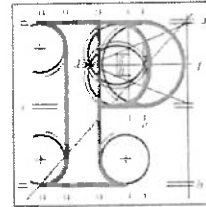


Our Case Number: ABP-317660-23



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Kenilworth Park Residents' Association
c/o Dermot Morahan
79 Kenilworth Park
Harolds Cross
D6W E244

Date: 15 December 2023

Re: Bus Connects Kimmage to City Centre core bus corridor scheme
Kimmage, Dublin

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

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaao Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
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64 Sráid Maoilbhride	64 Marlborough Street
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79 Kenilworth Park

Harold's Cross

Dublin 6W

D6W E244

Phone – 

06 December 2023

BusConnects Revised Infrastructure

Kimmage to City Centre

Core Bus Corridor 11

Submissions/Observations/Objections to An Bord Pleanála

Submission on behalf of the **Kenilworth Park Residents' Association**

Location - Kenilworth Park

Harolds Cross

Dublin 6W

Geographic Location – Extending from Lower Kimmage Road to Harolds Cross Road with intersections at both Wilfrid Road and Clareville Road.

Number of Houses = 106

In December 2019 Kenilworth Park Residents' Association made a detailed written Submission to the BusConnects Project in relation to the associated Connectivity Issue. Prior to this, as one of the affiliated Residents' Associations, it contributed to the Submission dated the 28th September 2018 made by the Harolds Cross Village Community Council to the BusConnects Project.

In advance of this Submission the Association engaged in the consultation process, both Rounds 1, 2 and 3 aforesaid. Most recently, in preparation for these Written Submissions/Observations/Objections, representatives of our Association considered all the information on the BusConnects website to include attendance at various information webinars. The Association members also considered the voluminous documentation that accompanied the current Planning Application.

The Kenilworth Park Residents' Association welcomes many of the positive proposals so far notified in the BusConnects Project.

The Association welcomes the principle aims and objectives of the BusConnects Core Bus Corridors as enunciated in that body's publications.

It particular, our Association welcomes the aims of the project to: -

1. Enhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system
2. Support the delivery of an efficient, low carbon and climate resilient public transport service
3. Improve accessibility of jobs, education and other social and economic opportunities
4. Enhance the potential for cycling by providing safe infrastructure for cycling
5. Enable compact growth, regeneration opportunities and more effective use of land in Dublin
6. Ensure that the public realm is carefully considered

Conscious of the above, and the proposals published to date, the Kenilworth Park Residents' Association hereby makes these Submissions/Observations. By their very definition some of the current BusConnects proposals will directly impact on our members and the geographic area in which they live whilst others may only impact in a tangential way. We have confined our Submissions/Observations/Objections to matters of direct relevance to our Association's members and trust that they will be accepted for their constructive merit.

Reduction of Traffic Volumes

One of the stated principal aims of the current BusConnects Project is to “(E)nhance the capacity and potential of the public transport system.”

This is welcomed by our Association particularly in circumstances where *its effective implementation* will lead to a greater utilisation of the public transport system and a consequential reduction in private traffic volumes in our locale.

With this in mind we would now like to turn to Chapter 6 entitled Traffic & Transport Appendices and to Appendix A6.3 – Junction – Design – Report

In the original plan as published (EPR) the junction of Sundrive Road with Lower Kimmage Road showed that, at RUS 013, there would be a sign indicating:-

“NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT BUSES AND BICYCLES”

This demonstrated that traffic proceeding along Sundrive Road in an easterly direction would not be permitted to turn left unto Lower Kimmage Road, with stated exceptions for public transport (buses) and bicycles. Rather traffic would move seamlessly from Sundrive Road to Larkfield Avenue and thence onwards to Clareville Road.

In the second such published plan, DRAFT PRO (PC2) the information signage at the junction stated that there would be:-

“NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT BUSES TAXIS AND BICYCLES”

(The addition of **Taxis** to those vehicles permitted to turn left was the only amendment from the details contained at the same junction in the EPR).

