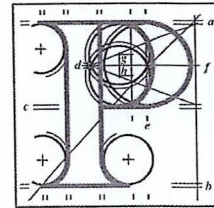


Our Case Number: ABP-314597-22



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Galway City Community Network CLG
Westside Community Resource Centre
Seamus Quirke Road
Co. Galway

Date: 06 July 2023

Re: BusConnects Galway Cross-City Link Scheme.
University Road to Dublin Road, Galway City.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above mentioned case. The contents of your submission have been noted.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

Please quote the above-mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

Niamh Thornton
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737247

CH08

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Glaio Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
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Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

Niamh Thornton

From: Development - GCCN <development@gccn.ie>
Sent: Tuesday 4 July 2023 17:17
To: LAPS
Cc: Niamh Thornton
Subject: Case reference: HA61.314597 University Road to Dublin Road, Galway City.
Attachments: GCCN BusConnects Submission Response to APB.pdf

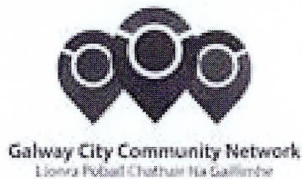
To whom it concerns,

Please find Galway City Community Network submission response attached.

Le deá-ghuí,

Brian Doherty

Development Worker



Galway City Community Network

The Public Participation Network in Galway City

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My work days are Monday – Friday

Please consider the environment before printing this email



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Galway City Community Network, The Public Participation Network in Galway City

GCCN Submission

July 2023

Re: An Bord Pleanála 314597: University Road to Dublin Road, Galway City.

Case reference: Bord Pleanála Case reference: HA61.314597

URL: <https://www.pleanala.ie/en-ie/case/314597>

Preface

Established in 2014, **Galway City Community Network (GCCN)** is the Public Participation Network in Galway City. It represents groups and organisations in the community, voluntary and environmental sectors in Galway City. The twin objectives that GCCN pursues are to:

- Advance the values of sustainability, equality, culture, community, empowerment, and inclusivity and embed these in the policies, programmes and practice of local government, state organisations, national government, and civil society.
- Develop and implement progressive models of and approaches to representation, participation, and engagement for civil society in informing and shaping policy development and implementation.

Context

GCCN welcomes the opportunity to make this submission in response to Galway City Council's observations on the initial application on the proposed Galway City Council Bus Connects Galway Cross-City Link (University Road to Dublin Road), made after consulting with GCCN members and representatives.

GCCN Policy and Positions

In developing this response, GCCN has drawn on its Policies and Positions document, the relevant sections of which stated:

- GCCN policy on transport is based on a Hierarchy of Road Users in the following order:
 1. Pedestrians and people with disabilities
 2. Cyclists
 3. Public transport and
 4. Private motor transport.
- GCCN believes that all projects, initiatives, policies, programmes, and services in Galway City should be universally accessible enabling the full and equal participation of all people, regardless of disability, age, literacy, or linguistic considerations.
- GCCN endorses the European Charter of Pedestrian Rights and the Road Danger Reduction Charter.
- firms the urgency of response to the emerging climate crises, and supports the implementation of the National Climate Action Plan.
- GCCN notes that documents such as the National Cycle Policy Framework, the Design Manual for Urban Roads, and Streets and the NTA Permeability Best Practice Guide seek to address inappropriate and unsuitable roads management and town planning practices. The network endorses the overall approach advocated in these documents.
- Speed limits of 30km/h or lower are the default option for all non-arterial roads in the city.
- Roundabouts be replaced with signalised crossings and in the short term raised table zebra crossings be established on all entries and exits recognising that the challenges and risks that current roundabout designs impose on vulnerable users are a barrier to pedestrian and cyclist mobility.

- Future development is mixed-use and orientated to public transport and other key facilities especially schools and workplaces.
- Safe travelling routes to amenities and recreational grounds are provided including for example, bike routes away from traffic, pedestrian crossings, traffic calming systems, lowering of speed limits, and addressing 'rat-runs'.
- Safe areas are established in residential areas which; favour pedestrians and children's play areas over traffic, have speed limits of walking speed and separate roads with access for bicycles, buses, and pedestrians from those open to motor vehicles.
- An inventory database of habitats, fauna and flora using the Galway City Habitats Inventory 2006 as a baseline is established monitored and regularly updated with the addition of a status/risk assessment element.

Bus Connects not Compatible with Climate Action

Firstly, it is imperative to point out from the outset that the indicative timelines, if achieved, which is very doubtful, will be too late to achieve the mandatory Carbon Budgets and the provision for cycling and walking are inadequate to achieve the necessary modal shift to active travel modes to achieve the mandatory Carbon Budgets.

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Response (i)

Below an extract from response (i)

For example, streets including Forster Street and Eglinton Street are narrow city centre streets with multi storey buildings fronting, making any road or street widening impossible without significant building acquisition and demolition. Without road or street widening, the provision of dedicated cycle lanes would require the use of most of the available road space and / or reduction or elimination of footpaths, which would result in no buses or any other vehicles being able to use these streets.

The submission issues requested greater delivery of segregated cycle facilities.

The response from GCC is exaggerated and not reflective of true possibilities to deliver greater segregation along the scheme or improved cycle facilities across the scheme. A concerted effort to deliver greater segregated cycling could be made in moving away from the delivery of shared space at junctions.

Shared space – where pedestrians and cyclists share and or where cyclists and motor traffic share space.

- The scheme forces cyclists in many instances to cross junctions with pedestrians.
- There is poor connectivity of segregated cycle facilities through junctions.
- There are cases where segregated cycle facilities deliver cyclists into shared spaces, for example, Woodquay and Dyke Road for example.
- The scheme proposes to deliver new multilane one-way routes along the inner city without safe access routes on some of these roads.

The scheme should be directed to take best practice design guidance on shared space (which is not recommended in the national cycle manual) and general cycle design principles from the draft National Cycle Manual which the NTA are bringing forward for use this year.

The draft National Cycle Manual (NCM) (Feb 2023) is at an advanced stage, so GCCN urge you to **recommend that the Cross City Link Scheme be re-evaluated in light of the new guidance document that the National Transport Agency (NTA) have developed.** This document is at a stage where designers can improve design based on international best practice which has formed the backbone of the revised NCM.

The Cross City Link project is a once in a generation project on the streets it encompasses, as well as the streets it does not reach based on the current red line boundary. As such this is a pivotal moment to get things right or at least knowingly improve what we know can be done better at this moment in time.

Submission issue (v)

Below is an extract in relation to submission issue relating to cyclist access.

▪ Cyclist Access

It has been long noted since the Bus and Cycle Network Plan that there is a lack of a legible corridor for cyclists through the city centre. This is an important issue to address if active modes of transport are to be supported as access to educational institutions and economic and enterprise centres from the west of the city must be considered. It is not clear from the drawings as to how this route through the centre is to be realised.

For example, the new Bridge at Salmon Wier is designated dual use for pedestrians and cyclists. The text states that cyclists will have access to the bridge "from Newtownsmith" but does not discuss how any bicycle user is supposed to access Newtownsmith from the north or east. For people on bicycles coming from the east side of the city in particular, what this means is that any indicative cycle networks essentially disappear when they reach the city centre.

This is because Galway City Council operates an extensive system of one-way streets in the city centre, many of which lack contraflow cycling arrangements. In areas where there is cycle lane provision it is unclear who this is intended to serve. This is an issue in the Woodquay area. Because Daly's Place is being made one-way in the opposite direction, it is unclear who this contraflow cycle lane is intended to serve. College Road is another location in which there is a lack of clarity regarding cycling flows.

As it stands Dock Road remains one of only two routes for people on bicycles to access the core of the city from the east. This is a hazardous route for cyclists given the railings on the left-hand side of the road, on street parking to the right and tight carriageway. However, if contra flow arrangements were provided along Merchants Road between Abbeygate St and Victoria Place this could be the beginning of an alternative circulation route for bicycle traffic into and through the old core of the city.

Action that can be taken to improve the provision of cycle routes through the heart of the centre include the provision of a path across the Plots to restore access inbound from Dyke Road. The provision of a two-way cycle track at the edge of the plaza at Wood Quay would improve access from the North side.

Submission issue (v)

The submission suggests that there is a lack of a legible corridor for cyclists through the city centre. The submission queries how the new pedestrian and cycle bridge at Salmon Weir will be accessed from the north or the east. It is suggested that one-way streets in the city centre do not have contra-flow cycle tracks and it is further queried as to the purpose of a proposed contra-flow cycle track at Woodquay, which is included as part of the Proposed Scheme.

Request that the deliberate designing of shared pedestrian and cycle spaces be limited. Where this is currently proposed in areas that are established access routes for motor and cyclists it is requested that the scheme endeavour to deliver segregated cycle access routes.

For example, GCC specific response in relation to Newtownsmith should be improved and a segregated cycle access route be provided. This would be in line with current National Cycle Manual and forthcoming revision of same.

The section of Newtownsmith between the bollards and St. Vincent's Avenue is proposed to act as a shared space for pedestrians and cyclists.

Regarding the specific response from GCC in relation to Woodquay it is requested that clear legible and safer cycle facilities are delivered in the scheme. The current scheme proposes to route cyclists into shared space with pedestrians at the junction with the Headford Road. Greater effort to provide safer cycle and pedestrian facilities should be made. This requires allocation of road space for connected cycle routes. Below is an extract from the response of GCC on Woodquay. However, it fails to address the shared space design that the current scheme proposed for cyclists to transition from Woodquay to the Headford Road.

The Proposed Scheme therefore includes a contra-flow cycle track adjacent to a one-way street to facilitate trips beginning at Woodquay wishing to access Headford Road.

General submission issue: bus gate and restricting through traffic

The following concerns are not clear from the response provided by GCC;

- How will the bus gate be implemented and managed?
- Who will enforce restriction of private traffic during bus gate hours?
- What time scale is proposed to review the bus gate management and implementation?
- What penalties will there be for violation of bus gate access?
- Will additional resources be provided to Galway City Council or An Garda Síochána to enforce the bus gate?
- Will the scheme have CCTV monitoring at bus gates, detect motor traffic that passes the bus gate inappropriately and form part of an enforcement process?

Entire scheme: Extent of the scheme including submission issue (iii) from An Taisce and GCCN in relation to access to destinations such as education centres in the West of the city for cyclists on safe cycle routes.

The current plan, as presented, together with the Dublin Road Cross City Link does not go far enough to service the needs of the city adequately. Specific road and areas were listed by submissions. The response by GCC does not go far enough to satisfy the concerns. **Cross-City Link is limited as it does not connect adequately with**

- Residential communities North on the city on Headford road (no quality bus corridor or continuous segregated routes)
- Health care settings: Galway University Hospital (delayed engagement & plan for connection)
- Retail destinations such as Galway Retail Park and Galway Shopping omitted from transport plan (Headford Road)
- The 'West End' and much of Salthill of Galway (concentration of schools and seaside amenity)

Together with the connection issues raised above the scheme will not deliver change to the streets in the city centre, adjacent and linking to the scheme, that are already over capacity with motor traffic and delivery vehicles.

