

N52 TULLAMORE TO KILBEGGAN LINK

First Public Consultation (Study Area & Constraints) - Feedback Report



MDT0891-RP-00-XX-RP-Z-0012
N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan Link
First Public Consultation (Study
Area & Constraints) – Feedback
Report
S3.P01
02 October 2020

FIRST PUBLIC CONSULTATION (STUDY AREA & CONSTRAINTS) – FEEDBACK REPORT

Document status

Version	Purpose of document	Authored by	Reviewed by	Approved by	Review date
S3.P01	Client Review	L Rooney	A Jennette	M Condrón	02/10/2020

Approval for issue

M Condrón 2 October 2020

© Copyright RPS Group Limited. All rights reserved.

The report has been prepared for the exclusive use of our client and unless otherwise agreed in writing by RPS Group Limited no other party may use, make use of or rely on the contents of this report.

The report has been compiled using the resources agreed with the client and in accordance with the scope of work agreed with the client. No liability is accepted by RPS Group Limited for any use of this report, other than the purpose for which it was prepared.

RPS Group Limited accepts no responsibility for any documents or information supplied to RPS Group Limited by others and no legal liability arising from the use by others of opinions or data contained in this report. It is expressly stated that no independent verification of any documents or information supplied by others has been made.

RPS Group Limited has used reasonable skill, care and diligence in compiling this report and no warranty is provided as to the report’s accuracy.

No part of this report may be copied or reproduced, by any means, without the written permission of RPS Group Limited.

Prepared by:

Prepared for:

RPS

Offaly County Council

Lisa Rooney
Senior Administrator

West Pier Business Campus
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin A96 N6T7

**Aras an Chontae, Charleville Road, Tullamore
Co. Offaly**

T +353 1 488 2900
E lisa.rooney@rpsgroup.com

T 057 9346800

Dublin | Cork | Galway | Sligo
rpsgroup.com

RPS Group Limited, registered in Ireland No. 91911
RPS Consulting Engineers Limited, registered in Ireland No. 161581
RPS Planning & Environment Limited, registered in Ireland No. 160191
RPS Engineering Services Limited, registered in Ireland No. 99795
The Registered office of each of the above companies is West Pier Business Campus, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, A96 N6T7



Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION	2
2.1	Summary Feedback:	3
2.1.1	Environmental Related Comments	3
2.1.2	Climate Change Related Comments	3
2.1.3	Socio – Economic Related Comments	3
2.1.4	Archaeological Related Comments	3
2.1.5	Other General Comments.....	4
2.1.6	Green Agenda.....	4
2.2	Next Steps.....	5

Appendices

- Appendix A Consultation Feedback Form
- Appendix B Consultation Brochure
- Appendix C Register of Submissions Received

1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this report is to summarise the feedback received at the 1st Public Consultation for the N52 Tullamore Kilbeggan Link. The first public consultation on the recommenced design process is focused on the Study Area and the Constraints Study that had been prepared for the project over recent months.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic it was not possible to hold formal events and gatherings of people at this time. Therefore, in relation to the First Public Consultation Process (Study Area & Constraints), an information brochure was distributed to residents, businesses and landowners throughout the Study Area and was also available for download on the website www.n52tullamoretokilbeggan.ie.

A questionnaire was also distributed within the Study Area along with the brochure, to allow members of the public to have their say on the project. Members of the public were also able to make their submission online through the website. The Constraints Maps produced for this stage of the project were available to be viewed and downloaded from the Publications section of the project website.

Residents, businesses and landowners were also advised they would be able to view the project details online at www.n52tullamoretokilbeggan.ie from 15th June 2020 onwards.

Scheme maps and information boards were also on window display at Offaly County Council and Westmeath County Council offices, along with window displays in a number of local shops and premises in Tullamore and Kilbeggan that were open at the time to the public.

The online public consultation afforded the public the opportunity to obtain information on the scheme and to submit any feedback or queries they might have about the scheme through feedback forms which were made available to each member of the public, as shown in Appendix A.

