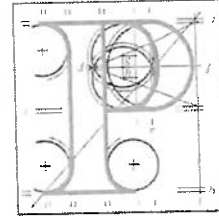


Our Case Number: ABP-316272-23



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Diarmuid McGuinness
2 Auburn Villas
Rathgar
Dublin 6
D06 EC91

Date: 24 April 2024

Re: Bus Connects Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme
Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above-mentioned proposed road development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

Please note that the proposed road development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it or approved it with modifications.

If you have any queries in the mean time, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board at laps@pleanala.ie

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

Yours faithfully,

Eimear Reilly
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737184

HA02

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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Kevin McGettigan

From: Eimear Reilly
Sent: Monday 8 April 2024 12:38
To: Kevin McGettigan
Subject: FW: ABP-316272-23 Response to Submission of the NTA to ABP on the 23rd December 2023

From: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 3:32 PM
To: Eimear Reilly <e.reilly@pleanala.ie>
Subject: FW: ABP-316272-23 Response to Submission of the NTA to ABP on the 23rd December 2023

From: Diarmaid McGuinness SC [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, March 28, 2024 1:08 PM
To: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Subject: ABP-316272-23 Response to Submission of the NTA to ABP on the 23rd December 2023

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

Case Reference Number ABP-316272-23

28th March 2024

An Bord Pleanála (Strategic Infrastructure Division),

64 Marlborough Street,

Dublin 1

D01 V902

laps@pleanala.ie

Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme

FROM DIARMAID MCGUINNESS of 2 AUBURN VILLAS, RATHGAR DUBLIN 6

Dear Sir or Madam,

As provided for under section 217B of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, and in accordance with your letter dated 23 February 2024, Diarmaid Mc Guinness wishes to make a further submission to An Bord Pleanála (ABP) in relation to the submission dated 20th December 2023 received from the National Transport Authority (NTA).

I refer to my earlier submission to the Bord.

1. I do not consider that the submission responds substantively to Part 2 of my earlier submission at paras 2.1,3.1,4.1 and paras 4.1 to para 10.1. about the failure to consider and assess reasonable alternatives, as required by law.

I would further comment as follows.

The NTA during the public consultation phases held separate consultations on the Busconnects Core Bus Corridor (CBC) 10 Tallaght/Tempoogue and Core Bus Corridor (CBC) 12 Rathfarnham. When applying to ABP both CBCs were inexplicably merged, given the resultant implications, and sent forward to planning which means that all buses from both the Rathfarnham area and the Tempoogue area will be sent through Rathgar and Rathmines. While the NTA keep stating that the Busconnects Infrastructure design changes which are being considered by planning are separate to the Busconnects Network redesign, in fact the merging of these two bus corridors and as a direct result their high volumes of buses, will have an even greater impact on the roads and the public realm of the Rathgar area. Just one of these bus corridors and its volume of high frequency buses directed through Rathgar would be appropriate to meet commuter demand and bus volumes could be tweaked as required in operating service. To add to the issue, the NTA have commenced a new bus service, Busconnects Orbital S4 route, along Highfield Road in Rathgar which is causing issues for residents along Highfield Road. The high frequency of these buses is already having an impact of clogging the system in Rathgar even before the Rathfarnham and Tempoogue proposed bus corridors are introduced.

Combining the bus volumes of the Rathfarnham and Tempoogue proposed bus corridors, two distinctly separate corridors as presented during the NTA's public consultation phase, at Terenure Cross and forcing that combined volume of buses down Terenure Road East and into Rathgar is a burden too great for the Rathgar area to take. Instead, one of these bus corridors should have been sent down Terenure Road North/Harolds Cross Road which is the original route of the Rathfarnham Quality Bus Corridor and the other corridor should have been directed through Rathgar. The NTA's proposals submitted to ABP results in an overloading and overburdening of buses through Rathgar and the stripping of a high frequency bus service along Terenure Road North/Harolds Cross Road which was the route of the Rathfarnham QBC into the city centre.