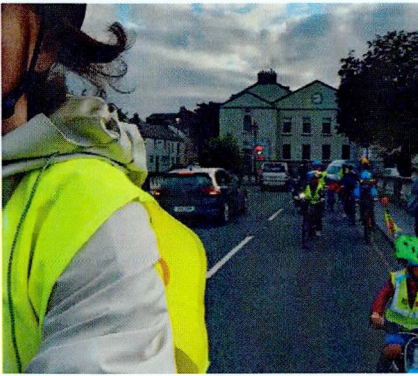

BusConnects needs to be extended urgently along the Headford Road and surrounding communities. The community along the Headford Road was reported to have a population of circa 4700 people or 20% of population in the City Centre electoral area. Importantly this community is however split between two electoral areas and so is historically poorly represented at local level. A report titled *Needs Assessment of the Ballinfoile area For Galway City North Child and Family Support Network* (McNiff 2020) captures the needs of the community on the Headford Road. It comprises of many small

areas with considerably high levels of deprivation. GCCN would urge you to include the community on the Headford Road/N84 who are closest to the City Centre but currently fail to benefit directly from the scheme. It will be many years before this community see change unless they are prioritised by Galway City Council and the NTA. They have several “rat runs” and National Roads cutting the community. The current GTS plan shows a quality bus corridor along only part of the N84/Headford Road connecting to Woodquay. Plans need to be upgraded and acted on to see modal shift in this generation.

This community should be able to get to schools, hospitals appointments, major industry centres, the seaside in Salthill and so on without painfully having to travel into Eyre Square only a couple of kilometres, wait and change bus. There is also a lot of land zoned for residential development in the surrounding community.

East of the Corrib Cycle Bus

The scheme will negatively impact on the access routes for cyclists travelling inbound on the Dyke Road and Headford road approaching the scheme due to increased traffic on these routes and junctions, as stated in the preliminary report for the scheme. This issue is associated with the points made by GCCN, an Taisce, Shane Foran and Shane Cosgrove to mention these as examples in relation to safe cycling routes, segregation for cyclists, increased private traffic, quality of service for cyclists on routes and through junctions, access to education centres in the west of the city for those coming from east/north.

	
<p>East of the Corrib cyclebus on the Salmon Weir Bridge</p>	<p>East of the Corrib cyclebus on the Headford Road at Lidl approaching the Dyke Road Junction where we turn right to the quiet route by the Plots/Waterside.</p>



Location: Headford Road approaching Woodquay with Bodkin Junction behind us

Outside BusConnects zone

GTS plan: shared bus and bike.

Desire: to include this in BusConnects and change GTS to deliver segregated cycling

The above route is the Headford Road alongside Galway retail Park and Galway Shopping Centre. This section of the road will not receive any works upgrade under BusConnects is circa 350 meters from where the above photo is taken. The Galway Transport Strategy (GTS) falls short on designating this section to have segregated cycling facilities. This is much needed as this road is the Inner-City Access Route (Pink Colour). The Preliminary Report states that traffic along this route and at the junction of Headford Road and Dyke Road will increase due to BusConnects. This road is a major route to distribute traffic around the inner-city access network route for motor traffic coming from the N6 and N84 at the North and Northeast of the city. It should also have a quality bus corridor as part of this scheme. There is space for segregated cycling if the NTA requests it adjacent to this route as it is largely car parking for retail parks and amenity space.

Increased traffic volumes in preliminary design report – what does, and should that mean for cyclists?
Extract from page 16 of Preliminary Design Report.

It notes that traffic volumes are likely to increase at the junction of St Brendan's Ave and Headford Road. However, cyclists are not given segregated facilities. There is no restriction to access on this route inbound or reduction to traffic volumes. This is surely a significant shortcoming in the design for the provision for safe cycling access into the core of Galway City for anyone living north of Woodquay. Anyone wishing to cycle into or through the city from Bodkin Junction, Kirwan Junction or turn of the primary cycle route along the Quincentennial Bridge/Sean Mulvoy Road.

Greater effort to provide for segregation along the Inner-City Access Route on the Headford Road such that cyclists can access the core of the city should be made. It is one of the missing links in safe cycle access into the city from one of its residential suburbs which is only a kilometre or two from the Salmon Weir Bridge.

Similarly at the junction with the Headford Road and Local Dyke Road (essentially a multilane roundabout with traffic lights) should have fully segregated cycle facilities on all lanes as it connects to and will be a new part of the Inner-City Access Route.



The Headford Road / Dyke Road was chosen as the other end of the Inner City Access Route to be included in this scheme. This was chosen due to the requirement to convert Fairgreen Road, Bóthar Ui Eithir, Prospect Hill, Bóthar na mBan and St. Brendan's Avenue a two-way link along its length, due to the restrictions placed along the Cross-City Link for general traffic. With the Cross-City Link in place, access to numerous car-parks along the Inner City Access Route will be required to be maintained. The most significant current constraint on this route for traffic and pedestrians is at St. Brendan's Avenue and Headford Road. It is expected that the traffic volumes at this junction will increase with the introduction of the Cross-City Link. This is also the location where one of the GTS bus routes intersects with the Inner City Access Network. The section of the Inner City Access Route along Headford Road, between St. Bridgit's Place and the N6 Bothar na dTreabh will likely be subject to another future scheme to be developed by Galway City Council to address the demands of all modes along that corridor.

Submission issue, deliveries, and submission issue (v) – legible safe cycle corridors

Delivery access concerns were raised by several submissions. The response from GCC suggests that the restricted deliver hours will result in safer access for cyclists. This needs urgent attention if we are to learn from recent incidents in Irish cities where vulnerable road users are severely or sadly fatally injured in incidents with delivery vehicles. Vision Zero of the Road Safety Authority needs to be considered and greater thought given to ensure the vulnerable road users are not exposed to increased risk as 'peak' delivery hours. GCC response fails to address the following issues associated with the restricted delivery hours.

*The primary aim of the government's **new road safety strategy** is to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on Irish roads by 50% over the next 10 years. This means reducing deaths on Ireland's roads annually from 144 to 72 or lower and reducing serious injuries from 1,259 to 630 or lower by 2030.*

Galway City can positively contribute to Vision Zero target by 2030 through delivering safer cycling and walking conditions in the city centre. In Galway there is a high proportion of mixing of people and vehicles on our city centre streets. GCCN would like to see greater segregation for all such that:

1. delivery vehicles are on dedicated routes and
2. cyclists are given a high permeability access to the city on quieter streets and segregated tracks on many of the roads in the scheme.

The scheme will not reduce the volume of traffic passing along the Headford Road (N6/N84 and in along the N84 and Inner-city Access Route (shown in pink on Drawing PL01) nor does it reduce traffic along the N6 from Bothar na dTreabh to Newcastle as bus infrastructure upgrades do not reach these roads in the scheme.

Submission from GCCN (submission iv and v) relating to pedestrian access and cycle access.

Pedestrian and cycle areas – surface management of drainage for safe movement of cyclists and pedestrians.

While GCC specify that tactile pavement will be used as required no specific response is made in relation to the delivery of drainage kerb / channel between cycle track and footpath along alighting/disembarking area or on footpath areas where falls and drainage management is necessary.

Drainage treatment should be under the footpath. **A surface channel with a dished effect should not be permitted in public areas where pedestrian and cyclists are crossing.** A flush drainage channel should be used and grill to allow for drainage of surface water to rapidly clear away from the pedestrian/cycle facility.

Request that drainage channels on footpaths and at intersections where cyclists transition over are recessed Aco style drains. The use of surface concrete dished water channels is problematic for maintenance and presents a hazard of slip/trip for pedestrians and cyclists. They present additional issues for wheelchair, buggy and mobility impaired users as there is an unexpected change in level.

Additional issues relating to gradients for drainage and cleaning surface channels are eliminated with the use of recessed drains as shown below.

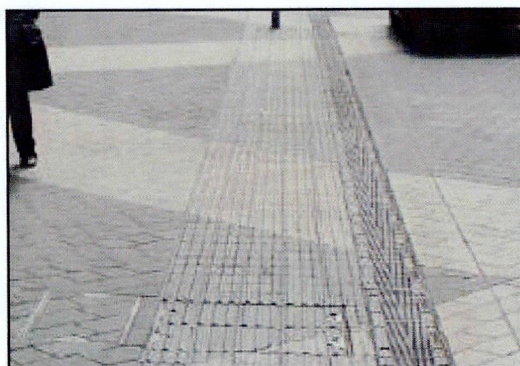


Figure 4.74: Example of an drainage channel on Exhibition Road, London. The kerb line indicates an area of pedestrian refuge and is used to guide the visually impaired.

Extract above from DMURS Section 4.4.8 - use of recessed drainage channel

Section 5.2 of the National Cycle Manual deals with drainage, extract below.

5.2 DRAINAGE


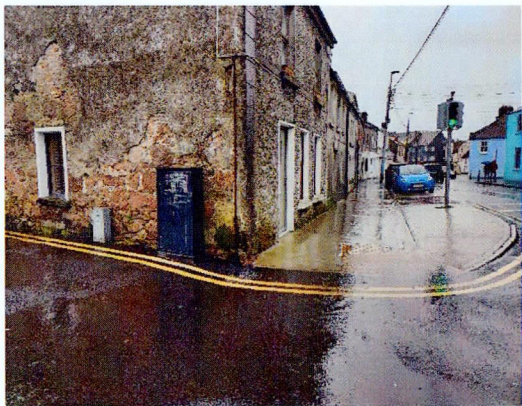
The appropriate detailed design of drainage can significantly impact on the quality and safety of cycling facilities.



Under the 1993 Roads Act (Section 13, Part 2), Local Authorities have an obligation to maintain public roads. The maintenance of cycle ways and cycle tracks falls within this remit.

5.2.1 Overview of Drainage for Cycling

The standard of drainage associated with cycle routes must be more effective than that for motorised vehicular routes. This is because:

- Bicycle braking systems and tyres are not as effective in the wet – it is harder to stop, and there is more risk of skidding in the rain
- Poor drainage increases the likelihood of standing water and spray, potentially drenching both cyclists and pedestrians
- Standing water can conceal serious surface defects, increasing the risk of accident for the cyclist or damage to the bicycle
- Excessive standing water or flooding on cycle lanes or tracks will result in cyclists cycling on parts of the road that are not designed for cycling

Drainage channels	
	
<p>Henry St, Galway. newly refurbished footpath and crossing. Surface drainage channel.</p> <p>Creates hazard for pedestrians, reduced mobility users and any cyclists transitioning from side street at playground/canal route.</p>	<p>Henry St, Galway. newly refurbished footpath and crossing. Surface drainage channel.</p> <p>Challenge to get falls and drainage. Cleaning and maintenance an issue. In winter with</p>

	cold temperatures this is a hazard for slips and trips to all users.
	
