

Session 3 :The Transport Appraisal Framework and Implications on RLR Projects

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The Transport Appraisal Framework and Implications on RLR Projects

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Kevin:

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- Project lifecycle
- Appraisal review: process & key elements
- Things for LAs to look out for

Richard:

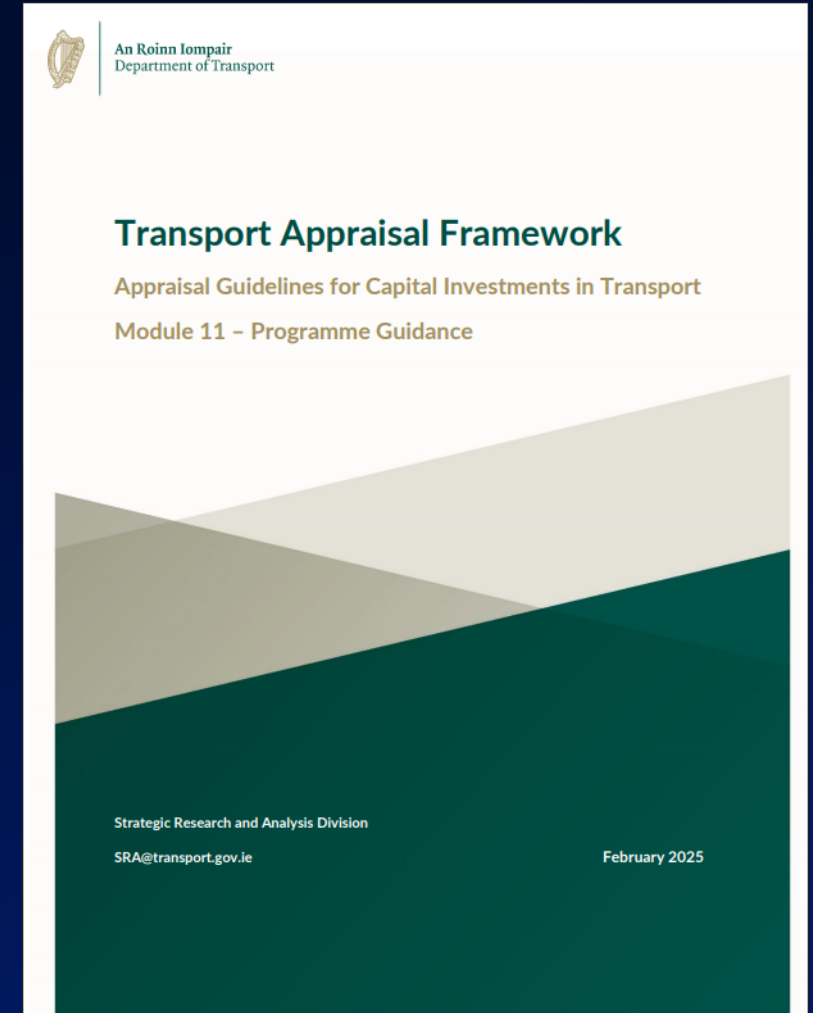
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Transport Appraisal Framework

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-transport/publications/transport-appraisal-framework-taf/>

- “designed to help assist and guide Sponsoring Agencies when developing transport business cases for proposed public investment.” (*capital*)
- Set of 11 module documents plus NIFTI and TAA templates.
- Published June 2023 to replace 2016 CAF (updated 2024 and 2025).
- “provides appraisal and implementation guidance that aims to promote investment in the transport system which meets the needs of society, fulfils strategic policy objectives, and delivers value for money through a common framework for appraising transport investments in accordance with the Infrastructure Guidelines (IG).”

