



COMHAIRLE CONTAE
CHEATHARLACH

CARLOW COUNTY COUNCIL

in conjunction with



**Mountain View Link,
Hacketstown, Co. Carlow**

**Proposal Summary to Accompany
Non-Statutory Public Consultation**

June 2022

Carlow County Council,
County Buildings,
Athy Road,
Carlow,
R93 E7R7.

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The following is a report providing information in relation to the provision of a high-quality combined footpath & cycle track, which will link the Mountain View residential area and provide alternative access to retail premises, recreational amenities, and town centre services in Hacketstown. This development does not require planning under Part XI of the Planning & Development Acts of Part 8 of the Planning & Development Regulations, however a non-statutory public consultation will take place.

1. Description of the Proposed Development

Carlow County Council's Active Travel Department, in conjunction with the National Transportation Authority (NTA), proposes to upgrade 145m of an existing combined footpath and cycle link in Hacketstown, Co. Carlow, which will link the Mountain View housing development with Main Street. The works will also include the provision of new and upgraded public lighting along the route and access control bollards.

The scheme will include the following elements: (see figure 2 – Scheme Extents)

- Site clearance of existing waste and rubble.
- Provision of 145m of a combined 3m wide footpath/cycle track with macadam surfacing.
- Provision of timber post and rail fence.
- Installation of LED public lighting and associated ducting.
- Topsoiling & grass seeding.
- Installation of associated signage and road markings as necessary.