In the third published plan DRAFT PRO (PC3) the junction has the same designation as it had for PC2,

“NO LEFT TURN EXCEPT BUSES TAXIS AND BICYCLES”

The Stage B Review omits all traffic signs at the junction whilst the document entitled FINAL DRAFT unfortunately omits any reference to there being no left turn at the junction (which is in direct conflict with the information for this junction contained in at least three of the earlier publications, namely EPR, PC2 and PC3 aforesaid).

Not alone is there no reference to there being no left turn at this junction but, inconsistently, the commentary to accompany the FINAL DRAFT under “commentary” states under “change” that there is “none.”

The plan now before the Board makes no reference at all to there being no left turn from Sundrive Road to Lower Kimmage Road notwithstanding that this no left turn was highlighted and explicitly provided for in all of the Project’s three previous iterations. And to compound this omission, it is disingenuous to suggest that there is “no change” for this junction’s

designation where patently there has been an enormous change and one having huge implications for both the Project itself and for the Residents of our Association.

Our Residents' Association made Submissions to the BusConnects Project, inter alia, dealing with the issue of the no left turn from Sundrive Road to Lower Kimmage Road. Those written Submissions, dated the 16th December 2020, were forwarded by e-mail to the BusConnects Project at the relevant time and duly received.

On the issue of the no left turn from Sundrive Road to Lower Kimmage Road, our December 2020 written Submissions sent to and received by the BusConnects Project welcomed the proposal that there be no left turn at the junction in question. Those Submissions noted the reason published behind the decision as set out in the relevant section of the BusConnects Project website (page 14 – Kimmage to City Centre, Core Bus Corridor 11 Preferred Route), namely "... the reduction of vehicles using the Lower Kimmage Road to prevent through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road."

Our written Submissions dated the 16th December 2020 to the BusConnects Project are attached.

It was our stated view at the time and indeed it still continues to be our view that:-

"... the reduction of vehicles using the Lower Kimmage Road to prevent through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road"

can only be accomplished by an **enforced** no left turn at the Sundrive Road junction aforesaid.

In light of the BusConnects Project's stated aim being to reduce the number of vehicles using Lower Kimmage Road and thereby preventing through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road, it is this Association's Submission that that no left turn be reinstated and maintained.

It is our opinion that the absence of a no left turn sign on Sundrive Road to prevent traffic accessing Lower Kimmage Road will invite traffic to use the latter road thus negating one of the principal reasons for the purpose of the Bus Corridor. Without a no left turn at the junction aforesaid traffic, (other than Buses, Taxis and Bicycles) will be permitted to traverse the Lower Kimmage Road from its junction with Sundrive Road to Kenilworth Park and indeed onwards to the proposed Bus Gate in the vicinity of McGowans Public House.

This, we would suggest, can not be the purpose of the Scheme.

Indeed, we are fortified on our view when looking further at the maps to accompany this current Planning application.

Originally it was envisaged that a segregated cycle track ('The Poddle Cycleway') would be constructed intending to take bicycle traffic from Sundrive Road before its junction with the

Lower Kimmage Road, and bring this cycle only traffic through Mount Argus Estate, past the front of the Monastery at Saint Paul of the Cross (Mount Argus) and then city bound via Mount Argus Road and thence to Harolds Cross Road.

Our Association notes that this proposal has largely been removed from the current Planning Application submitted to your Bord.

Thus, in that Planning Application, city bound bicycles will now be permitted/encouraged to proceed along Sundrive Road and then facilitated in a left turn onto the Lower Kimmage Road (LKR).

It is our Submission that in the absence of a no left turn sign at the Sundrive Road/Lower Kimmage Road junction (whilst at all times permitting the lawful passage of Buses, Taxis and Bicycles only to LKR) all traffic will be able to access the LKR thus impacting negatively on one of the principal stated purposes of the designated Bus Corridor in the first place.

