green Infrastructure (GI) can be defined as strategically planned and interconnected networks of green space and water capable of delivering ecosystem services and quality of life benefits to people. The Strategy has identified that there are GI assets in the area, but that they are poorly connected, and outlines recommendations to improve the connectivity including:

- New tree lines on all routes in the margins or as part of new structured on-street parking;
- New planting at major sporting facilities on the road;
- Preparation of a new landscape concept plan for the cemetery, including a new boundary treatment to the Hebron Road;
- Requiring new planting between building frontage and the footpath in all new proposals;
- Integration of SUDS measures in street improvements.

6. Next Steps

The implementation of the Strategy will need to be staged as follows:

- A programme for implementation of street improvements (Bishop Birch Place and Hebron Road).
- Secure improvements through the development management processes as opportunities arise.
- Identify traffic management measures.
- Identify improvements to the cemetery boundary wall to the Hebron Road
- Consultation with local land-owners on site-specific improvements
- Formalise a specific objective for a new access route to the Hebron industrial estate directly from the N10, east of the Ring Road.