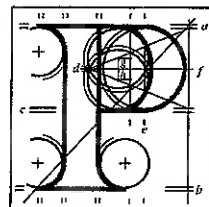


Our Case Number: ABP-317679-23



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Ivana Bacik
Dail Eireann
Kildare Street
Dublin 2

Date: 02 October 2023

Re: Ringsend to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme.
Ringsend to City Centre, Co. Dublin.

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission (including your fee of €50) 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,



Niamh Thornton
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737247

HA02

Tel	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

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

Ringsend to City Centre Bus Corridor Scheme

Observation – Ivana Bacik TD

Dáil Éireann, Leinster House, Dublin 2. Tel: 01 – 6183136. Email: ivana.bacik@oireachtas.ie

As a public representative for the Dublin Bay South constituency and a local resident in Dublin Bay South, and having appraised the documentation supplied by Bus Connects, I wish to provide the following observations on the Ringsend to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme.

First, I wish to express my support for the scheme, which represents a key step towards improving public transport and cycling infrastructure along this busy route. As a regular cyclist myself, I am strongly supportive of plans for improved bus services, the increased provision of safe cycle lanes and active travel infrastructure. It is of great benefit generally to see plans for the development of a cleaner, quieter, more sustainable environment for everyone living and working in the area covered by this scheme.

Indeed, as we move to a more sustainable city, it is essential that greater provision is made to facilitate active travel and improved facilities for pedestrians and cyclists. It is also essential that increased levels of public transport options are provided, and in particular that buses are given enhanced space on our roads.

Increased frequency of buses, and reduced journey times on public transport, will encourage and enable more people to take public transport, which in turn will lead to reduced levels of congestion in our urban villages. Reducing traffic congestion will result in substantial benefits for local communities in reducing carbon emissions, improving air quality, and enhancing pedestrian and cyclist safety.

I am also strongly supportive of the move towards metro and light rail transit for Dublin, and will keep pressing, along with local residents and constituents, for the introduction of a fair, forward-looking and sustainable transport solution for our area and the entire city – in particular, the urgent development of the long-awaited Metro Link.

Along with local residents, I have sought to see provision made for the continuation of Metro Link from St Stephen's Green to South West Dublin, and have questioned the decision to make provision for the terminus at Charlemont. I am also strongly in favour of the extension of the red line Luas to Poolbeg, which would significantly improve connectivity in the area and reduce car traffic. We need to ensure the provision of convenient, well-planned and affordable public transport with accessible links between buses, light rail and metro, so as to bring about significant and necessary reductions in car usage.

In the short to medium term, it is unarguable that buses remain the most accessible and effective public transport option available for supporting Dublin's growing population. Therefore, the implementation of improved and enhanced bus corridors and bus lanes will enable this mode of public transport to serve local communities in a more efficient, accessible and timely manner.

In this submission, along with expressing my general support for the scheme, I also wish to raise some concerns and observations that have been expressed to me by a number of residents' associations and constituents, and that are related to particular aspects of the scheme. I would ask that these views and concerns be taken into account.

I thank all the many constituents, residents and groups in and adjacent to my constituency who have engaged with me on this scheme.

Dodder Bridge

I particularly welcome plans to implement a bridge across the river Dodder at the point where it meets the Liffey, allowing pedestrians and cyclists to travel continuously along the South Bank of the Liffey from the City Centre. This bridge will also allow cyclists to remain on a segregated cycle route rather than having to filter on to Pearse Street, which is much busier and more dangerous. The bridge will facilitate greater connectivity between Ringsend and Sir John Rogerson Quay and the various amenities in the area.

Cycling Infrastructure

I would note that at some locations along the proposed route, cyclists must share space with pedestrians, for example at the southeast corner of the Samuel Beckett Bridge, the current shared space arrangement is maintained. I would ask that consideration is given to the negative impact of shared space arrangements on both pedestrian and cyclist safety as it increases the likelihood of collisions. I would encourage Bus connects to consider an alternative that allows cyclists to pass the junction without having to enter a pedestrian zone.

Local Access

Local residents in the Irishtown/Ringsend area, in particular the Cambridge Park/Pembroke Cottages and Ringsend Park area, have raised concerns about the impact of the proposals upon access and parking in their community, particularly for residents with reduced mobility; I would ask that these matters are taken into account in finalising plans. I know that our Local Area Representative Carol Reynolds will also be making her own personal submission on this issue.