One of the key issues referred to by the NTA above as '*20. Routing of buses via Terenure Road North and Harold's Cross*' that the Rathgar Residents Association and indeed many residents have pointed out since the initial stages of the NTA's public consultation process and which the NTA initially ignored and are now trying to make poor excuses for in their submission is that the NTA, from the very start of the Busconnects planning process/route selection stage, ruled out the Terenure Road North/Harolds Cross Road as a possible route due to the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) and this remains an indisputable issue which remains to be adequately answered.

The statements below come directly from the CBC Feasibility Study and Options Assessment Report, Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor (commenced in 2016 and completed in December 2017, conducted by DBFL Consulting Engineers and Transportation Planners on behalf of their client, the National Transport Authority of Ireland):

'6.1.3 The Clongriffin – Tallaght BRT is of particular relevance to section 2 of the Rathfarnham CBC route. The CBC route should complement the BRT service but should not duplicate the potential routing of the Clongriffin – Tallaght BRT route, which is likely to travel via the Harold's Cross corridor as per the Transport Strategy for the GDA (2016 – 2035) and identified in Figure 1.2 of this report'

'4.4.29 It should be noted that in the case of route options which converge with other CBC, BRT or other public transport corridors the residential and employment population served by these different corridors have been deducted to avoid duplication of population figures.'

As the BRT has now been replaced by the Busconnects Project, then the methodology for the Rathfarnham Busconnects Core Bus Corridor route selection through Rathmines and Rathgar Villages is based on considerations and constraints that no longer exist i.e. that Rathfarnham Busconnects route selection should not 'duplicate' the potential routing of the BRT.

The NTA are now trying to cover their tracks on page 148 of the NTA's submission dated 20th December 2023 by stating:

*'The primary reason for this is the significantly stronger demand for bus along the Rathgar Road / Rathmines Road when compared to Harold's Cross Road. This route corridor serves the urban village of Rathmines, which is a significant trip attractor on southern side of the city. **The strength of the high demand for bus in Rathmines compared to Harold's Cross Road is clearly evident from the extracts from the Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign Revised Proposal (October 2019) presented in Figure 4.27 and Figure 4.28.** The patronage shown in Figure 4.27 is based on existing bus services.'*

The NTA's submission also states on Page 147 that *'Section 3.4.1.1.2.2 of Chapter 3 Reasonable Alternatives of Volume 2 of the EIAR identifies that consideration of the routing the corridor along Harold's Cross Road: Option of the CBC following Harold's Cross Road and connecting to the Kimmage to City Centre CBC. The primary reason that this option has not been progressed is the significantly stronger demand for bus along the Rathgar Road / Rathmines Road when compared to Harold's Cross Road. This route corridor serves the urban village of Rathmines, which is a significant trip attractor on southern side of the city. The strength of the high demand for bus in Rathmines compared to Harold's Cross Road is clearly evident from the extracts from the Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign Revised Proposal (October 2019)'*

The Combined Activity Density Map presented in Figure 4.28 of the Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign Revised Proposal (October 2019) referred to in the extract from the NTA's submission dated 20th December 2023 above **based its data on the Central Statics Office Census 2011 data and the Busconnects Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) uses extracts from the Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign Revised Proposal (October 2019)** on which to base its analysis on demand in Rathmines versus the Harolds Cross Road. The report states that *'Combined Activity Density (population, employment, and student enrolment density) indicates the total level of daily activity in an area, as most trips begin or end at a residence, workplace, commercial, or educational establishment.'* Combined Activity Density Maps are very important at establishing real time requirement for public transport for an area rather than Daily Bus Patronage which is based on service levels available to an area rather than services required. The arguments set out in Page 150 and Page 151 of the NTA's submission are based on bus service available and not bus service proposed.

On page 149 of the NTA's submission dated 20th December 2023, it states:

'It is noted that the above graphic was based on the 2011 census. At the time of writing this response, the 2022 census data was not yet available, however an updated combined activity density map has been prepared based on the 2016 census and is presented below, confirming that the demand has not changed in any significant way.'

