



## Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

### Observer's details

#### 1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's name

(b) Observer's postal address

### Agent's details

#### 2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please also write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

(b) Agent's postal address

## Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

**You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1**

**The agent at the postal address in Part 2**

## Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Bord Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**

(for example: 300000)

313892

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

Bus Connects Blanchardstown to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Blanchardstown to Dublin City Centre

## Observation details

### 5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word limit** as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

Observations from Phibsboro Village Tidy Towns under four headings:

1. General Observations
2. Specific observations from residents of the Cabra Road / Upper Phibsboro area
3. Specific observations from residents of the Lower Phibsboro / Broadstone area
4. Environmental, Biodiversity and Climate impacts

#### 1. General Observations

- As an area that is currently used as an access route to the city centre by a large number of car commuters, the residents of Phibsboro welcome the positive impact that the Busconnects bus and cycling corridors will have on the volume of this car commuter traffic and quality of life in our village and surrounding residential areas. However, there are a number of proposals in the latest plan that will increase car volumes and reduce quality of living for some streets in the area, unless some additional mitigations are introduced - more details in the following sections
- The estimated traffic volumes used in the modelling for this application (e.g. for calculating the additional car volumes on some streets in the area) are based on a number of public transport infrastructural projects being completed, and commuters using these new modes. However, a number of these proposed projects (DART+, Metrolink, Finglas Luas etc.) will not have been delivered by the time that the new traffic arrangements come into place, and it is possible that some of these projects will be further delayed, or cancelled, as they have been in the past. We have a concern that the increased car traffic impact on roads such as Connaught St, Faussagh Road, Western Way, Berkeley St/Rd and Goldsmith St has been underestimated in the submission (and in the cases of some of these roads, not considered at all)
- The timing of this application (30 June 2022 – 30 August 2022) has made it very difficult for residents to engage in this process over the summer months. For this reason and others, we believe that an oral hearing on this proposal would be very beneficial in bringing the Busconnects planners and local residents together to explain the

## 5. Grounds

benefits and drawbacks, and hopefully resolve the remaining, very valid, issues of residents before the planning of this valuable project is concluded

### 2. Specific observations from residents of the Cabra Road / Upper Phibsboro area

- Residents did not object to former Busconnects routes, despite proposed increased traffic on the Cabra Road, as we accepted that improved public transport requires some sacrifice.
- The current Busconnects plans change local access routes, which both increase Cabra Road traffic as well as reducing local access routes in the neighbourhood.
- Proposing (already agreeing?) changes to local access roads (Monck Place, Charleville Rd and Annamoe Road), seemingly in reaction to local concerns, is presumably to avoid residents' concerns about being used as rat-runs but runs into the law of unintended (unexplored) consequences. **This will now have an extremely adverse effect on other roads in the neighbourhood. (Connaught Street, St Peter's Road, St Peter's Church junction and Cabra Road.)**
- The impact is not just on commuter traffic. These changes would reduce the ***permeability of the neighbourhood of Phibsborough for its own residents***, as well as severely restricting access for these and residents of east Cabra and Glasnevin southwest to e.g. Stoneybatter, the Phoenix Park and west via Infirmary Road, via Charleville and Annamoe as previously.
- Commuter traffic wishing to go south/southwest approaching from the Navan Road will now be directed a long way east along the Cabra Road, with no option to turn south until the U-turn at St Peter's Church. This junction is a carpark from far back on the Cabra Road as far as the crossroads at most times during the working day with very heavy volumes of traffic. **To that will now be added:**
  - all traffic from Phibsborough Road heading southwest (diverting via Connaught St/St Peter's Road, as Monk Place will not be accessible).
  - All **local Phibsborough**, Glasnevin and Cabra traffic, as there is no permeability to Stoneybatter, the Phoenix Park and Infirmary Road except via the eastern diversion along the Cabra Road towards the U-Turn at St Peter's Church.

