

# Service Area Policy 2023

## (Motorway and Dual Carriageway networks)

Transport Infrastructure Ireland



## TII Service Area Policy 2023 (Motorway and Dual Carriageway Networks)

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## 1.0 Introduction

### 1.1 Background / Context

Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) has a responsibility under the Roads Act 1993 to provide a safe and efficient network of National Roads. It is accepted that a safe road network includes the provision of sufficient parking areas to allow drivers to stop and rest. This need has been given legal standing by European Union Regulations under the Trans-European Transport Networks (TEN-T) regulations.

To ensure the provision of safety facilities for all road users, TII last published its Service Area Policy in 2014, [here](#). The 2014 Policy involved a comprehensive review of the services available on or adjacent to the Motorway and Type 1 Dual Carriageway Network<sup>1</sup> (henceforth simply referred to as ‘the Network’). The 2014 Policy outlined the need to provide facilities to allow drivers (in particular commercial drivers) to stop and rest.

This Service Area Policy update has been prepared in accordance with commitments made in the 2014 Policy and to reflect current transport policy direction and considerations on; road safety, refuelling and recharging requirements. It has been informed by a review of the progress in service area provision since 2014; as well as a public consultation on service areas, undertaken in 2023.

It should be noted, this Service Area Policy update specifically relates to the current and planned Motorway and Type 1 Dual Carriageway networks. This policy does not apply to the single carriageway National Roads network.

Taking the above into account, this document recommends a new desired maximum distance between service areas on the Network; and identifies areas where new service areas are most urgently required to ensure that a minimum required service area provision is met.

### 1.2 Policy Context

European policy (summarised in Table 1.1) dictates a need for Member States to provide areas where road users can park, rest and access facilities. There is a strong emphasis on servicing the needs of commercial road users which requires roads to be treated as a workplace and road users to be given a safe and suitable environment in which to work. Within more recent European Commission proposals, there is also an increasing prominence placed on the provision of electric vehicle charging facilities along the TEN-T road networks. These requirements are set out within the updated Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation. The table below lists the relevant European policy documents.

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<sup>1</sup> Type 1 Dual Carriageway – a divided road with two lanes and hard shoulder in each direction alongside

Table 1.1 Relevant European Policies and Regulations/Directives

| Policy                                      | Regulation/Directive  |
|---|---|
| Trans-European Transport Networks           | Regulation (EU) currently in the process of being updated and adopted, <a href="#">here</a> .                                 |
| Driving Time and Rest Periods               | Regulation (EU) No 561/2006, <a href="#">here</a> ,<br>Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012, <a href="#">here</a> . |
| Road Infrastructure Safety Management       | Directive EU 2019/1936, <a href="#">here</a> ; S.I. No. 612/2021.   |
| Intelligent Transport Systems               | Directive 2010/40/EU, <a href="#">here</a> .  |
| Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation | Regulation 2023/1804 <sup>2</sup>   |

### European Policy

The relevant European policies are discussed in further detail below.

#### ***Trans-European Transport Networks Regulation***

The TEN-T Regulation [(EU) No 1315/2013] stipulated the need to provide appropriate parking spaces for commercial users; and, on the core network, the development of rest areas approximately every 100 km in line with the needs of road users. The European Commission has recently adopted a Proposal to update the Regulation governing the TEN-T network (5<sup>th</sup> December 2022); and published revised proposals for the Core and Comprehensive networks.<sup>3</sup>

##### *Core Network*

The following revised spacings will be reflected within the updated Regulation: on the Core network, by 2040, *'rest areas are available along roads of the core and extended core network at a maximum distance of **60 km from each other**, providing sufficient parking space and appropriate facilities, including sanitary facilities, that meet the needs of a diverse workforce'*.<sup>4</sup>

##### *Comprehensive Network*

On the Comprehensive network, *'rest areas are available at a maximum distance of **100 km from each other**, providing sufficient parking space, and appropriate facilities, including sanitary facilities, that meet the needs of a diverse workforce'*.<sup>5</sup> On the Comprehensive network, these requirements shall apply by 2050.

The Proposal also states the following with regards the provision of safe and secure parking for commercial vehicles:

*'Member States shall make all possible efforts to ensure the development of safe and secure parking areas located on roads of the core and extended core network, or within 3 km driving distance from the nearest exit off the trans-European transport network, with a distance of 150 km between two such areas on average, providing a sufficient parking space for commercial vehicles and complying with the requirements set out in Article 8a(1) of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 by 31 December 2040. Member States may focus on road sections with high intensity of freight traffic.'*<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:32023R1804&qid=1699269091395>

<sup>3</sup> Council of European Union: Interinstitutional File: 2021/0420(COD); Brussels, 6 December 2022 (OR. en); 15664/22

<sup>4</sup> [pdf dated 20th December 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [pdf dated 20th December 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> [pdf dated 20th December 2022 \(europa.eu\)](#)

More recent research by the European Commission has proposed that safe and secure parking areas should be made available on the Core and Comprehensive TEN-T networks, with a maximum distance of 100km between each area. Although negotiations are ongoing on spacing, there appears to be general agreement that Member States should at the very least make all possible efforts to ensure the development of safe and secure parking areas to provide sufficient parking space for commercial vehicles and complying with the requirements set out in Article 8a (1) of Regulation (EC) No 561/2006 and/or Article 8(1), point (a), of Regulation (EU) 2020/1054 (see Section 3.1 for further details on TII activity in this area).

