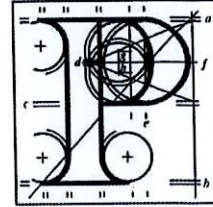


Our Case Number: ABP-316272-23

Planning Authority Reference Number:



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Dylan Timbs
63 Rathfarnham Road
Terenure
Dublin 6W
D6WYT96

Date: 16 August 2023

Re: Bus Connects Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme
Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission in relation to the above-mentioned proposed road development and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter. Please accept this letter as a receipt for the fee of €50 that you have paid.

Please note that the proposed road development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it or approved it with modifications.

The Board has also received an application for confirmation of a compulsory purchase order which relates to this proposed road development. The Board has absolute discretion to hold an oral hearing in respect of any application before it, in accordance with section 218 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Accordingly, the Board will inform you in due course on this matter. The Board shall also make a decision on both applications at the same time.

If you have any queries in relation to this matter 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,

Eimear Reilly
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737184

HA02A

Tell
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Láithreán Gréasáin
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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Bus Connects Submission

Bord Pleanála Case reference: HA29N.316272

Description: Bus Connects Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme

Case type: LA Road Dev - Application

Dublin City Council

August 13th 2023

Submission made by:

Dylan Timbs

63 Rathfarnham Road

Terenure

Dublin 6w D6WYT96

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am submitting herewith my observations on the Templeogue/Rathfarnham to City Centre Bus Corridor scheme application by National Transport Authority ("NTA").

I reside at 63 Rathfarnham Road, a property affected by a compulsory purchase order for this application made by the National Transport Authority.

I fundamentally object to this planning application by the NTA.

I request that this planning application is subject to an Oral Hearing.

This submission is divided into four sections:

1. Objections and observations to the planning application and its proposed impact on my property and immediate residential environment,
2. Comment on the overall NTA process,
3. Observations on the overall route planning application,
4. Alternative suggestions.

Appended to this report are two consultants report prepared by RW Nolan planning consultants and NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd. These reports form part of this submission.

Section One - Observations to the planning application and its proposed impact on my property and immediate residential environment

1. **ILLEGAL DEVELOPMENT - Mandatory Part M Building Regulations Violation:** My home, a residential house at 63 Rathfarnham Road, Terenure will be impacted by this planning application through a compulsory purchase order ("CPO") that will remove 23.7m² from our front garden (Plot List 1073(1).1d, 1073(2).2d). We have requested specific detail and drawings on repeated occasions from the NTA and their agents clearly setting out levels and the impacts on our property and in particular our driveway and frontage. We sought drawings that would show the 'before and after' effect. None of this has been forthcoming and ultimately has been specifically denied to us.

However, through our further engagement with ARUP (engineers appointed by the NTA on the Bus Connects project) we were verbally advised by David Collins on 28 June, 2023 that such **detailed drawings (for our house) were prepared and were excluded from the planning application and that the NTA were not allowing these to be released.** This was recounted to Mr Collins in writing.

We engaged NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd ("NRB") who carried out a detailed topographical survey of the road section of Rathfarnham Road (spanning houses 55 to 71) to facilitate NRB preparing a review of the NTA planning application and its impacts to the affected houses. NRB commented on the *scant information included by the NTA in their planning submission.* NRB prepared an analysis based on the information available and their topographical survey to assess the impact of the planning application.

The NBR report is attached herewith and forms part of our submission.

The NRB findings were that in relation to our house, number 63, the access gradient of the house would be significantly steeper (by an increase of 67% in gradient) as a result of the NTA proposed development in this application and therefore represents an illegal developmet due to contravention of PART M building regulations.

A significantly steeper gradient is the result for a further five houses and a steeper gradient for another house – six houses negatively affected in total making these dwellings less compliant than they previously were.

We sought clarification and detail about the temporary CPO and works to be execute under Plot List 1073(2).2d), concerned that these proposed works would further exacerbate the increased gradient within the property, increasing even further the danger to users and potentially making the house inaccessible for vehicles and more dangerous on approach to the public road. No information was provided by the NTA.

Our objection is made to this Part M breach on regarding our own house, number 63, and the other six houses affected.

The matter of access gradients and Part M contraventions was raised in writing, supported by a professional assessment, with the NTA in April 2019 by a number of Rathfarnham Road residents.

This is not a mere omission or oversight. This all raises pressing and concerning questions regarding the NTA.

- Why would a national agency seek to proceed to carry out development that is dangerous to the public and illegal?
- One way or the other there is a *significant question about the management and competency of the NTA*. Where else is such arbitrary and lawless judgment applied?
- It raises concern about the modus operandi of the agency and its inclinations to pursue their agenda at any cost and wilfulness to withhold critically important information that pertains to safety (and illegality) from the public and from the legal owners of property they would wish to sequester.

2. **Town Planning:** We engaged RW Nolan & Associates planning consultants ("RW Nolan") who carried out a detailed assessment of the planning application referencing in particular the section of the route from Rathfarnham village to Terenure village. Their report is attached herewith and should be considered as part of our submission and objection/ suggestion of alternatives that the NTA have omitted or ignored. These include:

- a. **No traffic modelling is included in the application documentation that shows the integrated effect of immediately adjacent and associated Bus Connects routes.** Considering the significant diversions, amendments to traffic routes and restrictions to private traffic, it is beyond comprehension how comprehensive traffic modelling is not a critical part of the application.
- b. **The NTA have chosen to seek planning approval for a series of bus routes on an individual basis for each route. This is done in absolute isolation of any other route, even those routes that are immediately adjacent and/or intersecting. The result is that the reality of these delivered schemes (as applied for by the NTA) will, in terms of traffic and the environmental impacts, be completely underestimated and irreversibly damaging to the environment.**

All through the consultation process the NTA has repeatedly committed to producing detailed traffic modelling information and always deferred to the next stage of the process for it (and environmental assessment); this is another instance of how the NTA have misled and misinformed the public and local property owners affected by their proposal. It is unacceptable that the National Transport Authority would not produce comprehensive traffic modelling guidance for the post implementation of their sizeable and visibly cross-impacting planning applications for the west and south-west of the city.

It is patently clear that the proposed traffic redirections/restrictions and diversions through the west and south-west of the suburban city will cause material rerouting of large volumes of traffic onto roads and streets that were not designed to take anything more than local residential traffic, or already operating at full capacity.

The obvious result is that these ignored diversions and resultant confluences of traffic and gridlock will have an intensely adverse impact on the environment in localised areas along the planning routes and adjacent and contributory routes not included on the planning application route maps. Springfield Avenue/Dodder View Road is a typical example. At Phase II the NTA dropped a cycle route from Rathfarnham village

through Brookvale and Brookvale Downs to cross Dodder View Road (and the Dodder river) into Rathdown Park. When questioned the NTA said this was dropped due to environmental impact concerns (crossing the Dodder river) but refused to explain these reasons or expand. Of course, the expectations were that the decision to remove this very safe cycle route that would deliver cyclists to the very much quietened Templeogue Road from the NTA's preferred route status was the NTA's acquiescence as a result of lobbying. In any event *it very much clashes with the eventuality this current planning application will present to the 1.8km stretch of the Dodder River and Bushy Park where the redirect traffic from the Kimmage to City Centre, Tallaght to City Centre routes will now divert to – this will become the most heavily laden road section per traffic lane in greater Dublin.* Yet the NTA do not see or consider this. The NTA are happy to submit environmental assessment reports to An Bord Pleanála in a statutory process that asserts that the planning application and resultant traffic diversion and management will have no environmental impact??

