

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

This document provides answers to questions frequently asked through the Pre-Design Public Engagement process for Living Streets: Dún Laoghaire (December 2022- March 2023). Information contained reflects the current state of design as of mid-May 2023.

Background

What is Living Streets: Dún Laoghaire?

The vision for Living Streets is for a vibrant, connected, and inclusive town. The scheme involves sustainable mobility and public realm improvements to make our local streets safer and greener, keep our economy vibrant, and communities more connected.

What are the aims of the project?

- Make walking, cycling, and public transport more convenient, enjoyable, and safer for all.
- Improve the environment by reducing traffic and related noise and air pollution, and more planting in public spaces.
- Enhance the economic vibrancy of Dún Laoghaire as a mixed-use town and its attractiveness as a destination by facilitating the sustainable and efficient movement of people and goods, and by creating an environment that people want to linger in.
- Improve connections between bus, rail, and active travel facilities to make it easier for people to get around.
- Promote health and well-being in the community by enabling safer active travel and enhancing the public realm for outdoor play, recreation, and social interaction.
- Promote equitable travel options and urban design that creates a safe and welcoming experience for all members of society, regardless of age, gender, ability, or income.

Why is the project happening?

The project is responding to a variety of local and national issues and policy goals.

- The project responds to local calls for action to address an increase in pedestrian accidents connected to congestion on residential streets and the gap in options for safe active travel inland from the town.
- The project aims to deter through-traffic, while ensuring destination traffic remains.
- Currently, 59% of Monkstown bound traffic is through traffic with no destination in Dún Laoghaire town.
- A community petition was submitted in June 2022 for the removal of through-traffic on Tivoli Road via modal filters which is being proposed as part of this project.
- Almost 50% of car trips to Dún Laoghaire town are from within a 1km radius. We need to enable and encourage people to shift these short trips to sustainable modes.
- Independent evaluation of the trial pedestrianisation of Georges Street Lower in 2022 showed a desire to make pedestrianisation permanent by 81% of residents and 67% of customers. In

addition, the authors concluded that “they [respondents] felt that this would best be considered in the context of an overall plan for the whole town...”. In a survey conducted by the DLBA, 50% of businesses voted in favour of making pedestrianisation permanent, 29% against and 21% neutral.

- The project meets agreed policy objectives of the County Development Plan (2022-2028) to “embrace inclusiveness, champion quality of life through healthy placemaking; grow and attract a diverse innovative economy; and deliver this in a manner that enhances our environment for future generations”.

How does the project contribute to climate action?

The project is one of 35 “Pathfinder” projects which are high-impact, local sustainable transport and public space initiatives supported by the government for rapid delivery nationwide by 2025. It feeds into our national climate policy goal for a 50% reduction in transport emissions by 2030, and for walking, cycling and public transport to account for 50% of all daily trips. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown county council has selected Dún Laoghaire and Blackrock for a new ‘Decarbonising Zone’ within which a range of actions will be taken including decarbonising transport to contribute to national climate targets.

What are the main features of the project?

Living Streets Dún Laoghaire involves three main elements:

1. Town centre upgrades and the pedestrianisation of part of Georges Street Lower
2. Living Streets Neighbourhood - incorporating modal filters and placemaking
3. Sustainable mobility improvements.

The Town Centre

What is planned for the town centre?

- Better landscaping, planting, and seating throughout the length of George’s Street to create a safe, welcoming, and vibrant environment. This will bring a coherent look and feel to the town and enhance its attractiveness as a destination.
- New landscaped feature areas are included in the proposal for outside Carnegie Library at the junction between Georges Street Lower and Library Road; and in the area outside the church at the junction of Marine Road and Georges Street Lower.
- See link to project update presentation developed in April which shows images of draft landscape designs.

How is accessibility being considered in the design?

- The scheme will comply with best practice in providing access for people with disabilities.
- There is an external disability consultant engaged for this project to review design proposals
- DLRCC met with the Dún Laoghaire Disability Consultation Group in the Pre-Design engagement phase to hear their feedback on initial designs, their priorities, and suggestions for its further development.
- Some key design features to improve accessibility of the scheme include:
 - Reduced street clutter and obstacles, defined areas for retailer’s furniture.
 - Introduction of tapping lines for visually impaired and contrasting materials at thresholds.

