



Gníomhaireacht Náisiúnta um Bhainistíocht Sócmhainní
National Asset Management Agency

An Bord Pleanála (Strategic Infrastructure Division)
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01V902

30th August 2022

Re: BusConnects Dublin - Blanchardstown to City Centre Ref - ABP SID Reference: 313961

Dear Sir or Madam

Background

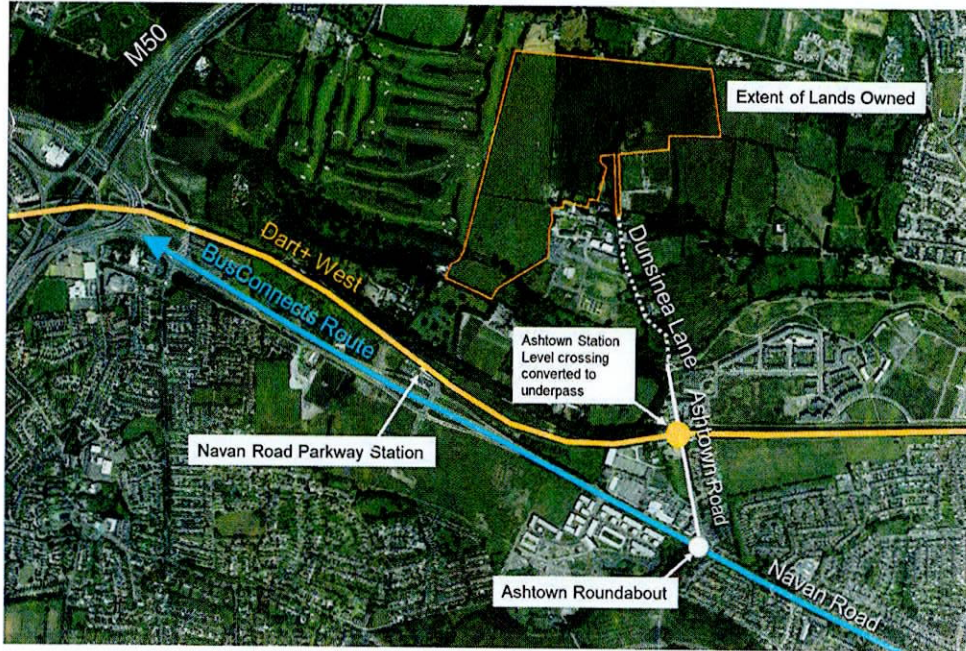
This submission is made by the National Asset Management Agency (NAMA) with regard to the statutory public consultation for the Core Bus Corridor initiative of BusConnects Blanchardstown to City Centre Route. This submission is being made in the context of the lands secured to NAMA at Scribblestown, Dunsink, which are located approximately 400m to the north of the Navan Road, along which the Blanchardstown to City Centre scheme runs. The site location is illustrated overleaf.

Dunsink Vision

The wider Dunsink area has been earmarked by Fingal County Council (FCC) for:

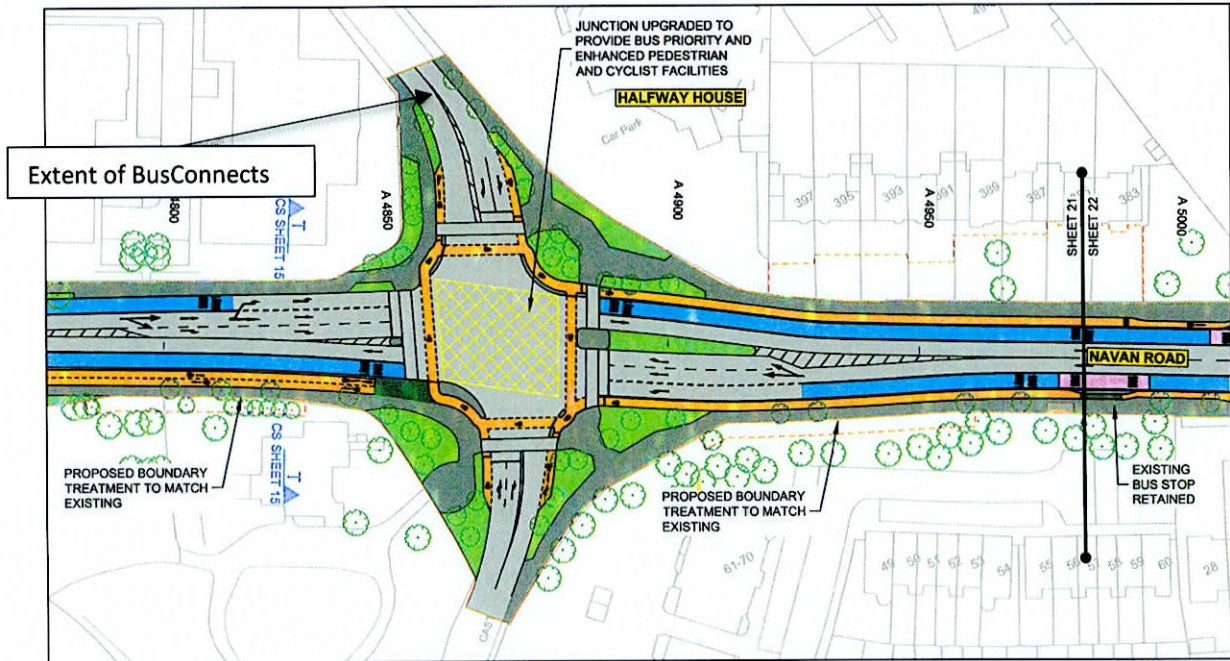
“Development of a low-carbon mixed-use transit-orientated urban quarter which prioritises active travel and public transport modes both within and outside, is well connected to the wider City via high quality public transport and active travel infrastructure and seeks to protect and enhance the environmental and historic character of the area.”

To reflect the above vision, the Draft Fingal County Development Plan 2023-2029 identifies the Dunsink area for residential development capable of providing between 9,000 and 11,000 homes supported by significant community and employment infrastructure.



The BusConnects Blanchardstown to City Centre infrastructure scheme, in addition to the BusConnects Network Review and the DART West + project will significantly increase the frequency and reliability of public transport services in this area, connecting Dunsink with the wider city. These parallel infrastructure projects are essential to the realisation of FCC's vision for the area.

At present, access to the site is provided via Dunsinea Lane and Ashtown Road which connects to the Navan Road at the Ashtown Roundabout. The proposed upgrade of the Ashtown Roundabout to a 4-way signalised junction along with the segregated cycle infrastructure and pedestrian enhancements proposed through the junction is welcome. These changes will not only enhance public transport services but also will allow pedestrians and cyclists to travel through the junction with a vastly improved level of safety, significantly improving the connection to Blanchardstown, Dublin City, and Phoenix Park by sustainable modes. The proposed design facilitates future cycle infrastructure to the north along the Ashtown Road which is also beneficial to the accessibility credentials of the site. The proposed upgrade of the Ashtown roundabout is extracted below.