The study area presented on the website was shown on a supplementary brochure as shown in Appendix B.

2 FINDINGS OF THE CONSULTATION

In total 18 questionnaires and 3 general submission (details below) were received from the first public consultation as referenced in the register in Appendix C. In the following sections a summary of the findings from each of the questions that was asked on the consultation questionnaire is outlined.

Q1 – Name/Applicant Address/Telephone/Email details

Q2 – Do you live or own property in the Study Area?

Q3 If you live/have property in the Study area is it; Residential; Farm; Commercial; other and add any additional details.

Of the answers to the above questions, only one person did not live or own a property in the Study area.

Q4 – Do you agree with the study area as defined for the scheme

Do you agree with the study area as defined for the scheme?

Yes	9
No	2
Not Sure	3
No comment either way	2
Detailed comment	2

Q5 – Do you have any other information in relation to the study area or key constraints that you want the project team to be aware of

This section of the feedback form allowed the public to make comments and queries with regard to the study area. In this section of the report a brief summary of these comments are outlined along with any issues that were highlighted by attendees.

- Access for Residents/Guests
- Access for emergency services
- Non-interference with well water
- Noise Pollution/Air Pollution
- Environmental Issues
- Socio-Economic Issues
- Proximity of road to people's homes
- Green Agenda
- Can you inform us please about the opportunities to make further submissions in this process, the budget of this project, timeline of the next stage

2.1 Summary Feedback:

2.1.1 Environmental Related Comments

- Hallsfarm townland: *There are numerous important wildlife species; noise levels - N52 Road directly behind our house.*
- Pallas townland : *Our dwelling house is close to a forest full of wildlife, (marked on questionnaire). Would not like to see any disturbance to that area or close by. Will this be included in any Environmental Study?*
- Ballynamona townland –
 - *Our residential family home is located on the eastern side of the designated area in the OS map. It is Ballynamona and it is next to Ballycalahan to the north and beside Derrygolan and the Westmeath county border to the east. Our house by surrounded by woodland, an ecosystem consisting of a huge range of animals, birds and plant species. There are foxes, red squirrels, hares, stoat, pinemartin, baths, dragonflies, pheasants, swallows, owls, magpies, bees. There are a huge and wealthy variety of trees including, beech, holly, yew, oak, scots pine, elder, black willow, white thorn, black thorn, black willow, silver birch, copper beech, ash, sycamore, furze, etc. The right to environment is a constitutional right. A right we firmly assert over our property. Our view on this proposed project is very simple. An existing road exists, N52 Tullamore to Kilbeggan. Widen it! Put allocated resources into adding laneways only if it is essential to do so.*
 - *Buzzards nesting in the woodland, cuckoo also heard in the location, would like information on disturbing of nests. Are there plans to create a bio diverse habitat in line with pollinator plans? What are the acoustic impacts of the new road on homes nearby & existing wildlife habitats? Will this be dealt with by the trees?*
- Silver River and the Aquifer - *Residents depend on wells for their source of drinking water/domestic use. Any roadworks that would degrade the quality of the water would not be acceptable.*

2.1.2 Climate Change Related Comments

- *We are all very aware of climate change - that should be central and number one in putting resources into making more roads and it should be at the forefront of this public consultation process. The idea of options regarding proposed routes is illogical and counter to the action required on climate change. It is preposterous to look at uprooting and destroying the existing countryside, the environment and existing ecosystems, habitats that add to and assist with the climate emergency. Trees that take in carbon dioxide and emit oxygen, farms and good farmlands limited and a valuable scarce resource that produce food... to make another road*

2.1.3 Socio – Economic Related Comments

- Hallsfarm townland: *local community made up predominantly off small children/families and elderly people. Needs to be safe, quiet & accessible. Area is quite popular as a walking route because of its safety for pedestrians*
- General - *Be aware and sensitive to the area and the needs of the local people. This was very much lacking in the previous planning. Please when making a decision, affect the least amount of people living in the area*
- General - *An alternative primary route would be a positive addition, it would allow children to cycle on the N52. Public right of way between Frevanagh & the N52 which is beautiful & worth maintaining. Vital the L2006 does not become a cul de sac. Need access to school ideally on foot*

