



# **RODERIC O'GORMAN TD DUBLIN WEST**



**Minister for Children, Equality, Disability, Integration and Youth**

August 2022

**Re: Busconnects Blanchardstown to City Centre CBC Scheme – Statutory Consultation**

To whom it may concern,

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

Overall, I welcome the plans to enhance bus priority and improve walking and cycling infrastructure in Dublin 15 and Dublin 7. The range of enhanced bus routes for the area, centred on the new B-Spine route, along with the increased frequency and decreased journey time resulting from the new bus corridor, will make further enhance the attractiveness of using buses. This is being further supported by the measures that Government are taking to reduce the cost of public transport for all commuters.

At the same time, I have concerns about some aspects of the proposed plans and would like to take this opportunity to raise them as part of the public consultation. I would request that An Bord Pleanála takes these points into consideration and make relevant amendments to the proposal, which I believe will strengthen it.

I have paid my €50 submission fee.

Kind regards,

**Minister Roderic O'Gorman TD**

### Cycling Infrastructure at Blanchardstown Shopping Centre

The proposed scheme should allow for the provision of a cycle lane to Blanchardstown Library, Fingal County Council civic offices on Grove Road, West End shops and on to the Snugborough Road. There is currently no provision for cyclists here and they must cycle along the road, with traffic, to get to these destinations, or follow the cycle route around the otherside of the centre which will bring them to the Snugborough Road Interchange, which is a very busy junction.

Minister O' Gorman's Constituency Office  
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### Slip Lanes

Slip lanes have been proposed at a few junctions along the Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme. These are dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists who have to cross these slip lanes as vehicles often drive fast along slip lanes. Additionally, incorporating slip lanes into junctions increases the number of phases pedestrians must go through to cross roads. Slip lanes should be removed as per Section 4.4.3 of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets 2019 and replaced with dedicated left hand turns at road junction. This will result in a single phase for crossing roads for pedestrians and cyclists, making these junctions safer for them.

For example, sheet 1 of the Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme General Arrangement shows a slip lane turning left from the Blanchardstown Road North onto the Old Navan Road. A pedestrian crossing Blanchardstown Road North at this location must do so in three phases. Removing the slip lane would mean that a pedestrian would cross the road in two phases, as well as slowing traffic down at this location.

### Old Navan Road

I am pleased to see that the proposed scheme has moved the cycle lane along the Old Navan Road, from the Circle K to the Auburn Road roundabout as I suggested. Doing so has prevented the removal of trees between the Old Navan Road and the Navan Road which were proposed in the last proposed plans put out on consultation.

However, the drawing shows no clear cycle path along the Old Navan Road. The Old Navan Road is currently quite a busy road in terms of vehicular traffic with access to St Brigid's GAA club at the bottom of the road. St Edmund Rice College will be opening this year at the other side of the Circle K on the Navan Road, meaning that students who are walking and cycling to school are likely to use this stretch of 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.

### N3 / Mill Road

The proposed scheme features a new set of bus stops on the N3, accessed via ramps from Mill Road. On the south side of the N3, this requires a land take at Millstead estate. The access to the bus stop is from Mill Road, but under the current drawings, the new boundary wall separating the access from the green area in Millstead is 1.1 metres. The current wall of the estate is over 2m high and provides significant privacy and also acts as an acoustic barrier to traffic noise on the N3.

I would urge that, provision is made for a higher boundary wall at this location, mirroring the existing wall and maintaining the privacy and amenity of the estate.

### **Removal and Replacement of Trees**

One consequence of the development of the core bus corridor is the need to remove several hundred trees along the route. This risks a visual and amenity impact on certain sections of the route. It is important that any grant of permission by An Bord Pleanála contains a clear overall requirement of a minimum of one for one replacement of trees. It is also necessary that the grant of permission make it clear that replacement trees should be planted as close as possible to their original location.

### **Compulsory Purchase of Residential Property**

The current proposals make provision for an extensive number of land takes from residential properties, in the form of Compulsory Purchase Orders. In many cases, these purchases will have a significant impact on the front gardens of residential homes, particularly along the Navan Road. It is important that An Bord Pleanála carefully examine each proposed land take across this section of the scheme to determine that the proposed compulsory purchase is absolutely necessary. The Board should also examine the scale of proposed land takes, and if these can be reduced in scale, then that reduction should happen.