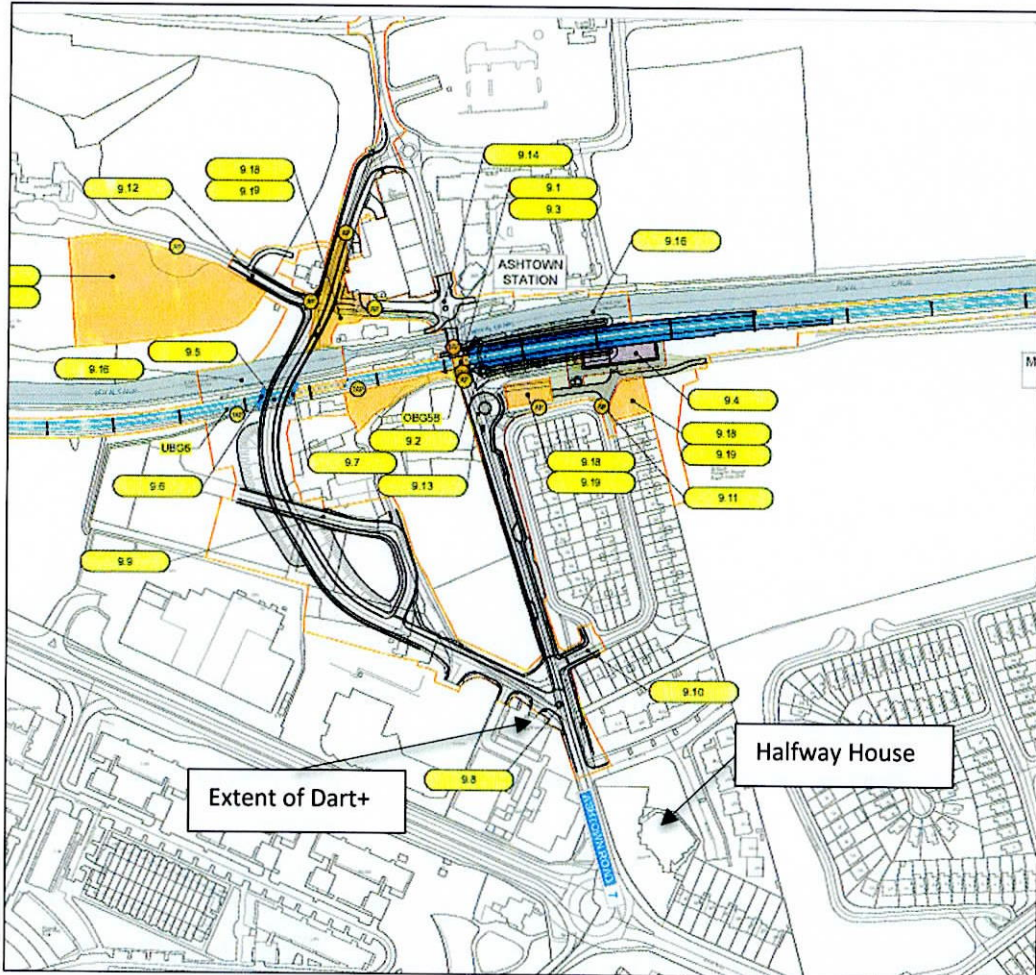


Extract from Bus Connects Planning Application in the area of Ashtown Roundabout

Alignment of Major Infrastructure Proposals

This Bus connectivity will be considerably enhanced by the concurrent proposal as part of Dart+ West to remove the level crossing at Ashtown train station and provide an underpass for bus, vehicular, pedestrian and cycle movements, along with a pedestrian/cycle overbridge at the station. This application is also before An Bord Pleanála (ABP) for consideration. In its assessment, ABP is requested to review this Bus Connects Infrastructure Scheme in the context of this concurrent Dart+ West proposal and ensure full connectivity between these two major infrastructure projects.

In summary, the northern extent of bus connects needs to meet and align with the southern extent of Dart+ West such that there is a seamless connection where the two Schemes meet. This will ensure full connectivity for all modes between the Navan Road and the Dunsink lands, fully in keeping with Fingal County Council's vision and fully in line with the National Strategic Outcomes (NSOs) of the National Planning Framework (NPF) around compact growth, sequential development and public transport based solutions to problems associated with increasing travel demand and urban congestion.