Abbeygate street, Galway. Recessed drainage channel	Recessed drainage channel provides safer level surface for pedestrians and cyclists to move across.

Submission issue specific from GCCN in dedicated road space for cyclists

Extract:

As highlighted in the Dublin Road section of this submission it is vital that there is safe dedicated road space for cyclists through segregated cycling facilities rather than the prioritisation of road space for cars. CYCLOPS ("Cycle Optimised Protected Signals") junctions left turns for cyclists at junctions and signalised jug handle turns at T junctions should be incorporated into the scheme. For example, a jug handle turns and free left turn for cyclists onto Lough Atalia from the bottom of College Road. There should be an increase in road space allocated to cyclists rather than a reduction, for example, the reduction of space where Bóthar na mBan meets the Headford Road.

The response from GCC fails to address specific requests above and the overarching request for safer connected segregated cycle facilities in the scheme.

The above specific locations should be fully explored and consideration for improved connections for cyclists be made without the over reliance on shared space connections where cyclists are forced to cross a junction with pedestrians or move to two or three sets of lights to connect to a quiet route or cross a series of roads/lanes.

Submission issue (ii) Increased car dependence/use surrounding the scheme.

Submission issue (ii)

The submission suggests that the proposal will lead to higher private car usage on College Road and on University Road, with consequent delays for buses. The submission therefore proposed that all on-street parking be converted to bus lanes on College Road and University Road.

Response (ii)

Galway City Council does not agree with the suggestion that the proposed scheme will lead to higher private car usage on College Road and University Road.

The scheme will initially result in increased private car use on many of the surrounding access routes.

The scheme must address these issues specifically in relation to cyclists increased exposure to higher volumes of motor traffic on these access routes without dedicated segregated cycle facilities.

Additional consideration and investment is needed immediately to address car dependency for residents in Galway City and for those traveling across the city. These are vital routes and destinations that need investment and action now under the umbrella of BusConnects. The overall scheme of BusConnects in Galway needs to be further reaching first time around and bring more communities into the realm of sustainable transport change.

In essence it may be that traffic volumes in the inner city reduce at given periods of time. However, the Preliminary Design reports states that traffic volumes will increase at junctions adjoining the scheme. The reality of this is that roads leading to the inner city will see greater traffic volumes of motor traffic. This will make cycling more challenging and less safe. **Cyclists have no safe route to the 1km long or so quality bus corridor in the inner city.** The delivery of a **segregated or quiet high quality access route for cyclists to the city centre from any major residential origin does not exist** and the current GTS is outdated.

This translates to a significant barrier for people to feel safe to cycle into the inner core of Galway City regardless of how close they live to it. The vast majority of roads adjacent to the inner city will become more hostile with multilane and in cases multilane one-way streets. Or they may be too narrow, due to widening of footpaths and providing for on street parking, and full of slow-moving traffic, hence no capacity for cyclists.

We may well have a few nice streets in the inner city, however with the increase in pedestrianisation, dominance of one-way streets and new plazas **navigating around the inner core is time consuming on long unnecessary routes for cyclists.** We will not see families visiting the city like our European Counterparts in their medieval and historic towns/cities. This is because many will not see the space for them to safely do so from their homes to the centre.

Submission issue from GCCN (i), (ii) and (v) from 09 GCCN, safety, priority and space for cyclists and pedestrians

With increased space and priority at junctions and crossings, such as Zebra crossings, we will see walking and cycling growing in popularity all year round. The cyclists and pedestrians should not face long waiting times at shared spaces.

How can this be measured and ensured appropriate balance of quality of service is given to them in the design?

Footpaths and existing waiting areas at junctions are already overcrowded. It is accepted that BusConnects will increase footpath widths however this will come with a cost to cyclists and pedestrians in different ways. **Cyclists will lose road space** and they are often forced onto shared spaces to transition at junctions. This is not an acceptable compromise. The plans also propose many new shared spaces. However, with greater priority to cyclists and pedestrians this should not be the case. **Motor traffic** lanes are receiving **perceived upgrades** in the form of filter lanes for turning and multilane roads while **cyclists and pedestrians are losing space** in parallel in places. GCCN do not agree with the balance in delivery of some of these upgrades and ask for review of same to rebalance and improve connectivity of some isolated shared or segregated cycle spaces as well as small, shared areas at junctions. Or indeed the potential provision of segregated cycle tracks instead of stagnant on street parking.

Cyclists and pedestrians alike want to maintain progress. Often pedestrians do not wait for their designated crossing time. While cyclists may cross when a break in traffic comes and 'make up' their own routes through car parks, along footpaths, on the wrong side of the road or cycle lane/track. They may be adult cyclists or cyclists with children. They do this to keep moving and avoid traffic jams where there is no space to filter or to avoid crossing at a junction that may take up to 5-7 minutes (e.g., Kirwan Junction). Many do not want to be alongside lorries or buses. They simply do not feel safe on the road in line with traffic. GCCN urge you to **provide for greater segregation** from motor traffic and at junctions to **move away from shared spaces** as they are not appropriate for more than a couple of users at any one time. With time more will choose to cycle and walk in the vicinity of the city and these shared spaces will be overcrowded. Considering more **people are wearing headphones** and there will be **groups of 2** or more walking/waiting in opposite sides of the road it is not safe to mix cyclists with pedestrians.

The **impact of poor weather** on cyclists and pedestrians should be considered and **increased priority** at junctions and on routes (e.g., segregation) should be provided. It is unclear what **duration of waiting times and quality of service cyclists** will have when the scheme is delivered. In addition, the hierarchy of road users should reflect **increased priority** for some particularly given the proximity of the residential communities to employment/health care/education etc in the city centre. GCCN ask that cyclists and pedestrians are given **greater priority at traffic lights, junctions and roads in terms of waiting times and space compared to previously delivered recent upgrades and shown in proposed plans**. Can further review be made towards this goal?

General comment on raised tables proposed by the scheme:

These second as crossing points. Generally, at desire lines for pedestrians. The pedestrian is not given priority over traffic despite this being in the core of the city. **Suggest** that a formal clear strategy is made to give priority to pedestrians in the form of **Zebra Crossings** at points where pedestrians are invited to cross by design, if motor traffic is relatively low within the scheme this balance is appropriate especially at times when pedestrians are crossing roads during the daytime.

Resolution of issues for cyclists and pedestrians at junctions once commissioned

From recent experience of the Kirwan Junction upgrade on the Headford Road pedestrians and cyclists have to wait long periods of time to get a few seconds to cross a half stage of an arm on the junction. This has resulted in many cyclists and pedestrians using their own judgement to cross when they see an opportunity. Adding to this the conditions when one must wait in cold, windy, dark, freezing or wet days/nights. It seems unfair to pedestrians and cyclists to have such long periods of time between

crossing times in contrast to what motor traffic waits. There is potential for adjustment however no engagement toward reviewing or improving this matter has come from TII or Galway City Council since Kirwan Junction was commissioned.

Shared areas were made larger at Kirwan after many requests were made prior to completion of the design and consideration was given to turning radii of bikes and comfortable passing distance as well as two-way cycle track. However, it must be noted that extraordinary efforts were invested by voluntary members of the public and myself to reach some improvements.

At the time of design for Kirwan Junction a Zebra Crossing was requested under improvements via consultation on the local road, Coolough Road, as part of the Kirwan project. Moreover, no Zebra Crossing was considered and no plan for same since. This is on a raised table for a local road adjacent to a residential community. The logic for not providing for increased priority for pedestrians at this location is not clear to me. **GCCN ask for improved engagement and delivery of the hierarchy of road users in the BusConnects process during and post-delivery** between the public, key stakeholders and cycle groups.

In the case of Kirwan Junction, a second opportunity for pedestrian and cyclists to cross for a few seconds should be given at all costs. The junction balance at Kirwan Junction seems to favour flow of motor traffic excessively. We trust that this will not be repeated in BusConnects at any of the major junctions for example where motor traffic gets two sequences of green lights to everyone pedestrian green half stage crossing at an arm of a junction.

The placement of some signposts are not ideal at present at Kirwan Junction nor are the level differences between cycle lane and footpath as the design is not consistent and the transition from shared space where everything is at the same level to segregated is too sharp. In different lights and levels of awareness of cyclists (particularly new cyclists like visiting students) some have had bad falls from bikes and pedestrians' trips on the level difference at segregated start points. To date no changes have been made at Kirwan despite reporting of issues.

GCCN are fearful of how issues such as this will be treated with future infrastructure if changes are at the cost of taking a few seconds from motor traffic travel times in favour of pedestrians and cyclists. **How does the NTA propose to manage this matter in conjunction with Galway City Council and TII where necessary?**

Routing, desire lines and cycle access map in Galway City

Cyclists travel along convoluted routes to follow the network of one-way streets that have been designed to route motor traffic in and out of the city. All the while cyclists have not been considered or given short safe permeability alternatives to network into, through or around the city. GCCN fear the effect of narrowing streets, which is recommend by DMURS, to create a lower speed environment as this will further reduce the space for cyclists to make safe progress in standing traffic and will leave less space if we are overtaken by motor traffic like buses, delivery trucks or private traffic. Where streets are narrowed, and it is along a key/primary cycle route especially where traffic will be queuing an alternative cycle route or segregated route should be provided. GCCN does not believe this has happened. Greater planning of a cycle network in tandem with BusConnects is needed to understand how cyclists access the city centre and travel through it. There is potential to designate some streets quieter streets suitable for safer cycling away from delivery lorries, buses and private traffic.

A cycle access map for Galway City should be produced as part of BusConnects. This could highlight quiet streets and show routes that cross the city centre from all sides and intersect at key central and orbital locations. It is short sighted of the current BusConnects plan to simply consider existing bus

routes, access for private cars, shopping trip attractors and deliveries. It should deliver a planned upgraded access and connectivity map that links schools, shops, playgrounds, healthcare, education, large employment locations etc together with quiet routes, link permeability to trails and safe cycle routes where cyclists can maintain progress without having to use busy narrow public footpaths or convoluted routes for access. Sensitive signposting or ground marking of such routes may be part of delivering the routes to help people new to the city around it.

Submission issue – general traffic calming through sharing 3m wide traffic lanes which have been narrowed by the scheme.

Where the footpath has been built out to reduce overall road width or calm traffic there will be a new risk to cyclists of all ages as busses, lorries and cars will likely overtake many cyclists in the city shared street. During the delivery hours of 10am-1pm there is a considerable increase in the risk to cyclists with delivery lorries operating in the 3 hours window and as they begin to enter and exit the restriction zones at the start and end.