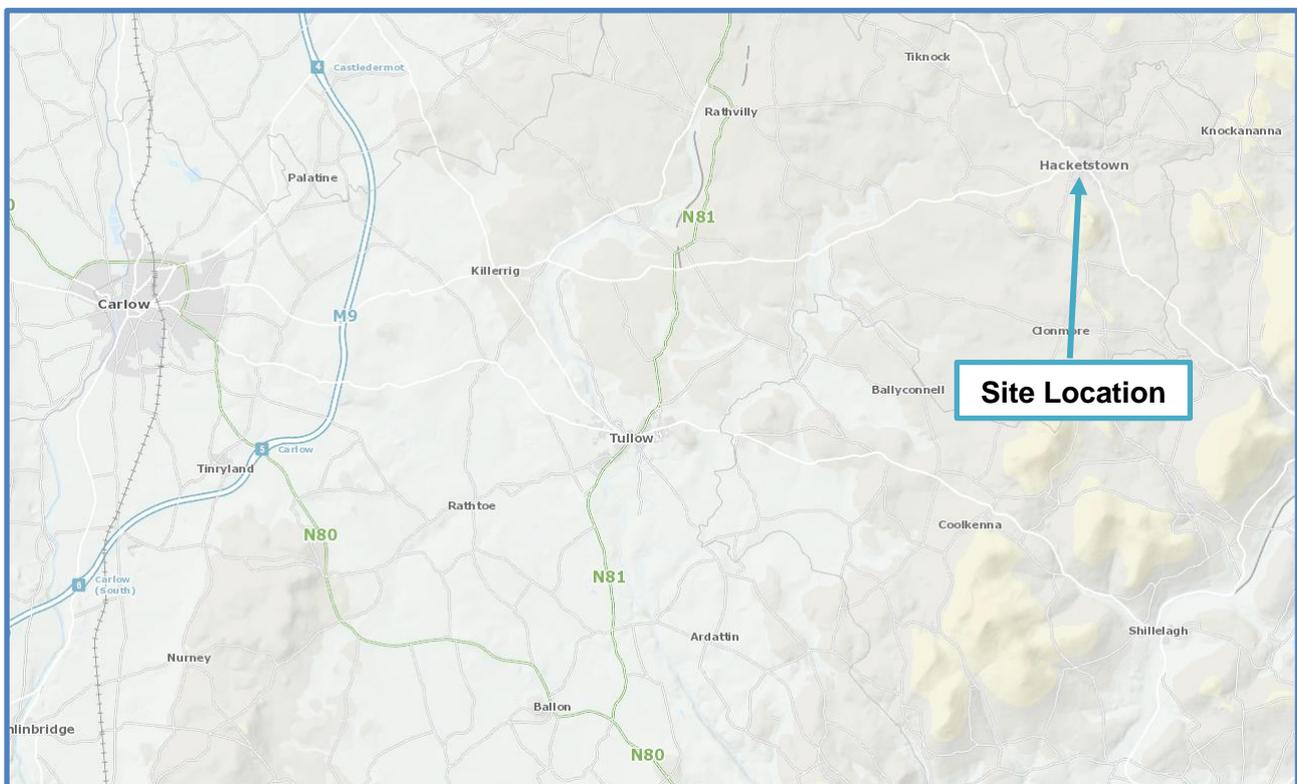


Figure 1 - Site Location

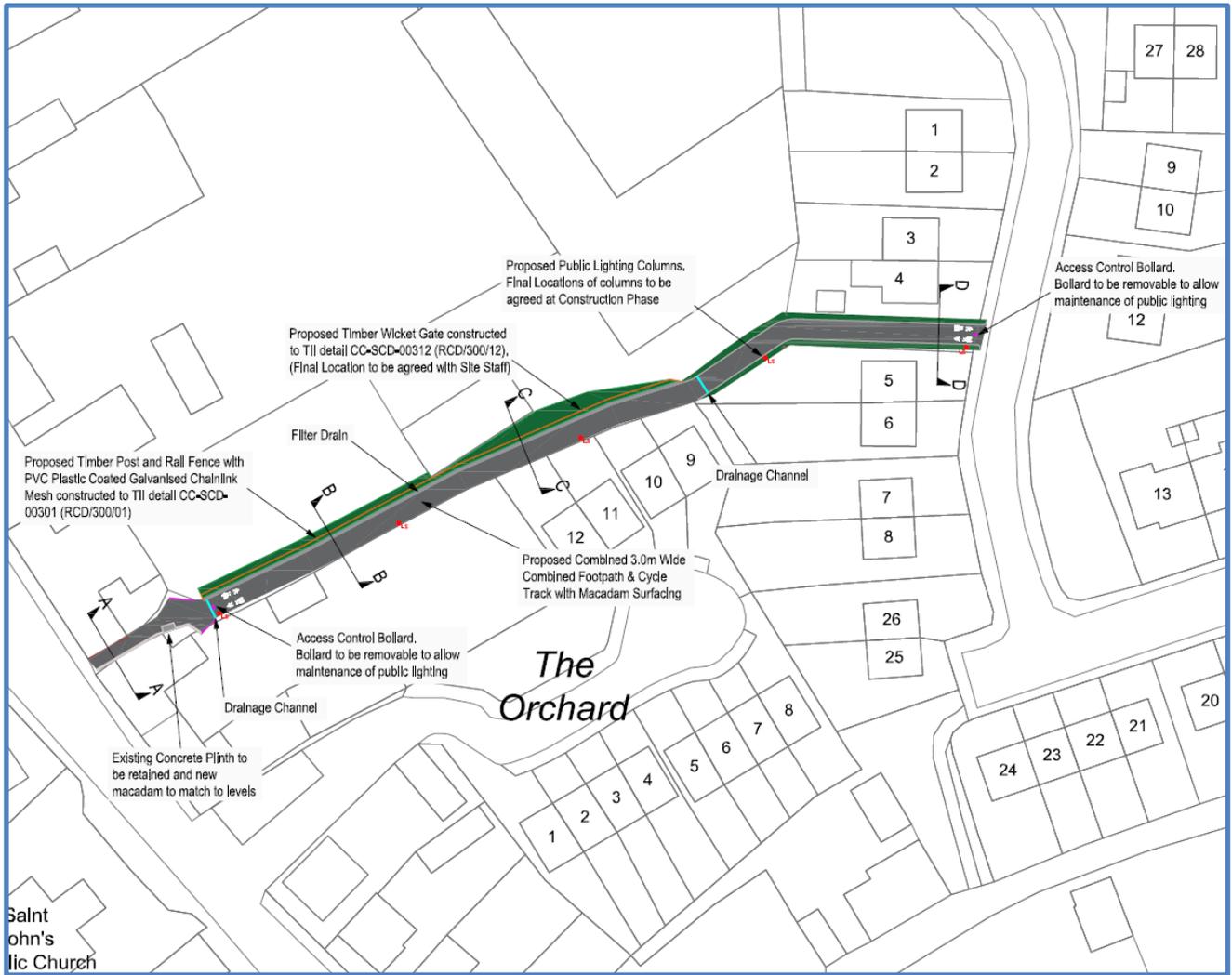


Figure 2 - Scheme Extents

2. Consistency with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and the County Development Plan

Hacketstown is the small town located in the northeast of County Carlow with a population of 597 in 2016. The town is located in a scenic area, with Eagle Hill a dominant feature to the south of the town and views of the Wicklow Mountains in the backdrop. Hacketstown is located on the main regional roads (R747 and R727) from the East Coast to the Midlands and is proximate to Tullow, Baltinglass and Tinahely. Hacketstown is the southern gateway to the major tourist attractions of County Wicklow. The town is located c.27 kilometres from Carlow Town.

The **Draft Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028** identifies Hacketstown as a Small Town in the Settlement Hierarchy. This tier corresponds to the Towns with an urban structure providing local services and employment functions catering for a wider rural hinterland area. Small Towns have important roles to play in providing services for surrounding local areas and supporting the viability of small towns is of significant importance.

The proposed development is in compliance with the policies and objectives of the Draft Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Hacketstown Plan which forms part of the overall County Development Plan. In particular the following policies and objectives, which are set out in the following sections of those plans:

Draft Carlow County Development Plan, Ch.5: Sustainable Travel & Transportation

5.3 Sustainable Mobility / Modal Shift

It is the policy of the Council to:

MS.P1: Seek investment in sustainable transport solutions, improved walking and cycling connectivity routes, the provision of a public bus service in Carlow Town and the expansion of rural transport initiatives throughout the county.

It is an objective of the Council to:

MS. O1: Support a modal shift from private vehicles to access work / school / college from circa 23% (2016) to 28% (2028).

5.4 Walking and Cycling

It is the policy of the Council to:

WC. P1: Prioritise and promote more sustainable and convenient modes of travel by the development of high quality walking and cycling infrastructure including greenways within a safe environment.

