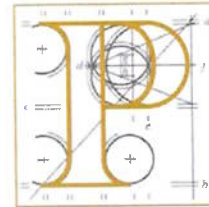


**Our Case Number:** ABP-317121-23



**An  
Bord  
Pleanála**

Leo Street and District Residents Association &  
Lower Dorset Street Community Group  
c/o Anthony Kelly, Chairperson  
16 Saint Joseph Street

**Date:** 15 February 2024

**Re:** BusConnects Swords to City Centre Bus Corridor Scheme  
Swords to Dublin 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 meantime, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board on at [laps@pleanala.ie](mailto:laps@pleanala.ie)

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

Yours faithfully,

Breda Ingle  
Executive Officer  
Direct Line: 01-8737291

HA0

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaio Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	<a href="http://www.pleanala.ie">www.pleanala.ie</a>
Ríomhphost	Email	<a href="mailto:bord@pleanala.ie">bord@pleanala.ie</a>

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

## Submission to An Bord Pleanála

Reference ABP-317121-23

<b>AN BORD PLEANÁLA</b>	
LDG-	
ABP-	<u>317/21-23</u>
08 FEB 2024	
Fee: €	Type:
Time: <u>11.18</u>	By: <u>hand</u>

*From Leo street and District Residents Association & Lower Dorset Street  
Community Group*

*C/O Anthony Kelly Chairperson 16 St Joseph Street Dublin 7*

### Introduction

Over the past 10 years business and community groups have worked closely together to try and improve the environment along and off Dorset street. The street has become a dual carriageway through Georgian Dublin. The birth place of Kearney and OCasey maternal home to the Behans. Numerous other writers and historical figures have been brought up in the warren of streets and avenues of this thoroughfare. And now it has become an eyesore because of poor planning and no vision. The gateway to georgian Dublin where thousands of tourists travel through each day has been let fall apart. **The bus connects plan if allowed go ahead in its current format will destroy the street all together.**

As we previously said the communities along the street have been working closely together for a number of years and produced our own plan for the street back in 2018. **The Greater Dorset street together plan** was Financed by DCC and produced by local architects who took into account not only the needs of the residents and businesses along the street but also with an eye on the future plans of the NTA. (Please find copy enclosed). This plan has been unanimously supported by the Central area Committee.

### **The Greater Dorset Together Plan and Bus Connects.**

When putting together this plan it was quickly realised that the main problem with Dorset street was the Central median. It turned the street into a dual carriageway and since its inception the street has died like fruit withering on a vine. We welcomed the prospect of engaging with the NTA, DCC and all interested groups to reverse this trend.

Removal of the central median would give room.

- 1) For the planting of both trees and shrubs along both sides of Dorset street protecting both Cyclists and pedestrians from the worst effects of emissions.
- 2) Turn the street from a Dual carriageway into an avenue a welcoming gateway to Georgian Dublin
- 3) Allow pedestrians to cross the street in one go not into the middle and on again.
- 4) For a limited number of loading bays so businesses can be supplied without having to park in a bus lane and carry goods across cycle lanes. Lack of loading bays have destroyed our street with empty premises and shuttered shops the length of it.

Bus connects has not taken into account the working of the street only the movement of buses. Neither has it taken into account those who live on the street. We the community that lives and works on Dorset street tried on numerous occasions to have meetings with the NTA. We were treated with disdain and ignorance. When we finally did get a 20 minute audience we were shocked to find out that the designers of the plan had not stepped foot on Dorset street and were unaware that there were people living along the street.

We were never opposing Bus lanes or Cycle lanes, we as a community were welcoming the prospect of a redesign of the street to correct the mistakes of the past. ***We were hoping for people with Vision instead we have got Blah.***

### **Dorset street Working group**

In late 2022 we finally got an agreement between DCC and their various departments NTA residents and business interests to form a working group to look at Dorset street to come up with a sustainable and agreed plan. At the initial meeting the NTA admitted that they had no objection to removal of the central median. DCC planted the Median in a way that the trees could be moved to the side if required.

**The NTA has not engaged since** copy of that agreement is also enclosed here.

### **Emissions ( Observation by Debbie Stanstreet. Professor of public health Royal College of Surgeons)**

Concern that emissions are going to increase in the Dorset street area due to the proposed scheme. Comment that increasing emissions when they are already about the accepted EU levels is negligent. Concern there are no plans to mitigate this with

greenery.

In the NTA response, Paragraphs are copied over from appendix 7 but the issue itself has not been addressed. Appendix 7 outlines how Bus Connects will benefit most people from 2028 in terms of a very slight reduction in air pollution, except for a few areas that are going to see an increase until 2043.