2.1.4 Archaeological Related Comments

- *Concern of a member of the public (who does not live or own a property in the Study area) is that in any works undertaken during alterations to the present route of the N52, Durrow Demesne must by subjected to archaeological investigation and supervision. If the upgrade involves re-alignment of the*

N52 into the western part of the Study Area, it is essential that the area around Durrow Demesne, including the Monastic area, be completely avoided.

- *Undocumented mass rock in Balleek Beg Area*
- *All consecrated ground of Durrow demesne must not be disturbed*

2.1.5 Other General Comments

- *Bed and Breakfast business worried about access for residents/guests from L2003.*
- *Bicycle lane needed from Tullamore to Kilbeggan. Speed limit needs to be reduced from 100km to 60km as residential area. Traffic calming measures needed from Durrow Abbey to bottom of hill at Kilbeggan side to help with school/residents. Footpath could be put in along the grass verge. Signs for the 'High Cross' and 'Durrow Abeey' needed. Speed is biggest problem on the road/speed van in the wrong place. CCTV needed.*
- *Is there another study area, if so we would like to see it. We do not want the road beside us, so close/near our home. We value our choice of where we live. We have been through all this - during the first phase of this and it cost us a lot of money. Therefore we would like to consult with someone to see if the new design would impact us in any way*
- *Project is not ambitious enough. Study area should extend west & south to provide options to bypass Tullamore to the west, effectively. Link the R420 to the N52 on Clara side of the town. Provides opportunity for tourist access points to Durrow Abbey & Charleville Castle. Daughter coming back to live on site near study area and is working from home due to COVID. Suggests perhaps funding should be diverted from roads infrastructure and put into high speed broadband for midlands*
- *Durrow is a close-knit community that incorporates both elderly and young families. The focus of proposed road construction in Durrow will cause isolation and lack of access in parts of the community. Any roadworks proposed needs to take into consideration “easy and safe” access for community members.*

2.1.6 Green Agenda

- *As per the newly formed government coalition, please take into consideration our nations shift in elected representation and the vision for the future of Ireland when considering the development of the proposed roadway. As per Green Party proposal:*
 - *Capital transport budget so that 10% is spent on walking infrastructure, 10% on cycling infrastructure and the remainder is split 2:1 in favour of public transport over road building and maintenance.*
 - *A rethink of our approach to public transport and active travel will allow us to vastly improve the quality of life for people in Ireland, freeing families from the financial burden of running multiple private cars while driving down congestion, air pollution and greenhouse gases.*
 - *Create a ‘safe routes to school’ programme to make it safer for children to make their own way to school and implement school clean air zones that will restrict car access.*
 - *Ensure that every County and City Council has a high-quality cycling policy and implements best practice infrastructure around housing and school projects.*
 - *Ensure that all road upgrades and new roads include provision for cycling built to standards consistent with European best practice.*
 - *Expand rural bus links to improve public transport connections between rural towns and villages.*
 - *Restore and expand rail freight capacity to promote it over truck haulage. One of the main problems concerning increase in traffic on the N52 is due to road haulage.*

2.2 Next Steps

The feedback as summarised in this report will be taken into consideration in the assessment process for the Preliminary Options. It is evident that a number of issues need further consideration, and are otherwise likely to present as challenges to the scheme going forward. Particularly considerations relating to Climate Change, Carbon Footprint, Sustainable Transport and the wider Green Agenda, need to be central to the option development process.

It is recommended that the key issues as outlined in Section 2.1 be considered further as part of the options assessment process. This will ensure a robust Option Selection process that still meets the objectives of the scheme and at the same time addresses the needs of stakeholders, residents, interest groups and users.

Appendix A

Consultation Feedback Form

Appendix B Consultation Brochure

Appendix C

Register of Submissions Received