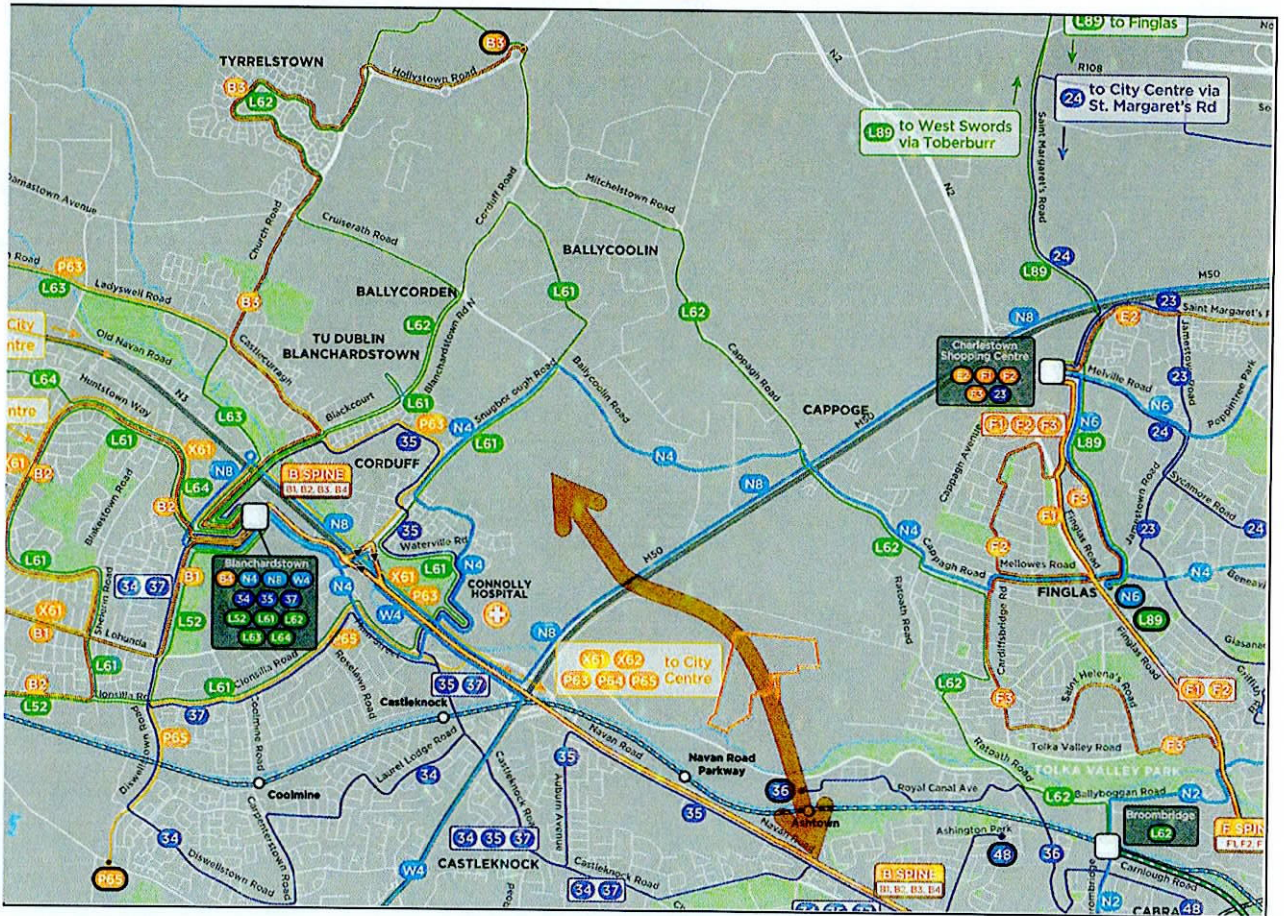


Extract from Dart + West Planning Application

Bicycle Parking

To further enhance the sustainable transport facilities in the area and allow for improved modal interchange between bus and bike, ABP is requested to consider the provision of cycle parking stands in the vicinity of the proposed bus stop locations, or adjacent to the Ashtown Road junction. This would facilitate bus passengers to complete/start their journey to/from the Dunsink area by bike, reducing the overall journey time.

It appears from the BusConnects proposals that the proposed bus stops located to the east of the Ashtown junction are to remain in their existing locations. It would be beneficial if these stops were brought further west, closer to the junction, availing of the additional space created by the removal of the roundabout. This would reduce the distance from the stops to the Dunsink area, thus improving the overall walking/cycling catchment of the stops.



Conclusion

Overall, it is considered that this scheme will bring significant benefits to the accessibility of the North-western area of Dublin, and in particular has the potential to enhance the sustainable connectivity of the lands secured to NAMA at Dunsink, helping to achieve the national strategic outcomes of the National Planning Framework, including compact growth, sequential development and supporting new development with a comprehensive network of connected public transport infrastructure.



In this regard, the seamless connection between the subject BusConnects project and the concurrent Dart + West project in the area of the Ashtown roundabout will be a critical element in the achievement of the overall bus and rail infrastructure plans and aspirations for the Dunsink area.

Yours faithfully

Deirdre O'Connor MIPI, MRTPI

Head of Planning

National Asset Management Agency