Is this simplistic and detached approach to assessment and compliance with State and EU legislation on environmental protection really acceptable? Will this binary tunnel vision version of shape shifting be accepted as just consideration by An Bord Pleanála?

- c. **The introduction of the signal-controlled priority measures that are proposed for junctions with Dodder Park Road and Rathdown Park, only 260m apart, are likely to lead to significant traffic congestion while the need for both priority measures is not made clear.** The signal-controlled priority measure at Rathdown Park should be removed, see RW Nolan report sections 4.1 and 4.2.
- d. The application proposes the addition of a dedicated cycle lane to replace shared cycle/bus lane inbound towards the city centre outside house nos. 51-71 Rathfarnham Road. **This is unnecessary and inconsistent with the most immediately comparable section of the same route** (as well as many other sections); the inbound section of Rathfarnham Road on the south side of the Rathfarnham Road/ Dodder View Road junction has a shared cycle/bus lane for more than 50% of the route back to Rathfarnham village. There is not logical requirement for any land take from houses along the house nos. 51-71 Rathfarnham Road.
- e. The NTA have proposed amending the width of the footpath to between 2.35m and 2.9m in front of the houses nos. 51-71 Rathfarnham Road section. In contrast the NTA determines 1.8m to be adequate width for the footpath at Rathfarnham village, see map 3 in Appendix-B4-Typical-Cross-Sections.pdf (which experiences far more footfall). **The footpath widths should be consistent and not unnecessarily large.**
- f. **The proposed set back of the front boundary wall and use of part of the existing front gardens of the houses on Rathfarnham Road for the widening of the road space, appears to be in material contravention of the development plan zoning objective.** The houses plus gardens are zoned Z2 - Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas). The proposed widening of the road space along the fronts of the houses nos. 51-71 would therefore be a material contravention of the Dublin City Development Plan.
- g. The NTA has provided detailed information on the process to remove trees from the houses along the nos. 51-71 Rathfarnham Road section, but there is no detail of any sort provided on replacement and replanting of these trees, many of which are unique and irreplaceable.

- h. We are deeply concerned in relation to health risks presented by the proposed widening of Rathfarnham Road and bring vehicular closer to our home at 63 Rathfarnham Road, Terenure. We are further concerned at the immense increase in traffic volumes that will be diverted to Rathfarnham Road and delayed in grid-lock at all times of the day. We refer to the very well documented evidence on carcinogenic airborne matter including nitrogen oxides, particles, carbon monoxide and hydrocarbons as well as fine friction particles that are here to stay, even as electric vehicles become more popular. The often underestimated by public policies and regulations, fine particles include those in exhaust fumes that are generated by fuel combustion and fine friction particles that are a result of tyre and brake wear and tear. They are a major health risk causing oxidative stress, respiratory or cardiovascular disorders, cancers, neurodegenerative diseases (Parkinson, Alzheimer), etc. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/jun/03/car-tyres-produce-more-particle-pollution-than-exhausts-tests-show>

Section Two: Comment on the flawed NTA process:

- 1. Flawed public consultation, which proved to be completely inadequate:** I believe that there was a very blatant attempt by the NTA to railroad the proposals through with minimum meaningful consultation possible. The NTA used the Covid 19 pandemic to their advantage and continued with a pretence of engagement by offering Zoom calls. A significant proportion of the affected residents, many in older demographics, who are less computer savvy, simply did not know how to engage with Zoom or the online documentation and as a result were excluded. For anyone seeking hard copies of the detailed documents, the cost of over €600 would be prohibitive. Without in person group meetings, ideas could not be shared, discussed and fleshed out.
- 2. NTA had a deliberate "Divide and Conquer" approach to its "individual" meetings.** The NTA would not agree to group meetings with various combinations of residents' associations. I believe that this was a deliberate strategy of the NTA to divide and conquer and the result was that concessions and changes to the original plan were granted to the vocal and more powerful residential areas. This does not represent a result for the "greater good".
- 3. NTA team creating the plan lack the necessary expertise:** The NTA proposals were compiled by engineers, noticeably absent are any town planners or architects which is an obvious deficit in expertise and has resulted in a less than rounded set of proposals.
- 4. Proposals are presented in a manner that is inaccessible to the common "layman":** The documents run to hundreds of pages. Residents, even those affected by CPO were not offered the means to access independent engineering or town planning advice. So, unless individuals have the financial means to fund this privately, they were at a disadvantage versus the state funded juggernaut of the NTA.
- 5. The NTA proposals conflict with the Dublin City Development Plan 2016- 2023 for the future development of Dublin's villages and local communities.** This suggests a detachment from the shared civic responsibility to preserve our urban heritage. It also implies a democratic deficit in the nature of the Bus Connects planning process.
- 6. Under the Aarhus Convention, members of the public have a right to participate in a range of decisions where these may be an environmental impact.** I do not believe that the NTA have

come close to fulfilling their requirements, which leaves this entire process open to a legal appeal.

7. **Deliberate lack of engagement of expert groups** by the NTA: there was no engagement with Dublin City Council, or South Dublin City Council. Even more strikingly no engagement with the Dublin Bus drivers, who surely must have the practical expertise in this area?!
8. **Well-grounded concerns and objectives were dismissed by the NTA: for example, the proposals at the main junction in Terenure.** Today when driving from Rathfarnham Road, there is no right turn at the junction to bring you to Terenure Road East. That is simply because of the danger it poses, there is no room for large vehicles lorries or buses to take this tight turn. Also, pedestrians cross the road at this point, as they carry out their village life, further increasing the danger on both vehicle drivers and pedestrians.
9. **The NTA has had the benefit of direct access to An Bord Pleanala over months and years for pre Planning meetings and consultations.** By stark contrast , the public were afforded an eight week period to access, interpret and respond. Moreover the contents and notes from the Pre-planning consultations are withheld until after the planning decision is handed down. This again denies the citizen the relevant and timely information to make an informed submission.
10. **There is no transparency or clarity on how An Bord Pleanala will review and determine judgement on the observations/ applications.** There is no understanding on how many aspects have been pre agreed between the NTA and An Bord Pleanala.

Section Three: Observations of the inadequacies of the proposals more generally.

1. The suggested "benefits" are deliberately misleading:

The scheme is proposed on the basis of time savings of 6 minutes in the am in 2028 and 2 minutes in the pm, decreasing to 4 minutes in am 2043 and 1 minute in pm! (see Environmental Report, chapter 6, page 136)

Table 6.52: A2 Service Bus Average Journey Times (Inbound Direction)

Peak Hour	Do Minimum (minutes)	Do Something (minutes)	Difference (minutes)
2028 AM	35.2	29.4	-5.8
2028 PM	31.1	29.1	-2.0
2043 AM	33.2	29.3	-3.9
2043 PM	30.7	29.3	-1.4

However, assessment of the details of the sources of time savings show that the greater majority of expected time savings do not come from the measures being proposed in the planning application – significant time savings can be achieved at little or no cost.

- a. The NTA themselves have said 50% of the time savings is the move to "Cashless buses". I completely agree with this cashless bus proposals and this should be

implemented immediately and separately, not cleverly rolled by the NTA into an overall "time" savings that it is using to justify a Euro 2Billion capital expenditure project.