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This is already a bottleneck as mentioned. It will become even more of a carpark at heavy commuter times, further holding up local public transport.

- There will be more and more unnecessary traffic on the Cabra Road, eastwards in the direction of St Peter's Church, using more energy, causing more air pollution for residents and further damaging the Phibsborough neighbourhood, already problematic for residents because of the existing volume of traffic.
- There will be more delays for normal through-Phibsborough traffic as local, formerly southbound, traffic will now have to divert eastwards, increasing traffic volumes and so hold-ups - all queuing to carry out the planned U-Turns from the Cabra Road.
- It should not be forgotten that Phibsborough is home to major hospitals, fire brigade, Garda Station and prison, needing quick access to and from Phibsborough via the Cabra Road, mainly. Emergency vehicles are likely to have travel times adversely affected.
- Pedestrians are also likely to suffer due to the bottleneck at St Peter's Church. It is already a very slow, two-stage, pedestrian crossing, as traffic accesses Phibsborough from both the NCR and Cabra Road at St Peter's. There must surely now be a further delay for pedestrians, to allow for traffic from each to perform the proposed U-turns.
- We particularly object to the loss of local southbound access from the Cabra Road to the NCR (via Charleville/Annamoe) as well as west to the Phibsborough Road via Monck Place. This is not rat-run traffic. This is genuine much-needed local access.

### 3. Specific observations from residents of the Lower Phibsboro / Broadstone area

- Overall, residents welcome the Busconnects project, and are awaiting the Ballymun/Finglas-City Centre planning application to see the final impacts on our area. However, the Blanch-City Centre route has had some unexpected impacts on our area, in particular with the new last-minute road access changes
- The closure of all traffic access from Phibsborough Road to Monck Place will displace a lot of traffic onto Western Way, Mountjoy St and Berkeley Street / Road in order to access the NCR. These roads are relatively wide and suitable for traffic, although we believe that traffic calming measures and additional pedestrian and cycle crossing

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points should be added to reduce the impact on residents and pedestrians

- Of more concern is the fact that a number of motorists will take a short cut to avoid Western Way by exiting the Phibsborough Road at White Lane, along Royal Canal Bank, Geraldine Street and Goldsmith Street to access the NCR. These roads are completely unsuitable for large volumes of traffic, are often one way streets that allow two way traffic, and there is a risk to pedestrians and children accessing Royal Canal Bank linear park and playgrounds. We request strongly that additional traffic restrictions be added to these roads, in consultation with residents
- We believe that with some small changes and mitigations, this project can be made to work for all. A public oral hearing would also make this process a lot easier

### 4. Environmental, Biodiversity and Climate impacts

- The Sustainability Sub Committee of PVTT welcomes the Busconnects project, in principle, for the very positive climate impacts that the expansion of public transport access, and the reduction of private car commuting through Phibsoboro will bring, notwithstanding the very valid points made by residents above
- Some of the knock-on effects of the changes to car routes will add to the number of cars driving / queuing in residential areas. We have a concern over air quality in these areas, and would like to see ongoing air quality monitoring, and, ideally, the introduction of a Low Emission Zone in the whole Phibsboro area, which would trigger actions if air quality dips below an acceptable level
- If junctions are being closed as part of the Busconnects project (e.g. The Phibsborough Road end of Monck Place in this stage), we would like to see those newly created spaces used to create a positive climate and biodiversity impact. These new 'mini-parks' should be planted with long-term trees and plants to green the area and promote biodiversity and would also be perfect locations for EV-charging points and PV-panel electrical generation to benefit the local residents

## Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

## Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct **fee** is included with your observation.

**Observers (except prescribed bodies)**

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

## Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to request the Board to hold an oral hearing, please tick the “Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing” box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the “No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing” box.

**Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing**

**No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing**

## Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

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**For Office Use Only**



| <b>FEM – Received</b> |  | <b>SIDS – Processed</b> |  |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Initials              |  | Initials                |  |
| Date                  |  | Date                    |  |

**Notes**