



## 13. Roads



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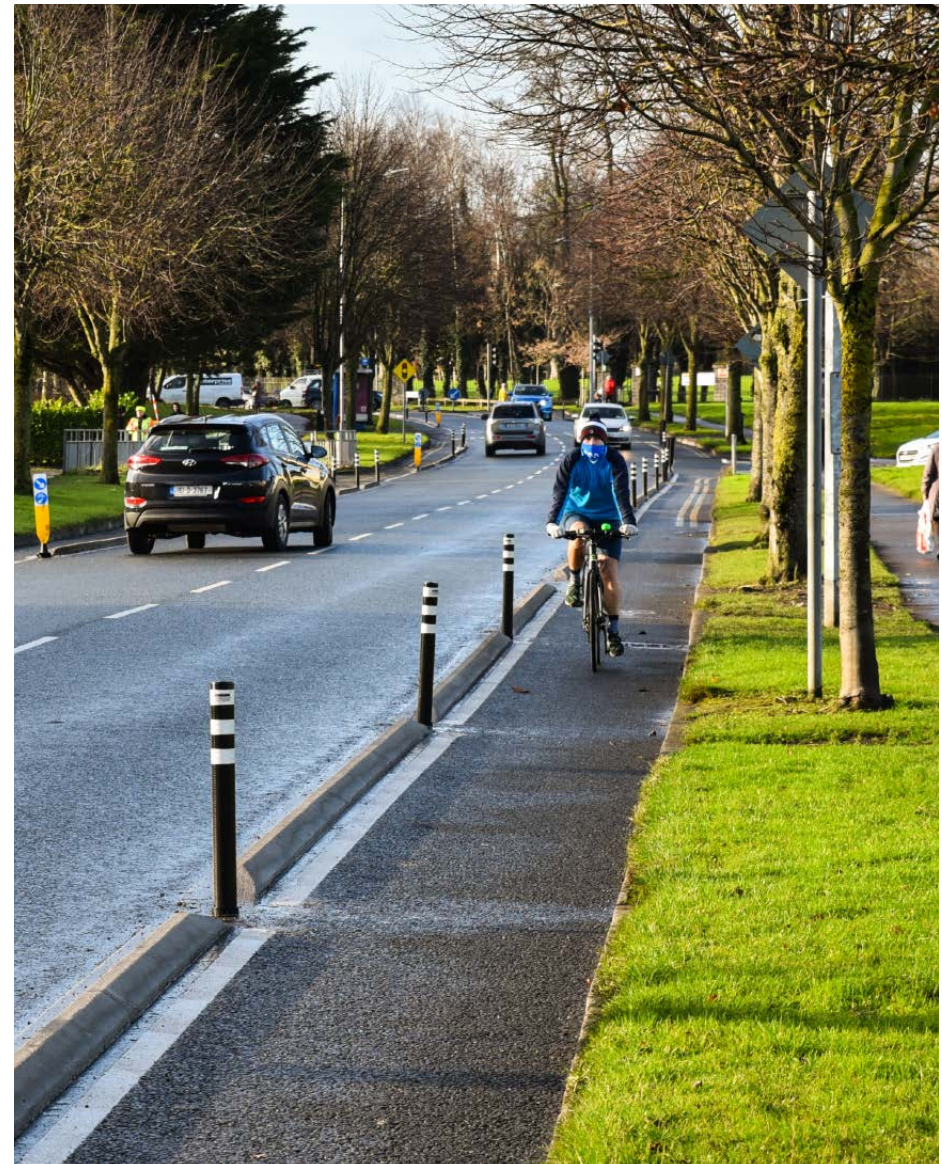
## 13.1 Introduction

Roads form the main transport arteries across the State and provide the corridors by which not just car movement, but public transport (buses, taxis and some sections of Luas), cycling, walking and freight movement operates. As such they are a critical part of an effective and sustainable transport system.