Impact of Construction on Local Communities

As stated above, I strongly support proposals to increase bus connectivity, support active travel and reduce congestion in the area covered by this scheme. I would ask that during construction every effort is made to ensure that there is minimal disruption to local communities. Where possible, construction should take place in daytime hours so as keep noise pollution to a minimum at night. When construction begins, I would ask that there is sufficient communication with residents and businesses regarding the times and dates of construction; this will allow residents to make the necessary arrangements and prevent any loss of business.

I would submit that once plans are finalised, Bus Connects should consult with Dublin City Council and inform local public representatives and residents' groups so as to ensure a coordinated approach to roadworks along the routes. Ideally, if there is any other maintenance work to be done along these routes, it should be done in conjunction with Bus Connects construction, so as to minimise possible disruption for residents and businesses.

In addition, it is vital that individual local residents and households who will be directly affected by construction works in implementing this scheme and other Bus Connects schemes should receive timely and regular communication about the works due to be carried out, the relevant timeframes and impact upon their homes, e.g. with temporary loss of utilities during construction; it is very important that those directly affected should receive such information on a timely basis.

Protection of Biodiversity

I would request that, when finalising the routes, consideration should be given to the negative environmental impacts of construction and that plans should be developed to have as little long-term impact on biodiversity as possible. In particular, it is vital that, as far as possible, existing tree coverage should be preserved along the route.

Public Consultation – Level of Required Fee

Finally, it is vital that public consultation is actively supported and facilitated with proposals and schemes like Bus Connects. In this regard, I have previously expressed my concern about the level of fee required to make a submission on this consultation process – see below for the text of my press statement issued in May on this point. For some local residents' groups and individual residents who will also be making submissions on other Bus Connects schemes, they may have to pay multiple fees - €50 in respect of each consultation.

Thus, I have called on the government to review the level of the fee required in public consultations on Bus Connects schemes, so as to enable greater public participation and accessibility in the ongoing statutory consultation process. Our local Labour Representatives in the relevant wards in Dublin Bay South, namely Carol Reynolds and Eddie McGuinness have also expressed their concern to me on the issue of fee levels for engagement with the consultation process. Like me, they have been contacted by many constituents on this, and thus our submission reflects those concerns.

PRESS RELEASE ISSUED 26 MAY 2023

Concern raised about impact of fee required for civic engagement in statutory public consultation processes

Labour Leader Ivana Bacik TD has raised concern about the fees associated with making a submission to An Bord Pleanála during statutory public consultation processes on infrastructure projects.

Deputy Bacik said,


“Ireland has ratified the Aarhus Convention, which is an international agreement affirming the right to public participation in decision-making. Civic engagement should not be contingent on income. Individuals should not be prohibited from having their say in a public consultation, simply because they cannot afford it.

“At a time when we are experiencing a cost-of-living crisis, I am increasingly hearing from constituents who are having to think twice before making a submission during public consultation on new infrastructure in their area. We all want to see new projects introduced to improve infrastructure in this country, and I am particularly supportive of effective new public transport, active travel and cycling infrastructure. That is why it is so important that a robust planning and consultation process is in place to ensure that issues are resolved early on. Everybody stands to benefit from a more accessible consultation process.

“My constituents in Dublin Bay South have contacted my office on many occasions, frustrated because of financial restrictions on their engagement with the mechanisms which are there to enable their participation. In the context of the ongoing statutory consultation on the Bus

Connects route from Rathfarnham/Tempogue-City Centre, constituents who wish to make comments in support of, and/or with concern about, aspects of the plans, have expressed their concern at the €50 fee associated with making a submission to An Bord Pleanála within this process. I would ask Government to consider whether the level of this fee should be reviewed, with a view to strengthening deliberative democracy and a process of inclusive social dialogue at local and national level.”

ENDS



IVANA BACIK TD
Dublin Bay South

www.ivanabacik.com
ivanabacik@oireachtas.ie
Ivana Bacik

@ivanabacik
@ivanabacik
+ 353 1 618 3136

Labour

Please note that any personal data contained in your email correspondence with Ivana Bacik TD will be processed by Ivana Bacik TD and her staff as a data controller in accordance with applicable data protection law. Much of this data processing will be done in connection with representations/requests made and also for electoral purposes. If you have received this email in error, please notify us immediately and then delete it. Please do not copy it, disclose its contents or use it for any other purpose. Thank You.

The Deputy is a Designated Public Official under the Regulation of Lobbying Act 2015 (details available on www.lobbying.ie)