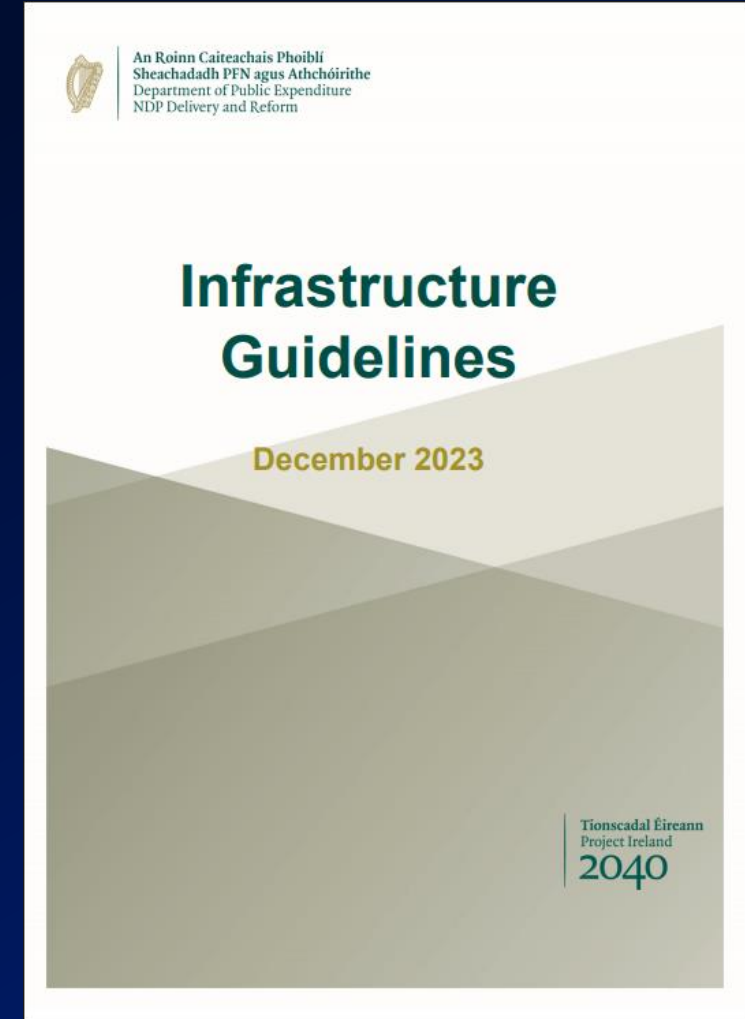


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Infrastructure Guidelines

<https://www.gov.ie/en/department-of-public-expenditure-ndp-delivery-and-reform/collections/infrastructure-guidelines/>

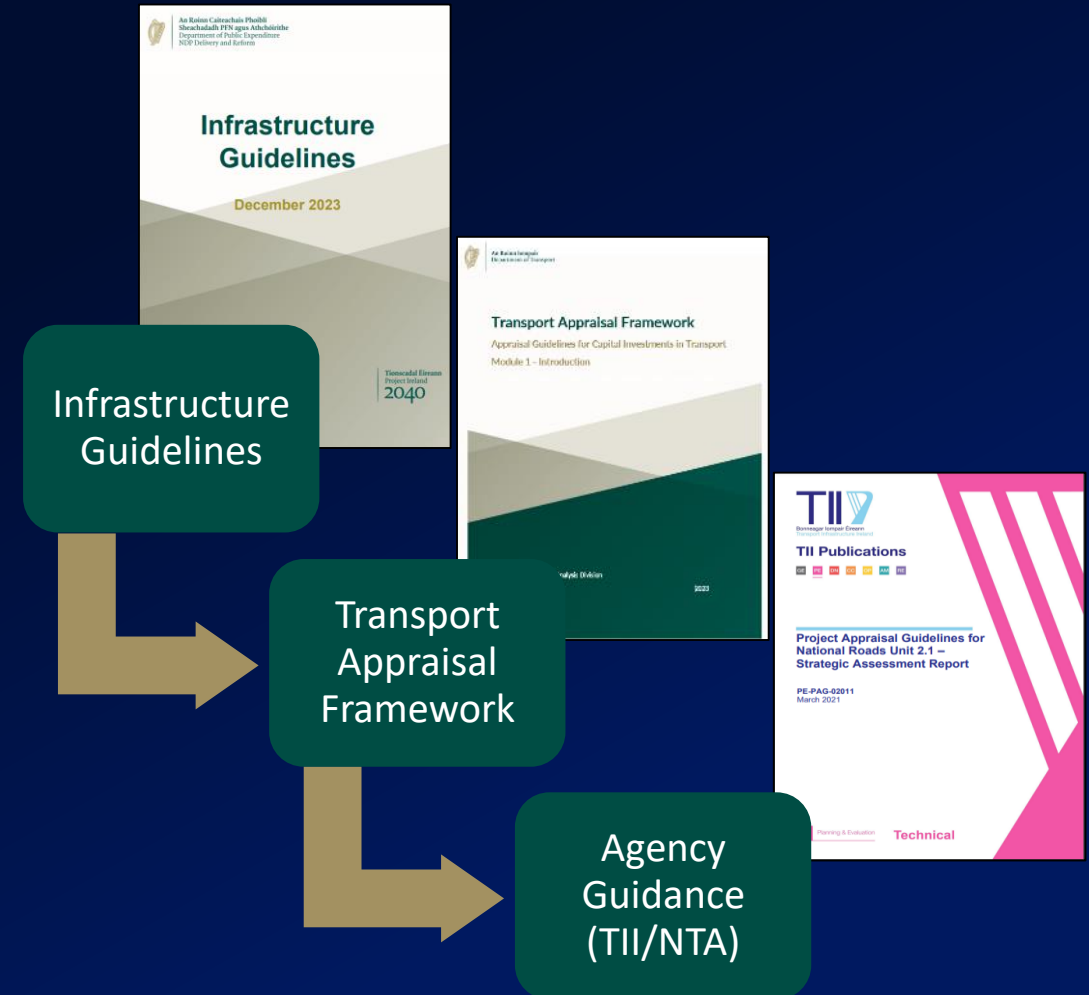
- “value for money guidelines for the evaluation, planning and management of public investment projects... in Ireland.”
- Updated capital element of the ‘Public Spending Code’.
- “arrangements set out in the Guide apply to all public bodies and all bodies in receipt of Exchequer capital funding.”
- Updates made in 2023 – need to streamline while ensuring rigour. Infrastructure a hot topic currently.



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Where TAF sits

- Infrastructure Guidelines – applies to all sectors
- TAF goes into further transport-specific detail
- TAF in turn informs agency and sectoral guidance e.g. TII Project Appraisal Guidelines (PAG) Units
- Transport sector in Ireland performs well on this front



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Project Lifecycle – different requirements as project evolves

- POD: what is the basic idea for this project?
What is it trying to achieve? Does it make sense?
- AG1: identification of preferred option,
preparation for ABP application
- AG2: before beginning tendering
- AG3: before awarding of construction contract,
with tender costs in – does project still make
sense?
- Implementation
- Project Completion Report
- Ex-Post Evaluation: did project succeed?