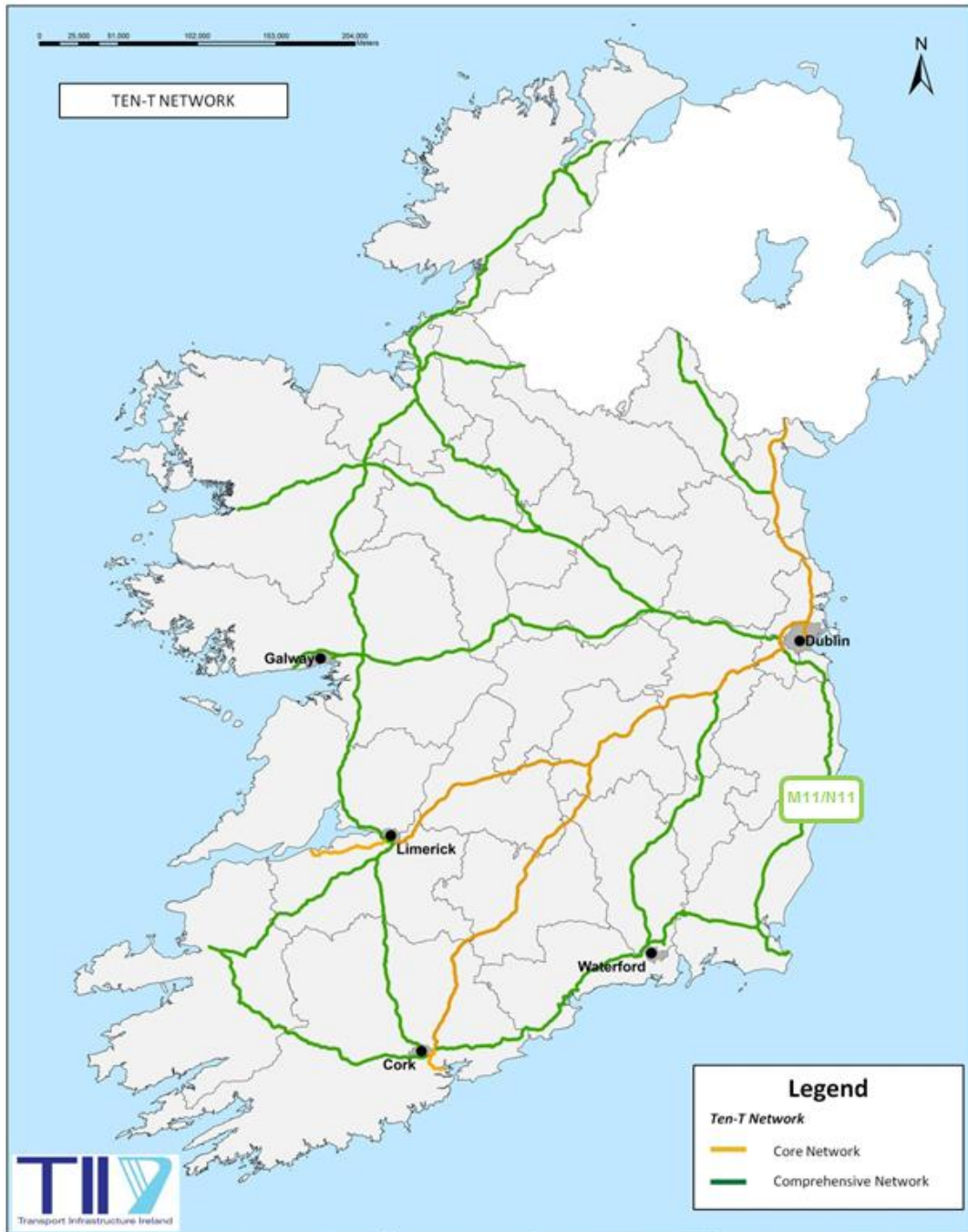


Figure 1.1: TEN-T Road Network

***Driving Time and Rest Periods Regulation***

The purpose of the Driving Time and Rest Periods Regulation is to improve working conditions for drivers and road safety for all road users. The Regulation defines a need for drivers to break for 45 minutes after every four and a half hours driving. In addition, drivers must take daily rest periods and weekly rest periods. Drivers are permitted to take daily and reduced weekly rest periods in their vehicles.

***Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive***

The Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive stipulates that when targeted road safety inspections are being carried out for infrastructure projects, the provision of safe parking areas and rest areas may be considered.

***Intelligent Transport Systems Directive***

The Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) Directive sets the need to use technology to enhance transport across the EU, including the need to provide information and booking of safe and secure parking for commercial vehicles.

***Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation***

The Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation (AFIR) was recently updated and adopted by the European Council in July 2023. The revised regulations mandate minimum charging infrastructure requirements on the Trans-European Transport network (TEN-T), which will ensure that there is sufficient, interoperable recharging and alternative fuel refuelling stations. Under the AFIR, each member state will also need to prepare an updated National Policy Framework on Alternative Fuels Infrastructure by the end of 2024; and will encompass the TEN-T network.

**Evolving European Policy*****Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012* (7<sup>th</sup> April 2022)**

The Driving Time and Rest Periods Regulation was supplemented in 2022 by the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012 regarding the establishment of standards detailing the level of service and security for safe and secure parking areas and the procedures for their certification.

It is anticipated that a spacing/distance requirement will be set out to complement the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012 within European Policy documentation in due course. In the future, online service areas (existing and proposed) will have regard to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012 in relation to: level of service; provision of safe and secure parking areas for commercial vehicles; and the spacing of the same.

**National Policy**

The relevant National policies are discussed below.

***Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025***

The Department of Transport launched the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025 (January 2023). The Strategy presents a pathway for the roll out of an electric vehicle charging network. In addition to home/apartment charging, residential neighbourhood charging, destination charging; the Strategy also identified the need for high speed en-route charging. The Strategy details the aim *'to deliver at least the AFIR requirement'*. The Strategy states the following with regards to en-route charging facilities along the TEN-T Network:

- *'By the end of 2025, there will be at least one charging pool with at least 300 kW of charging capacity (including at least one rapid-charge point of 150 kW), every 60 km on the TEN-T Core Network. This*

*network is coloured yellow on the map and includes the following motorways and national routes: N7, N69, N8, M1, N28, N40, and M50’.*

- By 2030, a similar level of cover, every 60km, is required on the Comprehensive Network.
- *‘A minimum coverage of publicly-accessible charging points (dedicated to heavy goods vehicles) is in place by the end of 2025. For example, charging pools with a total capacity of 1400 kW every 120 km on 15% of the TEN-T Network, with at least one charger sized 350 kW (minimum of 8 such charging pools)’.*<sup>7</sup>

As such, the Strategy sets a requirement to ensure sufficient charging capacity for cars, vans and trucks (heavy goods vehicles) in charging pools on the Core Network in the short term and on the Comprehensive Network in the medium term. TII currently has online service area facilities in place on the M1 corridor of the TEN-T Core network, at Lusk and Castlebellingham. Zero Emission Vehicles Ireland (ZEV) will co-ordinate the delivery of the AFIR high-power charging requirements on the TEN-T networks. TII will assist ZEV in the delivery of en-route charging infrastructure.

#### **Draft National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan**

Following the publication of the Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy, ZEV developed a draft National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan with the support of TII, ESB Networks and other stakeholders. This Plan is due to be finalised by the end of 2023. The network plan notes the strategic locations of the existing service areas; and highlights the crucial role that they can play in the delivery of en-route charging infrastructure. The network plan sets out the benefits which can accrue by leveraging these facilities and expanding the number of EV charging stations at these locations.

#### **Ireland’s Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2031**

The Department of Transport launched Ireland’s Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2025 (December 2022). The Strategy focuses *‘on generating efficiencies and improving standards, while helping to create secure employment and assisting the sector to move to a low-carbon future’*. To that end, the Strategy *‘sets out the measures and supporting policies which are needed to deliver on these objectives’*.