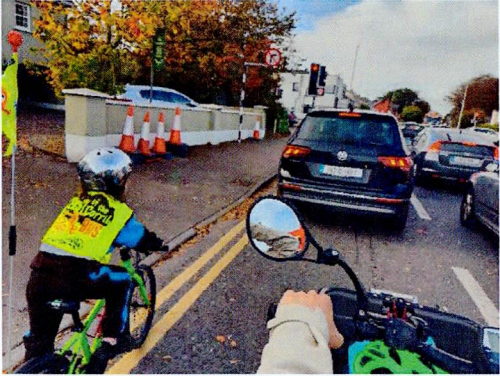

There will inevitably be traffic queuing and cyclists will be forced to wait in line, both inside and outside the scheme. This issue needs to be addressed and mitigated at junctions and approach to junctions. This will most likely result in cyclists opting for their perceived safer and quicker option of cycling on footpaths to reach the top of a junction and cross it potentially. All these movements are unsafe and undesirable for everyone.

The result of traffic queuing on 3m wide roads will cause reduced **air quality** for pedestrians. This will also have a significant negative impact on cyclists who are directly behind motor traffic that in many cases will emit toxic fumes and dioxins that are harmful to humans who are waiting to progress on their cycle trip.

Is it expected that motor traffic, buses/lorries/delivery vans/private cars will stay in line behind a cyclist and vice versa in the inner city where lane widths have been reduced and speeds to be 30km/hr?

Experience of cycling in Galway City and in Ireland in general suggests that motorists will overtake cyclists where at all possible. Regardless of if they are finishing their trip in a few meters or turning off the main road ahead. Driver behaviour needs to be addressed in tandem with reducing speed limits and changing the engineering design of the street/road.

- Who will take responsibility to manage this messaging in a timely manner?
- What penalties will there be where motorists are compromising the safety and enjoyment of cyclists within this scheme?
- What additional measures can be taken to actively manage the issue of cyclists being overtaken who are progressing at a reasonable speed?

	
<p>Lack of capacity to filter – consideration of effect at junctions needs to be planned for</p>	<p>Consideration of queueing at end of delivery hours and conflicts with bus/lorries for cyclists wanting to progress.</p>

Inner city access routes and goods delivery routes

BusConnects may well reduce the volume of private traffic in the core of Galway city as the scheme simply redirects traffic out and around the core of the city onto the Inner-City Access Route or City Centre Access Network. In fact, at peak during the Delivery Hours of BusConnects there may be an increase in heavy goods vehicles within the scheme at that time. This poses an increased risk to cyclists who share the road with such large vehicles. There does not seem to be any analysis of this scenario. Greater planning of routing of delivery vehicles should be part of BusConnects. Restriction to certain roads should be considered as a cycle access map for Galway City is generated as part of the project so too should a delivery access map be presented. Highlighting the different routes will lead to natural segregation of cyclists to preferred quiet direct routes into the city from all key origins/residential communities and through the core. This would reduce the need for cyclists to cross the River Corrib several times in one round trip or travel along multi lane roads. This approach will also lead to Galway being a more friendly walking and cycling city for residents and not just tourists living temporarily in the city centre.

The Inner-City Access Route or City Centre Access Network will see significant traffic increases, as is stated in the report. This will continue until such time as a restructured reliable alternative mass transport system is delivered for all communities to network in and across the city. However, BusConnects Cross-City Link based on the outdated model of 2017 GTS will not assist with modal shift for many who currently use a private car to access or cross the city in the near future. Residents North of the city, along the Headford Road or indeed the many that travel into Galway along the N84, to connect to work, education or amenity locations do not have an inviting alternative to choose from going forward. They will all continue to use the private car. This is also in line with the poor modal shift in the modelling for the GTS.

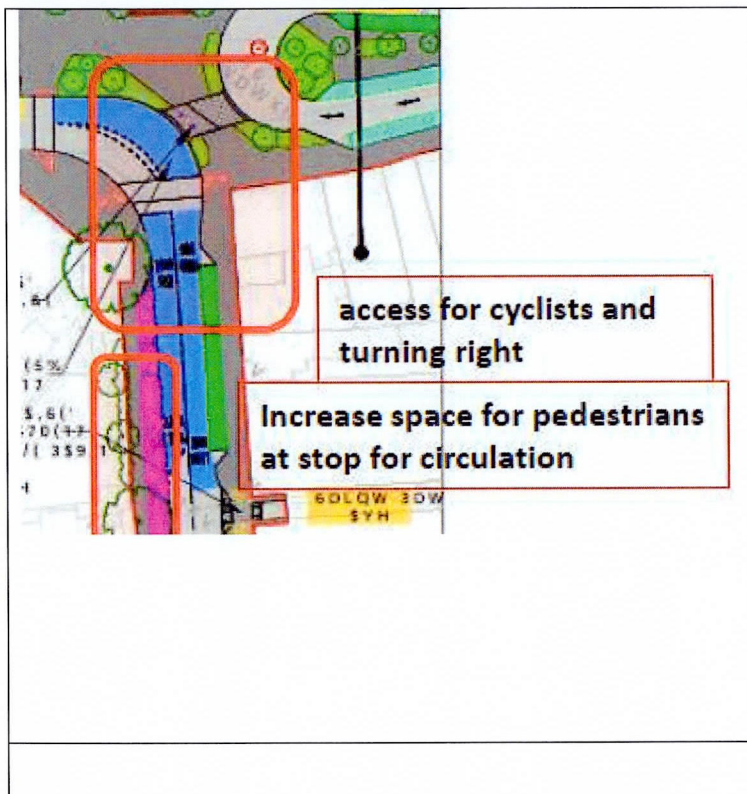
Bus Stops, road safety audit and submission from Shane Cosgrove (19) issue (i) and (ii)

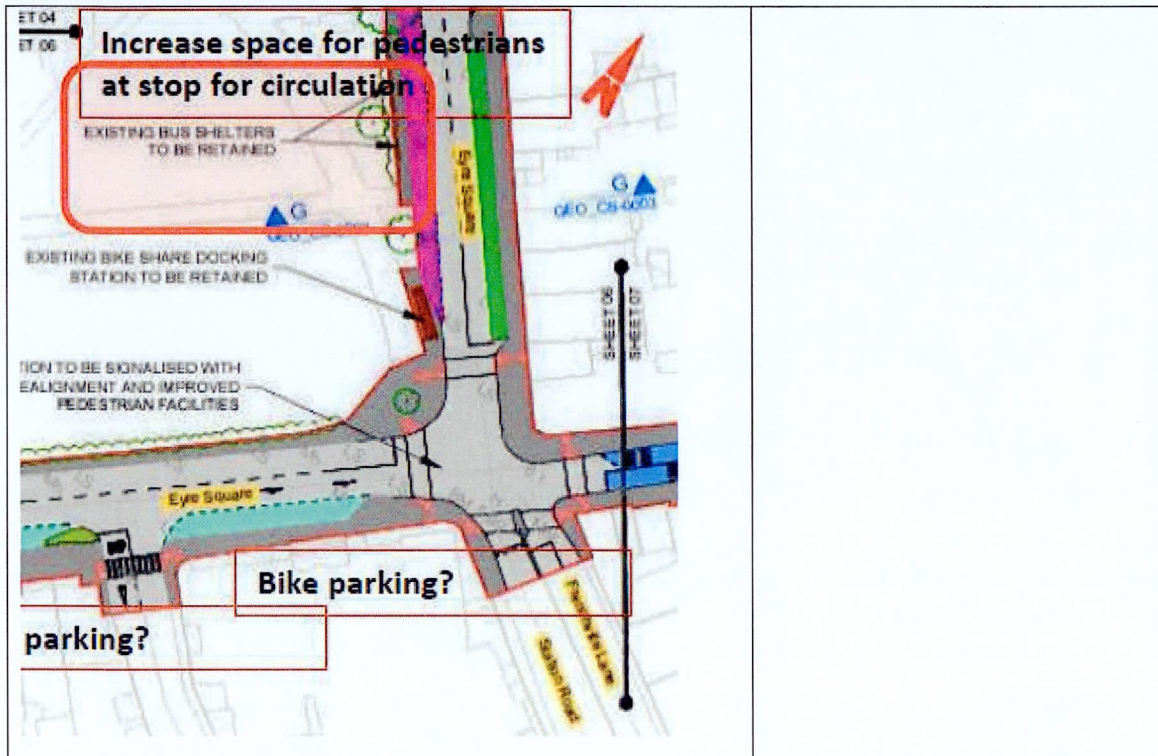
Greater consideration should be given for improved quality of service of cycle routes and safety of vulnerable road users at the following locations of the scheme and in general across the scheme.

Bus stops should be staggered more such that cyclists can pass if the possibility arises and would not be prohibited by two buses stopped at the same time in opposite directions – for example in Woodquay and at the Cathedral bus stops are directly opposite one another on a busy route. The stops should be staggered at such locations. Consideration to cycle bypasses should be given at these locations.

Waiting areas in the city centre at connecting areas – this issue was raised in the road safety audit carried out on behalf of GCC however no change to the design followed despite the issue of narrow footpaths being highlighted.

There is a general lack of welcoming waiting areas at bus stops. Footpaths are narrow and waiting areas are confined. If more people are to wait for a bus we will see greater mix in users waiting for buses at stops. They may be in wheelchairs, have buggies, have scooters etc. There is a lack of space for circulation and a feeling of confinement in many locations. Eyre Square, some Headford Road stops and Newcastle Road close to the hospital for example.

 <p>access for cyclists and turning right</p> <p>Increase space for pedestrians at stop for circulation</p>	<p>The safety review for the Cross City link requested that bus stops be set back further from the kerb and greater circulation space be given at some bus stops in Eyre Square. It also noted that there were discontinuous/lack of clear access routes approaching the bus stops due to upstands for example of trees.</p> <p>The space at the bus stops and access to the stops proposed at the Northeast side of Eyre Square needs review as greater number will use the bus. More space is needed for safety and to make the space inviting</p>
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Bus waiting areas are still too narrow at Eye Square for circulation of pedestrians. This was highlighted in the Road Safety Audit with particular reference to the area opposite St Patricks Ave. More footpath width and waiting areas are required. If passenger numbers are to increase, then this is critical for overall safety and reaching design standards. Little effort is made to overcome pinch points at areas where trees and raised planting/landscaping are restricting the flow of pedestrians along desire lines. See southeast end of Eye Square.

Bus stops on Newcastle Road are in need of urgent upgrade and locating in more appropriate areas such that users are safe, cyclists are accommodated, and traffic flow is maintained in a calm manner.

Junctions – intuitive design for all users – several submissions raise the issue of safe cycle routes and shared space of cyclists with traffic and or pedestrians.

Concerns has been raised that many of the junctions in the plans, for example at the Huntsman/Wellpark or the College Road/Lough Atalia, lack intuition for many users. Many of the transition points to and from shared spaces, cycle lanes/track or the road are

- poorly connected,
- have tight geometry,
- lack sufficient space and
- consideration for the safe movement or waiting of people travelling by bike or pedestrians.

The response from GCC does not go far enough to address or improve aspects of the current design that are of concern in an overall sense as well as at specific locations that have been mentioned.