Project Lifecycle Governance Stage	Required Documentation
Proposal Initiation	Project / Programme Outline Document (POD)
Approval Gate 1: Approval in Principle	Preliminary Business Case (PBC)
Approval Gate 2: Pretender Approval	Detailed Project Brief & Procurement Strategy
Approval Gate 3: Approval to Proceed	Final Business Case (FBC)
Implementation	Monitoring Reports
Review	Project Completion Report
Ex-post Evaluation	Ex-post Evaluation Report

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Areas of Review by DoT: Preliminary Business Case

- When Sponsoring Agency (Local Authority) submits appraisal document to Approving Authority (DoT), review process follows an established structure.
- Division of labour within AA – we rely on each other’s expertise.
- AA will revert to SA with comments for actioning including RAG status.
- Further steps for major projects (cost >€200m) i.e. External Assurance Process (EAP), Major Projects Advisory Group (MPAG)

Stage	SRAD	RLRD	Both
Preliminary Business Case (PBC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Demand Analysis• Monitoring and evaluation framework (inclusive of KPIs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alignment with national and local policies• Risk assessment• Risk management strategy• Draft procurement plan• Draft implementation plan• Draft operations plan• Affordability assessment• Financial appraisal• Recommendation to the Approving Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Context• Rationale for intervention• Scheme objectives• Lessons learned• Longlist of options• NIFTI assessment• Appraisal of each shortlisted option

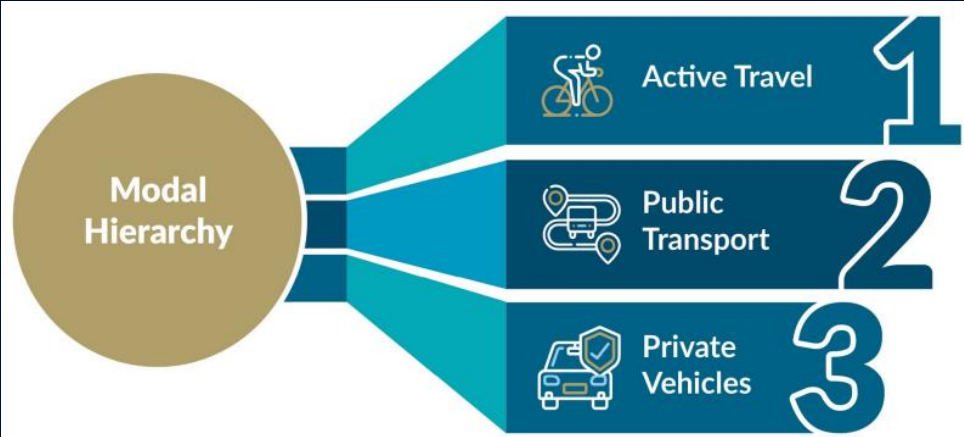
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Main things of interest from SRAD's point of view re. appraisals

- Objectives: are they there? Are they SMART? (linked to rationale)
- Option selection: 'funnel' from longlist → sifting (via MCA) → shortlist → detailed appraisal → preferred option. Have you kept an open mind re. what the end result should look like? Or are you only after one shiny new object?
- Demand, costs, benefits: how have these been estimated/modelled? (SATURN/TUBA/COBALT, RCF/QRA, CBA/CEA/TAA)
- What method has been used to decide the preferred option: MCA? CEA? TAA? CBA? Was the method appropriate given the estimated cost & project type (e.g. MCA if <€30m)? Was it carried out correctly?
- Lessons learned: are there any recent examples of projects like this proposal? How were they implemented? How was value for money achieved?
- Monitoring & evaluation framework (linked to objectives): do all objectives have KPIs attached? What are the plans to track delivery of outcomes?

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NIFTI Priorities & Hierarchies (we care about them!)



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Transport & Accessibility Appraisal (TAA): appraisal ≠ CBA

Option	Accessibility	Social	Land Use	Safety	Climate Change	Local Environment	2	3	4
							MCA Score for each option	CEA – KPI or divide MCA score by cost	BCR for preferred option
Option	Accessibility	Social	Land Use	Safety	Climate Change	Local Environment	MCA Score	CEA Scores	CBA Scores
Option 1	Slight Positive	Slight Positive	Positive	Neutral	Slight Positive	Slight Positive	30	0.75	1.9:1
Option 2	Strong Positive	Slight Positive	Positive	Neutral	Positive	Slight Positive	26	0.80	1.8:1
Option 3	Neutral	Neutral	Negative	Neutral	Slight Negative	Neutral	23	0.67	
Option 4	Slight Negative	Slight Negative	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	Neutral	18	0.5	

