



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Record of Meeting ABP-309584-21 1st meeting

Case Reference / Description	BusConnects Dublin Core Bus Corridor Projects. Dublin City and Greater Dublin Areas		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	1 st		
Date	21/04/21	Start Time	11 a.m.
Location	N/A	End Time	12.12 a.m.

Representing An Bord Pleanála
Staff Members
Ciara Kellett, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)
Kevin Moore, Senior Planning Inspector
Marcella Doyle, Senior Administrative Officer
Niamh Thornton, Executive Officer
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer
Representing the Prospective Applicant
Hugh Creegan NTA
John Flemming NTA
Anthony Sheehy NTA
Eddie Feely Arup
Ian Byrne Systra

The meeting commenced at 11 a.m.

The Board referred to the letter received from the prospective applicant requesting pre-application consultations and advised the prospective applicant that the instant meeting essentially constituted an information-gathering exercise for the Board; it also invited the prospective applicant to outline the nature of the proposed development and to highlight any matters it wished to receive advice on from the Board.

The Board mentioned general procedures in relation to the pre-application consultation process as follows:

- The Board will keep a record of this meeting and any other meetings, if held. Such records will form part of the file which will be made available publicly at the conclusion of the process. The record of the meeting will not be amended by the Board once finalised, but the prospective applicant may submit comments on the record which will form part of the case file.
- A further meeting or meetings may be held in respect of the proposed development.
- Further information may be requested by the Board and public consultations may also be directed by the Board.
- The Board may hold consultations in respect of the proposed development with other bodies.
- The holding of consultations does not prejudice the Board in any way and cannot be relied upon in the formal planning process or any legal proceedings.

Presentation by the prospective applicant:

The prospective applicant started its presentation by giving an overview of the role of the National Transport Authority (NTA)

The prospective applicant stated its intention to submit applications to the Board pursuant to section 51 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended). Related compulsory purchase orders will be submitted to the Board pursuant to section 213 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) and the Housing Act, 1966 (as amended). The prospective applicant will act as applicant for both types of applications.

The prospective applicant noted that, in relation to the CPOs, sections 47 to 49 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) do not apply. The proposed developments do not constitute a busway scheme as defined in section 44 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) which precludes pedestrians and cyclists from using the busway. The proposed developments will provide for pedestrians and cyclists.

The intention of the BusConnects-Core Bus Corridor Infrastructure Works is to transform the bus system in Dublin. The proposed development is equally intended to provide safe cycling infrastructure.

The proposed works will include 12 stand-alone, road development, corridor schemes with an overall centreline length of approximately 120km.

The aim of the schemes is to provide improved walking, cycling and bus infrastructure along key access routes in the Dublin region. The objectives are to:

- Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system by improving bus speeds, reliability and punctuality;
- Enhance the potential for cycling by providing safe infrastructure, segregated from general traffic wherever practicable;
- Support the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service, supporting the achievement of Ireland's emission reduction targets;
- Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Dublin;

- Improve accessibility to jobs, education and other social and economic opportunities, and
- Ensure that the public realm is carefully considered in the design and development of the transport infrastructure and seek to enhance key urban focal points where appropriate and feasible.

In regards to planning policy, the schemes' objectives are aligned with European, national, regional and local policies/plans to transition to a more sustainable transport system. The schemes are aligned with policies of the local authorities that manage the local road networks that will be impacted upon by the proposed works.

The prospective applicant submits that 10 of the 12 stand-alone schemes trigger a requirement for automatic Environmental Impact Assessment Reports (EIAR) pursuant to section 50(1)(a)(iv) of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended) and article 8 of the Roads Regulations, 1994 (as amended). The preparation of these Environmental Impact Assessment Reports are at an advanced stage and will be submitted to the Board with the applications.

EIA Screening Reports are in progress for the remaining 2 schemes.