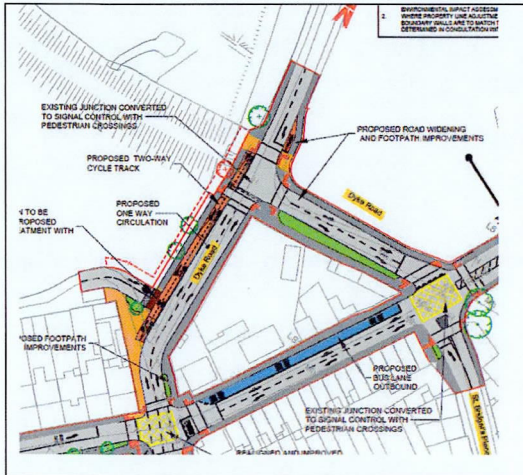
GCCN fear that such transition spaces are not capable of safely catering for more than a couple of people at a time. We are at a point in planning where **adequate capacity and redundancy** should be built into the design of all spaces for large numbers of pedestrians and cyclists, particularly in the city centre. Considering the projected population growth for Galway City is an additional 34,000 people by 2031, to a total of 115,000 people.

For example, at Woodquay more could be delivered with improved transition to and from the Headford road from the south road at Woodquay. At the **Dyke Road** cyclists are expected to cross to the Plots via a sharp right turn at the base of the old railway embankment. Both the Dyke Road and Woodquay have segregated cycleways that are poorly connected directly to potential routes from the end/start of the segregated area. Further examples of poor linkage/transitions/unfavourable shared spaces for cyclists and pedestrians/

- South end of Dyke segregated cycleway not linked to Headford Road and narrow path at junction – provide more space on path
- North end of Dyke Road poor direct access to segregated cycleway - allow cyclist to connect directly to two-way cycle track at plots and dyke road and vice versa. Provide priority for cyclists
- Introduction of new Multi lane intercity access route without segregation on Dyke Road – provide segregated cycle tracks
- Cannot link from Eglinton St to Woodquay south end segregated cycle way. – provide contraflow
- Cyclists on the one-way street of St Brendan’s Ave cannot link into Woodquay safely due to small section of road on Eyre St one way – allow contraflow
- North end of Woodquay not well linked to Headford Road outbound or Waterside Road – should have cycle track/lane at junction instead of shared space
- Waterside Road should provide contraflow connecting the back of Court House to The Plots Lane way at Riverside Road.
- Connectivity at College Road junction to and from quiet ways confusing and many filter lanes. Considering this is on the inner-city network route greater priority and connectivity should be given to cyclists to transition this busy junction with intuition.

The introduction of a multilane one-way triangular roundabout around the Dyke Road is not friendly towards cyclists as lane widths are narrowed and there is no segregation. These roads will see a

significant increase in traffic as per the Preliminary Report and is on the Inner-City Access Route. It should have segregation for cyclists, there is space for it on all sides.



Cyclists lack facilities on Inner City Access on one way multi lane roads, access from **Dyke Rd to Plots cycle track** design tight and low priority access. Lanes narrow – no space for filtering. Should have segregation for cyclists and advance start waiting areas for cyclists.

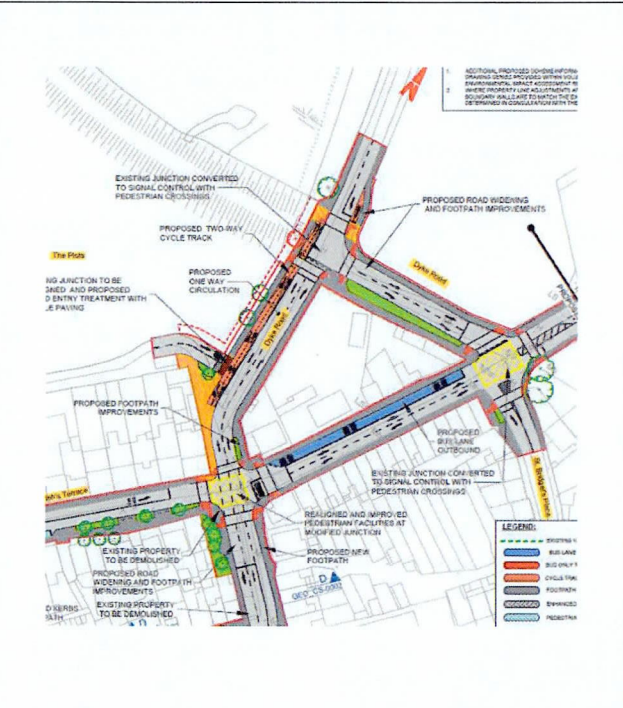
Desire lines from **College Road** to off road short cut behind **Huntsman** to access the Old Dublin Road is poor and lacks intuition. Cyclists would like to avoid the right turn at Wellpark earlier if possible. Access to dropped kerbs limited for cyclists who want to use permeability routes coming from Lough Atalia/College Road.

Little consideration and priority for cyclist accessing the city from the Dyke Road. Not all cyclists will use the Plots route.

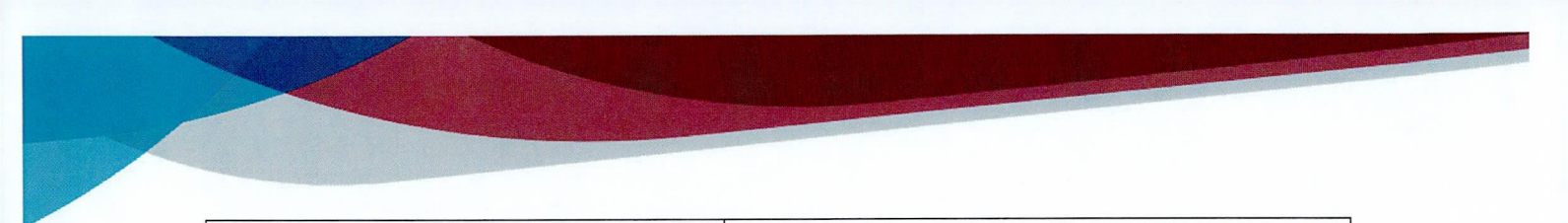
How do cyclists connect from the cycle track on Lough Atailia Road to and from College Road with continuity or having to be demoted to shared space/pedestrian light crossing style?

Dyke Road

Space to wait for cyclists to turn right toward the Plots from the Dyke Road, (inbound) adjacent to the Dyke Road Carpark, is too small. There does not seem to be enough space for several bikes to wait it traffic is moving forward from behind. Considering families often use the dyke road or groups of children, young cyclists or cargo bike users need to turn. More space to wait safely and turn is needed.



Turns around some of the junctions onto and off of cycle lanes/road crossings are very tight for some **cargo bikes to safely make a turn**. With a few cyclist or cargo bikes and cyclist mixing with pedestrians waiting to turn or cross. It is not ideal. More space for circulation is needed at these



junctions for cyclist and pedestrian to avoid conflicts.	
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Shared areas

The BusConnects Cross City Link presents excessive use of shared areas for cyclists and pedestrians. This is particularly evident at junctions and transition areas throughout the scheme. Cyclists move for sections of segregation, to shared spaces and to mixed traffic flow. There is space in many cases to better design these areas for safer movement of people cycling and pedestrians. GCCN strongly urge An Board Pleanála to issue instruction that the design and space for pedestrians and cyclists be reevaluated to make the scheme safer. Further GCCN request that use of the Draft National Cycle Manually be used to improve design principals in this key piece of infrastructure for Galway City and its people.

Cyclists and scooter users will end up moving in unpredictable patterns around pedestrians. This is intimidating for pedestrians, creates confusion and is a hazard for all users. They many become frustrated and transition from footpath to on road creating a hazard for themselves and other road users.

Cyclists and pedestrians of all ages and levels of ability prefer to be segregated from each other.

The current National Cycle Manual (2009) states explicitly that such facilities should be avoided as far as possible:

1.9 Pedestrians and Cyclists

Urban design of town and city centres should aim for the optimum pedestrian Quality of Service consistent with the overall traffic plan. Shared facilities between pedestrians and cyclists generally result in reduced Quality of Service for both modes and should not be considered as a first option.

1.9.3 Shared Facilities

Shared facilities are disliked by both pedestrians and cyclists and result in reduced Quality of Service for both modes. With the exception of purpose-designed shared streets, shared facilities should be avoided in urban areas as far as possible.

Conflicts should be reduced in the design between cyclists and pedestrians. Greater space in needed in cases at junctions for the safe connection of cyclists to the next part of their route. This would benefit all road users and would mirror the hierarchy of road users.

Follow the release of **extracts from the Draft National Cycle Manual (Feb 2023)** recently it clearly states that **“Footpaths should be clearly separated from cycle lanes and tracks wherever practicable”**.

Separation between Pedestrians and Cycle Users

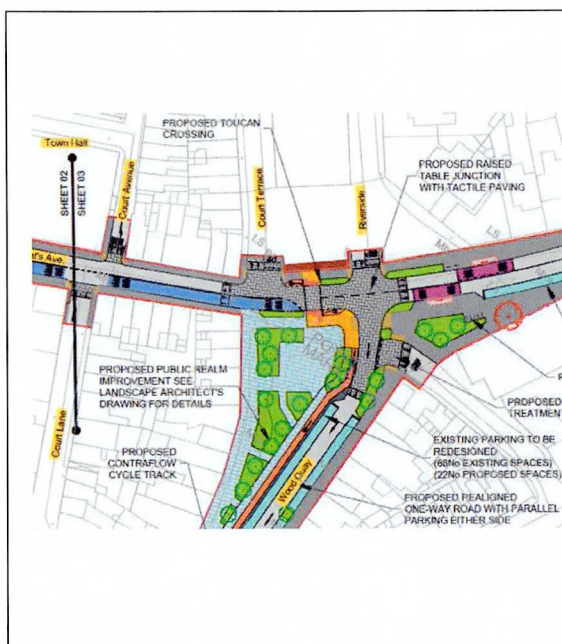
Footpaths should be clearly separated from cycle lanes and tracks wherever practicable. This reduces potential conflicting movements between pedestrians and cycle traffic and provides a more comfortable facility for all users.

The preferred and most easily detectable form of separation is a change in level between the footpath and cycle surfaces of minimum 60mm. This allows people who are blind, or vision impaired to detect the change in level. It is important that designers consider the legibility of the segregation kerb/upstand for pedestrians; legibility can be increased by having a strong colour contrast between the adjacent surfaces.

The kerb between the footpath and cycle track is typically vertical but use of splayed kerbs should be considered to make the inside edge of the cycle track more forgiving to cyclists.

Where pedestrians need to cross the cycle facility (e.g. to access bus stops or at pedestrian crossings), there should be suitable gaps in vertical segregation elements and kerbs upstands, and dropped kerbs and tactile paving provided at the interface between the footpath and the cycle facility. The decision on whether to provide informal or formal crossings of the cycle facility should be based on pedestrian and cyclist flows (one-way/two-way) and the width of the cycle facility.