In the absence of the no left turn sign not alone will the situation be no different from what currently applies but it will also encourage additional traffic to access the LKR from its junction with Sundrive Road and then to proceed city bound along the LKR for approximately 0.5 kilometres until that additional traffic will, in turn, be obliged to turn right. In doing so it will almost certainly choose to depart from the LKR and access Harolds Cross Road via Kenilworth Park.

This is precisely the ill which the BusConnects Project sought to avoid by the insertion of a no left turn at the Sundrive Road/LKR junction.

In its original documentation it anticipated that this scenario would be a strong possibility and having recognised the issue it proceeded to note the published reason behind the decision as set out in the relevant section of the BusConnects Project website (page 14 – Kimmage to City Centre, Core Bus Corridor 11 Preferred Route), namely:-

“... the reduction of vehicles using the Lower Kimmage Road to prevent through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road.”

It is our Submission that the no left turn at the junction of Sundrive Road with LKR must be reinstated in the Planning Application currently before your Board.

That no left turn (curiously absent from the current Planning Application but a resounding feature of all three previous iterations of the Sundrive Road Junction drawings and narrative (EPR, PC2 and PC3) must be reinstated so that it will lead to a consequent reduction in the number of vehicles (other than Buses, Taxis and Bicycles) using the LKR to prevent through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road.

The no left turn must, in our Submission, be reinstated at this junction for good traffic management reasons, to assist in the viability of the BusConnects Project (to prevent unnecessary private vehicles from accessing the LKR) and to stop traffic rat running from Sundrive Road to Harolds Cross Road via Kenilworth Park.

Without that no left turn sign it is to be anticipated that the current traffic volume and expected traffic volumes (traffic seeking to gain an advantage to divert to LKR rather than proceed from Sundrive Road to Clareville Road), (excluding Buses, Taxis and Bicycles) will then proceed towards Harold Cross Road via Kenilworth Park. This is the very ill which the BusConnects Project highlighted and then sought to avoid by imposing the no left turn sign at Sundrive Road/LKR junction in the first, second and third instances.

This was the issue raised by our Association in December 2020 when it welcomed the then published no left turn – Indeed that situation prevailed following two separate subsequent drafts and only now, in the Planning Application currently before your Board, has the situation apparently been changed. In so doing the stated reason advanced by BusConnects as to its imposition, viz.,

“... the reduction of vehicles using the Lower Kimmage Road to prevent through traffic from using Kenilworth Park instead of Clareville Road.”

has clearly been overlooked.

We are fortified in our view when it is noted that the current Planning Application, having referred to the previous draft where there was a no left turn sign at the junction in issue, states that there is “none” in response to the question of there being any amendment from the previous iteration(s).

All three former versions of the BusConnects Project, (EPR, PC2 and PC3) referenced the no left turn from Sundrive Road to Lower Kimmage Road.

Those reasons advanced in the BusConnects Project are as valid now as they were when they were initially published on the BusConnects website.

It is our Submission that the no left turn from Sundrive Road to Lower Kimmage Road must be reinstated not alone to benefit the overall viability of the Project but also to protect the residents of Kenilworth Park from being inundated with additional traffic, an issue which the BusConnects Project authors from its inception, were themselves keen to avoid.

Public Realm

Junction – Sundrive Road with Lower Kimmage Road

The Association welcomes the stated intention of Public Realm Improvements at the junction of **Sundrive Road with Lower Kimmage Road** on the R817 north of Larrissa Court to the junction with Sundrive Road.

In so doing it joins with the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee and their Submission dated the 16th December 2020 on this issue.

Without detailed plans available as to the works to be carried out at this locus (the information on your website together with the information gathered at the information webinar on the 10th November 2020 advises that this has yet to be agreed with the business owners of premises adjoining the road at that location) our Association submits that within the definition of ‘public realm improvements’ envisaged for this location provision should be made for suitable public seating to be installed as part of those works together with the provision of suitable bins and public bike stands.

