

Cllr Pamela Conroy
13 Castleknock View
Castleknock
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August 2022

Re: Busconnects Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme

To whom it may concern,

I would like to thank you for the opportunity to make a submission on the statutory consultation of the Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme.

Providing a core bus corridor will increase the speed and reliability of the bus service from Blanchardstown shopping centre to the city centre, making the bus a more viable option to those living in Dublin 15. Improvements to public transport are vital if we are to make the necessary modal shift from private vehicles needed to meet emissions reduction targets.

However, I have several concerns about the proposed scheme and question whether it goes far enough to enable a meaningful shift to happen. I have outlined these concerns below and am submitting them as part of my submission. I ask that An Bord Pleanála take them into account when considering the proposed scheme.

I have paid my €50 submission fee.

Kind regards,

Cllr Pamela Conroy

Active Travel Infrastructure

The first sentence on the website for the Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme, blanchardstownscheme.ie, states "*The Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme (the Proposed Scheme) will support integrated sustainable transport usage through infrastructure improvements for active travel (both walking and cycling)*". Making active travel options safer means it is far more likely that people will opt to use them.

While I welcome the fact that the scheme sets out to make infrastructure improvements for active travel, and their reasoning behind this, I am not convinced that some of the elements of the proposed scheme are an improvement to active travel infrastructure. Some of the proposed scheme does not take the opportunity to make infrastructure improvements, for example the removal of slip lanes. In some other locations, the new infrastructure which makes up the proposed scheme makes active travel worse, for example the new bus terminal at the Blanchardstown Shopping centre has

resulted in multiple phases for pedestrians crossing the road from Starbucks to access the bus terminal.

The active travel infrastructure of the proposed scheme should be examined carefully to see where further improvements can be made.

Slip Lanes

There are several slip lanes along the proposed scheme. Some of these have been added and some of them already exist and are being left in place. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (DMURS) highlights how slip lanes encourage drivers to drive along them at speed, making them dangerous for those who are using active transport. Slip lanes result in pedestrians and cyclists having to make multiple phases to cross road junctions which makes active travel less attractive.

Each junction along the corridor should be examined and the slip lanes should be removed and replaced with left hand turns at the road junction which have reduced kerb radii which slows down vehicles which are turning and means pedestrians and cyclists have a shorter distance to travel to cross roads.

Blanchardstown Shopping Centre Bus Interchange

The proposed scheme indicates that vehicles will be travelling on either side of the bus interchange. This means that to access the bus interchange, pedestrians will have several phases to cross roads at this location.

I feel that removing vehicle traffic from the entrance to the car park to the junction at the other end of the interchange would improve the active travel infrastructure at this location. I also feel that doing so would enhance bus priority at this location which is the aim of the scheme.

Cycling Infrastructure at Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

I have a few concerns regarding the cycling infrastructure at Blanchardstown Shopping Centre.

Firstly, I note that the proposed scheme has cycle paths along two of the roads around the shopping centre, but there is no provision for cycle lanes on the other two roads around the shopping centre. Instead, on these roads, those who wish to cycle must do so on the road alongside vehicles. I feel that provision for cycle routes around the entire shopping centre should be considered and indicated along the route.

Secondly, the cycling infrastructure around the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre is shared with pedestrians. Section 1.9 of the National Cycling Manual states that *"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."* There is a high volume of pedestrians around the Blanchardstown Shopping Centre, so pedestrians and cyclists sharing space at this location is of a particular concern.

Thirdly, at the junctions on either end of the road where the proposed bus interchange will be sited, the cycle lanes end abruptly, with pedestrians having priority in these areas. It is unclear what cyclists are supposed to do at these locations. The National Cycling Manual states *"the nature of pedestrians is that they are much less predictable than cyclists and other road users who are*

generally moving from A to B. Pedestrians can stop at any stage along the way to meet, talk, stand, wait and observe." I feel that there is a particular safety issues at these locations and would ask that these spaces in particular be revisited and redesigned with pedestrian safety in mind.

Old Navan Road

I note that the proposed scheme at this location has been altered from the previous proposed scheme with the cycle path being brought along the Old Navan Road at this location, preventing the removal of a large volume of trees at this location. However, the drawing shows no clear cycle path along the Old Navan Road. I feel it is important that some measures be taken along the Old Navan Road, such as an optical narrowing of the road for Quiet Street Treatment, which will slow cars down naturally, increasing pedestrian and cyclist safety at this location.