- b. A considerable number of **bus stops will be removed** per the proposal, so that will reduce the travel time inevitably. Again, why are the NTA rolling that time savings into the overall times that they are using to railroad this significant construction project through?
- c. The NTA themselves have noted that time savings will come from implementing **bus priority signalling**. Why did the NTA not listen to suggestions to **trial that approach** and understand the benefits in a real-world scenario, before proceeding with the massive road programme?
- d. The NTA **needs to clearly share the breakdown of the €2billion spend** into various time savings that will be delivered. It is already understood that the overall level of service will be reduced by Bus Connects. I believe that without a, b, and c above **there is very little justification for the colossal capital expenditure, hence it is at best 'convenient' for the NTA not to clearly demonstrate the analysis!**
- e. The reduced time savings in 2043 per the NTA's own estimations, also demonstrates that this proposal is not built for the long term, with the increased population growth. This contradicts the NTA's assertions that they are planning for the future.

2. Lack of Traffic modelling and the negative Environment impact:

- a. **Traffic modelling that is noted in the document is flawed. The impact of Covid 19 on society, and developments in hybrid working** has completely shifted the landscape and requirements for commuting, vehicular access and peak congestion timings.
- b. The application states no impact based on consideration of the entire route scheme (start to finish) but has **very deliberately not been considered any localised impacts** that will unavoidably arise in sections where massive increases in traffic and congestion will arise to the detriment of residents living along those areas brought closer to by road amendments.
- c. The application **does not consider the parallel Bus Connects route applications** for adjacent areas that are being made (Kimmage to City Centre, Tallaght to City Centre) and therefore discounts and ignores the inevitable resulting traffic redirection and congestion that will occur. Consideration by inclusion of these critical factors would have an enormous impact on environmental impact assessment. There is a particularly huge impact arising from the applications along Springfield Avenue/ Dodder View Road and northwards on Rathfarnham Road from Pierse Bridge.

The NTA are the National Authority for transport planning; they above any other body should be cognisant of these parallel and connected proposed amendments. The NTA fully understand the implications and integrated and knock-on aspects these three routes/corridors whereby the proposals all impact on each other. It is simply unacceptable on a number of levels that NTA would wilfully dislocate these vital considerations on environment to serve their base purpose.

3. Negative Environmental impact on Natural surrounds

- a. All along the route there will be loss of a **significant volume of mature trees**, which is disappointing from aesthetic and environmental stances. Concerns for the impact of

the 'sensitive and threatened' bat population in the Pearse Bridge area have been ignored.

- b. **There will be increased noise and air pollution from cars and lorries that will inevitably be queuing on "quiet roads".**
- c. **The reality of this proposal is while savings are assumed from "bus only" lanes, the reality will be very different with lane blockages arising from lorries, trucks etc that will be parking to deliver packages, stock etc**

4. **Lack of consideration for Local Residents living in urban villages:** The NTA is proposing 12 "bus corridors" that run from periphery points directly into the city centre. There is no proposal for cross radial routes, connecting suburb villages efficiently. There is absolutely no consideration that citizens will in reality want to cross from suburb to suburb, village to village to manage their daily lives of getting to school, to the shops, dentist or doctor, etc. The proposed schemes will eliminate some of these routes as they exist today. The NTA assumption/ suggestion is that citizens will take 2 or 3 buses to reach their destination. In reality, these citizens will have no real alternative but to drive their cars, thereby increasing congestion, gridlock and pollution.

5. **There is a huge and unfair disparity in the treatment of different roads that is unjustified in the documents.**

- a. **For example, on Templeogue Road from Terenure College to Terenure village will be closed to all vehicles except buses 24/7. The reality of this decision, is that traffic coming from the M50 Spawell junction, intending to access the city, will be forced to turn right at Templeogue Road the Templeogue junction to continue along Springfield Avenue/Dodder View Road and to turn left on Rathfarnham Road. This will ensure Rathfarnham road is a grid-locked bottleneck while Templeogue Road is left virtually idle for most of any given day. This is an unbalanced and unjustifiable concentration of all private traffic onto Rathfarnham Road.**

6. **Detrimental impact on heritage, environment and village/community fabric**

The Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government's Design Manual for Urban Streets 2019 (DMURS), sets out the modern, sustainable approach to treatment of urban streets. It highlights how urban street design should shift from the conventional traffic conduit approach and should instead be framed by viewing the street as a place with a social function, putting sustainability, multimodal movement, pedestrians and accessibility at the heart of street design. The proposals presented for high volume highways are wholly inappropriate for the mature suburban landscape environments that it is proposed Bus Connects Core Corridor 12 is to be foisted upon. There is important heritage in the streetscape of Rathfarnham Road, Terenure and Rathgar which will be ruined by the proposed high volumes implications. House numbers 51,53,55,57,59,61,63,65,67,69,71 which face directly onto Rathfarnham Road, are part of a 1920's much feted development of "Stringer" houses unique in the character of the Arts and Crafts style. The style and placement on site are very much part of the heritage of that era in the early part of the state's history and should be preserved and protected. Pearse Bridge (constructed circa 1790-1810) is a single arch bridge which again is worthy of protection for future generations. There is a commemorative bronze plaque depicting the Pearse Brothers from 1952. Similarly, the Memorial Hall, in Terenure village is a protected

structure that should be respected and safeguarded, however the NTA proposal is to further reduce to frontage to the road.

The proposed road widening will destroy the irreplaceable historical streetscape, fabric and character of Terenure and Rathgar and will breach the objectives of Dublin City Council Development Plan with regard to our built heritage (Chapter 11, Built Heritage and Culture).

Terenure Road East has an historical streetscape with houses originating from mid 19th century. Current proposals for Terenure Road East will impact properties, many of which are listed on Dublin City Council's Record of Protected Structures. Destruction of protected curtilage comprising of historical cut stone and old brick walls, pillars and railings is totally unjustified and unacceptable. Cllr Deirdre Conroy (architectural heritage specialist) made formal submissions on the above in the original heritage submission in April 2020.

7. **The commercial impact on the Rathfarnham, Terenure, Rathgar and Rathmines villages will be devastating.** Local traders and businesses would be detrimentally impacted from the loss of on street parking, loading areas and local access. Consumers would be forced to take their custom to more accessible areas (travelling further) and the small village shops and service providers, such as medical practitioners, which make up the heart of village communities, would disappear and the integral community aspect would unavoidably die, causing dereliction. This is in direct conflict with the Dublin City Development plan 2016-2023.

8. **The proposal for Core Corridor 12 would force private traffic onto secondary roads and into housing estates, which will create gridlock that will ensure private vehicle drivers will seek "rat runs" as alternatives to the arterial routes,** ruining all surrounding residential developments and again destroying the fabric of the communities in these housing estates. This alternation of routing for private vehicles will create distinctly unsafe road situations for residential roads that were never designed to carry traffic of the magnitude that will be channelled onto them. Gridlock will result throughout all areas of these residential communities.

The wider and interconnected traffic impacts of the various Core Corridor proposals have not been properly considered or modelled and in many key areas the actual effect will in fact be to slow the junctions on the corridor routes. For example, the proposed "no through" traffic along Templeogue Road to Terenure Village and the change to allow a right turn to be opened to traffic from M50/Templeogue on to Springfield Avenue will push all the eastbound traffic which previously used Templeogue Road onto Rathfarnham Road. Therefore, Rathfarnham Road will become stifled with traffic, jamming the Terenure Cross junction where all buses, private vehicles and cyclists converge to attempt to access Terenure Road East, competing with pedestrians making their way to the numerous schools and churches in the immediate area. There should be no left turn allowed from Springfield Avenue/ Dodder View Road on to Rathfarnham Road In the event this fundamentally flawed route plan is implemented.