Indeed, in the context of Public Realm Improvements for the greater Harolds Cross Village area, our Association can see no valid reason why our larger area in general and this location in particular could not become a pilot project for sustainable SmartCity Mobility. This should include the potential for the inclusion, at suitable locations across the greater Harolds Cross area, of SmartCity e-lockers for bicycles, scooters and other micro mobility vehicles to include vehicles for those of our citizens who are mobility impaired.

Likewise, the provision of or installation of public parking bays should be accompanied by the necessary infrastructure to facilitate public electric charging points.

The area in question is an active business location complimented by a number of restaurants, take-away food shops, a mini-market etc. It is clearly an area with a lot of footfall that would benefit from these, at times imaginative, Public Realm Improvements.

Junction – Revensdale Park with Lower Kimmage Road

The Association also welcomes the planned Public Realm Improvements at the junction of **Ravensdale Park with Lower Kimmage Road**. As envisaged from a close reading of the website published plans, the streetscaping together with the associated tree planting will provide a much-needed visual gain at this location.

In association with the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee, (who will be making a separate detailed Submission on the matter of the Public Realm) this Residents’ Association joins with that Committee in making a similar submission.

Harolds Cross Bridge/Robert Emmet Bridge Area

It is with deep regret that our Residents' Association notes in the plan the structural amendments envisaged for the historical Robert Emmet Bridge.

Whilst the plan acknowledges the historical importance of the bridge, the proposals contained for its modification are too onerous and appear to have little or no appreciation for the bridge, its structure or appreciation for its historical significance.

From the plans submitted the existing usage of the bridge is to be radically revised to allow for two simultaneously inward and two simultaneously outward lanes of traffic, one lane of which in each direction is to include a designated Bus Lane.

From the draft plans provision is made for cyclists and indeed pedestrians that would appear to rely on a proposed 'new pedestrian and cycle bridge' adjacent to the existing structure.

Essentially it would appear that the draft plan envisages the removal of the footpaths on both sides of the bridge as they exist at the moment and the redesignation of that space "to allow the road space on the existing bridge to be allocated to bus lanes in both directions."

The plan submitted suggests that: -

"widening is required to gain 1m of road width plus at least 4m for a pair of cycle tracks while maintaining 2m wide footpaths"

In our opinion the workability of the bridge for both Public Service Vehicles and other traffic, to include cycle traffic, could be accomplished without having to make **any** structural amendments to the bridge. It is suggested that this could be accomplished by the utilisation of priority traffic signals and would not have, in any way whatsoever, to compromise or alter the existing structure.

In addition to the above, Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee had embarked on a plan to develop this area in conjunction with Dublin City Council.

Prior to the first lockdown occasioned by the COVID-19 Pandemic, inspections had taken place with plans developed for a body of planting to take place to both complement and visually improve the area around Robert Emmet Bridge. Not alone had those inspections already taken place, but funds had been allocated before the entire matter was interrupted by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

In particular, our Association agrees that much needed public seating should be provided in this area. The area would also benefit from suitable flower planting, allied together with the planting of shrubs and trees, particularly in the areas to the east and west of the bridge.

Our Association endorses the Submissions for the Public Realm works made by the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee at this locus. It is our Submission that an accommodation, of benefit to both the BusConnects Project and the greater Harolds Cross community can be reached to enhance this area.

In this regard our Association refers to the Submissions from the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee and fully endorses the proposed improvements recited therein for this location.

Enforcement

It is our Submission that enforcement of traffic behaviour once BusConnects commences will be vital if the latter is to be as effective as anticipated. It is our Association's view that enforcement must be **effective** if it is to be of any use as otherwise it will bring the whole project in to disrepute.

Our Association submits that the BusConnects Project with its multitude of no right hand /no left-hand turns, as the case may be, will only be effective if it is enforced. Likewise, if drivers can ignore traffic turn signs without penalty they will be encouraged to enter and pass through the designated Bus Gates thereby obviating their vital purpose.