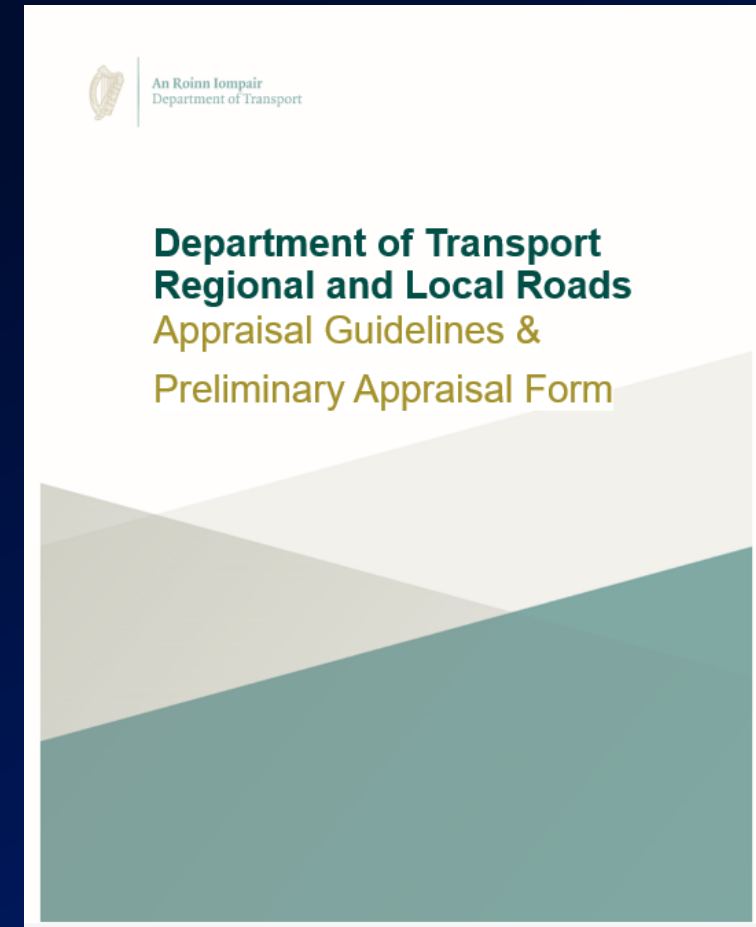
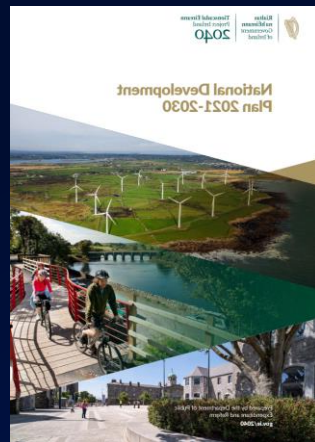
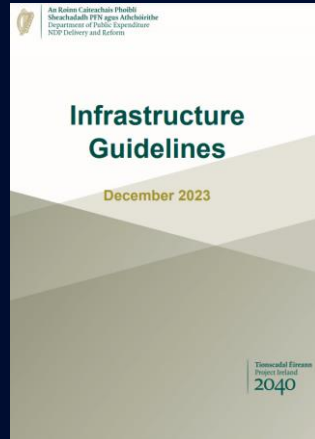
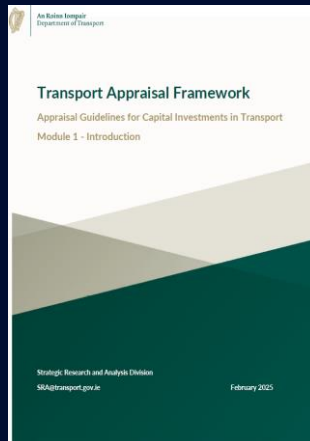


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Thank you!
sra@transport.gov.ie

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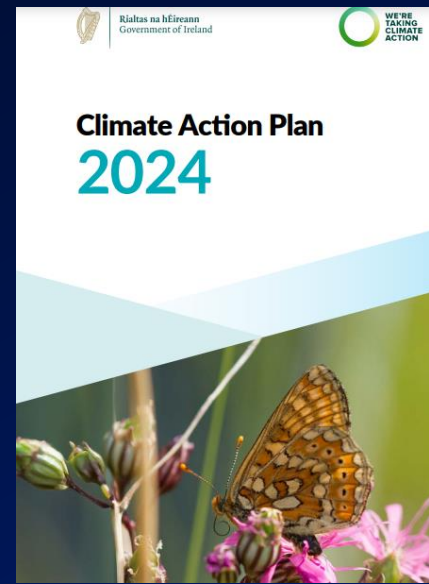
Regional & Local Roads Appraisal Guidelines



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Policy Context

- National Planning Framework and National Development Plan.
 - NSO 3 – Strengthen Rural Economies and Communities
- National Investment Framework for Transport Investment (NIFTI).
 - Investment Priorities;
 - Intervention Hierarchy;
 - Modal Hierarchy.
- Climate Action Plan 2024.



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Regional & Local Road Capital Investment Programme

Strategic and Specific Regional & Local Road Projects

- Strategic Regional and Local Roads Projects are projects with an estimated total project cost **in excess of €5m** including VAT.
- Specific Improvement Grant Projects are projects with an estimated total project cost in excess of €200,000 but **less than €5m.**
- The **Sponsoring Agency** is the principal body responsible for proposing, planning, managing, and evaluating public investment schemes within the requirements of the Infrastructure Guideline.
- The **Approving Authority** must ensure that the project or programme remains compliant with the requirements of the IG throughout the various stages in the project lifecycle.

Responsible Body	Role Under TAF
Department of Transport	Approving Authority
Local Authority	Sponsoring Agency

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Preliminary Appraisal Form

Overview of Preliminary Appraisal Form & Preliminary NIFTI Assessment

- Identify 3 No. problems which the project seeks to solve.
- Define the 3 main project objectives and how they will solve the problems identified.
- Minimum of 3 options and the Do-Nothing/Do-Minimum scenario.
- Objectives must be **SMART**:
 - Specific
 - Measurable
 - Attributable
 - Realistic
 - Time-bound
- Outline the degree to which the Project solves the problems identified & aligns with policy.
- A **preliminary NIFTI hierarchy score** now must be provided.