The Greater Dublin Area has a large network of national, regional and local roads and streets, which includes not only the roads themselves but also bridges and a tunnel, cycle facilities, footpaths, signposting and markings, traffic signals and sophisticated traffic and transport management systems.

A key focus of the Transport Strategy is the provision of safe, resilient road transport routes and liveable streets within the context of the need to support sustainable development principles and legislative commitments to decarbonise the transport sector in Ireland.

The first priority for road investment will be the expenditure required to maintain, renew, manage and operate that extensive infrastructure. It is also proposed to undertake a limited number of new projects, details of which are set out in the following sections.



## 13.2 Principles for Road Development

Given that national transport policy seeks a reduction in the growth in car travel and an increase in the use of public transport, cycling and walking, it is important that certain principles are reflected in the development of individual road projects within the GDA. Accordingly, it is intended that road development in the GDA will be undertaken in accordance with the following principles:

### Measure ROAD1 – Principles of Road Development

1. That there will be no significant increase in capacity for private car trips on radial roads within the Metropolitan Area, except where re-alignments or junction changes are necessary for safety reasons;
2. Provision will be made for steady state investment in the GDA's road network;
3. That a proposed road scheme will only proceed where it has been satisfactorily demonstrated that (a) alternative solutions, such as public transport provision, traffic management and/or demand management measures, cannot effectively address the circumstances prompting the proposed road scheme or

(b) that these alternative solutions are not applicable or appropriate in the particular circumstances

4. That road schemes, other than a motorway or protected road, will be designed will be designed to provide safe and appropriate arrangements to facilitate walking, cycling and public transport provision, including as applicable, the delivery of walking and cycling facilities off line where this is considered to be a more attractive solution for these modes;
5. That where a road scheme comprises an urban bypass, measures must be proposed and implemented to reallocate road space within the bypassed area to sustainable transport and/or public realm improvements;
6. That the travel demand or the development needs giving rise to the road proposal are in accordance with regional and national policies related to transport, land use and development planning; and
7. That the development of the road scheme does not diminish in any significant way the expected beneficial outcomes of the Transport Strategy.

# Road



Protect the  
Strategic Function of  
**Motorways and  
National Roads**



**Reallocation  
of Roadspace**  
to Sustainable Modes



**N2**  
Upgrade

**N/M11**  
Upgrade

Deliver  
**N3-N4**  
Link



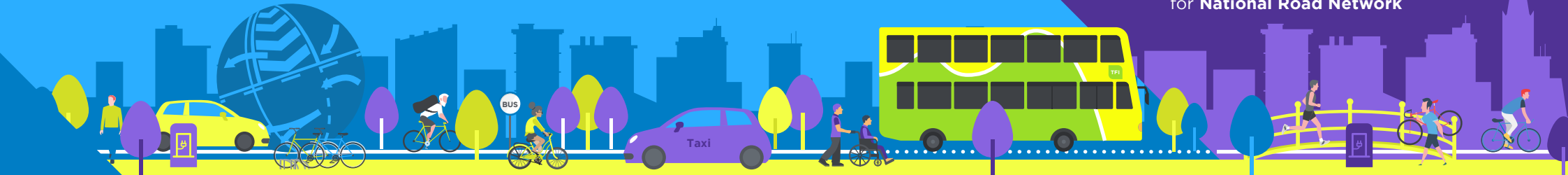
**Delivery**  
of Southern Port Access Route



**Online Improvements**  
for Orbital Traffic



**Improved  
Resilience**  
for National Road Network



## 13.3 National Roads

There is a clear need to minimise the impacts of increased congestion on the national road network and keep these vital national transport arteries operating satisfactorily at all times in so far as practicable. To facilitate the delivery of the National Planning Frameworks NSO2 (Enhanced Regional Accessibility) and NSO6 (High-Quality International Connectivity) within the GDA, improving the resilience and safety of the national road network in order to maintain its reliability and functionality will be critical. The approach taken will be to extend the life and optimise the use of the existing network and, where appropriate, minimise the need to build new infrastructure.