The prospective applicant noted that the schemes will give rise to some positive environmental impacts, including the increased use of public transport, cycling and walking, safety improvements and public realm and streetscape enhancements.

The prospective applicant noted the potential for negative environmental impacts including:

- Changes in traffic patterns and redistribution of traffic and some reduction in parking and loading facilities,
- Noise, vibration and air quality impacts,

- Archaeology, architectural and cultural heritage impacts which may arise at locations on the individual schemes, requiring mitigation measures where appropriate; and
- Visual impacts from lighting, signage, new boundaries and landscape planting treatments.

The prospective applicant also noted the potential negative environmental impacts that may come about during the construction phase including:

- Traffic, noise, vibration and air quality,
- Water quality impacts to watercourses due to potential run-off from construction works,
- Resource management impacts due to the quantities of excavated materials arising during the construction phase; and
- Cumulative impacts.

Four tiers of transport modelling tools have been developed to inform design decision and the preparation of the transport impact appraisals. These tiers cover strategic, local, corridor and junction levels of assessment.

The prospective applicant noted that it is liaising with the project teams on the MetroLink and DART+ Programme projects to ensure that all likely cumulative impacts in relation to these and other projects are assessed.

Appropriate Assessment Screening is underway for the 12 Core Bus Corridor Schemes.

Three rounds of non-statutory public consultation have taken place between November 2018 and December, 2020. Community Forums have been established and the prospective applicant stated that extensive engagement has taken place at individual and group level. The prospective applicant noted that engagement has been comprehensive and meaningful and that this engagement has substantially informed and refined the scheme development process.

The prospective applicant noted that it has also been in consultation with local authorities and prescribed bodies.

Board's comments/queries:

The representatives of the Board noted that further meetings would be necessary to go through the 12 schemes individually and in more detail. The Board advised that a presentation on each scheme would have to be provided including, but not limited to, details on the following:

- The nature and extent of each of the 12 projects,
- The physical works to be undertaken for each project, including the typical physical extent of the road corridor in cross section, the nature of the infrastructure to be provided, including surface treatment, use of materials, provision of street furniture, public amenity space, public lighting, etc.,
- Approach to development within the built-up urban environment, including "pinch points", the commercial core areas, urban streets, etc.,
- Clarification regarding the need for EIA for each individual scheme,
- Connectivity with other existing and proposed public transportation services,,
- Details on the volumes of bus traffic, levels of service, etc. to be provided with each project,
- The management of traffic in the city centre arising from the delivery of the projects,
- Cumulative impact – taking DART+ Programme, MetroLink etc into consideration,
- The role and responsibilities of the local authorities in the delivery of the projects,

The Board's representatives indicated they would want a certain level of detail on each of the proposed routes in the form of drawings in order to facilitate their understanding of each route, but also noted the high-level nature of pre-application

consultations and that a voluminous number of drawings should not be submitted at pre-app stage.

The Board's representatives asked, from the Appropriate Assessment Screening carried out to date, if it was likely that Natura Impact Statements would be required. The prospective applicant confirmed that the preliminary view, at this stage, is that Natura Impact Statements would be required.

The Board's representatives advised the prospective applicant to be cognisant of timelines for public objection timeframes on both the CPO applications and applications under section 51 of the Roads Act, 1993 (as amended). The prospective applicant was advised that these applications will need separate public notices and that they should run concurrently.

The Board noted the provision whereby it can liaise with relevant local authorities and prescribed bodies as part of the pre-application process.

The prospective applicant stated that, at the moment, it would be ready to start the application process in 3 months time. The prospective applicant stated that, in meetings going forward, it will try to cover 4 schemes per meeting.

Conclusion:

The Board advised the prospective applicant that further meetings will be facilitated in a timely manner.

The record of the instant meeting will issue and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments it may have in writing or alternatively at the time of any further meeting.

The meeting concluded at 12.12 a.m.



Ciara Kellett

Assistant Director of Planning

26/4/21

