

MINUTES OF PROCEEDINGS AT SPECIAL MEETING OF LIMERICK CITY AND COUNTY COUNCIL HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, DOORADOYLE, AND ONLINE, ON MONDAY, 8TH SEPTEMBER, 2025, AT 3.30 P.M.

PRESENT IN THE CHAIR:

Councillor C. Slattery, Príomh Chomhairleoir.

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Mayor Moran.

Councillors Beasley, Benson, Butler, Carey, Collins (B), Collins (M), Conway, Daly, Donoghue, Doyle, Foley, Galvin, Gavan, Hartigan (T), Keary, Kiely, Kilcoyne, McSweeney, O'Donoghue, O'Hanlon, O'Sullivan (O), O'Sullivan (T), Pond, Reale, Ruddle, Ryan (E), Ryan (M), Scanlan, Secas, Sheahan (J), Stokes, Talukder, Teefy, Teskey, Ward.

Apologies: Councillor Hickey-O'Mara.

OFFICIALS IN ATTENDANCE:

Director General (Mr. P. Daly), Deputy Director General and Director, Corporate Services, Human Resources and Organisational Development (Mr. J. Delaney), Director, Finance, Economic Development, Digital and ICT Services (Mr. M. White), Director, Housing (Mr. B. Kennedy), A/Director, Regeneration, Sports and Recreation (Mr. D. White), Director, Rural, Community, Culture and Tourism Development (Mr. S. Duclot), Director, Transportation and Mobility (Ms. P. Liddy), Director, Environment, Climate Action and Shared Services (Mr. K. Lehane), Director, Planning and Place-Making (Mr. V. Murray), Senior Engineer, Mid-West Road Design (Mr. T. Fitzgerald), N/M20 Project Coordinator, Mid West National Road Design Office (Mr. J. Howard), N/M20 Project Manager (Mr. Demitrios Paraskevakis, WSP), Meetings Administrator (Ms. C. Farrell), Administrative Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. A. Foley), Senior Staff Officer, Corporate Services, Governance and Customer Services (Ms. C. Sheehy).

The Príomh Chomhairleoir welcomed everyone to the Meeting and stated that she had called the Special Meeting following a request from Councillors D. McSweeney, D. Butler, S. Keary, S. Kiely and B. Collins to discuss the following issue as set out in the Agenda and accompanying Requisition in relation to the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Project:

"We, the undersigned, request a Special Meeting of Limerick City and County Council to receive an update from the N/M20 Design Team on the proposed scheme and to discuss the implications and solutions for the Attyflin Junction 5 and the proposed Croom Junctions."

The N/M20 Project Coordinator, with the aid of a presentation, gave an update on the N/M20 Cork to Limerick Project and, in particular, on the junctions of Attyflin and Croom.

He provided an overview of the items covered in the presentation including:

- The existing and under construction N20/M20/M21 Junctions at Patrickswell, Attyflin and Adare.
- How the proposed scheme would form part of the Trans-European Transport Road Network.
- Proposed N/M20 Attyflin Junction.
- Feedback received from the public on Attyflin Junction and consideration of alternative options for Attyflin Junction.
- Proposed N/M20 Croom Junction.
- Feedback received from the public on the Croom Junction and consideration.
- Comparisons of journey time/distance to motorway network.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator advised the Elected Members that the M20 / M21 Limerick to Adare and onward to Foynes would be designated as Extended Core Ten-T Network, when constructed. He outlined that the N20 Attyflin Junction to Cork City would be designated as Comprehensive Ten-T Network.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator referred to the Attyflin Junction and highlighted the short distance between Junction 4 and Junction 5 of the scheme, which measured approx. 750 meters weaving length (westbound) when entering and before needing to leave. He noted these measurements did not meet the current design requirements for weaving length which had changed since the M20 was constructed. Junction 5, Attyflin Junction, was an important strategic Interchange which brought together a lot of strategic national traffic. The N/M20 Project Coordinator outlined the need to design a free-flow Interchange to allow traffic to flow seamlessly at this junction noting that, in doing so, it would require significant lands.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator highlighted various other impacts that needed to be considered during the design process such as the railway line, environmental constraints and archaeological constraints. He acknowledged the importance of designing junctions that would serve the community and the surrounding area and demonstrated the movement of traffic in all directions.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator expressed his gratitude to the public for their feedback, including various concerns raised in relation to increased traffic in the Patrickswell and Crecora area. He acknowledged the request to look at additional local access for the Attyflin Junction.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator outlined that as a result of the consultation feedback, the Design Team undertook further work to assess the feasibility of providing additional local access from the existing N20 and R526 at Attyflin to the M20/M21 motorway network. This additional local access would be for M20 /M21 motorway journeys to and from destinations around Attyflin Junction.