9. **The lack of any "Park and Rides" proposals in the scheme will ensure that the private motor vehicle reduction is impossible.** The objective of "bus corridors" is to reduce the volume of vehicles by providing an alternative bus option. Today, there is significant volume of traffic from commuters coming from the M50 and surrounding ring roads. To be able to avail of the bus option, these commuters need a location to safely leave their cars. Therefore, it makes no

sense that "park and rides" are not being planned and implemented as part of this overall proposal. During the NTA consultation process, the NTA themselves asserted that none of the bus route schemes could be implemented without first providing "Park and Ride" facilities.

10. **The NTA's stated objective is to reduce private cars on these main routes into town.** The NTA proudly boast that there will ultimately be a reduced bus service. Today, at peak timings in the morning and evening, buses will pass Terenure village "full". With further vehicle restriction, if the NTA objective is achieved, the buses will be "full" earlier in the journey. Hence, the residents in areas like Terenure will not be able to avail of the bus option, and therefore will have no way of accessing the city.
11. The NTA presents the scheme as being for the "greater good". In that the NTA places the provision of commuter services to those living in outer periphery areas of the city above and ahead of the rights and entitlements of those living in the inner areas of the city. No citizen has a greater or lesser right than another despite the NTAs project objectives.

12. Implications on Cyclists Safety

The Bus Connects proposals for cyclist, in general, will be chaotic and dangerous. Cycle lanes also appear to pulse in and out of the proposed route, inconsistently offering cyclists a reserved route. This is the NTA suggesting to design for cyclists in name only, but are actually failing to design for safe cycling for all ages and abilities. There's little point having segregated cycle paths only for that segregation to end randomly where buses are pulling in or the road pinches to force all users into the same lanes. Why are cyclists not segregated entirely on alternative, parallel routes, where they will not need to vie with vehicular traffic and tailpipe fumes?

13. **Bus Connects has not considered the convenience or the safety of Pedestrians.** Pedestrians should not have to attempt to cross at signalled junctions unaided. The NTA assume time savings to justify the route amendments will in reality be severely diminished when the all of the necessary Toucan and pedestrian light crossings are added in a variety of points along the entire route.

14. **Alternative solutions with more favourable environmental and economic impacts were not given due review i.e. the Metro!**

The obvious strategic solution to the projected growth in south Dublin population is undoubtedly an **underground metro network**. Instead however, the NTA proposes to spend incredible amounts of taxpayer's money (unquantifiable by the NTA at this point) in a substantial road development. This is caveman philosophy in dynamically changing times for transportation and health considerations. The NTA's own publications show the vastly superior and desirable preference of rail-based transport over bus and road transport options. The NTA for years refused funding to Dublin Bus to acquire hybrid buses. Refusal was justified on financial grounds previously. Still critical factors remain regarding these vehicles: -

- They are incredibly costly, €400k-€500k each. Dublin Bus has an existing fleet of 1,100 diesel buses. The NTA refuses to give financial data on the life cycle, running cost and replacement cost of this fleet. Replacing this existing fleet would cost somewhere between € 330 million and € 550 million. Not to mention the additional equipment they require. Moreover, this fleet

would need to increase materially to service the population expansion the NTA justify Bus Connects upon (increased demand of 25% promised). These costs would therefore increase.

- It is a fallacy to think diesel hybrid buses have a genuine environmental improvement to offer. Their construction, servicing and disposal alone is arguably unjustifiable and their running efficiency gain is negligible. Additionally, fuel costs have increased dramatically recently.
- Irrespective of the deployment of diesel hybrid buses, or the long run lifecycle of existing of 100% diesel buses on the fleet, they emit diesel exhaust fumes that cause cancer. The World Health Organization's (WHO) International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), a panel of experts that co-ordinates and conducts research into the causes of cancer and develops cancer control strategies specifies that exposure to diesel fumes causes lung cancer. Categorising diesel engine exhaust fumes as 'carcinogenic' Group 1, which is used when a substance causes cancer in humans. The NTA is proposing a colossal state infrastructural spending scheme in Bus Connects that will increase and prolong for decades, the use, and increased use, of diesel buses on the city streets, bring these buses closer to homes and to channel cyclists into unavoidably breathing these fumes at close proximity. This is an incredibly irresponsible and ill-conceived strategy not just for transport but for public health.

15. There is no evidence to support the assertion that the NTA's costings (at € 2billion) are even a vaguely accurate estimation of potential costs.

If one looks at the CPO budgets in isolation, it seems wholly unrealistic. An authoritative independent cost/benefit analysis is undoubtedly required to understand if the current NTA proposal represents good value for money for the taxpayer. This actual cost of the implementation of Bus Connects has to be considered against a metro system assessed on the same criteria. Bus connects represents a fundamental strategic decision that positions Dublin's public transport as wholly and solely "bus-centric" given the massive sums of public spending this infrastructure would demand and therefore commit the city's public transportation to.

Separately the NTA responded to an enquiry by Eamon Ryan TD to confirm their estimation that CO2 emissions for transport in Dublin will increase by 30% to 2030, while the government is obliged to reduce emissions by 30% over this timeframe – a negative swing on emissions of 60% on today's emissions levels. It is staggering how the NTA can contemplate their current proposals in the face of these unavoidable environmental challenges to Ireland. **Underground Metro is the only solution.**

Section 4: Alternatives that should be considered:

- Metro – as noted by our NRB engineers "Nonetheless given the likely huge cost, disruption, limited benefits and the environmental effects, we are surprised that an underground alternative to a Bus Corridor does not appear as being vigorously pursued by the NTA (see attached NBR consulting document)
- Intelligent Bus priority signalling at all junctions
- Deploying more buses at peak times on the existing bus routes
- Implement cashless fares on buses first, before any construction works are considered or approved
- Introduction of city centre congestion charges

- Manage and police current road usage rules, for example severe fines for vehicles blocking bus lanes or parked on double yellow lines
- Counter flow initiatives, and independent traffic management consultants to look at traffic flow in the city
- Safe off route cycle lanes for cyclists of all abilities including families with children
- Retain independent traffic management consultants to look at traffic flows in the city, in particular at traffic light synchronization.
- Establish free park and ride facilities immediately to encourage commuters to use public transport
- Introduce a free bus service to encourage private transport commuters to switch, as was introduced in Luxembourg in 2020. Cost would be offset for the nation by reducing the EU fines paid for currently exceeded emissions targets.

Conclusion

The substantial, costly and devastating infrastructure changes that the NTA is seeking along these routes remain unjustifiable. No cost and low-cost improvements have not been considered and are certainly not offered to the public. The preference is clearly to embark on a substantial infrastructural build to enshrine public transport vehicles that are noxious polluters for generations to come.

The Bus Connects process is being railroaded without any apparent consideration of the environment aspect, health implications or community destruction. The NTA spend liberally on select media advertising but chose not to spend commensurate sums on advertising to make residents and commuters in affected areas aware (some newly affected) of the proposed routes and the implications.

This ill-conceived corridor 12 proposal needs to be abandoned and a cost benefit analysis of an underground Metro from Charlemont to Knocklyon needs to be properly and honestly evaluated.

The assessment and planning of the bus routes for the city must take cognisance of the needs and wishes of all commuters and citizens along the proposed routes, not just those at the outermost extremities. The needs and preferences of all citizens must be considered equally.

In conclusion, I fundamentally disagree with and object to the proposals and I am requesting an oral hearing to enable An Bord Pleanála to truly understand the depth of concern and objection with the current plans and the impacts on the individual residents and businesses in South and West Dublin.

The NTA has come across as a law unto its-self that is simply steam rolling its way through to its objectives. There has been no meaningful engagement during consultation and the result has been that the NTA have managed successfully to limit opposition.

Yours sincerely

Dylan Timbs

PROJECT NO. 67.06/2023



PLANNING SUBMISSION

Submission on the proposed
construction of the Templeogue/
Rathfarnham to City Centre Core
Bus Corridor

ON BEHALF OF:

RESIDENTS OF NOS. 51-71,

RATHFARNHAM ROAD, TERENURE, DUBLIN 6W.

DATE: JULY 2023

RW Nowlan & Associates | Basement Office, 54 Fitzwilliam Square North, Dublin 2 | Company Reg.
No. 565476 Director- Robert Nowlan | Tel: +353 01-8733627 | www.rwnowlan.ie

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 This submission has been prepared in response to the invitation by the National Transport Authority to make submissions or observations on the proposed 'Templeogue / Rathfarnham to City Centre Core Bus Corridor Scheme'. The Scheme forms part of the Bus Connects project for the city. This submission is specifically related to the section of the Scheme that is located between the junctions of Rathfarnham Road with the Dodder Park Road to the south and the junction of Rathfarnham Road with Rathdown Park to the north. The submission is made on behalf of the residents of the houses nos. 51-71 which are located along the western side of this section of Rathfarnham Road.

2.0 GENERAL

2.1 The details of the scheme for the section of roadway along the frontages of house nos. 51-71, are shown on drawing sheets 4 and 5.¹ Compared to the current situation along the stretch of Rathfarnham Road in front of the sites of house nos. 51-71, the proposals will result in the following changes:

1. Removal of left hand turning lane into Rathdown Park outside house nos. 51-53
2. Dedicated cycle lane to replace shared cycle/bus lane outside house nos. 51-71
3. Compulsory acquisition and loss of land to enable set back of boundary wall outside house nos. 51-71 to facilitate a cycle lane
3. New boundary treatment to match existing outside house nos. 51-71
4. Signal controlled priority for buses outside no. 51.

2.2 This submission questions the necessity and benefit of the setting back of the boundary wall along the front gardens of the house nos. 51-71 on the basis that this setback does not facilitate an additional bus lane but rather a cycle lane where such a cycle lane is already available as a shared bus/cycle bus.

2.3 In addition, it is considered that the introduction of the signal controlled priority measures that are proposed for junctions to the south and north of this section of road, may lead to significant traffic congestion while the need for both priority measures is not made clear. The consequences of

the proposed measures on increased traffic congestion cannot be properly understood in the absence of an integral consideration of the total of the Bus Connects scheme proposals in the broader locality rather than just those in the proposed corridor in isolation.

3.0 LACK OF INTEGRATED ASSESSMENT OF ENTIRE BUS CONNECTS SCHEME

3.1 The proposed bus corridor scheme forms part of the Bus Connects project to create an improved bus transport network for the City of Dublin. The National Transport Authority (NTA) has decided to introduce the new network on a phased basis.² While the reasons for such a phased basis are understood (*...to ensure smooth and efficient delivery of the full benefits for all bus users, while at the same time ensuring the network is responsive and flexible as the city grows and people's needs evolve*)³ it is a consequence of this approach that unintended effects may not be fully appreciated or understood as the Environmental Impact Assessment is carried out on individual Bus Connect route sections of the scheme rather than the scheme in full.

3.2 For example, one can be concerned that there is no traffic modelling included in the documentation that shows the combined effects of the intended alterations to road traffic flows/diversions etc. for the south, southwest and west of the city. There appears to be no integrated analysis for the subject Templeogue/Rathfarnham Scheme together with the Kimmage Scheme. Other corridor schemes as they are introduced on a phased basis are likely to have consequences for traffic volumes on the subject section of road space which would further add to the traffic congestion on this section.

3.3 The EIAR (traffic and transportation) fails to take into account the interaction of the Kimmage to City Centre corridor with the Templeogue/Rathfarnham Scheme. These corridors/schemes cannot and should not be considered independently as impacts of Bus Gates, traffic restrictions and rerouting significantly affect the broad areas of these corridors - cannot and should not be assessed in isolation. No integrated EIA analysis of these proposed corridors together has been presented in this application.

¹ *Environmental Impact Assessment Report*, Vol. 1, General Arrangement Drawings, April 2023, sheets 4 and 5.

² *New Dublin Area Bus Network, Summary Document*, NTA, September 2020, p. 9.

³ *New Dublin Area Bus Network, Summary Document*, NTA, September 2020, p. 9.

4.0 IMPACT ON TRAFFIC FLOWS AND CONGESTION

4.1 By introducing signal controlled priority for inbound and outbound direction buses at the junction to the south with Dodder Park Road and also at the junction outside no. 51 with Rathdown Park, it is likely that significant traffic congestion will result in the short stretch of Rathfarnham Road between these two junctions. This stretch is estimated to be ca. 260 m in length. As a result of the signal controlled priority for buses at the two locations, there is a risk that traffic will be held back in both directions at the junction with Dodder Park Road but also at the junction with Rathdown Park. If these traffic lights are not coordinated (which is impossible given the fact that there is a bus stop located on this stretch of road), there is a significant risk that cars would be let through at the junction to the south, only to be held back at the junction with Rathdown Park. This would result in traffic congestion south of the junction with Rathdown Park.

4.2 A better solution would be if traffic was held back at the junction with Dodder Park Road (to allow buses to continue along Rathfarnham Road unhindered) but not at the junction with Rathdown Park. Rathdown Park is a local residential access road whereas Rathfarnham Road is a regional road and a key radial route into the city. It would therefore make sense to have longer green traffic light cycles for the inbound traffic along Rathfarnham Road which would also benefit buses. A signal-controlled priority treatment is therefore not necessary at this junction. For outbound traffic there is less of a problem given the distance of the nearest house (no. 71) to the signal priority-controlled junction with Dodder Park Road.

5.0 GRADIENT OF PRIVATE DWELLING DRIVEWAYS

5.1 The houses along Rathfarnham Road are at a significantly higher level than the road. Removing part of the front gardens as proposed, creates a risk that gradients of the driveways to the individual houses may become too steep. The documentation fails to provide detailed information of the impact on the gradients of the driveways.

5.2 A report assessing the impact of the proposed land take from the front gardens on the gradients of the access driveways to house nos. 55-71 reveals that for 5 of the 7 houses, the access gradient would be significantly steeper than is currently the case.⁴ Such a deterioration would contravene national Building Control Regulations which require that a material alteration to a dwelling must not

⁴ Report NRB Consulting Engineers, 24/07/23

make the dwelling less satisfactory in relation to Part M of the Regulations (which regulate disabled access to dwelling houses) than it was before.