In fact, what the 'updated combined activity density map has been prepared based on the 2016 census' on Page 149 of the NTA's submission and referred to above does show is the distinct need for a bus corridor along Terenure Road North/Harolds Cross Road even in 2016, which importantly would also provide an interconnection between other Busconnects corridors (linking Kimmage/Rathfarnham/Temploeogue) in the area which is a stated goal of the Busconnects Project. Did the NTA update their EIAR also when updating their Combined Activity Density Map based on 2016 census as opposed to the 2011 census?

While it is strange that the NTA in 2019 had based their initial Busconnects route selection analysis on 2011 data, it is totally bewildering why it is not evident to them now that Terenure Road North/Harolds Cross Road requires a bus corridor given the need shown in the 2016 data, coupled with the fact that in the last eight years since the 2016 data was captured, that the Terenure Road North/Harold's Cross Road has had an explosion of home building, commercial

and school building projects which has a direct impact on population, education and employment levels in the area and hence bus/public transport requirements.

The NTA's proposals amount to the removal of an adequate bus service to the Terenure Road North/Harold's Cross Road which has ample areas of Zoned Z1 Sustainable Residential Neighbourhood in the environs either side of it and an overloading of two core bus corridors merged into one, which are proposed to be funnelled down Terenure Road East and into Rathgar which is largely Zoned Z2 Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Area). The Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 Mapset H shows the vast potential of building growth into the future along Terenure Road North/Harold's Cross Road whereas it is glaringly obvious that this population growth potential is not possible along the corridor proposed down Terenure Road East, into Rathgar Village and down Rathgar Road, mainly designated a conservation area.

It is also noteworthy that between 2011 and 2016, Ireland was still in the grips of the fallout of the recession. The NTA is proposing a project for the past, not a solution for the future. In effect, by using Census 2016 population data, the NTA is essentially using pre 2008 recession data instead of mapping, computing, and predicting future bus user volumes for the area. The Central Statistics Office's Census 2016 data is used throughout the project and not only as the NTA's paltry excuse as to why the shorter and more time efficient and historical route of the Quality Bus Corridor (QBC) from Rathfarnham to the City Centre along the Terenure Road North/Harold's Cross Road was not considered properly in the planning stages of this project. It is most significant that the NTA kept both the Templeogue and Rathfarnham to City Centre routes separate during public consultations, only joining them together when planning was brought to ABP.

It is also noteworthy that Transport Infrastructure Ireland who are managing the proposed Metrolink Project on behalf of the NTA are using the Central Statistics Office Census 2022 data in their presentation to the An Bord Pleanála Metrolink Oral Hearing which commenced on the 19th February and which I attended. On page 149 of the NTA's Busconnects submission dated 20th December 2023, it states: *'It is noted that the above graphic was based on the 2011 census. At the time of writing this response, the 2022 census data was not yet available'*. The NTA submission that we have been invited to respond to is dated not two months earlier the start of the Metrolink oral hearing. Why was the Census data 2022 available two months later in February 2024 and not in December 2023 or why didn't the NTA request to delay its response for another two months if the data wasn't available in December 2023 to ensure the most accurate response to guarantee the best outcome for the Busconnects project? Both Busconnects and Metrolink are huge public infrastructure projects and both will cost the taxpayers billions. How is it correct to base the planning application of one of those projects on Census 2022 data and the other on Census 2016 data and in particular census data on population?

Also, Transport Infrastructure Ireland in their presentation to the An Bord Pleanála Metrolink Oral Hearing presented changes in the proposed project including to the Environment Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) since the railway order planning application was lodged to ABP in September 2022. Changes made to the EIAR since the original application include updates due to public policy changes, the new Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042, the Cycle Network Plan 2022, climate legislation, new planning applications and planning updates near the proposed Metrolink alignment, and changes requested by ABP to the proposed planning.

The Busconnects Project could have also benefited from these new amendments being included in its planning application by way of submission in the NTA's response dated 20th December 2023 which we have now been given an opportunity to respond to. It would have made the planning process more robust and less likely to be held up by judicial reviews in the future. However, we have been left with very little to respond to in the NTA's submission which reads like a data filing exercise where submissions are correlated and summarised with no genuine answers given. One would expect an AI generated response to have produced a more sincere effort to provide answers.

