

Bob Laird
20 Greenlawns
Skerries
Co. Dublin
K34 RW18

Date: 10 August 2023

Re: BusConnects Swords to City Centre Bus Corridor Scheme
Swords to Dublin City Centre

Dear Sir,

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.

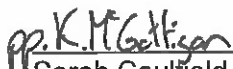
Please note that the proposed road development shall not be carried out unless the Board has approved it or approved it with modifications.

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,


Sarah Caulfield
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737287

HA02A

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SUBMISSION TO AN BORD PLEANÁLA

SWORDS TO CITY CENTRE CORE BUS CORRIDOR SCHEME

This submission is made in relation to

"The implications of this road development, if carried out, for proper planning and sustainable development in the area in which it is proposed to situate the proposed road development".

The purpose of the proposed road development is to facilitate high quality sustainable transport by both bus and cycling. I fully support the need for this development. I have two general comments, which the Bord may feel appropriate to comment on (items 1 and 2 below) and one specific modification to the plan, which I am suggesting is necessary if the objectives are to be achieved for a particular cohort of potential bus users.

ITEM 1. NORTH OF PINNOCK HILL ROUNDABOUT

This core bus corridor scheme is designed to ensure quality, reliable bus services at a reasonable speed for people who live in, and have reason to visit, locations along and close to the corridor. To be successful, it must incorporate the full length of a bus route. If any length of route is omitted, then it becomes difficult to deliver the bus service at the quality and reliability necessary to achieve the objectives.

This corridor ends at Pinnock Hill Roundabout. There is no indication of how buses are going to continue with reliable journey times north of this location. If buses leaving Swords are delayed within Swords, then a consistent and reliable service will not be delivered along the whole corridor.

The Bord may feel it appropriate to include a comment in relation to the situation with the town of Swords.

ITEM 2. SUPPORTING TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Lack of priority for buses is not the only cause of delay and slow journeys for bus users. Traffic lights are another. There are approximately 47 sets of lights between the existing bus terminus used by Swords buses in Lower Abbey St., Dublin, and North St., Swords. The Swords corridor is different from most of the other bus corridors, inasmuch as buses will not be using the same roads as most general traffic. On most corridors, buses are on the same corridor, and therefore the bus route gets quite a bit of time at key traffic junctions. Most of the Swords route, north of Whitehall Church, has been bypassed by N1/M50/M1 for general traffic, and the bus route has been designed for local access, with many sets of four phase lights, and quite often poor priority for the main route on which the bus is travelling.

This is a specific issue for the Swords bus corridor and is one that needs to be considered as part of the bus corridor project. Improved bus priority in street space without improved priority at traffic lights will not have sufficient impact to achieve the objective of making the sustainable bus option an attractive one.

The Bord may feel it appropriate to include a comment in relation to traffic light priorities on this corridor.

ITEM 3. PROPOSED REMOVAL OF BUS STOP 3671 AT AIRPORT ROUNDABOUT NORTHBOUND

The planned BusConnects service in the Airport to Swords area will give a big increase compared to current levels, and that is very welcome. There will be a significant number of buses approaching the

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Airport Roundabout northbound from both the Airport (7 per hour) and from Dublin city centre via R132 (9 per hour). An obvious place for a bus stop is where these two routes merge. Yet under the plan submitted the existing bus stop at this location will be removed.

Why does this matter? It could be argued that anyone coming from the Airport can get a bus at an Airport stop, and anyone coming from R132 direction will get a bus at an earlier location on this route. However, there are practical reasons why, in many cases, it suits people to use Stop 3671, and while new services may, in theory, remove these reasons, in practice, they won't. Lack of a bus stop in this location would be very inconvenient for a significant number of potential bus users, would cause their total journey time to be increased significantly, and therefore goes against the objective of promoting and encouraging sustainable travel.

The factors that come into play are:

- Many parts of Swords will be served by the A4 route, which will not serve the Airport. This is the planned core service to Swords. Walking to the main road to pick up this bus will be more convenient than taking a connecting bus for many people.
- There are many office blocks and hotels within a 5 minute walk of this bus stop. For people coming from these, this bus stop is more convenient than using a stop within the Airport complex.
- Even with the planned frequency increase, there will be times when users to many of the places served will find that walking to the stop that serves all bus routes will be more convenient than waiting at a location only served by some.
- I have twice used this stop in the past few months having arrived in the Airport on a flight. One was more convenient time compared to a bus from the Airport. The other was a bus from the Airport not running. In this case, there were 6 of us, four Airport staff and two passengers, who rushed to Stop 3671 for an alternative bus that did not serve the Airport. The promoters of this scheme may argue that similar situations will not arise with the new network. In practice, they will. The network that emerges may not be exactly as planned. There will be times when services are not running exactly as planned. And there are off peak times when frequencies are lower and people need more options.
- The planned service from the Airport is 7 buses an hour. However, as this is one route at 20 minute frequency, and two at 30 minute frequency, there will be at least two gaps of 15 minutes each hour, or else one of 20 minutes. With this level of frequency, many people for Swords will find it worthwhile walking to the main road rather than wait and need to change.

Put simply, the most obvious place for a bus stop is immediately after two different routes join up. Isn't that just common sense?

Proposal – Bus stop 3671 needs to be retained at its current location or closer to the Airport Roundabout.

Submission from

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Bob Laird 9/8/2023