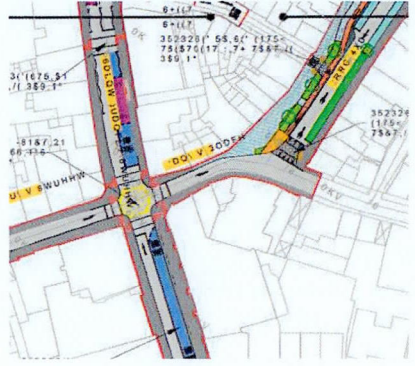
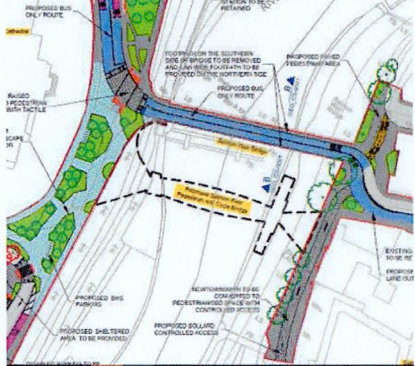
Shared areas and their use by cyclists in the plans seem unclear to me and at times when there are a few pedestrians waiting or walking that there is too much potential for conflict either at tight corners of junctions or as cyclists transition through a plaza like Newtownsmith/Cathedra Plaza/Woodquay in either direction for example.



Woodquay:

Cyclists exit from cycleway to cross Headford road and turn right or left should be improved. **Suggest** allowing for cycle lane to come to the head for Woodquay side road. Doing this will allow for confident cyclists to avoid having to cycle on a shared footpath space at a junction where there are two areas at the corner where pedestrians will be waiting to cross. It is **unnecessary to force all cyclist onto the path** as the road into woodquay side road is one-way (inbound) for traffic.

There is space to bring the cycle track on the side road to meet the main Headford road.

	<p>stagger bus stops further to allow cyclists to pass standing bus safely or provide cycle bypass</p>
	
<p>Full connection with cycle lane on Woodquay to Headford road needed and avoid shared space clashes.</p> <p>Many cyclists would like to connect from Eglington St to Woodquay without having to go to Court House traffic lights/’Out and around’. Dalys Pl lacks contraflow for cyclists to connect to the outbound cycletrack in Woodquay that seems to be of limited use in the present design as nobody can cycle to the start of the cycletrack. It is great to have the cycletrack in woodquay but it needed to be better connected all around.</p>	<p>Access to and from both Plazas at new pedestrian bridge and travel north/south unclear.</p>

Following the recent opening of the new shared pedestrian and cycle bridge over the River Corrib adjacent to the Salmon Weir bridge some residents in Galway have expressed grave concern over the confusion and sharing of space on this new piece of infrastructure, See extract from Galway Advertiser 8th June 2023.

<https://edition.pagesuite-professional.co.uk/html5/reader/production/default.aspx?pubname=&pubid=a2fc81f2-0ccf-4dbf-aca1-00bedf4bde35>

Another article in the City Tribune (Connacht Tribune 6th June 2023) notes the bridge as pointless and connection to and from the bridge at either side is flawed as road traffic restrictions will not permit safe transfer to and from the bridge. The need for clarification of contraflow for cyclists is a key issue at Newtownsmith. While cyclists are forced to exit the shared area at the Cathedral side at one point only – the shared toucan crossing. This will be busy and will not be a safe place for cyclists to continue or start their transfer to/from the bridge.

<https://connachttribune.ie/new-bridge-in-galway-pointless-for-people-on-bicycles/>

New bridge in Galway 'pointless for people on bicycles'

Published 2 days ago on June 6, 2023
By Dara Bradley



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From the Galway City Tribune – An advocate for cycling infrastructure in Galway has labelled the city's newest cycle and pedestrian bridge as 'pointless' for people on bikes travelling from the Cathedral to Newtownsmyth.

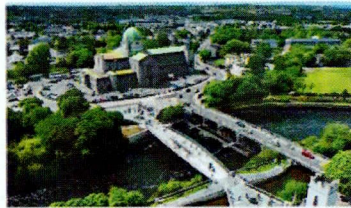
Extract from the Connacht Tribune 6th June 2023.

No cyclepath markings on the new bridge

Dear Editor

I very much welcomed the news that Galway City Council had unveiled the new Pedestrian/Cyclist bridge over the river Corrib – a move that I had assumed would improve connections for all road users and would somewhat alleviate the strain on the existing Salmon Weir Bridge which for many years has been a precarious bridge to cross (with pedestrians, cyclists, cars and buses all vying for room).

As a regular cyclist, I was particularly interested to see how the new bridge would be safely segregated for its intended users (pedestrians and cyclists) and where the cycle path



would be on the bridge.

Anyone who has viewed the new bridge will have ascertained that there are currently NO road markings indicating where cyclists should enter or exit the bridge or any sign of a cycle path or road signs. Seriously?

Following on from the recent disastrous/failed

attempt by Galway City Council to improve cycling infrastructure in Salthill, one probably shouldn't be surprised, I sincerely hope that the Council is planning to address these serious omissions and that the bridge was opened in a hurry.

Surely, we Galwegians don't deserve another

flawed, unsafe infrastructure in our city? We can only live in hope that this situation will be urgently resolved.

And as for anyone wishing to safely cross from the Fisheries Field side of the road to access the new bridge, good luck with that. You are reliant on the goodwill of passing motorists to let you cross, or a break in the traffic. Unbelievable that no provision or pedestrian crossing has been created in that regard opposite the cathedral.

Not rocket science one would imagine?

Lower Salthill Cyclist & Pedestrian
(Name and address with editor)

Extract from Galway Advertiser 8th June 2023 in the Letters section.

Shared areas and shared crossings should be replaced with improved segregation and safer flow of people along desire lines and routes. At peak times the footpaths will become busy, and this is no place for people on bicycles to mix with pedestrians of all ages and mobilities. At crossing points where design is poor and does not accommodate desire lines or cyclist are transitioning (see image below) there will be frequent conflict points between cyclists and pedestrians. Careful consideration and improved design is needed throughout the Cross City Link scheme such that this issue is mitigated. The infrastructure will in a whole be substandard for all users if it remains unaddressed.



Cyclists wait on narrow footpath to cross N6 to continue inbound trip on inbound cycle track. Headford Road, N6. Desire line now shows majority of cyclists travel inbound on N6 between Kirwan and Bodkin Junctions.



Cyclists travel inbound on East side of N6 (designated outbound cycle track) to toucan crossing as multistage crossing at Kriwan Junction (to the North) is not user friendly.

Primary conflict for cyclists and assessment

A significant concern for cyclists is indeed left turning traffic. However, greater mitigation of this issue could be better managed with segregation at junctions for cyclists. Can further effort be made to provide same at more junctions.

GCCN note that there are no segregated cycle tracks along College Road and consistency at the Lough Atalia/College Road junction is poor where there is space to provide more segregation as well as connection to the Old Dublin Road/Moneenageisha Junction (point specifically raised in submission for improved design for cyclists to turn left and transition across this specific junction to connect to the quiet path behind the Huntsman).

5.3.2 Cyclists

The provision for cyclists at junctions is a critical factor in managing conflict and providing safe junctions for all road users. The primary conflict for cyclists is with left turning traffic. Along the majority of the Cross City Link this conflict has been reduced through reduction in traffic volumes and removal of general traffic.

As segregated cycle facilities are not proposed along the majority of the Cross City Link, cyclists will share road space with buses and other permitted vehicles. Bicycle detection will be installed at every junction to ensure cyclist priority.

Segregated cycle tracks are proposed along the City Centre Access Network along the College Road and also along Dublin Road at the Moneenageisha and Lough Atalia/College Road junctions. Toucan crossings are proposed to facilitate cyclists to navigate these junctions.

Flow and access for cyclists throughout the design

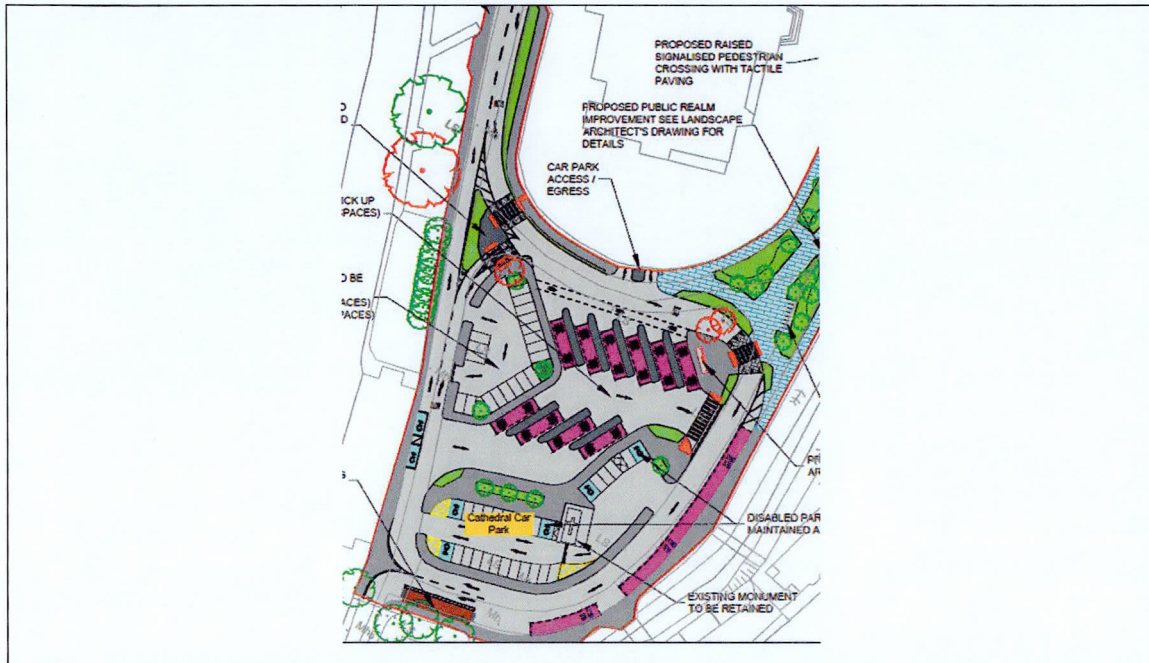
The following areas remain concerns to GCCN in relating to the flow and access for cyclists to and from the roads/junctions/spaces (see attached presentation with highlighted red areas) (as raised in GCCN submission in relation to Cycle Access and cycle safety - shared space)

- Woodquay
- Newtownsmith
- the Plaza at the Cathedral,
- Nuns Island,
- Dyke Road,
- Right turns at junctions such
 - Northeast of Eyre Square
 - University Road and Gaol Rd behind the Cathedral,
 - Bothar na mBan and Prospect Hill,
- Movement through the
 - Bus Gate
 - College Road and Lough Atalia junction
 - Wellpark Junction.

Attached presentation

The attached presentation shows highlighted red areas. Issues not limited to the flow and movement. Issues may also relate to space and segregations for cyclists, bike parking, general access, raised crossings for pedestrians etc.

