

Submission of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council to the Bus Connects Core Bus Corridors Stage 2 15 Apr 2020

Introduction

This submission has been prepared by the Municipal Services Department in consultation with other Departments in the Council.

The Council's submission to the Stage 1 Public Consultation is taken as read, so I will not repeat its contents, other than to reiterate that the Council's support for Bus Connects still stands. The Council appreciates that many of the issues raised in the last stage of public consultation have been either fully resolved or substantially mitigated. In particular, the proposed changes in Shankill are very welcome. Likewise, the reduced number of trees to be removed is also welcome, while noting that the exact number and locations of trees to be removed has still to be agreed.

The planning and traffic context has also changed. There are significant new planning permissions and planning applications (both current and prospective). There has been progress in the development of the County Development Plan, Local Area Plans and Master Plans (especially for Parks). A number of NTA funded cycle priority schemes have started construction or progressed in their design. These will need to be considered during the next stage of design.

General Comments on the Preferred Design

Private Developments: There are a number of planning permissions, planning applications and pre-planning discussions for the following sites

- UCD (both the bus interchange and several significant new buildings)
- Stillorgan (Blakes and Leisureplex sites)
- Cornelscourt
- Woodbrook
- Daughters of Charity (Blackrock)

Clearly, the Core Bus Corridors will need to be coordinated with these developments.

Council Schemes: The Council, in association with the NTA and UCD has started construction on the Stillorgan Road UCD Accessibility Scheme. This scheme extends to Fosters Avenue and The Rise.

The Council is also progressing the design and construction of the following:

- cycle priority at Stillorgan Park, Brewery Road and Newtown Park Avenue;
- cycle and pedestrian facilities and upgraded urban realm as part of the Stillorgan Village Movement Framework Plan;
- housing and a library at Stillorgan.

Clearly, the Core Bus Corridors will need to be coordinated with these schemes.

Coach Stops: I understand that coach stops are indented because their dwell times are longer than for buses. Indentation allows non-stopping buses to pass stopped coaches without delay. In many cases, it appears to be possible to

1) indent both the coach stop and an adjacent bus stop. As the tapers would be shared, there would be a (small) reduction in cost and space required. Non-stopping buses would also be able to pass stopped buses. The only possible disadvantage I see is that it could lead to interference between coaches and buses at combined stops. Given the frequency of coaches, this would be a very minor disadvantage. The best example of this is northbound at Galloping Green. Other examples are at Springfield Avenue, Clonkeen Road and Loughlinstown Roundabout.

At a number of locations, the footpath and cycle path widths appear to be reduced at coach stops. At a number of locations, the cycle path appears to coincide with the waiting area for coaches. Is this correct?

Is it proposed to allow Bus Eireann and/or private buses use the coach stops?

T-junctions: Would it be possible for the cycle path or the bus lane or both to bypass one side of a T-junction (similar to what you propose at Willford)?

Possible locations are on the southbound ramps at Belfield bridge, Booterstown Avenue, Mount Merion Avenue, Springfield Avenue, Kill Lane, Westminster Road, Cherrywood (Junction Q), Trimleston Avenue, Mount Merrion Avenue and Monkstown Road. There are constraints at most of these junctions, but it should be possible to achieve some improvements. The signalisation of bypassing traffic (especially if only cycles) would need to be considered carefully.

The treatment of cycle paths at junction appears to differ between Corridor 13 and Corridor 15. In Corridor 13, cycle paths run straight through the junctions (except White's Cross), whereas in Corridor 15 cycle path have a small chicane. The Council prefers the straight through design. At White's Cross (Newtown Park Avenue junction), straight through cyclists appear to lose priority, particularly with respect to left turning motorised vehicles. The Council would view such a loss of priority as a significant negative.

The design of two-way cycle paths needs to be considered carefully. Generally, cyclist prefer two one-way cycle paths. Conflicts at junctions are easier to understand and are therefore safer. There are differing opinions regarding whether it is better to cycle on the right or left, normally depending on whether a verge exists between the two-way cycle path and the carriageway. There are a number of two-way cycle paths in Corridors 13 and 15. I would appreciate more information on the design rationale behind each two-way cycle path.

Detailed Traffic Issues – Corridor 13

Map 15: It is not clear why there are bus stops on both the southbound on- and off-ramps. Would it be better to have all bus stops at one location, thereby facilitating interchange between different bus routes?

There would be significant conflicts between cyclists on the northbound off ramp and buses accessing the interchange facility. The details of the protection for cyclists is not clear on the map. Perhaps a pre-signal for cyclists at the top of the northbound off-ramp could be considered.

There would be a potential conflict between right-turning cyclists and straight-through cars at the tops of the two off-ramps. Could the advance stop line for cyclists be widened to the full widths of the ramps?

Map 17, 18: The Council and UCD, with support from the NTA, have started construction for improved cycle and pedestrian facilities between The Rise and a

proposed new entrance to UCD at the Nova Building. This should be reflected in the CBC designs.

Map 18: The design shows a two-way cycle path on the north side of the Stillorgan Road from UCD to Belfield Park. Consideration should be given to extending it to Colaiste Eoin, which would potentially be a large trip attractor.

Maps 19, 20: The northbound cycle path should tie-in to Roebuck Avenue, Greenfield Road and Sycamore Crescent.

Maps 21, 22: The proposed new footpaths along the Stillorgan Bypass are very welcome – there is currently a significant volume of pedestrians walking along the cycle paths.