NIFTI Investment Priority		Tick Which Investment Priority is Applicable			
Decarbonisation		✓			
Mobility of People & Goods in Urban Areas					
Protection & Renewal		✓			
Enhanced Regional & Rural Connectivity					

Modal Hierarchy	NIFTI Rank	Do-Nothing	Option 1 Rank	Option 2 Rank	Option 3 Rank
Active Travel	1	3	1	3	2
Public Transport	2	2	2	1	3
Private Vehicle	3	1	3	2	1

Intervention Hierarchy	NIFTI Rank	Do-Nothing	Option 1 Rank	Option 2 Rank	Option 3 Rank
Maintain	1	4	1	1	4
Optimise	2	3	2	2	3
Improve	3	2	3	3	2
New	4	1	4	4	1

Preliminary NIFTI Assessment Score	-	48	100	79	52
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Example Preliminary NIFTI Assessment

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Preliminary Appraisal Form

Multi-Criteria Analysis

- Preliminary MCA must also be completed.
- New set of criteria and sub-criteria in the TAF.
 - Transport User & Economic Benefits;
 - Accessibility;
 - Social;
 - Land Use;
 - Safety;
 - Climate Change;
 - Local Environmental.
- Consider additional information that might be of interest to the Department when considering funding.
 - Is it a Location of Interest (LOI)?
 - Is it on a Critical Infrastructure Route (CIR)?
 - Is it on a safe routes to school?
 - Alignment with Climate Action Plan?

		Estimated Total Scheme Budget € Incl VAT, Land, consultants etc (€m)			
Current typical C/way width	Route No.				
Appraisal Criteria	Appraisal Sub-Criteria	Do-Nothing	Do something 1	Do something 2	Do something 3
Transport User Benefits and Other Economic Impacts	Travel Time	4	6	Dropdown	4
	Transport Costs	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Journey Reliability	6	5	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Journey Quality	7	6	5	Dropdown
	Change of Land Value	5	2	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Wider Economic Impacts	5	5	Dropdown	Dropdown
Accessibility Impacts	Access to Key Services	5	3	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Access to Recreational Facilities	4	1	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Access to Jobs	4	5	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Access to International Transport Gateways	5	5	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Freight Access	1	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
Social Impacts	Vulnerable Groups	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
Land Use Impacts	Change in Quality of Public Realm	4	7	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Existing Transport Network and Service Impact	3	4	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Zoned Land, Land Use Planning and Spatial Planning	5	3	Dropdown	Dropdown
Safety Impacts	Collision and Related Impacts	6	Dropdown	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Other Safety Impacts	5	5	Dropdown	Dropdown
Climate Change Impacts	Climate Action Impact	4	2	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Climate Adaptation Impact	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
Local Environmental Impacts	Air Quality	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Noise and Vibration	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Biodiversity	4	7	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Water Resources and Soil Quality	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Landscape and Visual Quality	4	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
	Cultural and Heritage	5	6	Dropdown	Dropdown
Total		110	120	5	4

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Preliminary Appraisal Form

Total Project Budget Spreadsheet

- Total Project Budget Spreadsheet must be provided at each Approval Gate.
- All costs must be **inclusive** of VAT.
- National Finance Guidelines advise that the Approving Authority and Sponsoring Agency should be prepared to abandon the project at any stage if continuation would not represent value for money.

Project Name:	Project Status	Region
	Dropdown	Dropdown
Road Authority	Length of Project Road	
Total Project Budget Stage (Preliminary, A, B or C)	Latest Update date	
	Dropdown	
Total land required (ha)	Start Year	Completion Year

Base Cost Expenditure heading	Base cost (inclusive of total risk)	Uninflated target cost	Pre 2025	2025	2026	2027	2028	2029	2030	2031	Post 2031
Main Contract Construction Incl VAT)											
Employer Risk on Construction											
Main Contract Supervision											
Employer Risk on Supervision											
Archaeology											
Pre construction Archaeology risk											
Advance works & other contracts											
Employer risk											
Land and property											
Land issues risks											
Planning and design (incl GI and topo)											
Employer risk on P and D											
Other											
Subtotal (Excl Inflation and Programme risk)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Add 5% inflation and programme risk	0										
TOTAL PROJECT BUDGET	0										
Total Cost /km	#DIV/0!										
Land Cost /Ha	#DIV/0!										

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RLR Project Appraisal

- Preliminary appraisal, detailed appraisal & Department deliverables are dependent on project costs.
- Specific projects between €200k and €5m => MCA
- Strategic projects require detailed assessments during preliminary business case => MCA, CBA, TAA, CEA.
- All projects require preliminary NIFTI assessment & MCA included with preliminary appraisal form at RLR Stage 0.
- Projects over €200m are Major Projects