2. A large portion of my objection also deals with the lack of necessity and impracticability of making Rathgar road bus only proceeding southward.

I have referred to the large number of multiple dwellings on the road in addition to ordinary housing. The car ownership or daily traffic movements from these and from all the adjoining minor roads has not been considered at all.

. Other Cul de Sacs:

Other cul de sacs on the Rathgar Road as such, in addition to Auburn Villas, are Belleville, Spireview Lane, Wesley Road, Garville Mews and Rathgar Place. I note that in none of documents published in November, 2020 is there any information related to the number of residents in these cul de sacs or the car ownership or car usage in terms of estimated or surveyed frequency of use. How many thousands or tens of thousands of access/egress movements occur from these properties?

. Other De Facto Cul de Sacs:

Unfortunately, a number of the original houses on Rathgar Road have been demolished or converted into apartment blocks. In all of these there is multiple occupancy with private car ownership and parking. They all share the same characteristic as the cul de sacs identified above, in that they have no rear vehicular access to the property. These are Linden Court at 114 to 115, Grenville at 110 to 111, Madison House at 112 to 113, the four houses set back between the Butler's Pantry and the Bergman shop at 98 to 101 Rathgar Road, Hillcrest at 94 to 95, Sherborne at 96 to 97, Rathgar Court at 19 to 20, Sycamore Court at 75 and Albany House at 126. Again, I note that in none of the documentation published in November, 2020 is there any reference to the number of residents, their car ownership or usage, including frequency, whether by way of estimated or actual surveyed frequency of use. How many thousands or tens of thousands of access/egress movements occur from these properties?

The consequence of this with the right or left turn bans are as follows;

The consequences, on any analysis of the issue, is unthinkable. The two Bus Connects routes, if joined together and forced down through Terenure Village, Rathgar Village and down towards Rathmines, will (if that proposal for a bus lane with the traffic prohibitory signs erected, or a ban applicable to all residents on the Rathgar Road from similarly turning left or right) cause all traffic on the Rathgar Road to be involuntarily conscripted into joining the Bus Connects traffic flow in the town-ward direction. This requires crossing the road, attempting to join traffic going in that direction and, for the traveller then who wishes to divert off the road, he has to engage in further turning movements across another lane of bus traffic and across another lane of bike traffic to exit the road down which he does not wish to travel. This is so irrespective of whether he can turn left off the road or right off the road to make the journey he would have originally intended. It is hard to think of a more bizarre proposition than this which would add unnecessary traffic to a road, the purpose for which is to attempt to lessen journey time for bus services. Nothing could be more calculated than to prevent this objective than by injecting unwilling and involuntary traffic from each side of the road from all of the side roads abutting onto Rathgar Road. It is notable that Table 5.2 in Volume 4 of 4, providing the JTC locations and junction identifiers, that there are incredibly limited junction data for any of the roads leading onto Rathgar Road (namely Garville Road and Frankfort Avenue based on 2019 data). Please see the concluding paragraphs of para 17.2 of my objectio

3. Admission of erroneous data collection.

My contention at para 13.1 of the completely erroneous transposition of data has been conceded to be true .That undermines the base for the bus only choice.

4 Local roads.

All the local road leading onto Rathgar road cannot take the traffic displaced by the involuntarily conscripted traffic from the residents on the road or adjoining roads. To this must be added all the non resident passing through traffic and all other commercial traffic to these roads.

These include Supermarket vans, bin lorries, courier and delivery vans, builders lorries ,service vehicles of all types, friends, family members, gardening trucks, plumbers. Etc etc. THE ROADS TO WHICH THEY ARE TO BE DIVERTED CANNOT TAKE THEM.

It is clear that the proposers have no idea at all of the lack of capacity to carry this additional traffic. There is no data ,computation assessment at all on this issue . Each such road cannot normally allow two cars to pass. I plead with the Inspector to visit by car all these roads as a necessary inspection.

I ask the Bord to consider all the photos previously submitted by me and these additional few below on the garville road section , which is no different to the other roads .
They speak for themselves.







Thank you

Diarmaid McGuinness

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