### 13.3.1 National Roads Requirements

With the above in mind, the requirements for the GDA national road network are set out below. These are complementary to the Section 28 Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012):

#### Measure ROAD2 – National Roads Requirements

1. The primary function of national roads is to cater for strategic traffic and this function must be protected;

2. Strategic traffic, in the context of national roads, is primarily comprised of inter-urban and inter-regional traffic. This includes vehicles involved in the transportation of goods and products, especially those travelling to and from the main ports and airports, both freight and passenger related. It also includes cars, buses and other public service vehicles which contribute to national and regional economic development;
3. Within the GDA, the asset value, reliability and functionality of the national road network will be protected and maintained;
4. Secondary local functions should not be encouraged, or planned for, on national roads in the GDA;
5. National roads are not to be developed or planned, to support the continued urban expansion through the zoning of residential land uses adjacent to or within national road corridors;
6. Secondary local function traffic on national roads can be accommodated insofar as it does not impact on the primary function, which is to cater for strategic traffic;
7. If secondary functions impact on the primary function of national roads, then demand management measures should be considered to mitigate this impact;

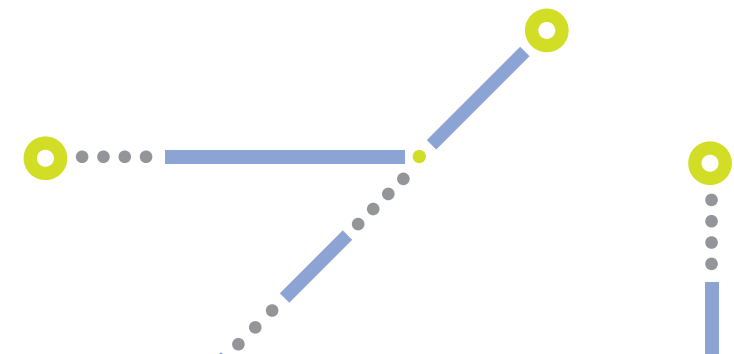


8. Network resilience will be delivered by enhancing Motorway Operation Services within the GDA, as appropriate; and
9. The primary functions of the Dublin Tunnel will be maintained and protected. These functions are to facilitate the movement of goods vehicles between Dublin Port and the national road network and to facilitate access to the City Centre for public transport service vehicles, whilst also facilitating the 'strategic' movement of goods to and from Dublin City Centre, subject to appropriate vehicle size and time restrictions. It is also essential that the structural integrity of the Tunnel from incompatible over ground development is ensured.

### 13.3.2 National Roads Projects

During the period of the Strategy it is intended to further manage, develop and enhance the national road network including the delivery of the following projects:

- Improvements to the Lissenhall junction on the M1, supporting the delivery of a Metrolink Park and Ride facility at this location;
- N2 Slane Bypass and associated public realm and sustainable transport enhancements in Slane Village;
- N2 Upgrade from the M2 Rath Roundabout to Kilmoon Cross to address safety issues;
- Junction enhancements and lane layout changes, including bus lane provision, to enhance safety, legibility and bus priority along the N3 between Junction 1 and Junction 4;
- Improvements to junctions 5, 6 and 7 on the M4 in order to address queuing onto the mainline and associated traffic safety issues plus the provision of bus priority between Junctions 5 and 7;
- The removal of all direct uncontrolled accesses onto the N7 between the M50 and Naas, in accordance with the EU Guidelines for the Development of the Trans-European Transport network and the implementation of measures to facilitate efficient bus operations;
- Safety, alignment and bus priority enhancements to the N81;
- The provision of bus priority on the N/M11 corridor and the implementation of measures which protect the capacity of the mainline for strategic traffic;
- Various enhancements and measures to protect the strategic function of the M50 for the efficient movement of people and freight; and
- Various projects and schemes to protect the steady-state condition of the national road network and to improve safety.