This is a matter that requires the BusConnects Project to form a clear view. Either enforcement rests with the Gardai or the BusConnects Project must come up with a new and novel approach to enforcement, to avoid that part of the Project, and possibly the Project as a whole, from descending in to farce.

Bus Gates – 24/7 designation

Our Association questions if a 24-hour 7-day a week designation should be afforded to the planned Bus Gates.

We note that the proposed Bus Gate at McGowan's Public House is one of 24 hours duration.

The one at KCR/Ravensdale is from 06:00 to 10:00 hrs and from 16:00 to 20:00 hrs

The one at Siopa Linn is from 06:00 to 10:00 hrs only.

It is the case that there are no buses on the planned route that run on a constant 24-hour basis. Therefore, we question why it is necessary to prevent private vehicle users availing of the bus gated areas for travel at a time when the public transport services are not operational and therefore could not avail of such 'Bus Gates.'

The Association questions why the restricted areas of access should be denied to private vehicle users (and others) particularly during the hours from say 23:00 to 06:00 hrs. Private vehicles availing of those limited and considerable 'off peak' hours could have no measurable impact on the planned public transport service, particularly so at times when the existing public transport system has much reduced operations or is not running on those same roadways at those times.

If the KCR/Ravensdale and Siopa Linn Bus Gates hours only commence from 06:00 hrs we should submit that the same times should apply to the 'opening' of the Bus Gate at McGowans Public House.

Similarly as the KCR/Ravensdale Bus Gate 'closes' from 20:00 hrs we submit that the same times should apply to the 'closing' of the Bus Gate at McGowans Public House.

Footpath – South side of Harolds Cross Park between 174 and 194 Harolds Cross Road

The Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee in its plans for 2020, subsequently scuppered by the current COVID-19 epidemic, had planned improvements in the public realm particularly for the plaza area immediately outside of the main gates at the entrance to Harolds Cross Park.

That area was recently reconfigured by Dublin City Council.

With a view to improving the streetscape the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee had carried out preliminary inspections of the locus with the results of these being encompassed in their planned works for 2020. The COVID-19 Epidemic interrupted their work and imposed constraints on what could be accomplished by the Committee during 2020. Nevertheless, the Committee had agreed to adopt this as one of their planned improvements for the area and had at all times intended to include it in their plan, now COVID-19 deferred, for 2021. The Committee had envisaged that a bench and ancillary street furniture would be installed at this location thereby enhancing the entrance to the park and providing much needed public seating. It is with some regret that the Tidy Towns Committee now see that it is proposed to remove the footpath on the northside of this roadway, with a consequent reduction of the plaza area, thereby reducing considerably the area at the Tidy Towns Committee's disposal to constructively improve this location.

Not alone is it envisaged that the plaza area (apron) will be reduced but that vehicle traffic will now be brought closer still to the main entrance to Harolds Cross Park.

The Bord should be aware that the Park comprises a much needed and utilised Children's Play Ground. The area is frequented by, inter alia, parents, young children and children from our local primary schools who attend the playground after school time.

It is our Submission that the plaza area/apron at the front gates of Harolds Cross Park should not be reduced in size as to do so would compromise the ability and safety of current users to avail of this much needed urban playground and the general area of recreation that the Park provides.

This will be a matter by way of separate Submission from the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee. Our Association has seen the Submissions made by the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee on this matter and endorses their views for improvements at this location.

Losing Trees along the Eastern side of Harolds Cross Road

The Kenilworth Park Residents' Association regrets that the plan as currently formulated, envisages the removal of a number of trees on the east side of Harolds Cross Road.

The Plan as it is currently published involves the removal of some four trees at this location, i.e., to the East of Harolds Cross Road, that area between the entrance to Mount Drummond Avenue and south to St Clare's Convent.

The Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee, in their planned works' improvements for 2020 had already considered the feasibility of planting flower beds to compliment the trees in this area but the COVID-19 epidemic interrupted those planned works and associated planting.