Project Cost	Project Type	Preliminary Appraisal	Detailed Appraisal	Approving Authority Review	RLR Stage Gate#
€0.2m - €5m (incl VAT)	Specific Grant Project	1. Preliminary Appraisal Form 2. Preliminary NIFTI Hierarchy Assessment – All Options 3. Preliminary MCA – All Options	N/A	RLR	0, 4, 5
€5m - €20m (incl VAT)	Strategic Regional and Local Roads Project		MCA – All options	RLR	0, 2, 3, 4, 5
€20m - €30m (incl VAT)			MCA - All options & CBA - Preferred option	RLR and SRAD	0, 1, 2, 3, 4, 5
€30m - €200m (incl VAT)			TAA & CEA – All options CBA – All Options / subset of the Shortlist	RLR and SRAD	
Above €200m (incl VAT)	*Major Project			RLR and SRAD EAP: AG1 MPAG: AG1 Government Consent: AG1 & AG3	

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TAF Approval Gates & RLR Stage Gates

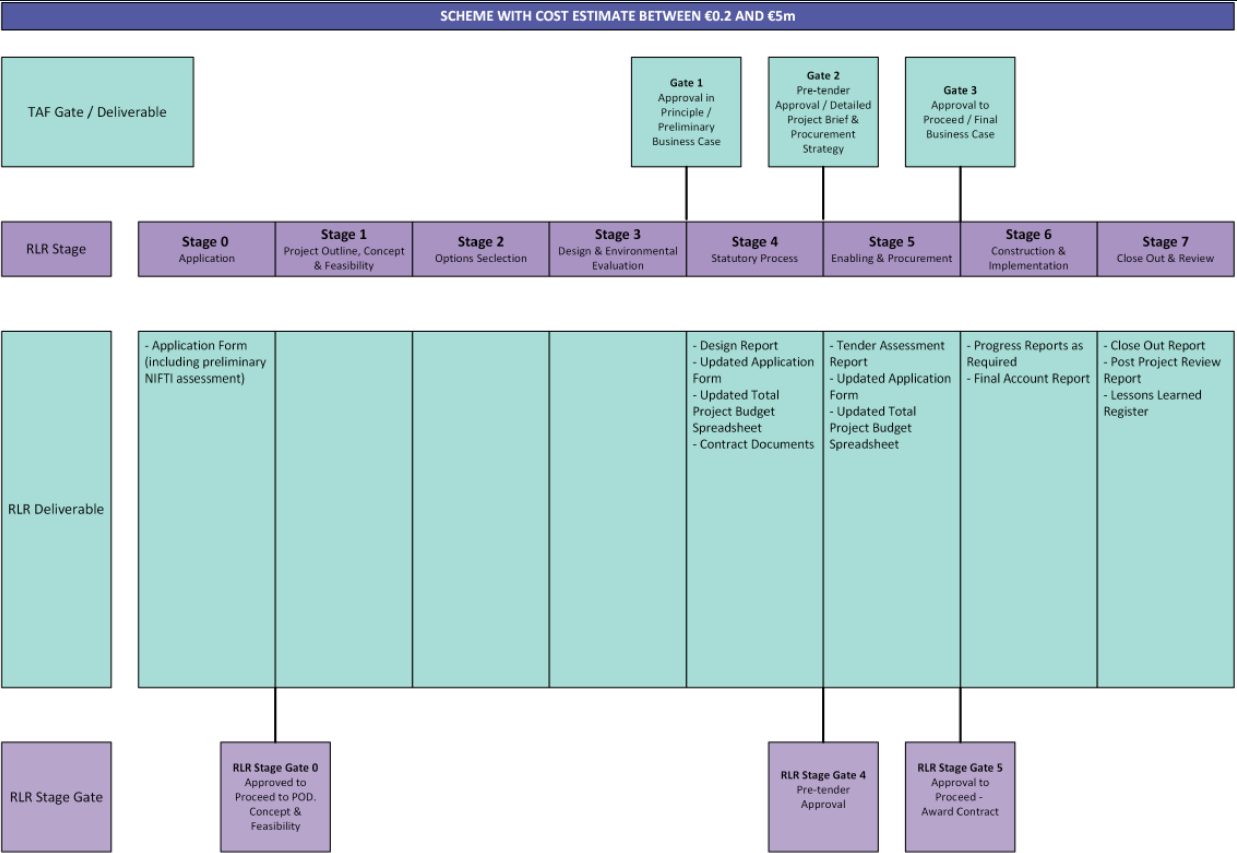
- Regional and Local Roads Division have a specific set of Stage Gates which must be adhered to alongside the TAF Approval Gates.
- Specific deliverables required at various TAF Approval Gates.
 - Preliminary Business Case at AG1
 - Detailed Business Case at AG2
 - Final business Case at AG3
- Number of RLR Stage Gates depends on the project cost.
- For projects less than €5m, Business Cases are updates to preliminary appraisal form and Total Project Budget Sheet previously submitted at Stage Gate 0.
- Level of additional information (PEP, design reports etc.) to be provided to RLR for review depends on project cost.