- Additional drop kerbs for mobility impaired.
- Smooth clean surfaces with non-slip finishes.
- Tactile and contrasting paving at crossing points.

What area will be pedestrianised?

The project proposes to pedestrianise part of Georges Street Lower between Patrick Street and ending before St. Michaels Hospital (see visual at end of document). It covers the same area as was pedestrianised previously on a trial basis as part of the Summer Streets project. It also includes sections of Sussex St and Convent Road where they meet Georges St. Lower.

What did the 2021 Summer Streets pilot pedestrianisation show?

An independent [survey](#) of the 'Summer Streets' trial pedestrianisation (2021) showed a desire to make pedestrianisation permanent amongst 81% of residents and 67% of customers. In addition, the authors concluded that *“they [respondents] felt that this would best be considered in the context of an overall plan for the whole town...”*. The evaluation also showed that the volume of traffic trips to in Dún Laoghaire town centre did not significantly change during the trial.

What did the businesses think of the Summer Streets trial?

In a survey conducted by the [DLBA](#), 50% of businesses voted in favour of making pedestrianisation permanent, 29% against and 21% neutral.

How will loading take place on the pedestrianised area?

Loading will be facilitated up to 11am each day along pedestrianised areas. There will also be designated loading areas at the edges of the pedestrianised zone for loading outside these hours. There will be adequate space within the public realm to allow for convenient loading outside shops.

How will waste collection take place?

Waste collection will be permitted up to 11am each day along the pedestrianised area.

How will emergency services be affected by the project?

The movement and access of emergency service vehicles will be facilitated within pedestrianised areas throughout the day as required.

Will outdoor dining be permitted?

Shared communal seating arrangements will be provided for use by all visitors to the town. If businesses want to set up their own outdoor dining arrangements, the normal licencing procedures will apply and we are making provision in the design to allow for this.

What will you plant and how will planting be cared for?

Detailed planting schemes and plant lists will be included in the Part 8 application. An emphasis will be on native plants, incorporating a seasonal mix of species and on planting into the ground rather than in planters. Maintenance will be an important factor influencing design. We are considering issues like the provision of special taps at intervals along Georges Street for watering plants. These could also be utilised also by Tidy Towns' volunteers.

What is happening in Clarinda Park?

In addition to placing a modal filter at Clarinda Park West, DLRCC is working on plans to improve Clarinda Park through landscaping and the relocation of car parking that is currently situated within the boundary of the park.

The Living Streets Neighbourhood, modal filters & traffic modelling

What is the 'Living Streets Neighbourhood'?

The Living Streets Neighbourhood refers to the block flanked by York Road, Tivoli Road, Corrig Road, Glenageary Road Lower, and George's Street Upper and Lower. The project aims to make this area a more inviting place to be in, and a safer place to move around within on foot, bike, or on wheels. This will be achieved through enhanced planting and seating, fixed pavements, better road crossings and the placement of 'modal filters' on three different roads within this area.

What is a Modal Filter?

A modal filter is a design feature at a single point in a road that prevents certain modes, in this case vehicles passing but allows pedestrians and cyclists to pass through.

Why have a modal filter?

Modal filters are a common traffic calming feature to reduce through-traffic. Through-traffic is a key contributor to traffic problems in Dún Laoghaire. Currently, 59% of Monkstown-bound traffic in Dún Laoghaire is through-traffic. The interventions for Living Streets Dún Laoghaire will deter through-traffic. A key benefit will be quieter, safer roads with less traffic and pollution. It also frees up road space for improved public realm e.g. planting, seating, outdoor dining

How will I access my house by car?

You will still be able to drive to your home, have visitors, receive deliveries and services. Depending on where your property is situated, you may have to take a slightly different vehicle journey than before because of the modal filters. However moving about within the block itself will be quicker as the traffic that is there will be destination traffic alone (rather than through-traffic).

How do I access the centre of Dún Laoghaire town by car?

The modal filter locations still allow destination traffic to the town centre and to houses within the area.

Where will 'modal filters' be placed?