The Road Haulage Strategy places an emphasis on the provision of high-quality rest areas; and safe and secure parking areas for the haulage sector. The Strategy also highlights the need for high quality information and mapping of available facilities, to improve awareness among hauliers and the public of the same (Action 19, of which TII is identified as an owner).

*‘Action 19: Map the current infrastructure available to haulage and freight including rests stops and refuelling stations and identify priority projects for advancement.’*<sup>8</sup>

#### **Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines**

The Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines for Planning Authorities set out planning policy considerations relating to development affecting National Roads (including motorways and dual carriageways) outside the 50/60 km per hour speed limit zones for cities, towns and villages.

Section 2.8 of the Spatial Planning and National Roads Guidelines distinguishes between three different types of service area/facility:

- On-line Motorway Service Areas;
- Off-line Motorway Service Areas at National Roads Junctions; and
- Roadside Service Facilities at Non-Motorway National Roads and Junctions.

<sup>7</sup> Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy 2022-2025, pages 27 & 53-54.

<sup>8</sup> Ireland’s Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2031, page 61.

The guidelines advocate for the need to avoid a proliferation of service areas at National Roads junctions. The guidelines also stipulate that facilities included in service areas should be of a type that avoids the attraction of short, local trips or the locations becoming destinations for local customers.

## **2.0 Public Consultation 2023**

This document has been subject to a public consultation which was undertaken between July and August 2023, inviting stakeholders and the public to comment on: the existing service area provision, an initial draft of the subject document and the TII Signage Policy. The responses to the consultation were categorised as either ‘relevant to service areas’, ‘relevant to laybys’, ‘relevant to signage’, and ‘outside the remit of the policy’, as outlined in the following sections.

### **2.1 Responses Relevant to the Policy – service areas**

The following broad themes, emerging from the public consultation, were deemed relevant to the Service Area policy and have been considered when preparing this policy update:

- The revised service area spacing requirement (of 60km), outlined in the draft policy document, was noted as being too great.
- Level of service area provision on the single carriageway National Roads network was questioned.
- Common standards for safe and secure parking areas for the haulage sector was queried, and levels of service for the same.
- The need for quality-of-service audits for services areas was highlighted, touching on cleanliness and level of service (e.g., operating hours); and other ancillary services such as live traffic and weather information.
- Design standards update for service areas, was also raised. TII publishes design standards for online service areas; these standards are regularly reviewed and updated. An update of this standard is outside the remit of this policy document but will likely be influenced by: the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012, the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation update; the finalisation of the National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan (alongside engagement with ZEVI); and also reflect this Update.

### **2.2 Responses Relevant to the Policy – lay-bys**

The following points were made with regards lay-bys specifically, and have been considered when preparing this policy update:

- Availability of lay-bys for all Commercial Vehicles was requested.
- Lay-by improvement / upgrade works was queried, where lay-bys and Garda Enforcement Areas are to remain available for usage. A communications campaign for any rationalisation or closure was suggested.
- Several submissions requested additional lay-bys or ‘proper stops’ for use by all (specifically on the M6 corridor between Athlone and Galway; and that padlocked Garda Enforcement Areas along the M7 and M8 corridors are made available).

### **2.3 Responses Relevant to the Signage Policy**

The following themes, emerging from the public consultation, were deemed relevant to the Signage policy and will be considered within an update to same:

- The provision of blue signage for offline service areas, in preference to the current brown signs; or other means of identifying service areas and the level of services they provide e.g. an MSA unique identifier system.
- Provision of food brand logos was raised and queried.
- Clarifications on the process around provision of signage was requested, alongside the process for dealing with roadside trailers.



- More generally on signage – the value of 15km advance notice signs for service areas was raised; provision of signage at lay-bys indicating distances to the next service area was suggested; and the provision of dimensions for the various signs within the Signage policy was also requested.

## 2.4 Responses Outside the Remit of this Policy Update

Several submissions were made in relation to high-speed electric vehicle charging facilities along the TEN-T networks; and were considered most relevant to the *National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan*. These submissions have been passed onto ZEVI.

## 3.0 Facilities

There are two different types of service area on the Network that provide opportunities for drivers to rest, as outlined below.

### 3.1 Online Service Areas

Online service areas have access and egress directly from the Motorway / Type 1 dual carriageway mainline. All online facilities provided thus far, are Type 1 Service Areas (full service areas), as referred to in the 2014 Policy. They are large-scale service areas providing an amenity building (including a convenience shop, restaurant, washrooms and tourist information), fuel facilities, electric vehicle charging facilities, picnic areas, sufficient parking and sanitary facilities that meet the needs of a diverse workforce. TII undertakes regular monitoring and review of each of the online service area facilities, to ensure the maintenance of high standards, levels of service and accessibility requirements.

TII is responsible for the delivery of online service areas, whether developed as an integral part of new road projects or retrofitted on the Network. TII currently operates online service areas, through concessions, at 6 locations on the M1, M4, M6, M9 and M11 as indicated in Figure 4.1.

In the future, online service areas will have regard to the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012 in relation to: level of service; provision of safe and secure parking areas for commercial vehicles; and the spacing of the same. TII is currently in the process of reviewing existing parking area facilities about the Network, in the context of level of service as discussed in the Commission Delegated Regulation; and may identify potential to develop a pilot scheme, in regard to the provision of safe and secure parking areas for the haulage sector at an online service area. This review and findings may require an update to TII standards for online service areas; and may inform subsequent roll out of provision across the wider online service area network, where feasible.

### 3.2 Offline Service Areas

Offline service areas are located adjacent to the mainline carriageway but accessed via a junction on the Motorway / dual carriageway. The provision of offline service areas is subject to local development plan policies and the requirements of national planning policy stated in the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012). TII recognises that appropriately approved offline facilities can provide extensive services and fulfil certain criteria, namely that they:

- Include an appropriate level of parking provision for cars and Heavy Commercial Vehicles (HCVs);
- Convenient to Motorway Junctions with National and Regional Roads: Be located close to Motorway junctions, i.e., within 500 meters from the top of the furthest off-ramp of the Motorway / dual carriageway junction;
- Remain open to the public on a 24 hours per day, 7 days per week basis;
- Permit commercial vehicles to park for longer periods, including overnight, thus allowing drivers to take breaks and rest periods;

- Provide safety and security equipment and appropriate facilities, including sanitary and driver welfare facilities alongside fuelling, recharging and ancillary facilities; and
- Motorway to Motorway Junctions: there are some Motorway to Motorway junctions on the Network which are of a non-standard layout, and so service areas located in the vicinity of these exceptional arrangements will be reviewed on a case by case basis.

Offline service areas are provided by private developers and TII has no responsibility in the delivery and operation of such facilities. There are currently thirteen offline service area locations on the Network, which currently meet the requirements outlined above.