RLR Project Stage	RLR Stage Gates	TAF Stage Gates
Stage 0: Application	Stage Gate 0	-
Stage 1: Project Outline, Concept & Feasibility	Stage Gate 1	
Stage 2: Option Selection	Stage Gate 2	
Stage 3: Design & Environmental Consideration	Stage Gate 3	Approval Gate 1: Approval in Principle / Preliminary Business Case
Stage 4: Statutory Processes	Stage Gate 4	Approval Gate 2: Pre-tender Approval / Detailed Project Brief & Procurement Strategy
Stage 5: Procurement	Stage Gate 5	Approval Gate 3: Approval to Proceed / Final Business Case
Stage 6: Construction & Implementation	-	-
Stage 7: Close Out & Review		

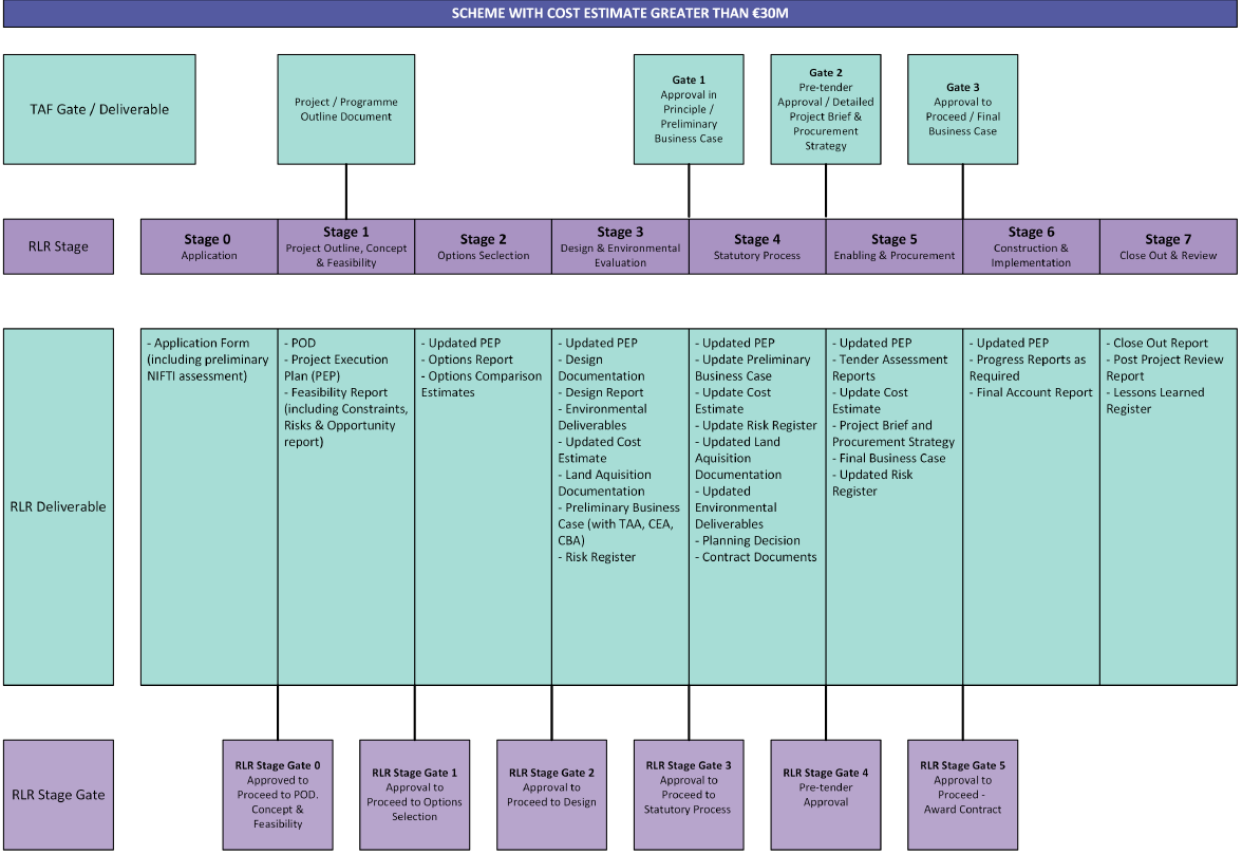
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RLR Project Cost & Deliverables

Scheme costs between €0.2m – €5m



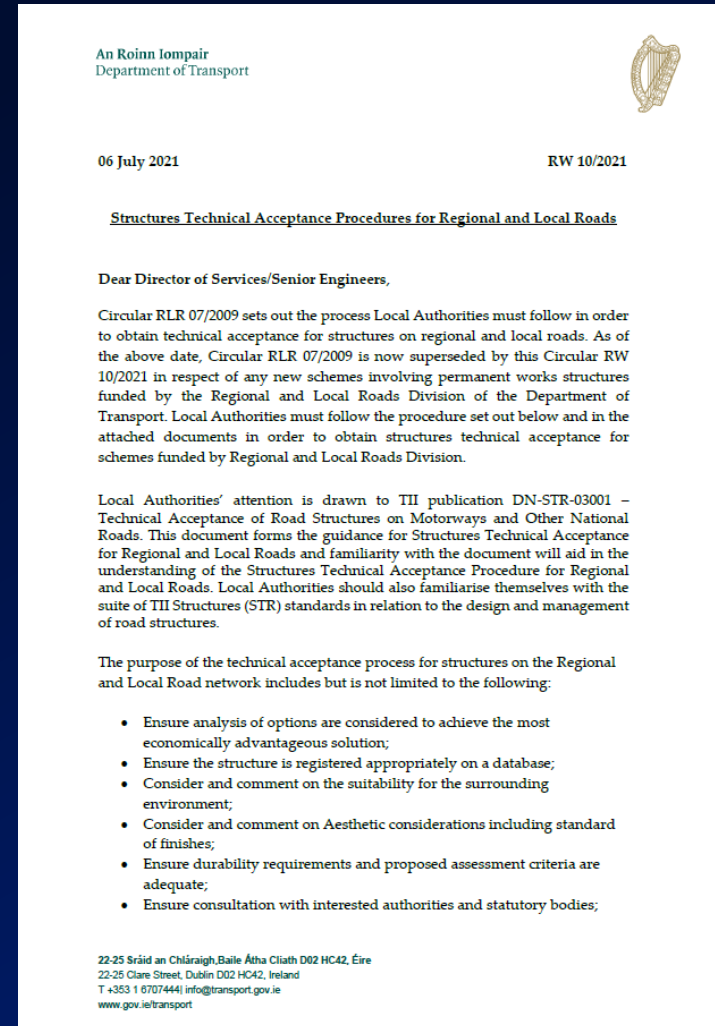
Scheme Costs greater than €30m



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Technical Approval of Structures

