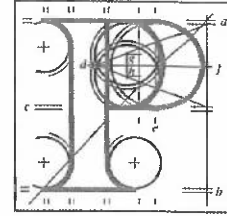


Our Case Number: ABP-314597-22



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

Diarmuid Croghan  
1 Walshes Terrace  
Woodquay  
Co. Galway  
H91KC7P

Date: 05 December 2022

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 proposed road development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter. A receipt for the fee lodged is enclosed.

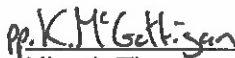
Please note that the proposed road development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it or approved it with modifications.

The Board has also received an application for confirmation of a compulsory purchase order which relates to this proposed road development. The Board has absolute discretion to hold an oral hearing in respect of any application before it, in accordance with section 218 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Accordingly, the Board will inform you in due course on this matter. The Board shall also make a decision on both applications at the same time.

If you have any queries in relation to this 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

HA02A

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
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D01 V902	D01 V902

1, Walshes Terrace,  
Woodquay,  
Galway,  
H91KC7P  
18/11/2022

**Re Case No. 314597 Bus Connects Galway Cross City Link**

To whom it may concern,

The proposed development impacts greatly on residents like myself in the Woodquay Area of Galway city residing just a couple of hundred metres from the Salmon Weir Bridge. It also impacts hugely on people who come into this area to work and use the Salmon Weir Bridge for access.

I wish to make the following Observations

**1) It is proposed that the Salmon Weir Bridge be closed to private cars from 7am to 7pm.**

This means

**No direct access for Residents from Woodquay in their cars to the Regional Hospital and back again.** I reside 800 metres from the Regional Hospital via the Salmon Weir Bridge. The proposed Planning Application requires that **between 7am and 7pm I would have to go 2.5km via the Quincentennial Bridge to get to the hospital. That figure increases to 2.9 km if I must enter the hospital at the rear (Browne's Roundabout).** I had to be driven to the hospital at 7.30am in an **emergency** some time ago. I also need to make that trip now on a more regular basis for a procedure which requires that I cannot walk home and must be driven. It's not just the extra 1.7 km (over a mile extra each way from Woodquay), it's the added journey time due to gridlock on the quincentennial bridge which will be further compounded if travel over the Salmon Weir Bridge for private cards is prohibited.

At an online consultation that I participated in I raised this issue but the answers about the legalities of using the bridge in a medical emergency during

the hours of prohibition of use were vague to say the least. I believe this matter needs to be addressed.

The bridge closure would also have a massive effect on people who use the bridge to access the central area for work as the detours and associated delays are very significant for those people. It is also needed to access the Cathedral which has recently become the parish church for Woodquay. Funerals, Weddings, Services how are cars to get from east to west?

**2) Increased journey times to Salthill.** I go to Salthill 4 or 5 times a week. I carry equipment which I cannot take on a bus and in any case my destination is not served by a bus. This again means a detour via the Quincentennial Bridge or Lough Atalia via the Fairgreen Road. Both routes involve significant added journey time, burning diesel and increasing emissions into the atmosphere,

**3) Increased journey times to Oughterard.** A family member works in Oughterard and leaves the house around 7.40am. Presently she goes over the Salmon Weir Bridge, up to the hospital and out the Newcastle Road. If she is not allowed to do this, she will have to go over the Quincentennial Bridge, cross the Newcastle Road and enter the log jam at the Browne Roundabout at the rear of the hospital (this is a known problem area) and then make her way via the N59 to the traffic lights at the Galway Business Park. There is no bus alternative, just added journey time and increased fuel consumption and emissions.

**4) Closure of access from the Salmon Weir bridge to Waterside.** This is the one-way road leading from the bridge via the waterside to the Galway Rowing Club, the Courthouse and Walshes Terrace. It is a quiet low volume road. It is more heavily used during certain times for example when access is required from the western side of the river to get to the rowing clubs, functions in the Town Hall Theatre, The Courthouse and activities associated with the Annual

Film Fleadh and so on. It allows a quick and convenient access for the Emergency Services (Gardai from Millstreet or the Ambulance from the Hospital). Recently I requested from the roads department an explanation of how closing off this access could possibly have anything to do with the Bus Connects Project but the officials I spoke to couldn't give me an explanation other than to say it might be to prevent access to the bridge. I pointed out that it is a one-way road leading away from the bridge. You cannot access the bridge on that road.

Leaving this road open also saves people from queuing on the main Headford road (R863) and accessing the area further "downstream" during times that the Salmon Weir Bridge would be open to private traffic.

In short, I can see no valid reason why it is necessary to close this road as it has nothing to do with the Cross City Link.

#### **5) Removal of large number of car parking spaces as follows**

**44 in Woodquay**, Section 6.10 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report Volume 1 Non-Technical Summary

**116 at the Cathedral** General Arrangement Drawings Sheet 2 of 3, in the above document and

**5 spaces at Gaol Road** between Nun's island and the Salmon Weir Bridge Page 320 of 1235 Environmental Impact Assessment Report Volume 4 Appendices

**10 at the Dyke Road Car Park**, page 315 of 1235 Environmental Impact Assessment Report Volume 4 Appendices

**So that's 175 car parking spaces lost in this area and there are quite a few more.**

By any standards that is unacceptable. It is already difficult for residents to get parking. It is not just residents of course. Many people enter the area to work. Residents are already encountering difficulties with builders and other service providers who are reluctant to come into this area because it is so difficult to get parking.

**6) Inadequate Consultation.** The consultation process took place during Covid and much of this was online. I attended one session myself. What I have found is that while people are aware of the proposed bus scheme, **most people in Woodquay and indeed outside the area are not aware of the Bridge Closure and the extent of loss of carparking.** This will impact hugely on residents and particularly those with cars.

I recall that there was no leaflet drop in this area that I am aware of and that there was one in other parts of the City. Given there is an older Community here I do not believe it is sufficient to rely on electronic forms of communication when car parking is being removed on such a large scale and the bridge is to be closed. I cannot emphasise how much those two elements of the plan impact on local people.

To this day nobody is communicating to the people here that the Bridge will be closed.

**7) Traffic Congestion** There will be severe congestion if this scheme is introduced in its present form. During the online consultation, I raised the issue of the effects of the Salmon Weir Bridge closure on the rest of the Roads Network and the answer I got was "studies show more people can be brought over the Salmon Weir Bridge in buses than in private cars". To me that is not a sufficient answer. There will be severe traffic congestion on the Quincentennial Bridge and Wolfe Tone Bridge if traffic is taken off the Salmon Weir Bridge.

The traffic congestion might have improved by 2038 but for now I believe a scheme on this scale will cause a lot of hardship for a lot of people even though the opposite is the intention.

To summarise, I believe that the impact on the community and motorists is disproportionate. Nobody is denying there should be much greater use of public transport. However, I request that this modal shift should be introduced gradually. The bridge closure times if introduced should be for peak hours only and extended as deemed necessary. There are many hours of the day when university road is not that busy. **See two photos below.**

Below a photo taken at 9.33 am last Monday 24th Oct 2022 which shows very little traffic on University Road. I acknowledge that there are peak times when the road is severely congested.



Photo below taken 11.17 on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> November 2022 shows little traffic on University Road



Regards,

*Diarmuid Croghan*

Diarmuid Croghan BE