WC. P2: Work with the National Trails Office, Coillte, relevant Government Departments, and other relevant stakeholders, to improve on the existing level of infrastructure and facilities for walking and cycling.

WC. P3: Ensure that connectivity for pedestrians and cyclists is maximised in new communities and improved within existing areas particularly towns and villages throughout the county including associated infrastructure, to maximise access to local shops, educational facilities, public transport services, employment locations and other amenities.

WC. P4: Provide for safer routes to schools within the County and promote walking and cycling as suitable modes of transport as part of the Green Schools Programme and other local traffic management improvements.

It is the objective of the Council to:

WC. O2: Ensure that all streets and street networks seek to facilitate permeability, are designed in accordance with best practice standards including the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets and the National Cycle Manual which seek to prioritise the movement of pedestrians and cyclists within a safe and comfortable environment for a wide range of ages, abilities and journey types.

WC. O3: Reduce walking and cycling distances to areas of employment, community services, schools, shops, public transport and other community facilities through implementation of the 10 Minute Town Concept, the provision and maintenance of high-quality linkages and the delivery of local permeability links within existing communities.

WC. O4: Prioritise where required the upgrade and maintenance of footpaths, cycleways, public lighting, traffic management and public realm works and supporting signage on public roads / paths

WC. O6: Improve pedestrian and cycle connectivity to rail station locations and other public transport interchanges within the county.

5.13 Street Lighting

It is the policy of the Council to:

SL. P1: Ensure that public lighting is provided in accordance with relevant EU Norms, National Standards or best guidance documents as appropriate, including any forthcoming Council Public Lighting Specifications and Policy documents.

It is the objective of the Council to:

SL. O1: Improve the efficiency of public lighting assets in order to minimise electricity usage.

5.17 Accessibility

It is the policy of the Council to:

AC. P1: Support suitable access for people with disabilities, including improvements to buildings, streets and public spaces.