As they are at the moment, the trees in question provide an avenue like definition to Harolds Cross Road, and rather than their removal, the Committee had it in their COVID-19 interrupted plans, to approach the local City Council to make provision of complimentary planting of other similar trees on the opposite footpath to the West side of Harolds Cross Road. Indeed, the Tidy Towns Committee was then and is still now in funds to do so but would first require the co-operation of the County Council to survey the footpath with a view to their installation.

The proposal in the current iteration of the Project will remove the existing trees from the east side of Harolds Cross Road thereby rendering at nought the proposal of the Harolds Cross Tidy Towns Committee to seek additional planting on the west side of Harolds Cross Road to complement the existing trees.

The Committee welcome the proposal in the Project literature to plant trees to replace the planned removal of the four trees on the east side of Harolds Cross Road. However, it notes with some disappointment, that the current proposal is to plant only three trees which rather than lined along the road and providing an avenue-like vista, will, disappointingly, be grouped closer together to complement a yet to be constructed small parking bay. A parking bay that this Residents' Association considers to be totally unnecessary as the plans already envisage additional parking spaces in the area located to the front of the grounds now occupied by our local Hospice.

Rather than provide for the removal of the four trees to the East side of Harolds Cross Road, our Association have long held the belief that there should be a line of trees on the West side of that Road to compliment those already in situ to the East and, additionally, that there should be a line of trees in the middle of the road to compliment both.

This proposal is similar to the one contained in the Plan before your Bord sofar as it applies to the centre of the roadway at Clanbrassil Street and New Street South.

As one exits the city proceeding in a Southerly direction, a person would leave Clanbrassil Street/New Street South, cross the Harolds Cross Bridge/Robert Emmet Bridge and be presented with a continuum of trees along the lower Harolds Cross Road thus provide tree lined avenue like approach as one proceeds to Harolds Cross village and beyond.

Possible Land Acquisition – East Side of Harolds Cross Road – Numbers 33 to 61 Harolds Cross Road

The Association is disappointed that ‘the improvements’ along Harolds Cross Road should require the compulsory acquisition of property from some fifteen or so properties on the East side of Harolds Cross Road.

It is our Association’s Submission that such compulsory acquisition will, by definition bring vehicular traffic closer still to the households along this stretch of roadway and that by doing so will seriously injure the peace and enjoyment of such householders in their use of the properties aforesaid.

Again, at this locus our Association refers to its Submission above and in particular the reference to the proposed small parking bay planned for this location.

Indeed, our Association would question the validity of such land acquisition at this location to provide for what is considered to be an unnecessary small parking bay and the extension of the existing footpath/roadway in an Easterly direction when the existing block of shops and apartments beyond 61 Harolds Cross Road can not be moved and are clearly an obstacle to any road widening.

Summary

In the main the Kenilworth Park Residents' Association welcomes many of the positive proposals currently contained in the Planning Application before your Bord. At the same time, it is cognisant of the fact that many of the issues highlighted above will require amendment prior to the project securing Planning Permission. In doing so, and in accommodating as many of the positive inputs from the various individuals or representative associations, we have no doubt that it will lead ultimately to a transformed city-wide bus service. A service in our Submission that will benefit a great number of public transport users and bus users in particular.

In making these suggested amendments the Association is looking at the Project overall. It is submitted, that the Association has not looked to the short-term selfish interest of the individual Association member. Rather these Submissions are being made for the betterment of bus users and public transport infrastructure in the capital for many years to come. In their adoption the Association submits that this Project has and will have the capacity to impact directly upon important issues affecting public transport in the capital for many years to come.

In that context the Association has given of its time and devoted many hours to constructive engagement. Sofar as possible, the Association has suggested amendments/improvements that can be reasonably accommodated with only a positive gain for both the BusConnects Project and the local citizenry.

DERMOT B. MORAHAN
Acting Honorary Secretary
Kenilworth Park Residents' Association