## **4.0 Policy for Service Area Provision**

### **4.1 Existing Provision – Implementation since the 2014 Policy**

When the 2014 policy was published, five service areas were in place on the Network; three TII online service areas and two private off-line service areas off the M7 corridor, as indicated in Figure 4.1.

The provision of at least five new service areas on or immediately adjacent to the Motorway network by 2020 was one of the actions outlined in the Government’s Road Safety Strategy (2013—2020), with the aim of reducing deaths and serious injuries on the road network.

Since 2014, a further fourteen service areas have opened, bringing the total number of service areas on the Network to nineteen locations, six of which are online, with a further thirteen offline. More recently, planning permissions have been sought for the development of offline service areas on: the M18 corridor in the vicinity of Ennis; and the M3 corridor in the vicinity of Dunshaughlin.

The change in service area provision between 2014 and 2023 is illustrated in **Figure 4.1**.

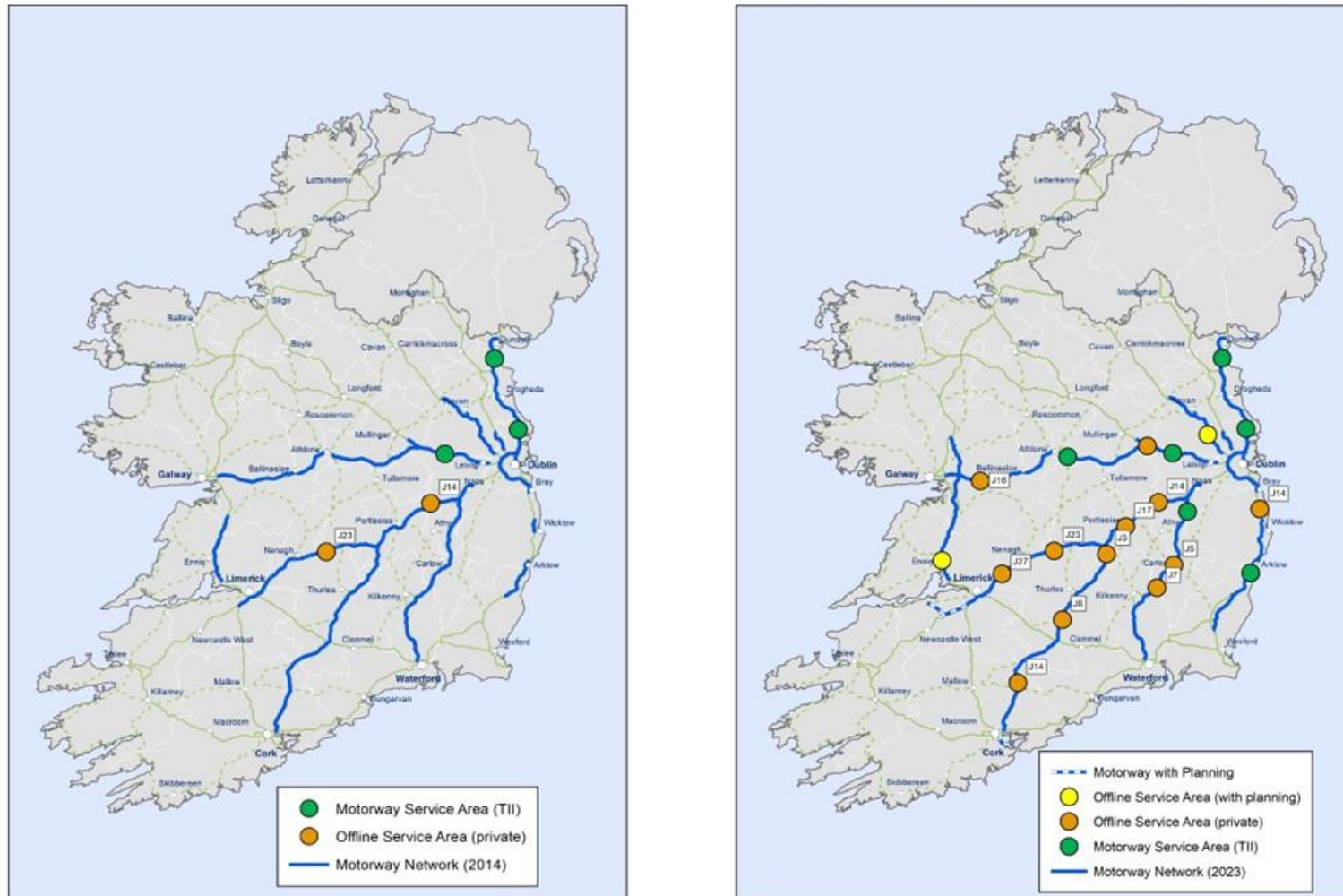


Figure 4.1: Changes in service area Provision between 2014 (left) and 2023 (right)

## 4.2 Research and Benchmarking

A research and benchmarking exercise has been undertaken, to understand provision in other jurisdictions.

*Fatigue*, a 2018 paper by the European Road Safety Observatory,<sup>9</sup> outlines how fatigue leads to a deterioration of driving performance manifesting itself in:

- slower reaction time;
- diminished steering performance;
- reduced ability to maintain headways; and
- increased tendency to mentally withdraw from the driving task.

As a result, fatigue is a major factor in a large proportion of road crashes (range 10-20%). The paper also notes that, when drivers are well rested and they take enough breaks during driving, they can drive further without reducing performance.

In determining an appropriate spacing for this policy, TII has taken into account examples of motorway service area spacings in other European countries, such as:

- UK DfT guidance indicates maximum spacing between motorway service areas should be 28 miles (~45km) / 30 mins drive time for a HGV;
- In France, service areas are generally provided every 50km-60km;
- In Spain, service area provision depends on the traffic intensity and interaction with other motorways and generally ranges from 20km-60km; and
- In Germany, spacing between service areas is typically between 30km and 60km.

## 4.3 Revised Policy

On the basis of policy considerations, international research and benchmarking; a revised policy for service area spacing on the Network is proposed. The updated policy proposes a maximum distance between service areas on the Motorway and Type 1 dual carriageway networks (including both the TEN-T Core and Comprehensive sections) of 60km, in line with EU Regulations.