### Measure ROAD3 – National Roads Projects

It is the intention of the NTA and TII to deliver the national road schemes listed in the Transport Strategy, subject to their appraisal against national and regional policies and objectives.

#### 13.3.3 Eastern Bypass

The Eastern Bypass scheme would comprise an extension of the M50 from the Dublin Tunnel to Sandyford completing a full orbital motorway around Dublin. Dating back many decades, updated assessment work, taking account of current transport policies, has identified that the scheme is no longer required to be developed. Accordingly, it is not intended to progress this project as part of this Transport Strategy.

Subject to the retention of a corridor reservation for the South Port Access Route (detailed later), the lands reserved for this scheme in the Dublin City Development Plan, Poolbeg Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme and Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan can be released for development. In relation to the southern section, the NTA is of the view that the lands reserved in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan for this scheme from the Stillorgan Road to Sandyford should be reserved, pending the outcome of an assessment for its potential use as a transport corridor accommodating sustainable transport modes.

### Measure ROAD4 – Lands Reserved for the Eastern Bypass

The NTA will undertake an assessment of the potential for the southern section of the former Eastern Bypass corridor reservation – as provided for in the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan – to be used as a transport corridor accommodating sustainable transport modes. Pending completion of this assessment the existing reservation should be retained.

### Measure ROAD5 – Southern Port Access Route

Dublin City Council, with the support of TII and the NTA, and with the cooperation of Dublin Port will deliver a new public road which links from the national road network at the Dublin Tunnel to serve the south port lands and adjoining areas. A reservation for such development should be included in the Dublin City Development Plan prior to the removal of the Eastern Bypass reservation.

## 13.3.4 Access to Dublin Port

As set out in section 10.3, it is a requirement of the NTA, TII and other agencies to facilitate the efficient and sustainable operations of Dublin Port. One of the key issues relating to the port is the difficulty in accessing the south port estate from the national road network, in particular the connection to the Dublin Tunnel. It is proposed to address this by means of the delivery of the Southern Port Access Route, a new public road extending from the national road network at the M50 Dublin Tunnel to serve the south port lands and adjoining areas.

## 13.3.5 Leinster Orbital Route

The Leinster Orbital Route comprises an orbital road proposal extending from Drogheda to the Naas/Newbridge area with intermediate links to Navan and other towns. Given the above road principles and Government policy related to reducing transport's contribution to emissions, this project will not be progressed in its existing form. Instead it is proposed to provide online, or mainly online, improvements to the existing road network to cater for orbital demand along these corridors.

### Measure ROAD6 – Catering for Orbital Movement in Leinster

TII and the local authorities will deliver online improvements to existing road carriageways, and localised schemes on national and regional roads, to cater for orbital traffic movement, where issues related to the safety and capacity of the network have been identified.





## 13.4 National Road Network Resilience

The M50 corridor provides for strategic traffic distribution throughout the GDA for private, freight and public transport vehicles.

In particular, the Dublin Tunnel section of the M50 provides a dedicated access route for freight traffic to Dublin Port and area as well as being a significant corridor for public transport to/from the city centre and a connection with other transport modes including Luas and DART.

Given the critical contribution that motorways make to the overall transportation network, major traffic incidents requiring a motorway closure can cause widespread traffic congestion which can quickly impact a significant part of the GDA. Accordingly, it is important that an appropriate level of resilience is provided for such critical infrastructure.

### 13.4.1 M50 Motorway Resilience

While arrangements are in place to deal with unplanned closures of the M50 due to incidents such as road traffic collisions, there is a lack of adequate resilience along the section of the M50 between Junctions 6 and 7. In addition, there is a need to have clearer designated routes available in the event of a closure of the Dublin Tunnel, given its strategic significance in Dublin's transport system.

To address these issues, it is intended to develop an appropriate road link between the N3 and N4 national roads, which can provide a satisfactory alternative in the event of issues arising on the M50 between Junctions 6 and 7, in addition to providing potential additional public transport linkages.