A pedestrian plaza typically does not facilitate cyclists. In the Docklands specific signage has been put in place to permit cyclists to travel through the pedestrian zone, see below, Shared pedestrian zone. It is prudent that such key elements and access corridors to the medieval core be clear and without restriction.



Concerns were raised about the convoluted route that cyclists will face to access Nuns Island and indeed the lifeline to almost all the city centre/medieval core from the North or East of the city. This was specifically noted by submission (no. 19) Shane Cosgrove issue (iv). The response from GCC does not attempt to create a more direct and safer access route for cyclists. It blames the need to relocate blue badge parking as a primary issue and reason not to investigate the matter further. Greater consideration to the routing of cyclists on this and other long indirect routes needs to be given in the design of the scheme. GCCN urges that the scheme addresses this specific issue and the wider issue of routing of cyclists on one way street/routes that are longer than could otherwise be delivered with more direct planning and priority.

Additional pedestrian crossing points at the South of the Cathedral Parking area are poor and connectivity from footpath to footpath is poor overall.

Long routing – unnecessary for cyclists and should be actioned on through BusConnects

For example to access Middle street or the Public Library on Augustine St a cyclists accessing the city from the Headford Road areas must cross the (1) Salmon Wier bridge and then turn left in front of the cathedral and have to travel longer around the back of the cathedral and turn East again toward the Corrib and snake around the coach parking area as if they are a car before they can finally take the turn to Nuns Island towards St Joseph's Secondary School. It seems illogical to not provide segregated two-way cycling facilities that give a direct route to Nun's Island. Forcing mixing of cyclist with coach parking facilities and the people who access them seems unnecessary.

From there a cyclist must travel down Dominick St and around by the Fire station and cross the (2) Wolf Tone Bridge (now second time to cross the Corrib). We must then travel toward Merchants Road (very hostile multi one way road) along the Inner-City Access Network on a Multi-lane Road with buses, car park access/exits and deliveries before they can turn left to Abbeygate St lower.



The latter is also how those in the West of Galway access the City Library.

For those coming from Eyre Square they must travel along two multi-lane roads – Dock Road and Merchants Road. This is an unacceptable standard of access.

These roads are part of the Inner-City Access Network (Black). They will have increased traffic. The effect of BusConnects must be managed such that it does not create more hostile cycling conditions elsewhere as a by-product of the scheme.

***** A review of access into the city core is needed for cyclists from many key origins. *****

Pedestrian Plazas in general and the design for Newtownsmith

Cycling on a footpath or pedestrian zone

Extract from citizens information

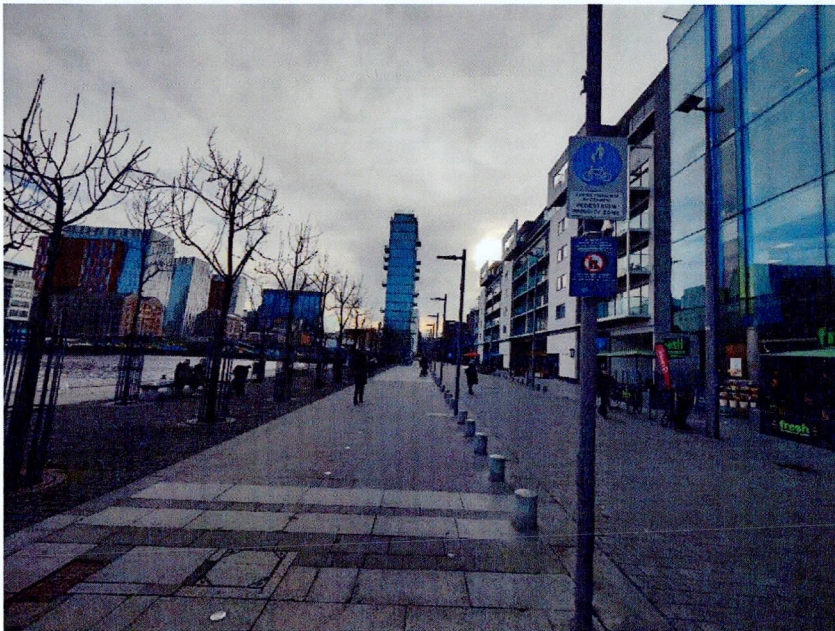
Is it legal to cycle on a footpath?

You are not allowed to cycle on a footpath unless there is a designated cycle lane on the footpath or you are entering or exiting a property. Cycling on a footpath is not a specific fixed charge offence though. However, you could be fined for doing so if a garda deemed their cycling to be without 'reasonable consideration'.

Similarly, you cannot cycle in a pedestrianized area at the designated times unless there is a cycle lane.

There is no designated cycle track/lane shown on the Newtownsmith street, as such GCCN believe the commitment to the provision of two way cycling in Newtownsmith is limited. GCCN notes that there is a one-way access route for motor traffic north bound on Newtownsmith and it may be that cyclists are permitted at given times on this section in this direction only. There does not seem to be adequate safe provision to cyclists in both directions along Newtownsmith. It is not recommended to design shared spaces for pedestrians and cyclists as previously stated from the National Cycle Manual. This is a key quiet access route into the city and to the new shared space bridge south of the Salmon Wire bridge.

Inclusion of green amenity strips shown in drawings is noted. GCCN ask that it be stipulated that grass, flowers, low planting (that is appropriate for management all year round) be made. It should not be acceptable to provide tarmac or concrete that is green in place of soil and grass/planting in these areas. Note Kirwan Junction has some painted green tarmac along the verge where green amenity was shown on planning drawings.



Example of Docklands shared plaza in Dublin.

This area is larger than the plazas in Galway.

There is a clear access route with little clutter.

Fear that there is a lot of green planting planned for at Cathedral Plaza what will reduce space for circulation of people and potential for bikes accessing the

	<p>pedestrian/cycle bridge</p> <p>See signage here. In tandem with lighting pole.</p> <p>Reduces unnecessary poles in layout</p> <p>What is the guidance from the NTA on the use of Plaza's as shared areas and for cyclists to travel through?</p>
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Provision for cyclists in general

A very limited number of cycle parking locations have been shown on drawings. Cycle parking is referred to in the Preliminary Report in subsections. However, such reference is insufficient at this stage of the project as **specific location, quantity and access to same is unknown and no commitment is made for delivery of quality well planned and accessible bike parking.**

In planning and showing bike parking on BusConnects it is evident where cyclists are expected to cycle and from there cyclists can comment on the appropriateness of same. However, a poor attempt to address this issue has been made thus far. With good planning it would also be evident where cyclists can actually safely and legally cycle to and park to shop/study/work/socialise/transition etc.

We ask that a review of parking be carried out and adequate parking be provided for.



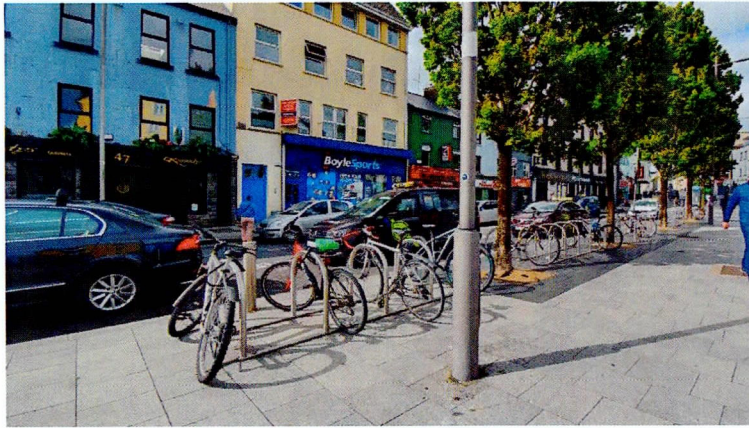
	<p>Cycle parking needs to cater for</p> <p>Good access in and out of the area, safe waiting and away from motor traffic for safety with children. Cater for cargo bikes, space for shopping bags, well designed and spaced Sheffield stands. Control bikes tied to poles and introduce more parking close to amenities in the core of the city.</p> <p>Locations shown are Woodquay (x2) and Bowling Green above</p>
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Cycle parking needs to be close to amenities and shopping streets. Access routes to cycle parking should be considered and how far a cyclist must walk to reach shopping streets. Is provision for crossing points along potential desire lines considered in the plans. Introduce **parklets** and facilities for waste disposal at bike parking.

Poor location of cycle parking shown below due to antisocial behaviour and lack of social passive surveillance. This is located at the North end of Eyre Square Park, see below. There is little through put of people walking in this area despite it being in full display of the public.



Bike parking at the top of Eyre Square adjacent to Eyre St seems to be removed as it is not shown in the plans, see below. This bike parking is well used and well located. This bike parking should be retained and more added in connected locations close to the pedestrian core.



Parking/Taxi/Loading etc issue raised in several submissions

The number of Designated disabled parking spaces are to decrease or be located further away from destination points. In terms of location priority should be given to locating these as close to amenities as possible and priority be given to them over general parking spaces.

Loading bays could become Designated disabled parking outside the hours of the deliveries (10am-1pm). This would be a huge positive effect for disabled users to access the city and shops. These would need marked as designated disabled parking spaces to avoid confusion and show a sign for loading bays for the hours of deliveries.

It remains unclear where taxi bays will be from the drawings. This is an important point and is discussed in the text but needs to be shown on the drawings for greater transparency of use of on street parking and taxi bays.

Parking on streets like **Walsh's Terrace, University Road and College Road** where on street parking is shown – suggest that this be at off peak times and only for residents/permit holders. The general public should use alternative parking. This is prime space that should be dedicated to cycletracks/lanes to make cycling safer and more inviting to support modal shift. This approach would reflect national policy in prioritising sustainable transport modes and be in line with the design guidance in the National Cycle Manual.

Annual Average Daily Traffic counts and Passenger Car Units

Greater transparency is needed in relation to the impact of the scheme at various stages of the process and at different locations. GCC report that traffic counts and passenger car units will reduce a given locations at specific times. The response does not go into sufficient detail to communicate the impact of the scheme on other road users and effectiveness this scheme will have for bus transport both within and outside the scheme. This is an important point as selection of subsequent routes outside the scheme will need to be upgraded in time and data on traffic volumes are needed to inform the transport strategy that is to follow as a result of this scheme.

Request breakdown of vehicle type passing through the (A) core of the city /BusConnects project, (B) along the Inner-City Access Route and (C) Inner City Network for:

(1) current status/do nothing, (2) 1yr after BusConnects and (3) 15yrs after BusConnects.
Carry out the assessment for the hours of: Delivery Operation, Peak am, Peak pm and AADT

- Annual Average Daily Traffic counts (AADT)

- breakdown for delivery vehicles
- breakdown for buses (public and private)
- breakdown for car...other
- Passenger Car Units (PCUs)
 - breakdown for delivery vehicles
 - breakdown for buses (public and private)
 - breakdown for car....other

This information will help assess the impact of the scheme on the roads connecting to the city centre and the inner core itself which will inform the conditions for cyclists at various times at these different locations.