The Members were advised that there were currently four options being investigated, F1 to F4, noting that all four options would use the Attyflin Junction and would provide additional local access to the M20/M21 motorway network for communities around the junction. He outlined the following options:

Option F1 - Addition of westbound diverge

Option F2 - Addition of eastbound diverge

Option F3 - Addition of eastbound diverge & link

Option F4 - Addition of Link Road between M20 J4 & J5

The N/M20 Project Coordinator highlighted that all four alternative options had varying degrees of road safety, design standards, property impacts, and environmental issues. These four options were currently being appraised using a multi-criteria analysis by the Design Team and environmental specialists against the current design proposal. Feedback from impacted property owners following consultation would be considered as part of this appraisal.

He outlined that the Project Team now needed to consider all feedback, including today's Special Meeting, where they would assess the options, seek any necessary safety departure approvals and confirm Attyflin Junction arrangements to the Elected Members and the public later in 2025.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator updated the Members on the Croom Junction, highlighting that they were proposing to use the existing Croom by-pass, but emphasised that they were trying to minimise the impact on land. He advised that the traffic from the south would use the southern half of the junction, and traffic from the north would use the northern half of the junction with a two way link road connecting the two half junctions. The type of junctions are referred to as dumbbell junctions.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator thanked the public for their feedback in relation to the Croom Junction and noted the concerns raised over non-motorway traffic travelling through Croom Village due to the upgrade of the N20 Croom Bypass to a Motorway (M20). The public requested that the Project Design Team consider N20 dual carriageway classification between Croom and Attyflin to facilitate non-motorway traffic.

He highlighted that the following considerations had to be taken into account during the road cross section selection (motorway) and the design process of the Croom Junction:

- The class and type of vehicles that were restricted from motorways as set out in the Roads Act and Road Traffic Regulations.
- The decision to select a motorway road type for the N/M20 project was announced at the June 2024 project update. A comparative analysis considered four different forms of divided

carriageway (all options having a central median and associated safety barriers) and confirmed that the “Motorway” road type was the clear preference in terms of best achieving policy and project objectives. Motorway provision, with its access restrictions, had proven to be the safest form of road type linking our cities, which would save over 1,300 collisions during a 30-year period on the M20.

- The volume of non-motorway traffic was typically less than 5% of the overall traffic volume on the road network. There were several alternative routes for non-motorway traffic through and around Croom. The impacts of non-motorway traffic in Croom and other communities were being considered as part of the planning and design of the N/M20 project.

The Members welcomed those present in the public gallery and commended them for their ongoing participation in ensuring that the correct design was agreed. They thanked the N/M20 Project Coordinator for his presentation and commended him for his engagement to date.

During the course of the ensuing discussion, the Members outlined the following items:

- Members thanked the Design Team for their presentation and their engagement with the Elected Members and the public throughout the design process. The team was commended for investigating solutions to issues raised with the proposed scheme.
- The project was referred to as a crucial piece of infrastructure that needs to be progressed, but highlighting the need to ensure it does not impact on the lives of those living in the areas around the scheme.
- It was the view of some Members that option 4 was possibly the most suitable option, while emphasizing the need to keep trucks out of the towns and villages along the route of the N/M20 project.
- Members stressed the need to meet with landowners impacted by any proposed changes to the junctions.
- Members outlined the proposed change to traffic flow in and around Patrickswell village, highlighting how the partial closure at Junction 5, Attyflin, would have significant effect on motorists wishing to travel to and from Limerick; to Adare; and from Cork. They outlined that this change could have a negative effect on those living in the village.
- At the Croom Junction, concerns were raised over the potential increase in traffic through the village as a result of one entrance/exit into and out of the village.
- Croom village has a hospital and secondary school and it was requested that consideration would be given to adding an over-pass at Fanningstown to help reduce traffic through the village.
- They referred to the declassification of the Croom road and queried if it would affect future funding opportunities.
- Members asked the team to look at other junctions and traffic flow in other counties that is working before reverting with the proposed design.
- A timeline for a possible solution to the junctions and for submission of planning application was requested.

In response to the Members queries, the N/M20 Project Coordinator agreed to look at the solutions outlined by the Members including use of existing slip roads but highlighted how this would reduce the distance between the junctions. He noted that the design would need to meet safety requirements and highlighted that any proposed changes had to be approved by Transport Infrastructure Ireland before presenting back to the Members and the public.

The Members were advised that new standards must be applied to the existing Junctions once changes to the Junctions are proposed. The N/M20 Project Coordinator outlined that any additional land required for changes to the Junctions will need to be assessed from a property point of view along with environmental and archeological impacts.

The N/M20 Project Coordinator thanked the Elected Members and the community groups for their contributions and constructive engagement on the project. He informed the Members that once a design is agreed, a business case must go to Transport Infrastructure Ireland and the Department of Transport for approval before a planning application can be submitted. It was the design team's intention to get the business case submitted before the end of the year and agreed to revert to the Elected Members through the process.

The Members thanked the N/M20 Project Coordinator, and Project Design Team, for their responses to their queries. They stressed the need for continuous public consultation and engagement with the Elected Members through the remaining process. They reiterated the need for a solution to suit all and to avoid any changes that will increase traffic through towns and villages, impacting the lives of those that live and work there. They requested that consideration be given to the timing around the business case, and noted that they looked forward to moving on with the project.

This concluded the Meeting.

Signed:

Príomh Chomhairleoir

Date:
