



Pre Draft Bray LAP Submission - Report

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Topic

Infrastructure - Sustainable Movement – Transportation

Submission

In the submission below, I have focussed my observation on the issue of TRAFFIC.

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2024 Bray MD LAP Submission Peter Byrne.pdf, 0.13MB

Peter Byrne

Wednesday 18th December 2024

Submission to the Bray MD LAP Draft Plan 2025 on: TRAFFIC

1 N11-M11 Plans and Congestion:

The overall 'problem to solve' behind both the N11 M11 project and its concurrent and temporarily abandoned predecessor (The N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme), is **congestion**.

This is due to many inter-related complex factors.

Some of these factors are: population growth + housing crisis in Dublin + urban growth + age profile and family composition changes + increased HGV traffic to and from Rosslare. All of which and more have combined to increase N11 M11 traffic volumes over time.

The solution to the complex issues raised by this congestion, needs to be a complex and multi-faceted solution, which will likely require substantial investment.

It has to be said that this ridiculously overly-simplistic proposal reeks of being **a cynical exercise of the worst kind, dressed up to appear as though it has some environmental benefit, but in reality will bring nothing but increased congestion over time, not only to the main road of the N11/M11, but also will certainly compound and spread the existing congestion out into the local towns and villages nearby.**

It is clear that the only benefit—and it is minor and disproportionately so—would be to bus/coach users travelling from further south in/out to the city/greater Dublin area.

There is room for many improvements to the bus services—e.g. frequency—that would yield much greater benefit for far, far less disruption.

There is significant local anger and opposition to this—and due to the (deliberately?) low key publicity methods—this local opposition is only getting started.

This present proposal to make many significant changes will **negatively impact the transport network** of two towns and two villages, with a total population in excess of over 55,000 people. We include Shankill, Co. Dublin as there is only one north/south route at the north

end of Bray town, and there is considerable traffic exchange between and through Shankill, Co. Dublin.

In reality, other residents of north Wicklow do also use these existing N11/M11 access points and local road networks to travel to and from employment, education, medical centres, family etc. so the “real” figure of those impacted is likely considerably higher than the bare CSO Census figures.

2022 Census / CSO		
Bray		33,512
Enniskerry		1,889
Shankill		14,257
Kilmacanogue		1,240
Environs at av. 77/kmsq		3,680
		54,578

Even using conservative estimates, **these proposals will affect almost one-third of the total population of Wicklow County as a whole.**

2 N11-M11 Plans and Risk—Accident and Emergency:

We have identified two “areas of risk”. There may well be more.

2A Loss of the Hard Shoulder:

When traffic volumes are high, and the access roads and roundabouts cannot take the volumes, traffic lanes build up: e.g. on the hard shoulder at Junction 7 for hundreds of metres at morning and evening rush hour. This creates a huge risk, with **passing traffic including fast-moving HGVS moving very close to a stopped line of traffic at high speed.** Whether through stupidity or otherwise, this is made worse by some drivers trying to cut in, causing emergency braking and near-accident situations. We have witnessed several.

Traffic stopped on the hard shoulder of a busy arterial roadway used by HGVs is well known internationally to be a very high risk situation. **It is a miracle there has not been a serious accident to date.**

In addition, **loss of the hard shoulder provides no place of refuge** for the distance of the proposed restrictions in case of a breakdown, with a corresponding safety barrier for the occupants of the vehicle to stand behind. This is a disproportionate and unnecessary risk.

2B Reduced access points in and out of Bray in an Emergency situation:

This is a present issue known to the NAS, the other Emergency Services, and by Utility companies. Bray presently has only one north-south bridge available that crosses the river

Dargle. As the tenth largest urban settlement in Ireland, and serving a population hinterland and other towns further north and south, this is a significant weak point in the event of a major public emergency, and will significantly affect the ability of the Emergency services to respond. In effect, this is already putting lives at risk. **Therefore to contemplate shutting off access points along the N11/M11 will make the situation more risk prone.** Take note.

3 Build a Large Capacity Park and Ride

Put simply, any alteration of the main artery N11/M11 in the environs of Bray will need to be undertaken as part of a far more **holistic and visionary plan** that must include appropriate investment.

We have in the past submitted detailed proposals when previous consultations have been in progress to the RPA, the NTA, the DTO, Wicklow County Council etc. that reference some of the possibilities available.

E.g. we proposed a park and ride at Fassaroe that would be **visionary and proportionate** to the need—with a capacity of 2,000+ vehicles, and a Luas Loop system from Cherrywood to Fassaroe, down the Southern Cross Road to the Dart station and looped back to the Cherrywood line. These kinds of solutions have been commonplace for many decades in many other countries.

We will never be able to bring a low-carbon public transport system to every back road and byway in rural county areas—therefore the solution may be to provide an alternative for these necessary road journeys to terminate on the outskirts of the greater Dublin area.

4 Proposed Traffic Signals at Junction 7 / Hill's Roundabout:

It beggars belief that this dangerous off-ramp traffic hazard has been not only ignored, but will in fact be made more risk prone under the proposed plan, with a clear increased risk of serious accidents and fatalities.

There was a previous plan to increase the Roundabout at Hill's Garage to a two lane much larger roundabout based on I think 2003 traffic volumes—**why on earth would even the most basic desk exercise conclude that placing traffic signals at the end of the off ramp would be a good idea?** Just unbelievable.

PLACING TRAFFIC SIGNALS AT HILLS ROUNDABOUT WILL CAUSE HUGE VOLUMES OF TRAFFIC TO BUILD UP AT PEAK TIMES ON THE SOUTHERN CROSS ROAD AND KILLARNEY ROADS. OTHER TRAFFIC FLOW OPTIONS MUST BE CONSIDERED, WITH LOCAL INPUT.

For many of the reasons mentioned in the above points, proposing to close one of only four south bound access points to the town of Bray and its environs is deeply flawed, and dangerous. In addition, this is one of only two access points on the south of the River Dargle, where the majority of the population of Bray are resident. Ridiculous.

With best wishes,



Peter Byrne

The **N11/M11 Junction 4 to Junction 14 Improvement Scheme** commenced in November 2018. Phase 2 of the project concluded in late 2021, with the announcement and public display of a preferred option for the scheme. In January 2022, it was confirmed that funding would not be available to Wicklow County Council to progress the project to the next phase and further development of the scheme was paused.

The **N11/M11 Bus Priority Interim Scheme** commenced in October 2021 following the completion of an initial Feasibility Study. The overriding objective of this project is to develop a proposal for the provision of bus priority on the N11/M11, enabling buses/coaches to avoid congested traffic lanes and reducing the unsustainable dependency on the private car.