In relation to the Dublin Tunnel, it is intended that a route on the existing road network will be identified and designated which will provide surface connectivity for HGV traffic from the M50/M1 Junction to Dublin Port and its surrounding area in the event of a prolonged closure of the Dublin Tunnel. This surface route will be the Dublin Tunnel Emergency Diversion Route. Provision for use of this route will require that existing bye laws related to the Bus lanes and HGV Cordon be reviewed and amended if necessary. Operational arrangements will be developed to activate this Emergency Diversion Route, including measures to ensure that the route has sufficient available capacity to operate satisfactorily during periods of HGV diversion.

#### **Measure ROAD7 – Dublin Tunnel Emergency Diversion Route**

It is intended that a route on the existing road network will be identified and designated which will provide surface connectivity for HGV traffic from the M50/M1 Junction to Dublin Port and its surrounding area in the event of an emergency or prolonged closure of the Dublin Tunnel.

### Measure ROAD8 – Emergency Diversion Routes

The NTA, in collaboration with TII and the relevant local authorities, will seek the development and construction of an appropriate road link between the N3 and N4 national roads, which can provide a satisfactory alternative in the event of incidents arising on the M50 between Junctions 6 and 7, in addition to providing potential additional public transport linkages.



## 13.5 Regional and Local Roads

Regional and local roads make up the vast majority of the road network in the Greater Dublin Area. In relation to the elements of this network outside urban areas, and in accordance with any associated measures set out in previous chapters, it is intended to implement the following measure to guide the development of regional and local roads in the GDA.

### Measure ROAD9 – Regional and Local Roads Policy

1. Implement necessary upgrades to the regional and local road network in line with the Principles of Road Development set out above;
2. Enhance orbital movement between the N3, the N4 and N7 national roads, by the widening of existing roads and/or the development of new road links, for the purpose of providing resilience to the operation of the M50 and incorporating provision for sustainable transport; and
3. Where part of a sustainable mobility plan, to develop orbital roads around town centres, accompanied by and facilitating enhanced public transport, cycling and pedestrian facilities in the relevant centre;

4. Develop appropriate road links to service development areas, including the provision of public transport (where required) and active travel facilities;
5. Enhance pedestrian and cycle safety through the provision of safer road junctions, improved pedestrian crossing facilities and the incorporation of appropriate cycle measures including signalised crossings where necessary; and
6. Implement various junction improvements, realignments and local reconfigurations on the regional and local road network to address safety deficiencies and/or support integrated transport proposals catering for all road users

Given that many of the proposed road schemes are relatively small and localised it is not intended to establish an exhaustive list of such schemes for development over the period of the Transport Strategy. Instead, it is intended that each road scheme is developed in accordance with the principles of road development set out at the beginning of this chapter and in accordance with the general objectives of this strategy.

It is recommended that confirmation of consistency with the Transport Strategy is obtained from the NTA in advance of a road authority seeking development consent for a particular road scheme. Exchequer grants should only be provided for road schemes which are in accordance with the principles set out above.

## 13.6 Urban Roads and Streets

Within urban areas, the function of roads extends beyond transport and movement to serve economic, social and environmental needs. Compact, denser, more interconnected layouts, particularly where served by good quality bus or rail services, will help to consolidate cities, towns and villages making them viable for reliable public transport and amenable to higher rates of walking and cycling.

Place-making focuses on the interaction between people and the urban environment and achieving a high quality of life, sense of place and belonging. Planning and urban design play a central role in realising quality places. Well-designed streets, which make up a key element of the public realm, can create connected physical, social and transport networks that promote real alternatives to car journeys, namely walking, cycling or public transport. High quality, integrated street design can be effective in cost and efficiency by managing traffic speeds and through fostering a greater understanding between users of all transport modes.

### Measure ROAD10 – Urban Roads and Streets

The implementation of the Transport Strategy will support and facilitate a place based approach to urban roads and streets, based on the measures in Chapter 14.