The current (2023) service areas on the Network are illustrated in Figure 4.1, and the distances between them outlined in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Current service areas on the Network and distances between them (including online and offline facilities)

| Corridor | TEN-T Network | From                       | To                         | Distance |
|----------|---------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------|
| M1       | Core          | Start*                     | Lusk (J4-J5)               | 15km     |
|          |               | Lusk (J4-J5)               | Castlebellingham (J15-J16) | 50km     |
|          |               | Castlebellingham (J15-J16) | End                        | 24km     |
| M2       | -             | Start                      | End                        | 17km     |
| M3       | -             | Start (at M50)             | End                        | 66km     |
| M4       | Comprehensive | Start (at M50)             | Enfield (J9-J10)           | 35km     |
|          |               | Enfield (J9-J10)           | Kinnegad (J10)             | 17km     |
|          |               | Kinnegad (J10)             | End                        | 20km     |

<sup>9</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road\\_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/ersosynthesis2018-fatigue.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/transport/road_safety/sites/roadsafety/files/pdf/ersosynthesis2018-fatigue.pdf)

|                               |               |                                       |                                       |       |
|-------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|-------|
| <b>M6</b>                     | Comprehensive | Start (at junction with M4)           | <b>Athlone (J7-J8)</b>                | 53km  |
|                               |               | <b>Athlone (J7-J8)</b>                | <b>Kiltullagh (J16)</b>               | 62km  |
|                               |               | <b>Kiltullagh (J16)</b>               | End                                   | 26km  |
| <b>M7/Foynes</b>              | Core          | Start (at M50)                        | <b>Mayfield (J14)</b>                 | 51km  |
|                               |               | <b>Mayfield (J14)</b>                 | <b>Midway (Two facilities at J17)</b> | 27km  |
|                               |               | <b>Midway (Two facilities at J17)</b> | <b>Moneygall (J23)</b>                | 53km  |
|                               |               | <b>Moneygall (J23)</b>                | <b>Birdhill (J27)</b>                 | 37km  |
|                               |               | <b>Birdhill (J27)</b>                 | Foynes/End                            | 54km  |
| <b>M8/M28<br/>Ringaskiddy</b> | Core          | Start (at junction with M7)           | <b>Rathdowney (J3)</b>                | 7km   |
|                               |               | <b>Rathdowney (J3)</b>                | <b>Cashel (J8)</b>                    | 52km  |
|                               |               | <b>Cashel (J8)</b>                    | <b>Fermoy (J14)</b>                   | 54km  |
|                               |               | <b>Fermoy (J14)</b>                   | Ringaskiddy/End                       | 49km  |
| <b>M9</b>                     | Comprehensive | Start (at junction with M7)           | <b>Kilcullen (J2-J3)</b>              | 10km  |
|                               |               | <b>Kilcullen (J2-J3)</b>              | <b>Carlow (J5)</b>                    | 37km  |
|                               |               | <b>Carlow (J5)</b>                    | <b>Paulstown (J7)</b>                 | 19km  |
|                               |               | <b>Paulstown (J7)</b>                 | End                                   | 54km  |
| <b>M11</b>                    | Comprehensive | Start (at M50)                        | <b>Cullenmore (J14)</b>               | 24km  |
|                               |               | <b>Cullenmore (J14)</b>               | <b>Gorey (J21-22)</b>                 | 39km  |
|                               |               | <b>Gorey (J21-22)</b>                 | End                                   | 45km  |
| <b>M17/M18</b>                | Comprehensive | Start (at junction with N17)          | End (at junction with M7)             | 120km |

Both the N21/N69 Foynes to Limerick and M28 Cork to Ringaskiddy schemes form part of the recently extended TEN-T Core network. Both planning schemes, submitted to An Bord Pleanála included provision of a service area providing some services for Heavy Commercial Vehicles at Foynes and Ringaskiddy Ports (including secure HGV parking spaces), in the vicinity of the port facilities.

Other Motorway and Type 1 dual carriageway schemes at planning will consider the need for service areas as part of the scheme development and the recommendations of this policy.

#### 4.4 Identified Need for New Service Areas and Provision

Taking into consideration the revised service area spacing policy, a needs assessment was undertaken to identify locations where service areas are required on the existing Network.

The needs assessment has identified locations on the existing Network where this maximum distance is currently exceeded; and where additional service areas are necessary to ensure that the minimum required service area provision is met. The following needs were identified:

- **M3 corridor** – The M3 does not form part of the TEN-T network. Nevertheless, there is a need for service area provision along this corridor. There is currently no service area in place along this route – the obtainment of planning permission is progressing for an offline facility in the vicinity of M3 Junction 6.
- **M17/M18 corridor** – There is currently no service area in place on this corridor. A suitable location may be between Junctions 12 and 17 – the obtainment of planning permission has been progressing for an offline facility in the vicinity of M18 Junction 12.

TII had commenced with the planning of online facilities along the M3, M6 and M18 corridors in 2018/19. However, that planning activity/site selection was suspended in 2020 at all three locations; and will remain suspended, in order to allow the private sector to obtain full planning consent for offline service areas to address these needs. It is noted that planning permission is being sought for offline service areas at M18 Junction 12 and also along the M3 at Junction 6.

In the event that the private sector fails to achieve planning consent and delivery of facilities along the M3 and M17/M18 corridors respectively by the end of 2028 (as per the revised maximum spacing set out above); TII will reactivate its planning process (subject to the business case for any service area being robust).

TII will not seek to provide online service areas in the vicinity of existing offline service areas, assuming they remain open and continue to fulfil the criteria outlined in Section 3.2.

The service area needs outlined in this policy should not be interpreted as the only locations where further service areas can be developed; however, proliferation should be avoided, as set out in the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012).

The identified needs are illustrated indicatively in Figure 4.2.