Traffic modelling exercises and public engagement has led to the identification of three preferred locations for modal filters:

1. Tivoli Road (between Patrick Street and Tivoli Terrace East)
2. Cross Avenue (between Patrick Street and East Lane)
3. Clarinda Park West (between Georges Street Upper and Clarinda Park North).

What is traffic modelling?

This is a computer simulation tool that can assess a variety of design options to see how they compare to each other. Based on different scenarios, the model can predict what routes traffic would take and if any delays would be experienced.

What did traffic modelling involve?

Extensive modelling exercises were completed to identify preferred modal filter locations. First, traffic counts were carried out in 33 locations, over 7 days in September 2022. This allowed us to understand what would happen to traffic flows if filters were introduced. Then the model tested different sites for modal filters and traffic direction changes on certain roads. These interventions were combined together into what were called scenarios, over 15 scenarios were tested to come up with the preferred arrangement. See a summary of this process in our project update [presentation](#) from April 2023.

Why were those locations selected for modal filters?

The locations were selected because they achieved the best balance between reduced through-traffic in the neighbourhood minimising impact on traffic flow on the surrounding streets and ensuring destination traffic is maintained. Traffic modelling estimates that placing modal filters at the selected locations will reduce overall traffic in the Living Streets Neighbourhood by 50% i.e. the current amount of traffic rat running through this area

Will traffic congestion increase on boundary / nearby roads?

The modelling exercise predicts a slight increase in traffic travelling on York Road, Glenageary Rd Upper and Georges St Upper. However, with a conservative estimate of 4% of people switching modes of travel this is reduced to a traffic increase estimate of 13% for Glenageary Road Upper, 15% for York Rd, while traffic on Georges St Upper is estimated to reduce by 7%. It is estimated that these changes would have minimal impact on journey times adding add no more than one to two minutes extra.

Will traffic signal timings be adjusted?

The project plans to optimise junction timings through the scheme to allow for a better flow of traffic at peak times.

How have similar projects elsewhere impacted traffic?

A [study](#) of 46 similar schemes in the UK showed a 46.9% mean decrease in traffic within areas where modal filters were situated, while traffic flow at the boundaries increased by only 1.3%. These studies are based on real life traffic counts taken before and after installation.

Will there be any traffic calming works on roads near to (but not within) the Living Streets Neighbourhood?

We are considering the addition of traffic calming features e.g. raised crossing points / signalized crossings on roads such as York Road, and Glenageary Road Lower which will serve to calm traffic and increase pedestrian safety. Glenageary Road Upper is part of the DLR Central scheme that will have improved features along its length.

Are speed limits part of the project?

Speed limits cannot be introduced via the Part 8 Planning process (which is what this project falls under). It is the Councilors' function to make decisions on speed limits within the constituency and a speed limit review is underway. We have communicated this project to the team involved in the speed limit review.

Is the traffic direction changing anywhere on the coast road?

To reduce traffic at the People's Park junction, improve accessibility to Dún Laoghaire town and to provide improved access to Monkstown and Blackrock, the scheme proposes to reverse the direction of traffic along the coast road from Link Road in Glasthule so that people can drive from that point to Dún Laoghaire town and onwards to Blackrock. The stretch of coast road from Link Road to Sandycove beach will remain in its current direction which is towards the direction of the Forty Foot. Crofton Road will remain two-way (as it is now) to ensure it's easy to drive in and out of Dún Laoghaire along the coast.

How will you ensure visitors can still reach Dún Laoghaire by car?

Anyone who chooses to drive to Dun Laoghaire will not have access removed. The project is targeting a reduction in through-traffic in the area. A goal of the project is to facilitate destination traffic and the main routes into and out of town remain in operation with no change to traffic direction, including; Clarence Street, York Road, Georges Street Lower (Monkstown end until the start of the pedestrian extent after St. Michaels Hospital), Georges Street Upper, Crofton Road, Marine Road, and Queens Road. To maintain accessibility for those who need to drive, the project will include clearer signposting, and will communicate wayfinding options for visitors.

Will you be removing car parking? Will car parks remain open?

All the car parks in the town will remain open and their access unaffected by this project. It is not a goal of this project to remove on-street parking. A key aim of this project is to facilitate those driving to reach their parking destination in an efficient manner (to avoid roaming looking for parking spots).

Sustainable mobility improvements

What is planned to encourage walking? Will you be fixing pavements?