Specific concerns in relation to the design for the safety of cyclists and pedestrians as raised in several submissions at a high level.

- Dropped kerb needed at side lane to St Bridgets Court lower.
- Not enough circulation area at corner of Headford Rd and Bothar na mBan where house to be CPO'ed. There is excessive introduction of planting. With pedestrians waiting to cross there is not enough space for safe circulation considering the price paid to create this space. This will be a busy junction for traffic – need for space to step back and circulate away from kerb.
- Very limited bike parking indicated and many locations across the city core need more dedicated bike parking. Some existing bike parking seems to be removed in the plans with no alternative adjacent locations planned
- Ensure all side access and side roads have raised crossings, see attached presentation
- Plans for scooter parking may be necessary?
- What is the predicted effect on the numbers of taxis operating in the city core during bus connects as a result of the scheme?
- Use of Forgiving/splayed kerbs in design instead of stepped 90 degree edges between footpath and segregated cycle track. Research has shown that these kerbs reduce hazards for cyclists of accidents while still maintaining a delineation between footpath and cycletrack which protects users with mobility or visual impairment.
- The draft National Cycle Manual (Feb 2023) recommends kerb upstand (at the edge of the cycle track) between the road and segregated cycle track. One positive aspect of this segregation between road and cycle track is that it can assist in reducing parking on cycle tracks. However, care in design is needed such that cyclist are considered and can have necessary access/egress from the cycletrack at appropriate locations.
- Potential for scheme to deliver segregated cycle route on Dyke road lower section as this is public land.

Restrictions for motor traffic are creating unnecessary rerouting for cyclists along roads with potential traffic queuing at lights for circulation. For example




- Cyclists will need to turn left and right at Dalys Place.
- Cyclists will want to also travel both directions on Dalys Place
- Cyclists will want to turn right and left on Marys St and go straight.
- Cyclists will want to turn right from Eglinton street onto St Anthony's Pl
- Cyclists will want to cycle both directions on Eyre St
- Will cyclists be permitted to cycle in front of Skeff at Eyre Sq – not shown
- Possibility to turn right from St Brendan's Ave to Woodquay – contraflow?
- Waterside contraflow

- Overall very few cycle symbols on the street

Concerns in relation to shared areas where toucan buttons and waiting areas are designed at junctions

Toucan buttons should be **set back from the kerb** and consideration given as to how cyclists on larger bikes, those with kids on kid seats of bikes, those with buggies etc can **safely reach and activate the toucan button** without having to roll a front wheel onto the road or reach excessively. Also consider the area that the **radar sensor** picks up. The Cyclebus users have many a time lost the slot to cross as the radar does not pick them up as they wait to cross. Those with larger bikes may not be able to wait in the zone immediately at the kerb/road.

Cyclists should not be demoted to rely on use of toucan crossings in the scheme as much as they currently are. There should be greater flow and connectivity for cyclists in the scheme than is presented.

	
	
<p>Above photos from Kirwan Junction Galway City</p>	<p>Above photos from Kirwan Junction Galway City</p>
<p>Access to toucan button not intuitive or located appropriately for safe access for a cyclists</p>	<p>Pedestrians/cyclists may be set back from the waiting areas. This is problematic for the radar to pick up and so they may miss sequence and the radar does not pick them up and cancels the request to cross.</p>

Cargo bike users are set back further from front wheel and so cannot safely reach toucan buttons. Manoeuvring is also difficult with load and angles to get to the button.

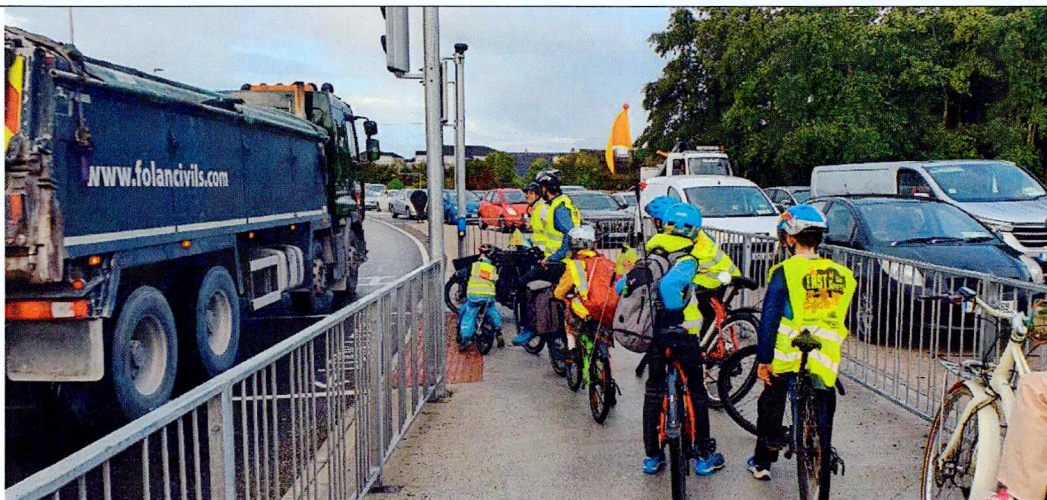
A child may way set back from the kerb and not be in the radar zone. Consideration to pick up more users waiting away from the kerb should be made

Design aspect to consider for toucan buttons: (not limited to this list) position of toucan button, space for passing, consider mixed pedestrians and cyclists, infra-red zone, **new cyclists flat toucan button at Kirwan is poor compared to standard larger pedestrian one**. Audible and tactile feedback is almost non-existent over the humdrum of motor traffic. Requests to increase audio and tactile feedback seem to be ignored. One engineer maintains nearby toucan crossing buttons noted that they have not seen these flat cyclist toucans before and there is no capacity to increase the audio in them. There is little space for error, need for high attention with traffic so close at these crossing points.

Above a young child waits only centimetres from the road. A cyclist often finds it difficult to keep back from the road, activate the button and stay in the radar zone until they get a green light. This may be several minutes with your hand gripping the break and balancing your children in your bike.

For a driver in a motor vehicle, their world of waiting in a car is dramatically different. **Greater consideration and priority** is needed for crossing of pedestrians and cyclists. **BusConnects can make this a priority that is tangible** such that these users feel they are being put first.

See below a **large group of cyclists** on a central waiting island. There is little space for error. **Add into the mix pedestrians** which is often the case, it's difficult for everyone to safely complete the crossing and move forward in the short time allotted. It's not always possible to predict the movements of pedestrians and they may stop or turn suddenly. These scenarios need to be given consideration and more space, time and greater segregation delivered with BusConnects. GCCN wishes to ask that consideration of spared spaces with bikes be reviewed in BusConnects to mitigate any of the above issues.



Above photo from Kirwan Junction Galway City

- Note position of toucan buttons in relation to road and angle of cyclist.
- It is not possible for a cyclist to safely activate the toucan button in many new junction areas at Kirwan.
- Consider different sizes of bikes and ages of riders.

- Note slope of ground towards road.
- Consider of pedestrians were already waiting at the red tactile area. Time to cross is short and often pedestrian do not activate lights, as a result a cyclist cannot reach the lights easily.
- Often pedestrians do not look behind them when waiting or walking so they may not be aware of surrounding cyclists or approaching cyclists from behind.
- Consider if a reduced mobility pedestrian, parent and toddler, parent and buggy, wheelchair user are waiting to cross. The combined movement of cyclists and these users is not at the same pace and not what new infrastructure delivers. There is a greater need for increased segregation and much more space where shared areas are.
- Consideration for waiting areas for different users.
- Consideration is also needed to users on the opposite side of the road who will cross at the same time against the users waiting to cross above.
- All of the above leads to unfavourable shared spaces that are not ideal for users. Considering spends now we must approach shared areas with greater caution and try to design them out of new **infrastructure** and indeed existing infrastructure.



Above photo from Kriwan Junction Galway City

To mitigate the above issues can the design locate the toucan activation buttons at crossings back from the kerb/roadside. This will mean cyclists with non-standard bicycles or carrying children (front or back) will not need to dismount to safely activate the toucan button. Alternatively use an induction loop in the waiting area that does not force the cyclist to wait at the kerb side.

Section 4.7.2 of the National Cycle Manual states that for toucan crossings design

Additional push buttons located for cyclists' convenience – bicycle detection (loops, passive IR etc.) may be more appropriate.



Poor location of toucan activation button – too close to roadside.



Safer location of toucan activation button.

It is important the levels falling to road from path are minimal while allowing for surface drainage.

In addition to the above, GCCN requests an extra public toilet near the new bridge at the Cathedral Plaza as the nearest one in Millenium Park is too far away.

Conclusion

GCCN remain concerned as to how cyclist will manage to cycle into the city while mixed with busses and or deliveries & taxis on 3m wide lanes. They will also be sharing the road for the majority of the route for example along the N84, N6 and Headford Road at the retail parks with increased traffic.

Treatment of access routes to the city for cyclists needs urgent attention and there should be continuous segregated routes from residential communities to the city core and indeed inside the scheme there should be greater segregation.

The above route also needs attention if a quality public mass transport service is to be delivered to the residents on the Headford Road/new No. 7 route. Any increase in frequency will be nullified by the fact that the bus needs to travel in line with traffic accessing the city and its inner-city network/access routes. As such a quality bus corridor together with safer segregated cycle infrastructure is needed for the new No. 7 route.

GCCN asks that further consideration be made to strike a better balance and where possible, removal of on street parking to facilitate cycle lanes or introduce cycle lanes at peak hours over parking spaces, which has been done in Dublin.

It is challenging to consider and believe that vehicles will maintain in line flow for the majority of time. There is little room for error, there is little protection for right turns on many of these 3 m wide streets. Traffic will build up at the end of the delivery hours and it will be difficult for cyclists to maintain forward motion as motor traffic queues at junctions.

Inclusion of contraflow for cyclists along one-way streets is something that needs to be considered where possible. Or introduction of shared streets what permit traffic to enter only from one side thus allowing two-way directional movement of cyclists. This would be of benefit in streets that are narrow with no space for expansion. Deliver a cycle access map in tandem with BusConnects and Delivery Route options.

A recommendation to reduce shared space and areas through greater segregation and flow of cyclists as pre the existing and draft National Cycle Manual.

To conclude GCCN asks that further opportunity be given for refining plans and better serving the needs of communities in different areas of the city. We note that a fee of 50 euro is required to make a submission. This is something that will have put many who would have liked to engage briefly with the plans off from doing so.

Once again, we welcome the introduction of BusConnects to Galway and understand the urgency for delivery of a sustainable modal shift option from the private car. GCCN would like that the plan presented reach further to connect to communities and that the source of trips be addressed for peak hours, such as schools, as these transport users are more vulnerable and generally do not travel alone at a young age. Many dropping/collecting then go on to make more trips to and from schools throughout the day. There is a noticeable difference in peak traffic on rat run routes on days when schools are off. Addressing this is key to reducing some of the peak traffic on any road in Galway. This will lead to less hostile streets and roads in our city and close to schools.