The NTA is effectively dismissing the moderate adverse effects on the local community as most people will benefit from a very slight reduction. The report also refers to the time period as short term since it will be reduced from moderate to slightly adverse from 2043. These time frames are unacceptable as they will expose people to levels of NO<sub>2</sub> that exceed EU limits for a further 19 years. There are children not yet conceived who will reach adulthood by this time and will have been exposed to very dangerous levels of pollution all of their lives. North Inner City Dublin is an extremely disadvantaged area. Local residents' health cannot be sacrificed for the benefit of the Bus Connects scheme, apparently for the greater good. In addition, given that there will likely be more stringent targets by 2030 as a result of new EU legislation, these levels of pollution may well be unlawful by 2030.

While we understand and support the importance of public transportation initiatives, we believe that the health and safety of local residents must take precedence. As an extremely disadvantaged area, there is also an important health equity aspect to exposing these communities to large volumes of toxic air as a result of viewing the area as a bus corridor.

Thank you for your understanding and commitment to ensure a healthy and safe living environment for all residents.

**In closing Bus Connects has failed to address any of the issues along Dorset Street. It has refused to listen. It has paid lip service to the concept of engaging. In not even trying to mitigate or work within the framework it agreed with to mitigate for toxic emissions it has shown contempt for the health of those who live and work along the street. From placement and removal of bus stops it has failed to listen. To creating rat runs it has refused to listen. Our community was not opposing cycle lanes or bus lanes. Our community wanted to engage for the good of everyone instead we are being treated as second class or should I say as working class by an entity that looks down on us.**

**We would ask you to put down a condition that they must engage with the communities along the street in a meaningful and sincere manner pending any approval on this part of the project. We are most likely going to be the last part of**

**the project so there is time to save Dorset street and the health of those who live and work along it.**

Anthony Kelly

**Chairperson** Leo street and District residents Association and District Seven  
Community Alliance

Tony Kelly

Chairperson

District 7 Community Alliance

28/10/22

Re Working Group on Dorset Street – future plans to support the streetscape

Hi Tony

Following on from the meeting between the Dorset Group Together, Dublin City Council – Traffic and Area Management and the National Transportation Authority on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2022 it was agreed by all parties that the establishment of a small working group was necessary if we were to make progress on common aims and objectives.

The rationale for the establishment of this group was to take a broad look at what could be achieved on the street to build on the existing plans to supplement private car activity and increase cycling, public transport and pedestrian movement into and around the area.

The working group would be made up of representatives of the Dorset Street Together Group, LCSP, Dublin City Council Traffic, Parks and Area Management staff (with attendance from the NTA in relation to Bus Connects)

The makeup of the group shall include the Chair of Dorset Group Together with 3 nominees from that group/LCSP and a representative from Dublin City Council's Area Management, Traffic and Parks Departments.

The City Council will invite representatives from other Departments to specific meetings to cover topics that are deemed important which emanate from the group – Planning enforcement, Housing, Culture/Arts etc

The meetings will be chaired by Dublin City Council, Area Management.

The initial meeting of the working group will be held before years end and a follow up meeting in January 2023, the group members can then decide frequency of meetings.

The initial meetings of this working group would tease out the terms of reference of the working group, look at future opportunities in terms of place making, supporting local businesses and improving environmental/biodiversity responses through innovative traffic management/public realm initiatives, including the central traffic median.

While looking at opportunities the group would also tease out the challenges that would be posed in terms of the delivery of any common actions for the street's improvement.

The group would look at issues around finance, technical challenges, existing policies/legislation and community engagement.

The City Council would provide assistance in terms of supporting the work of the group and initiating any technical surveys/data collection that could inform next steps in the process.

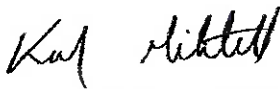
#### Interim interventions:

The Dorset Group Together and Dublin City Council would continue to build on the work to date through the following:

- Build on the existing Shopfront Improvement Grant Scheme
- Look at quick win improvements on /around the street – Paving fixes, tree stump removal, Lighting/Bin/Bollard painting. Intensive cleansing.
- The relaunch of the Dorset Street/Blessington Street Festival.

#### Current Greening

The City Council would continue with its central median interim greening intervention (based on the Parks Division memo relating to the type of interim works now planned) that could provide an immediate improvement to the environment/biodiversity status of the street but could be reused in another part of the City if the central traffic median was no longer required based on innovative solutions agreed through this process.



---

**Karl Mitchell**  
**Director of Services**  
**Central and South East Areas**