6.0 REASON FOR SETBACK OF THE BOUNDARIES

6.1 In examining the proposals for the subject stretch of Rathfarnham Road, it is not clear why a setback of the boundary wall with resultant loss of part of the front gardens is necessary. This is a disproportionate proposal relative to the benefits and outcomes that would result. It is also not clear what is meant by 'temporary land acquisition'. Along this stretch of roadway there is currently a bus lane plus a single lane carriage way in both directions. This division of road space remains unchanged in the proposals. The only differences between the proposed design and the current situation are the removal of a left hand turning lane into Rathdown Park and the addition of a cycle lane instead of the current combined cycle lane/bus lane. As it is proposed to improve travel times for buses under the bus connects scheme, the proposals for this section of roadway do not change the relative position between cars and buses other than the introduction of the bus priority signalling. The division of available road space between private (cars) and public (buses) road space remains the same as it is at present. In that context, it seems excessive to remove front boundary walls and parts of front gardens just to achieve a cycle lane where such a cycle lane already exists in the form of the share cycle/bus lane.

6.2 The houses for which boundary setbacks are proposed, all have beautiful mature gardens which took years to achieve. It seems reckless to destroy them. Proposals on the restoration of lost trees are not clear.

7.0 LACK OF RATIONALE FOR THE DEDICATED CYCLE LANE

7.1 It is noted that the proposed corridor scheme makes no provision for a dedicated cycle lane along Rathfarnham Road between Rathfarnham Village and a short distance south of the junction with Dodder Park Road.⁵ Along this section of road there are 22 houses fronting onto Rathfarnham Road. The cycle lane is provided here as a shared facility with the bus lane. Unlike this section of Rathfarnham Road, a dedicated cycle lane is proposed for the section between the junctions with Dodder Park Road and Rathdown Park. This inconsistency in approach is not explained in the documentation.

⁵ *Environmental Impact Assessment Report*, Vol. 1, General Arrangement Drawings, April 2023, sheets 3 and 4.

8.0 CONFLICT WITH DEVELOPMENT PLAN ZONING OBJECTIVE

The proposed set back of the front boundary wall and use of part of the existing front gardens of the houses on Rathfarnham Road for the widening of the road space, appears to be in material contravention of the development plan zoning objective. The houses plus gardens are zoned Z2 - Residential Neighbourhoods (Conservation Areas).⁶ The zoning objective is: ...*"To protect and/or improve the amenities of residential conservation areas."* The permissible uses nor open for consideration uses do not include the use of the land for transport related purposes.⁷ The proposed widening of the road space along the fronts of the houses nos. 51-71 would therefore be a material contravention of the Dublin City Development Plan.

9.0 CONCLUSION

- **The proposed set back of front boundary walls of gardens of houses nos. 51-71, Rathfarnham Road is not justified given the loss of mature gardens and the relatively limited benefit of a one way cycle lane where such a cycle lane is already in existence. Moreover, it would specifically be a breach of the Part M Building regulations.**
- **The proposed set back of front boundary walls of gardens of houses nos. 51-71, Rathfarnham Road for the purpose of widening the road space of the road, would materially contravene the zoning objective under the Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028.**
- **The proposed scheme does not state why a dedicated cycle lane is required along this stretch of Rathfarnham Road whereas a shared bus lane/cycle way is proposed for the section of Rathfarnham Road to the south of the junction with Dodder Park Road. This inconsistency in approach requires clarification.**
- **The introduction of the signal-controlled priority measures that are proposed for junctions with Dodder Park Road and Rathdown Park are likely to lead to significant traffic congestion while the need for both priority measures is not made clear.**
- **As a result of the phased introduction of proposed measures under the Bus Connects improvement scheme, unintended effects may not be fully appreciated or understood as the**

⁶ Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, Map H.

⁷ Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028, p. 531.

Environmental Impact Assessment is carried out on sections of the scheme rather than the scheme in full. This approach is inconsistent with the holistic approach under the EIA Directive which is to ensure that all environmental impacts are considered that are consequential of a development scheme or project.

- **The houses along Rathfarnham Road comprising nos. 51-71 are at a significantly higher level than the road. Removing part of the front gardens as proposed, will result in gradients of the driveways to the individual houses that become significantly steeper which contravenes the requirements under Part M of the Building Control Regulations.**

24 July 2023
19-042/ER

Core Bus Corridor Project,
National Transport Authority,
C/O Residents of,
55, 59, 61, 63, 65, 67 & 71 Rathfarnham Rd.,
Terenure,
Dublin 6W.

+353 1 292 1941
Info@nrb.ie
www.nrb.ie

Sent by Email to Client Only

Dear Sirs/Madam,

TEMPLEOGUE/RATHFARNHAM TO CITY CENTRE - CORE BUS CORRIDOR SCHEME
REVIEW ON BEHALF OF #55, #59, #61, #63, #65, #67 & #71 RATHFARNHAM ROAD:
BASED ON AVAILABLE DESIGN DETAILS AND TOPOGRAPHICAL SURVEY

NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd are specialist in the field of Traffic/Transportation and Roads and we do not offer expertise in other areas of Consulting Engineering. Further details of our expertise are available on our website. This Report has been prepared in full by Eoin Reynolds, a Chartered Engineer with over 33 years-experience in the area of Traffic/Transportation and Roads and a Director of NRB Consulting Engineers Ltd.

We do not address herein the technical, environmental or capacity matters associated with the proposed Corridor. Nonetheless, given the likely huge cost, disruption, limited benefits and the environmental effects we are surprised that an underground alternative to a Bus Corridor does not appear as being vigorously pursued by the NTA.

We have reviewed the proposed design of the Bus Corridor, based on the relatively scant design information available from the Statutory Application documentation, supplemented by a Topographical Survey previously commissioned by NRB on behalf of the Residents.



This submission focuses on the resulting changes to the gradients on the approaches to the residential houses as a result of the Bus Connects plans, and the implications in terms of the Mandatory Part M, National Building Regulations.

As far as we can see, the only levels information provided in the documentation is a "Crown Line" level along the proposed route 'centreline'. No information appears to be available to Residents to enable them to clearly determine the effects on their properties or the medium terms implications for accessibility. No levels information is provided to residents.

In terms of the impact upon individual residences along the route, given the scant information provided within the statutory documents and the planning application we have had to assume some typical design details (gradients and details which would normally apply to schemes of this nature, with the assumed gradients as illustrated below as **Figure 1**).

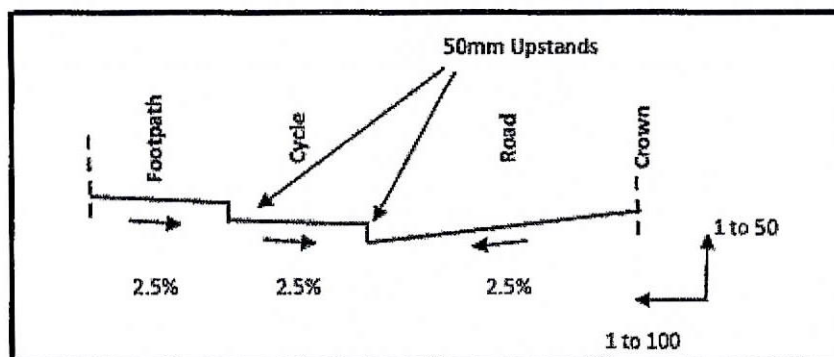


Figure 1 – Details assumed for the Purposes of this Study

We have used the Permanent CPO Land-take drawings and the property widths along the corridor to calculate the depth of land-take at each property.

We include below a 'Before' and 'After' Cross Sectional Profile for each Property.

