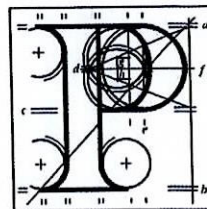


Our Case Number: ABP-316272-23

Planning Authority Reference Number:



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Paul Jacobs
52 Rathdown Park
Terenure
Dublin 6W
D6WVX89

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

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Paul Jacobs
52 Rathdown Park
Terenure
Dublin
D6W VX89

An Bórd Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

14 August 2023

Re: Bord Pleanála Case Reference: HA29N.316272

I am writing as a resident of Rathdown Park, Terenure. I work in the city centre and have 3 school / college children and a wife who works in the city centre and at home.

I would like to express my concerns about the proposals under the above planning application. I would welcome any *appropriate* transport solutions that makes the city function more sustainably and unfortunately Bus Connects is not such a solution. I object to the Bus Connects Proposal and especially in relation to the changes proposed in the vicinity of Terenure village where I and my family live.

I am aware of the local campaign by residents of this area who have advocated for a metro but this has been ignored.

Adverse Impacts on Family Life, School, and Activities

As a resident of Rathdown Park in Terenure, the proposed Bus Connects in its current form will have huge detrimental impacts on the quality of life of myself and my family.

Our family is deeply involved within the Rathmines, Harolds Cross, Crumlin, Terenure, Templeogue, Rathfarnham communities, attend schools/college locally and in the City Centre, and avail of the clubs and facilities in our leisure time. Our children attend Marino College, St Mary's Rathmines and Loreto College St Stephen's Green; all family members are committed and active members of Kevin's Hurling and Camogie Club in Crumlin / Dolphin's Barn, as players, coach, referee, and administrative duties. member of St Jude's, Templeogue; membership of Terenure and Leinster Cricket Clubs; our son is a keen rugby player his school which requires (among other things) early morning training sessions in Rathmines and Donnybrook;

The cross-city journeys to and from training, meetings, matches, and all other related activities, some requiring the transport of heavy and bulky sports equipment and car-pooling with other parents. These will be made considerably worse and perhaps impossible due to increased journey times.

The current provision of bus transport is not adequate as it cannot be relied to get a seat on a bus in Terenure that will get into the city centre for commencement of normal business hours. We know because we have tried on many occasions and cannot risk taking the bus to school as full buses pass and do not stop. Bus Connects will not change this, having examined the proposed routes and timings.

Further, the cost both in terms of monetary expense and non-monetary disruption, will not provide commensurate meaningful benefits.

Post COVID Impacts

From the documentation, it is clear that all the surveys, etc. were done in the early 2010's with supporting data sourced from that time. We have also had the changes brought about by COVID19.

COVID-19 has changed the world of work in ways that we cannot know even now, however, we do know that many large employers are re-thinking their office accommodation needs. In a November 2020 consultation session, when the issue of the changes that pandemic are bringing was put to the Bus Connects Team the response was to dismiss the idea that if there were changes, the response would be to *reduce the number of buses on the road following* Bus Connects becoming operational.

It would be unacceptable to inflict irreversible damage to our communities, villages, and way of life at vast expense to put *fewer* buses on the road.

Impacts on Communities

It is clear that this Bus Connect proposal has no appreciation of the fracturing and dislocation the proposals under the above planning application will bring and is blind to the consequences of not preserving the Dublin urban landscape. By way of example of how this is exhibited in the proposal; the removal of trees will alter the streetscapes; compulsory purchase of parts of established residences; various road closures; banning of right turns forcing traffic on certain already congested roads.

The closure of the Rathgar road outbound will have a significant effect on my journey to work. The 'improvement' to bus services will not provide a transport solution for my journey to work in City Quay, and I will be forced to use other routes that other cars will also be forced onto increasing congestion and journey times.

The closing off Templeogue Road at Olney Crescent going into town and cutting off access from Rathdown Park will choke off access to the city for many residents and add to the journey times and congestion.

The traffic at the weekend trying to access Bushey Park for GAA, rugby, tennis and the Farmers' Market is already at intolerable levels.

Poor Consultation and lack of accountability

The conduct of the consultation on this matter has been poor. By way of example, I attended a 'Zoom' consultation in November 2020 which had been poorly advertised among impacted residents and the conduct of this session was highly controlled by the Bus Connects representatives. The contributions

(exclusively adverse) made by the attendees were not treated seriously and were brushed aside. All objections and comments were met with 'I don't agree' with no supporting evidence.

The obvious gender imbalance on the Bus Connect teams was on a number of occasions challenged (zero females on their team) and similarly brushed aside.

That this was taking place in the context of the COVID pandemic restrictions and the insistence by the Bus Connects team that there would be no accommodation for the restrictions, in my view, brings this 'consultation' into question.

Benefits Do Not Warrant the Costs

The benefits of this proposal are unclear. There will be removal of bus stops as well as bus routes and the improvements in bus journey times negligible which means any improvements will very quickly be negated as the population rises and we will be back to the drawing board within a decade.

The attendant disruption, and dislocation of communities will be considerable, irreversible, entirely negative with absolutely no discernible tangible benefit.

All of the above will result in disruption of local journeys, displacement of traffic rather than reduction, dislocation of village communities. The inevitable increased journey times will exacerbate emissions which calls into question the sustainability claims of the scheme.

In terms of tangible measures, and as a simple example, having examined the proposed frequencies of buses post Bus Connects I have no confidence that we can expect a reliable bus service to take our children to school (i.e. buses will continue to pass Terenure full and not stop). Yet, we will be severely affected the limitations on which roads we can use to travel to nearby communities and indeed the central City, and we will have a large influx of cars clogging up Rathdown Park as a result of introduction of the non-right hand turn from Templeogue Road and cars being re-routed to solely enter from the already congested Rathfarnham Road.

Conclusion

In summary, the Bus Connects proposal as detailed in the above planning permission overstates any benefits which will vastly be outweighed by the considerable financial costs and destruction to the urban villages and the quality of life of residents. It is indisputable that the area needs an upgrade to its transport provision and the NTA must deliver a fit-for-purpose future-proofed transport solution but without the needless attendant degradation of quality of lives, environmental and habitat destruction.

I trust the above will be of assistance to An Bórd in its deliberations.

Yours faithfully,

Paul Jacobs