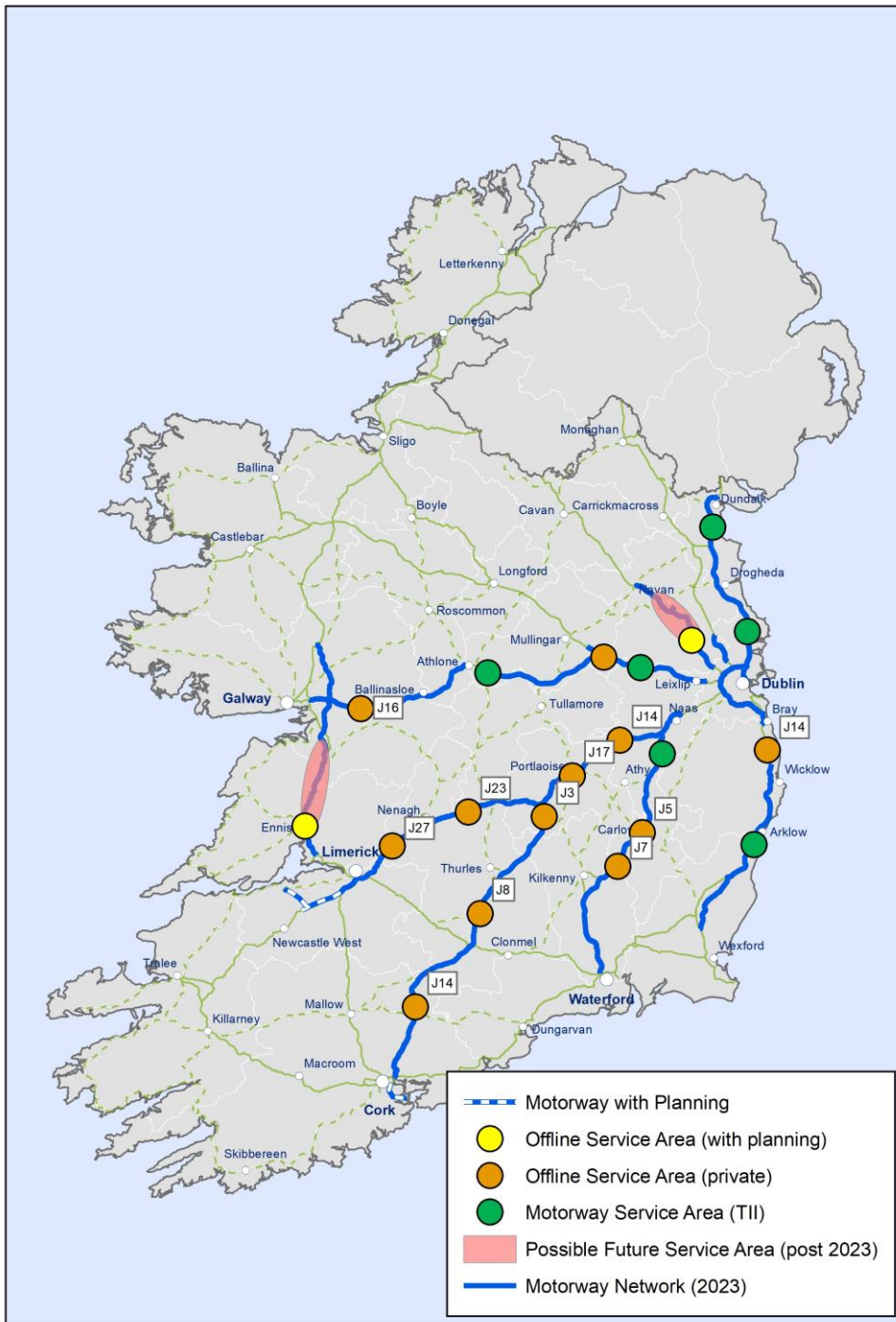


Figure 4.2: Post-2023 Service Area Provision: Existing Network.

## 5.0 Planning

TII's role in the future planning and delivery of service areas is outlined hereunder.

In accordance with the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2012), TII is responsible for the delivery of on-line service areas, whether developed as an integral part of new road projects or retrofitted on existing Motorways and Type 1 dual carriageways. As part of these arrangements, TII's role is to acquire the necessary lands and to obtain relevant statutory approvals. TII will (subject to An Bord Pleanála approval) include appropriate on-line service areas as an integral part of roads schemes when planning or upgrading dual carriageways (including Motorways), in accordance with the maximum distance spacing outlined above.

The needs assessment outlined above, concludes on the minimum required service areas on the current Network, to ensure compliance with the revised maximum distances between service areas. TII's responsibility is to ensure that these needs are provided for.

As indicated in Section 3.2, TII has no development or operational role in relation to private sector facilities in the vicinity of the National Roads network, even though the developments in question might include services for motorists. TII does, however have a role to play as part of the planning process, and in this regard, attention is directed to the Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities (Department of Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012).

Under the guidelines, facilities proposed for inclusion in all service areas should be of a type that avoids the attraction of short, local trips, a class of traffic that is inconsistent with the primary intended role for National Roads and associated junctions in catering for strategic long-distance inter-urban and inter-regional traffic. Furthermore, to permit a service area to become a destination for local customers would be contrary to Government planning policy on retail and town centres as set out in Retail Planning Guidelines (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, 2012).

Section 2.8 of the guidelines refers to the provision of on-line and off-line motorway service areas at National Roads junctions. With respect to on-line service areas which TII is directly involved in securing, in accordance with the provisions of the Roads Act 1993, as amended, the guidelines outline that the intention to provide these on-line service areas should be catered for in relevant development plans.

The Spatial Planning and National Road Guidelines for Planning Authorities clearly indicate that a proliferation of off-line service area facilities at National Roads junctions should be avoided. To address this requirement, the guidelines advise that local authorities in the preparation of their plans, may consider policies for the provision for offline service areas with reference to the requirements and advice included in the most up to date TII guidance on the location and layout of TII's service areas in addition to existing or planned privately promoted service facilities within towns/settlements and located in the general environs of the relevant road corridor. It is therefore important that a coordinated approach between planning authorities should be undertaken in consultation with TII as part of the drafting of development plans. This TII Service Area policy may form the basis for the preparation of relevant development plan policies and objectives for discussion between planning authorities and TII. TII is a statutory consultee and prescribed body under the Planning and Development Acts and Regulations. To that end, Planning Authorities must notify TII of planning applications and development plans which impact on the National Roads or light rail network. Any TII submission on an offline service area will be made within the context of safety and efficiency impacts at the relevant National Roads junction.

The scope of this Policy update is limited to the Motorway and Type 1 dual carriageway elements of the National Roads network.



## 6.0 Lay-bys and Garda Enforcement Areas

There are several lay-bys on the Motorway network (27 no.), as shown in Figure 6.1 below. These lay-bys currently provide parking areas for short period stops. In addition, there are several Garda Enforcement Areas on the Network (20 no.); some of which are gated/padlocked and not available for public use (8 no. currently). These Garda Enforcement Areas (GEAs) support a law enforcement function in some cases.

The Service Area Policy 2014 stated the following with regards lay-bys:

*'The Authority has previously constructed a number of lay-bys on the dual carriageway network, primarily intended as Garda enforcement areas, though in the absence of proper service areas many are open to public use. These lay-bys allow traffic to pull in off the main carriageway, but there are no facilities located in the areas and parking spaces are severely limited. It is not permitted for road users to exit their vehicles at these lay-bys. As such the lay-bys provide a limited service to road users. These lay-bys will be withdrawn from general public use, though some may continue in use as Garda enforcement areas.'*

Since 2014, there has been a significant increase in service area provision along and adjacent the Network, as shown previously in Figure 4.1. Service areas provide many benefits to road users including safety, convenience and a range of facilities set out in Section 3.0. Therefore, with increased service area provision and related higher quality facilities, the need for lay-bys reduces. Furthermore, lay-bys have been highlighted through Road Safety Inspections (carried out in accordance with the Road Infrastructure Safety Management Directive) as an area of concern on safety grounds.