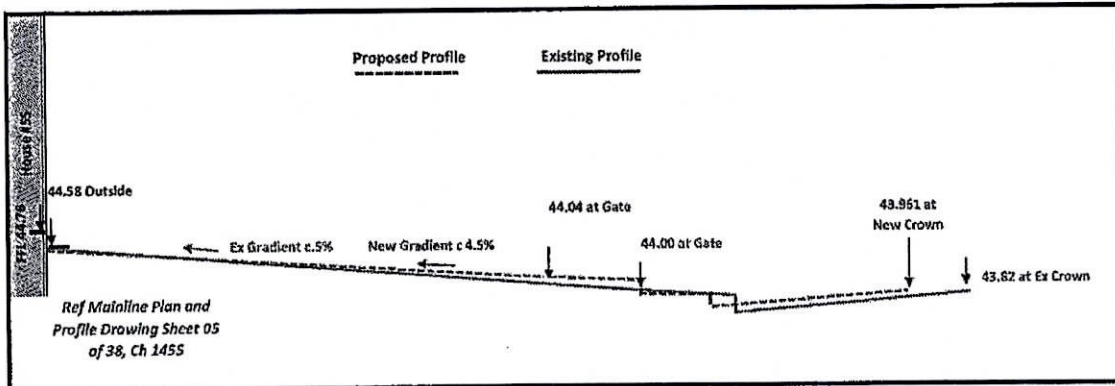


Figure 2 – Profile for #55 Rathfarnham Road

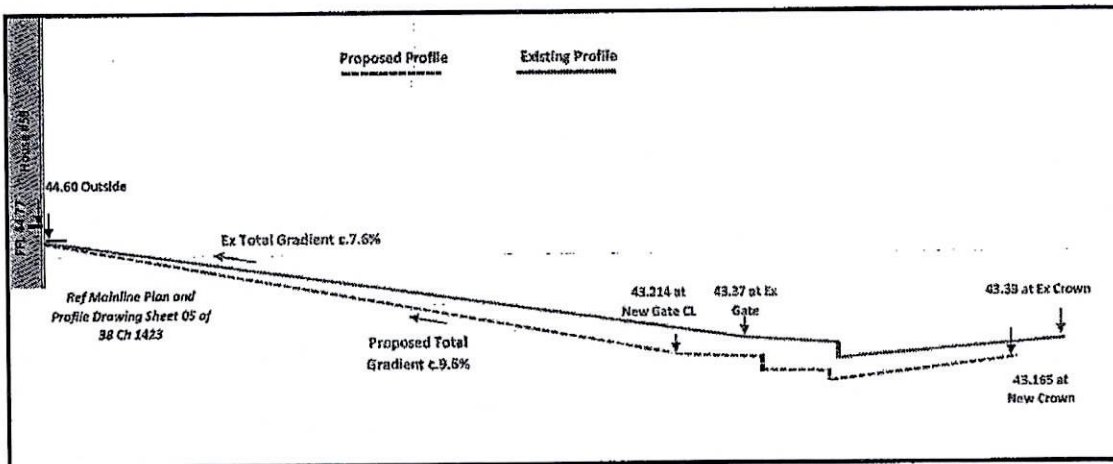


Figure 3 – Profile for #59 Rathfarnham Road

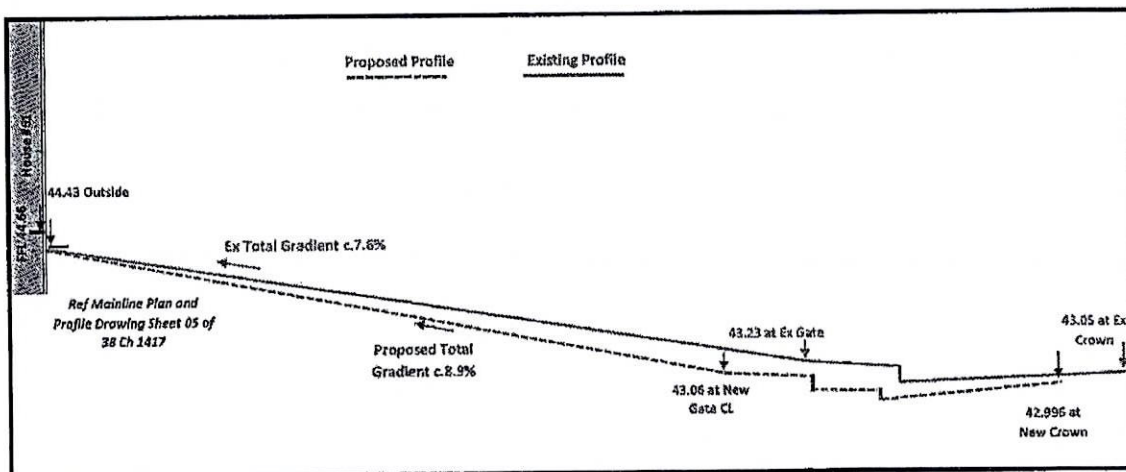


Figure 4 – Profile for #61 Rathfarnham Road

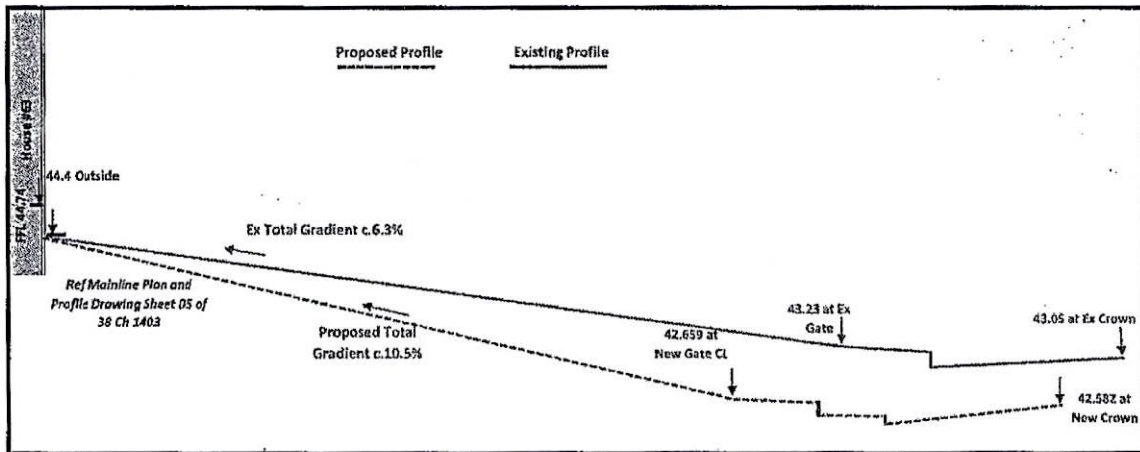


Figure 4 – Profile for #63 Rathfarnham Road

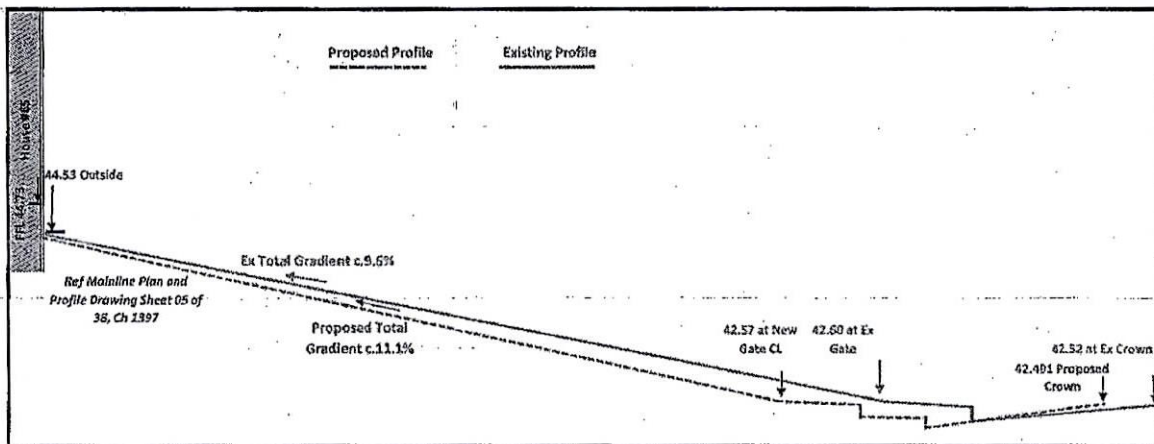


Figure 5 – Profile for #65 Rathfarnham Road

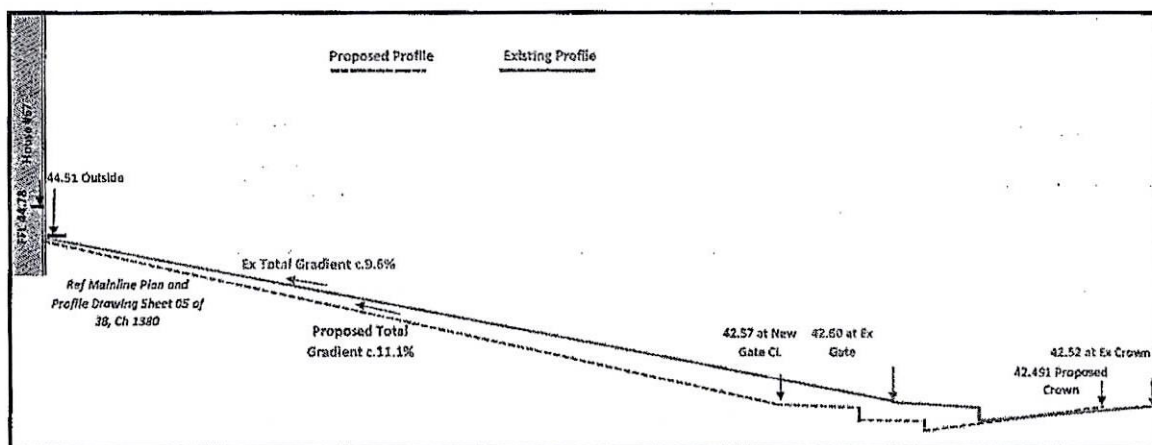


Figure 6 – Profile for #67 Rathfarnham Road

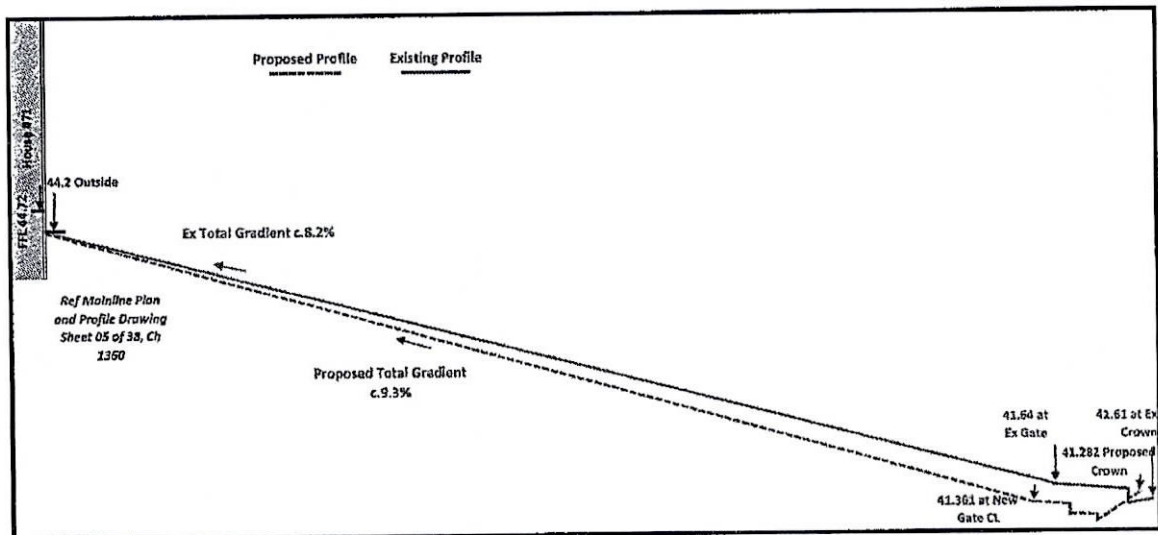


Figure 7 – Profile for #71 Rathfarnham Road

We include below the Summary Table of the comparison of the gradients currently versus post Bus Corridor for each Residence.

Table 1 – Summary of Design Review of Access Gradients

House Details	Current Total Gradient ¹	Future Total Gradient ²	Comment
55 Rathfarnham Rd	5%	4.5%	Improvement
59 Rathfarnham Rd	7.6%	9.6%	Significantly Steeper
61 Rathfarnham Rd	7.6%	8.9%	Significantly Steeper
63 Rathfarnham Rd	6.3%	10.5%	Significantly Steeper
65 Rathfarnham Rd	9.6%	11.1%	Significantly Steeper
67 Rathfarnham Rd	10.6%	13.6%	Significantly Steeper
71 Rathfarnham Rd	8.2%	9.3%	Steeper

1 – Measured from the existing vehicular gate threshold level to the house doorway ex ground level
 2 – Using Provided Crown level to interpolate the Future gate threshold level



Part M, the Statutory National Building Regulations specifically states; -

"An extension or a material alteration of a dwelling must not make the building, as a whole, less satisfactory in relation to Part M than it was before. This means an extension or a material alteration of a dwelling need not itself comply with Part M, but it must not result in the dwelling being less compliant than it previously was"