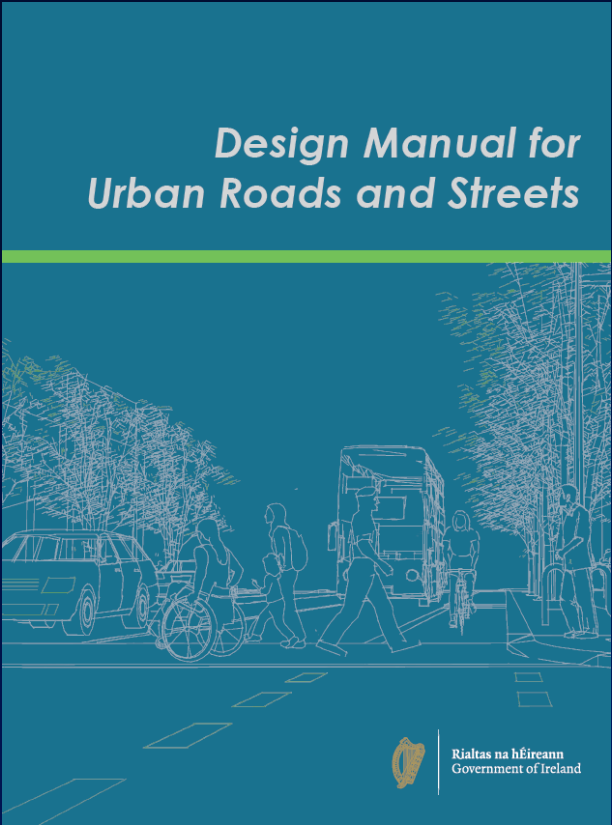
- Approval process for structures is outlined in RW10 / 2021.
- The approval process will depend on the cost, category of structures and if it's a D&B, as follows:
 - Structures designed by the Employer where Structures Construction Cost Estimate is in the Range €200,000 to €750,000 (incl. VAT) per Structure.
 - Structures designed and constructed using Design and Build Contracts where Structures Construction Cost Estimate is in the Range €200,000 to €750,000 per Structure.
 - All Category 3 Structures, Structures where the Construction Cost Estimate is greater than €750,000 (incl. VAT) per Structure and Schemes with a total Construction Cost Estimate greater than €5m (incl. VAT) and incorporate structures in the design .



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DMURS

- DMURS is the governing design guide for projects which include design of urban roads and streets.
- Where RLR projects are undertaken in urban areas, the following must be issued to the Department:
 - Road Safety Audit
 - Quality Audit
 - Certificate of compliance with DMURS



Appendix 1

SAMPLE COMPLIANCE CERTIFICATE

(Where a Compliance Certificate is provided the following template must be used unless an alternative equivalent certificate is required by the DoT, NTA or TII.)

[Insert Scheme/Project/Works Title and Location]

I, CERTIFY that reasonable professional skill, care and diligence has been taken by us with a view to securing that the above works have been designed and completed (delete as required) in conformity with the requirements of Department of Transport Circular NGSG 01-2022 and the associated National Table.

Where planning approval was required for the works, please give details: -
(Include date and references)

The following key and relevant design standards and guidelines were utilised and complied with: -

No	Item

I confirm that works which are not in compliance with the appropriate standard or national table have had Relaxations or Departures applied in accordance with the requirements of circular NGSG 01-2022 and are hereby attached to this Certificate.

Where relevant please list below (and attach), Departures and Derogations: -
(Include date and references)

This certificate shall be retained on file for inspection or submission to the TII, NTA or DoT as required.

Signed Dated

Title

Organisation

Qualification: Year

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Project Completion and Ex-Post Evaluation Reports

Project Completion Report

- The Post Project Completion Report aims to identify lessons learned to improve how public investments in the transport sector are evaluated, planned, and managed.
- Should be undertaken just prior to completion to facilitate the reviewer to access feedback from all stakeholders.
- Reviews shall be completed for all projects and the level of detail should be proportionate to the value of the project or programme.
- Sponsoring Agency are responsible for delivering the report.

Ex-Post Evaluation Report

- The Ex-Post Evaluation is the last stage in the project lifecycle.
- Focuses on analysing scheme outcomes and assessing if any lessons learned that can be applied to other schemes.
- The Ex-Post Evaluation should be completed within **5 years** of the project / programme completion date.
- In the case of projects costing **less than €20m incl VAT**, reviews to be carried out on a **representative sample of 5% of all projects**.
- Sponsoring Agency are responsible developing the report.

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Kevin Threadgold & Richard Dowling

THANK YOU

**Join the Q&A session at
Slido.com and enter 3873601
or via the QR Code.
Questions must include name
and associated Local Authority
to be considered by the panel.**