TII undertook usage monitoring surveys at the various lay-bys. These surveys indicated that there was significant usage of lay-bys by HGVs and professional drivers. TII has considered how best to operate and manage these parking lay-bys into the future. The policy for lay-bys is now as follows:

- Some of the current GEAs (gated) will be re-purposed as lay-bys and gates will be removed.
- Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs<sup>10</sup>) and professional drivers (those operating vehicles within the scope of tachograph regulations) will be permitted to use lay-bys for a maximum period of up to 1 hour, as the Network forms part of their workplace.
- Any non-HGV drivers (or professional drivers in the scope of tachograph regulations) seeking rest areas, will make use of nearby service area facilities along the Network (outlined in Figure 4.1 above), **except in the case of emergency.**
- Signage reflecting the alterations above will be installed at each of the lay-bys.
- Some rationalisation and upgrade of parking lay-bys will commence along the Network, rationalisation will only take place where a superior quality facility / service area is in close proximity (this results in 8 closures at present).
- Remaining lay-bys on the Network (after rationalisation/consolidation) will be improved.
- A communications plan will be developed to highlight existing motorway service area facilities on the Network, as outlined in Section 7. It has become apparent via consultation, that there is limited awareness of the service area facilities available across the Network, at present.

Further rationalisation of lay-bys may occur into the future, as additional service areas are developed along the Network in close proximity to existing lay-bys. To this end, TII will enhance communications to the public on the service area network, see Section 7 below. This raising of awareness around the service area network will be undertaken online (as set out below); and via provision of adequate informational signage along the Network. The raising of awareness about the level of service area provision also necessitates a change to current signage arrangements for offline service areas.

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<sup>10</sup> Those operating for hire or reward and transporting goods using a vehicle with a maximum permitted weight above 3.5 tonnes.

Rationalisation of parking lay-bys will now take place where duplication of function exists with regards the service area network, and usage is diminished. The following Table 6.1 outlines the proposed changes in relation to Lay-bys and Garda Enforcement Areas on each of the Motorway and Type 1 dual carriageway corridors.

Figures 6.1 and 6.2 below, provide an overview of the lay-bys (with planned rationalisation and closures) about the Network. Following rationalisations, there will remain 34 operational lay-bys on the Network.

Table 6.1 Alterations to the Lay-by and GEA network.

| Corridor   | Network       | Actions with respect to Lay-bys  |
|------------|---------------|--|
| <b>M1</b>  | Core          | Closure of Garda Enforcement Area south of Lusk Service Area   |
| <b>M2</b>  | -             | -  |
| <b>M3</b>  | -             | -  |
| <b>M4</b>  | Comprehensive | -  |
| <b>M6</b>  | Comprehensive | Removal of Lay-by between Kinnegad and Athlone. Removal of facility in vicinity of Athlone service area.<br>Development of an additional Lay-by between Athlone and Galway |
| <b>M7</b>  | Core          | Closure of Lay-by between Nenagh and Limerick due to nearby service area, (facility to pass to an enforcement function).   |
| <b>M8</b>  | Core          | Closure of Lay-by between Thurles and Clonmel due to nearby service area, (facility to pass to an enforcement function).   |
| <b>M9</b>  | Comprehensive | Removal of Lay-bys south of Kilcullen Service Area   |
| <b>M11</b> | Comprehensive | Removal of Lay-by south of Gorey Service Area  |

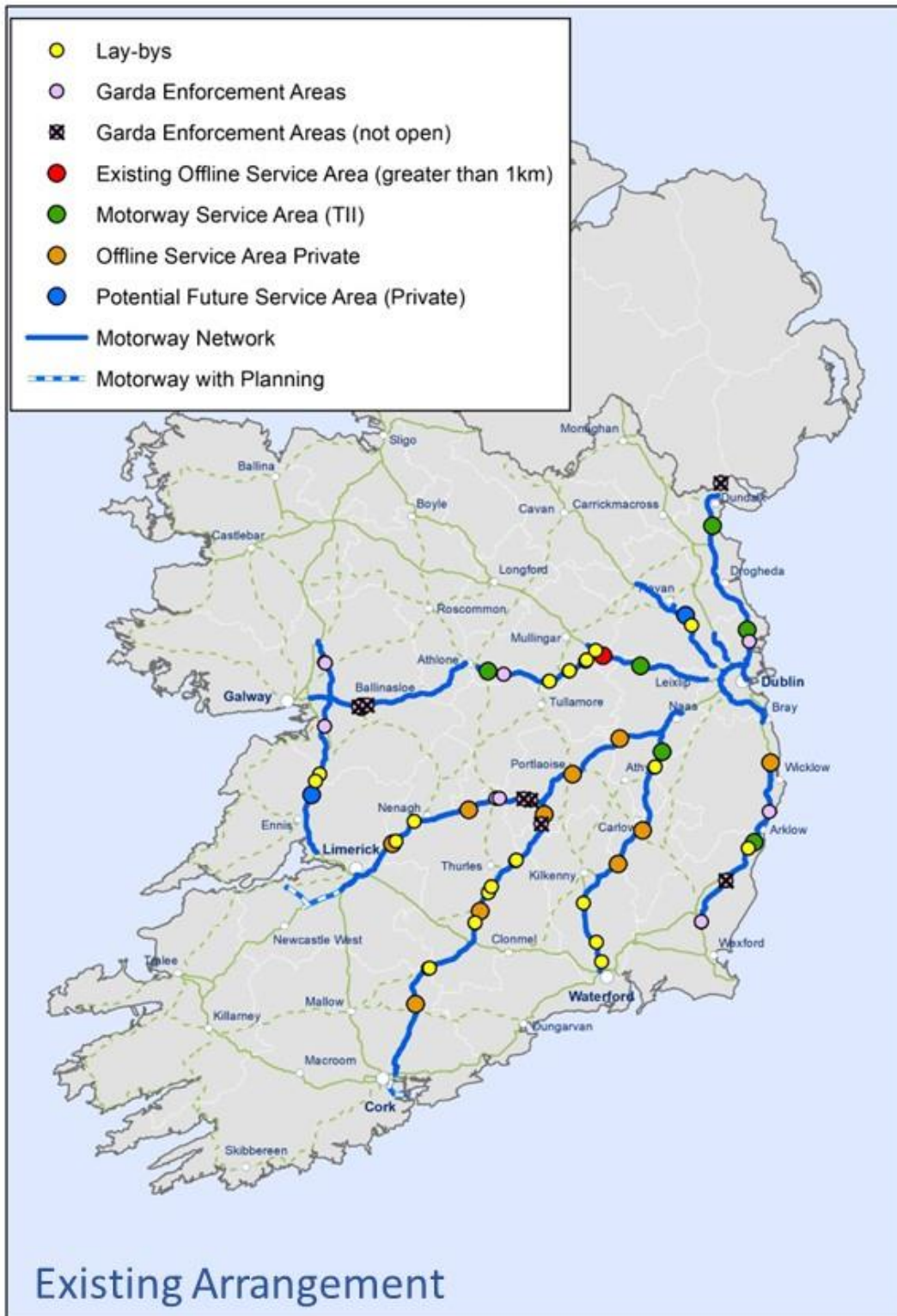


Figure 6.1: Garda Enforcement Areas and Lay-bys (Existing Arrangements)