A safer walking environment will be created through reduced traffic overall. Within the Living Streets Neighbourhood and on key roads in the town, broken pavements will be fixed, and footpaths will be widened where space allows. Cobble stones at the junction of Marine Road and George's Street will be removed to make it safer to cross and to cycle, scoot or wheel on. Pedestrian crossings will be improved throughout the area.

What is planned to improve cycling?

Living Streets Dún Laoghaire aims to improve cycling in the area by making it a more convenient, enjoyable, and safer option for all. This will largely be achieved by reducing traffic by an estimated 50% within in the Living Streets Neighbourhood. This will make the roads much quieter and safer for cycling on.

Will there be any new bike lanes?

Aside from a small contra-flow bike lane between Patrick Street and Mulgrave Terrace, there are no plans to create new bike lanes as part of this project. To improve connections between the Coastal Mobility Route and the Metals with the town, a safer cycling environment will be created on Marine Road. The Living Streets Neighbourhood itself will be a low-car, bike friendly zone which will link with DLR Connector once it's built creating a connected network of safe cycling routes across Dún Laoghaire.

How will cyclists and scooters be deterred from going on the pedestrianised area in town?

They will be encouraged to dismount through effective positioning of bike parking at perimeters and signage requesting they dismount.

Will there be any new public transport delivered as part of this?

The Living Streets Dún Laoghaire project does not involve the delivery of new public transport. However, it does include improvements to the integration of existing modes of transport, such as providing good walkways between travel options and bike parking near bus stops and train stations. A new pedestrian link has recently opened that allows people to walk directly up from the coast road near the DART station into the town (adjacent to the Harbour Master's Office).

How does Living Streets relate to the Bus Connects project?

Living Streets is happening in parallel with and will facilitate the implementation of "Bus Connects", the National Transport Authority's programme to improve bus services across the country. This will deliver a significant increase in bus capacity and frequency, as well as providing more evening and weekend services in Dún Laoghaire and nationwide by 2025?

How will bus services be impacted?

If George's Street Lower is pedestrianised, buses which currently run along this section such as the 46A would have to be re-routed. The County Council are currently in discussions with the National Transport Authority (responsible for public transport) about rerouting options and are seeking to find a viable location near the pedestrian area for the positioning of an alternative bus stop.

I need to go to an out-patient appointment in St. Michael's Hospital – I normally get the bus, what can I do now?

If Georges Street Lower is pedestrianised, the bus stop at the front of the hospital, currently served by the 46A, 7, 7A, 7D, 63, 63A, 75, 75A, would no longer be in operation. A priority of ongoing discussions with the NTA about bus rerouting options is the provision of an appropriate public transport service for the hospital. Options might also include solutions such as shuttle services. A survey of how patients access the hospital is being undertaken to help inform decision making on this.

Project Progress

What has been done so far?

We have now completed the Pre-Design phase for this project. This included detailed traffic management and mobility studies, the identification of preferred locations for modal filters, the development of draft public realm designs, and public engagement activities.

What public engagement has happened?

DLRCC is working with M-CO to conduct public engagement activities for this project. From December 2022 to March 2023 a range of public engagement activities were held. This included an online consultation survey, a webinar, a public drop-in information session, and a pop-up in Lexicon Library. Combined, these efforts engaged 575 individuals. A number of meetings were held with representative business and community groups from the area.

How was awareness raised of these activities?

To ensure widespread awareness of these activities, we utilised several communication channels. A leaflet was dropped to 1800 households and flyer was hand-delivered to 300 businesses. We issued over 200 direct mails to local representative residential, business, advocacy, and disability groups. Social media activities promoted each event online.

Where can I view feedback from the pre-design engagement activities?

See the Pre-Design Public Engagement Report here – [Click to view and download](#)

When will the council apply for planning permission?

Taking into account insights from studies completed and feedback received during the Pre-Design Phase, we are now developing a detailed design for this scheme. The aim is to have this ready for submission for planning approval through a Part 8 planning application by Summer 2023.

Will there be more public consultation?

There will be a formal statutory consultation process when we submit a Part 8 Planning application. This will involve another consultation survey, along with pop-ups, drop-in information evenings and webinars to get feedback on the proposed designs.