Draft Carlow County Development Plan, Ch.15: Hacketstown Plan.

15.3.1.19 Hacketstown Policies - Movement and Transport

It is the policy of the Council to:

HT.P10: Maintain and improve where appropriate the local road network /streets and to improve traffic safety through localised improvement works including the quality, aesthetics and width, where appropriate, of footpaths in the town, to promote active travel measures and to improve access for mobility impaired.

HT.P11: Promote and facilitate the development of walkways and cycleways at appropriate locations throughout the town to encourage sustainable transport.

15.3.1.19 Hacketstown Policies – Public Realm

HT.P21: Promote and support the utilisation of available funding and the implementation of any projects or schemes for which funding has been received that would contribute towards the maintenance and improvement of the public realm of the town.

Conclusion

The proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in that:

- It will provide improved access to retail premises, recreational amenities, educational facilities and town centre services for pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users.
- It will facilitate modal shift away from private car use towards more sustainable modes of transport such as cycling and walking.
- It will facilitate permeability and improved connectivity between residential areas for pedestrians and cyclists.
- It will provide pedestrians and cyclists within a safe and comfortable environment by reducing interactions with motorised traffic and through the provision of new and improved public lighting.

3 Scheme Justification

Hacketstown is predicted to see substantial population growth from 597 to 724 (21%) within the life of the New County Development Plan. There is a need to develop supporting services and in particular to support sustainable travel and alternatives to car-based commuting. There are also issues around possible conflicts between vehicular traffic and vulnerable road users wishing to access town centre services and amenities.

This scheme will help to address these issues by providing a dedicated footpath / cycle track, with new and upgraded public lighting, which will allow residents to switch to a sustainable mode of travel in a safe environment.

4 Impact of the Proposed Scheme

Impact on traffic

It is envisaged that this scheme will have a minor impact on traffic during construction, however no long-term negative impacts are expected. The construction of a dedicated combined footpath / cycle track in a safe environment will allow residents make journeys by walking or cycling which they previously would of made by car. This will result in fewer car journeys and result in a long-term positive impact on traffic.

Impact on pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users

The proposed works will have a significantly positive impact on pedestrians, cyclists and vulnerable road users seeking to access retail premises, recreational amenities, educational facilities and town centre services. The scheme will provide improved connectivity in a safe and comfortable environment.

Impact during construction

The following impacts during construction will be temporary:

- Site mobilisation and operations
- Temporary traffic management
- Construction traffic and materials deliveries
- Construction dust and noise
- Temporary hoarding/fencing/barriers/traffic cones
- Temporary site lighting, if deemed necessary

Impact on landscape and visual amenity

The works will take place within an existing sub-standard well established public access route. It is envisaged that this scheme will have a minor impact on landscape and visual amenity during construction, however no long-term negative impacts are expected. New and improved public lighting, road signage, road markings and landscaping in the vicinity of the works will also enhance and improve the existing streetscape at the works location.

Impact on ecology

The proposed works do not lie within or affect any existing ecologically sensitive areas.

Impact on built and cultural heritage

The following information sources were checked as part of a desktop exercise to check for possible impact on built and cultural heritage:

- The National Monuments Service Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) – Nothing recorded in the vicinity of the proposed works.
- The National Inventory of Architectural Heritage (NIAH) – Nothing recorded in the vicinity of the proposed works.
- The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) - Nothing recorded in the vicinity of the proposed works.
- The Record of Protected Structures (RPS) for County Carlow – Appendix 2, Chapter VIII of the Draft Carlow County Development Plan 2022-2028 – Nothing recorded in the vicinity of the proposed works.

It was determined that the works will not impinge on or affect any built and cultural heritage.

Conclusion

It is expected that the proposed development will have some short-term negative impacts during construction but no longer-term impacts requiring mitigation are expected to arise.

5 Flood Risk Assessment

No flooding or surface water management issues have been identified for the site. The site is not indicated in a flood risk area as per the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for the Draft County Development Plan 2022-2028. There is also no historic flooding events listed on the OPW floodmaps.ie portal.