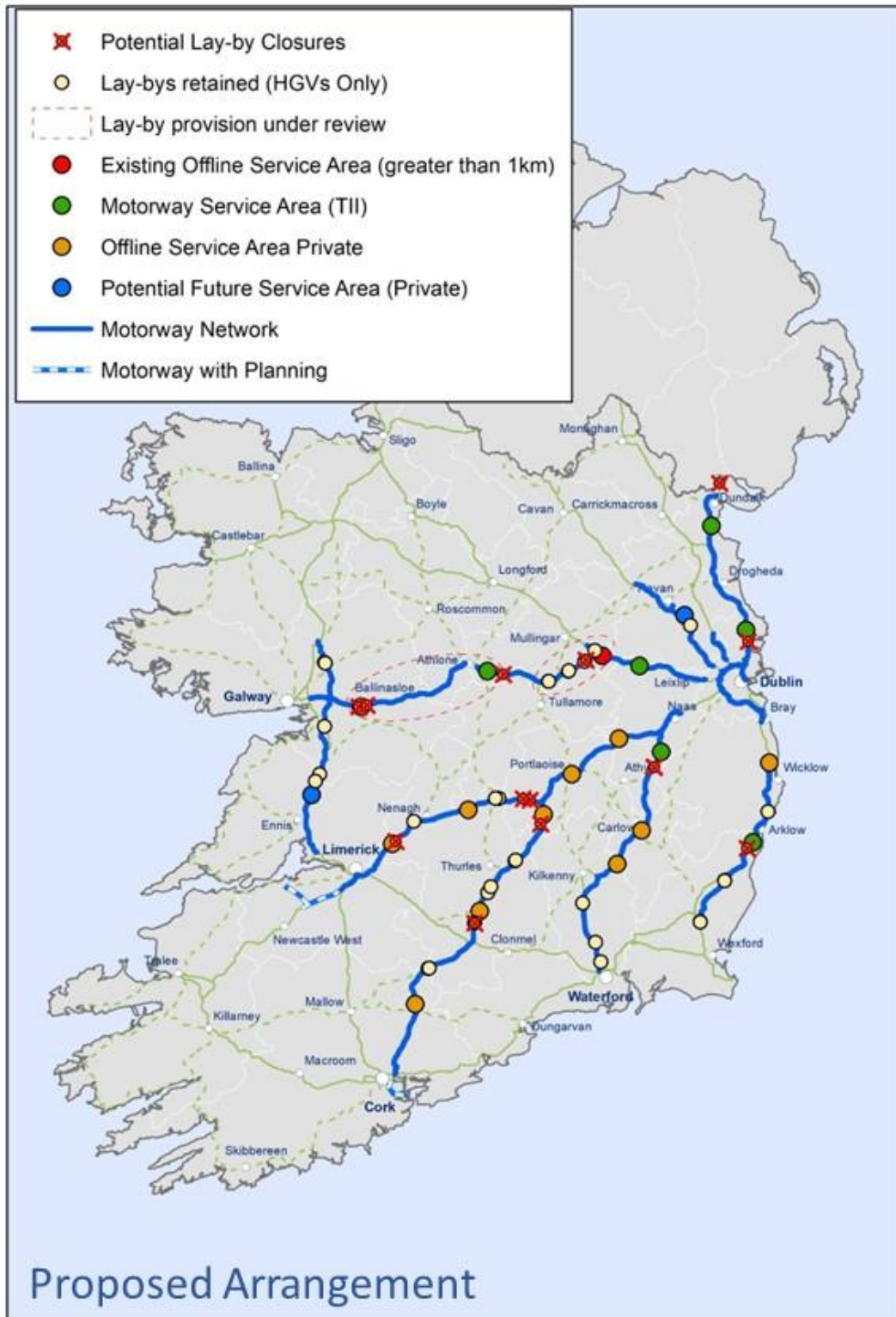


Figure 6.2: Garda Enforcement Areas and Lay-bys (Proposed Arrangements)

## 7.0 Policy for Communications

To ensure that drivers can adequately plan their journeys on the motorway and dual carriageway network, it is important that comprehensive, accurate and easy-to-find information on the locations of service areas (and the facilities they provide) is made available. There is a need to communicate this information in a clear and consistent manner to both domestic and international audiences; and indeed communicate on any additional service areas developed in the future.

In light of the above and in accordance with Action 19 of Ireland’s Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2031, it also proposed to update communications with respect to service areas (in consultation with the Department of Transport and the Road Safety Authority) via the following:

- TII will consolidate service area information online into a single, simple to use webpage and a TII ‘Tiredness Kills’ rest opportunities app;
- Information will be provided in an interactive and georeferenced map, with details of the services provided at each service area (accessed by clicking on the map);
- Information will be provided for online and offline service areas (that meet the criteria for motorway signage);
- The type and level of information provided will be consistent across the online and offline service areas;
- TII will establish communications with wayfinding stakeholders to ensure the most up to date information is communicated and integrated on their webpages, ensuring the same quality of information across all platforms; and
- TII will also provide information on the parking lay-bys about the Network; and will also inform the public about any re-purposing / rationalisation of the same.

## 8.0 Next Steps

In order to address various issues highlighted during the public consultation, this Service Area policy will be reinforced by a series of actions, to be undertaken by TII subsequent to the policy publication. These actions are set out in the table below and will address any residual issues in relation to services areas, lay-bys and signage.

| No. | Action   |
|-----|--|
| 1   | Complete a review of existing parking area facilities about the Network for the haulage sector, in the context of level of service as discussed in the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012. Identify potential locations to develop a pilot scheme, in regard to the provision of safe and secure parking areas for the haulage sector at an online service area. |
| 2   | Update the TII Signage policy, taking into account the points raised within the Service Area 2023 public consultation, where feasible / if possible.   |
| 3   | Provide updated signage, reflective of Section 6.0 of this policy, at lay-bys and re-purposed GEAs about the network.  |
| 4   | Update <i>DN-GEO-03028: The Location and Layout of On-line Service Areas</i> , to reflect various items including: the Commission Delegated Regulation (EU) 2022/1012; the Alternative Fuels Infrastructure Regulation update; the finalisation of the National En-Route EV Charging Network Plan (alongside engagement with ZEV); and also reflect this Update.             |
| 5   | TII will work with the RSA to develop public awareness TII about the level of provision of service areas.  |
| 6   | TII will develop a webpage and mapping in accordance with Action 19 of the Road Haulage Strategy 2022-2031, as per Section 7.0 above.  |



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