Maps 23: The speed reducing curve on the northbound slip into The Hill is welcome, but needs careful design. The NTA should consider banning the left turn from Stillorgan Road into Kilmacud Road Lower.

Map 24: The junction with Stillorgan Grove and the access to St John of God's should be designed in accordance with DMURS.

Map 26: Southbound carriageway: the footpath at the coach stop and on the north side of service road seem to be narrow.

Northbound carriageway: The coach stop is upstream of pedestrian signals. Parked buses or coaches can obstruct the visibility of signal heads. Consider relocating the coach stop or pedestrian crossing or both.

Map 27: The proposed design of White's Cross seems to involve a significant loss of cycle priority and directness. This would need to be justified.

Map 27, 28: It appears that the grass verges would be narrow and therefore difficult to maintain.

Map 28: The location of pedestrian crossing of the northbound carriageway vis-a-viz Knocksinna should be reconsidered. It would improve the safety of traffic exiting Knocksinna if the pedestrian crossing was to the south of the junction.

Map 30: What is the likely impact of banning the u-turn? What volume of traffic currently uses the u-turn facility and what is their alternative route?

Map 31: Would it be possible to provide a footpath along the full length of the north side of the service road?

Map 35: There is a separate cycle lane which runs into a pedestrian priority zone. It is not clear why.

Map 36: The detailed design should make it obvious to pedestrians that footpaths do not go beyond the bus stops.

Maps 36, 37: There should be a footpath near the northbound carriageway, linking the new Cherrywood Junction Q to the bus stop near Shrewsbury House.

Map 37: The southbound bus lane and cycle path should be continuous through the junction.

Map 40: The proposed removal of the pedestrian crossing at the top of the southbound on-ramp would be a significant reduction in the accessibility from Cherrywood to the southbound bus stops. The signage of the two-way cycle path will need to be clear.

Maps 43, 44, 44A: There is an absence of segregated cycle facilities on the Dublin Road from the Loughlinstown Roundabout to Stonebridge Road. The BusConnects proposal has a two-way cycle lane on the north side of Stonebridge Road that ends abruptly at the M11 overbridge. The Council is seeking to progress a two-way pedestrian and cycle route that starts at the Stonebridge Road/Falls Road junction and would link to Parc Na Silla Rise. This would also provide links to Cherrywood and Loughlinstown Hospital. Can BusConnects provide the short section of 'missing' cycle lane over the M11 and improved cycle facilities on Parc Na Silla Rise to provide a continuous link to the cycle lanes on the N11.

Map 45: The radius of the left turn from Beechfield Manor to Shanganagh Road should be tighter.

Maps 45, 46: The revised design is very welcome. The negative impact on the public realm, trees and car parking has been completely avoided. Obviously, the details of the signal-controlled priority (aka queue relocation) will need to be managed carefully on an on-going basis, especially as it is a reasonably long distance. We will work with the NTA to ensure that it is successful.

Map 47: The retention of most of the trees at Cherrington Drive and Beach road is very welcome.

Map 48: The current BusConnects proposal has a coach stop in direct conflict with the entrance to the proposed 600 residential unit development in Shanganagh Castle. A planning application for this development was submitted to An Bord Pleanála earlier this year. The entrance to Shanganagh Castle was designed to accord with the BusConnects proposals that were in circulation at the time.

Map 50: An Bord Pleanála granted permission to Phase 1 of the Woodbrook Lands development earlier this year. The entrance to this development was designed to accord with the BusConnects proposal that was in circulation at the time. The current BusConnects proposal, in this location, has changed from what was originally proposed. As this development has planning approval the approved entrance should be shown on the BusConnects map.

Map 51: The northbound cycle path does not appear to be consistent with the Cycle Manual.

The Dublin Road Improvement Scheme provided for an access to DLRCC owned lands (Cois Cairn) in the south-west corner of the Wilford Roundabout. The BusConnects proposal should indicate how this proposed access can be accommodated.

Detailed Traffic Issues – Corridor 15

General comments

The design of Corridor 15 appears to be different from Corridor 13. At major junctions, cycle paths take a small chicane through the junction, as opposed to the direct straight paths in Corridor 13. The Council, and the Cycle Design Manual, prefer straight lines.

Several major junctions are annotated 'Bus Priority Signal'. As there are bus lanes downstream of the junctions, it is not clear why a Bus Priority Signal would be required.

Maps 3 and 4: It is not clear if it is proposed to ban the right turn into the southern arm of St Helen's Road.

Map 9: There is currently a banned left turn from Frascati Road into the shopping centre at the Rock Hill junction. This removes a conflict with straight through cyclists. (The access to the shopping centre is at its south end.)

Summary

The Council continues to support the proposed Core Bus Corridors. The bus mode is, and will continue to, be a critical part of the sustainable transport system. There are numerous policies and objectives in the County Development Plan and relevant LAPs which explicitly support the provision of sustainable transport, including buses. The Core Bus Corridors will produce a higher capacity public transport network which will allow for higher density of housing development, thereby contributing to solving the current housing situation.

The Council has a number of queries, comments, and concerns regarding the Preferred Design. We look forward to on-going consultation with the NTA during the next stages of the design. We are confident that, working together, we will produce optimal designs and best solutions to the problem of providing sustainable transport in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.

While this submission is a useful means of informing you of the Council's views, it is necessarily limited in the level of detail and does not provide a forum for interactive discussion. The Council therefore proposes that we should have a workshop with the BusConnects design teams to discuss design decisions and possible alternatives.