This extract is taken from Page 12 of the National Statutory Document, reproduced exactly below as **Figure 8...**

The Requirements of Part M do not apply to works in connection with extensions to and the material alterations of existing dwellings, provided that such works do not create a new dwelling. However, an extension or a material alteration of a dwelling must not make the building, as a whole, less satisfactory in relation to Part M than it was before. This means an extension or a material alteration of a dwelling need not itself comply with Part M, but it must not result in the dwelling being less compliant than it previously was;

Extract P12 Part M

Figure 8 - Part M Extract Referring to Residential Dwellings

We conclude that the Bus Connect plans (as per the Planning Application, based on the design data provided) appear to result in a significantly steeper approach to the majority of the subject dwellings, clearly contravening National Building Control Regulations.

Based on our Design Review, it would therefore appear clear to us that an adequate detailed 3-D design that fully explores the implications for accessibility to the subject houses has **NOT** been undertaken by Bus Connects and/or their agents.

We would suggest that a comprehensive consequential design for pedestrian and vehicular access from the public road to the door of each house, that meets the Part M requirements, should be provided demonstrating to An Bord Pleanála and each resident that this has been adequately addressed.

Such failure to properly assess, detail and design, and subsequently accurately cost Public Infrastructure Projects from the outset has proven to be problematic in the recent past in terms of the medium to longer term cost implications for the Taxpayer.

Yours sincerely,



**Eoin Reynolds
Chartered Engineer
Director**

