

PHIBSBOROUGH THROWN UNDER THE BUS.....CONNECTS

The ideas and recommendations in this submission come from the people who live and work in Phibsborough, an RIAI led Design Review of the Public Realm in Phibsborough, the Phibsborough Local Environmental Improvements Plan (LEIP), a Dublin City Council commissioned public consultation with Paul Keogh Architects to design a plan for the public realm with an emphasis on Doyle's Corner, the Dublin Cycling Campaign, the LEIP Resident Reps, traffic surveys, questionnaires and from the Department of Transport Tourism and Sport Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets.

Public consultations carried out by Dublin City Council on local plans for Phibsborough consistently show traffic issues to be a major problem for the people who live in this "urban village"

The massive volume of motor traffic damages and degrades the village's environment. The priority given to pushing this traffic through the village endangers its cyclists and pedestrians. Within the framework of Dublin City Council's Phibsborough Local Environmental Improvements Plan 2017-22 (LEIP), local community representatives have been prioritising calming the traffic at Doyle's Corner and creating a safe cycling/walking route running uninterrupted from Cross Guns Bridge to Broadstone along the filled-in canal harbour.

The current BusConnects Route 3 proposal would make meaningful traffic calming in Phibsborough village impossible. It makes no provision for cyclists and pedestrians and would leave them in a far worse position than they presently occupy. This is because BusConnects has route proposals that do not directly affect Phibsborough but involve displacing even more private vehicle traffic out of other areas and into this urban village.

The National Transport Authority (NTA) is responsible for BusConnects. In drawing it up, NTA has entirely ignored Dublin City Council (DCC) and the local improvement plans that DCC has in place such as the Phibsborough LEIP. As it stands, BusConnects is a badly thought-out set of plans that has a worthy objective (better city bus services) but is so one-eyed that its implementation would inflict massive damage on the people and the fabric of this city.

The BusConnects Route 5 (Blanchardstown to City Centre CBC) redirects city bound through traffic from Cabra Cross onto the New Cabra Road and down to Doyle's Corner Phibsborough dumping an additional 500 vehicles per hour into already traffic choked Phibsborough. The result will be that motorist frustration and behaviour will deteriorate leading to a dangerous and aggressive environment for locals walking and cycling to school/work in Phibsborough village. Similarly, Route 5 redirects outbound through traffic from Church St, Constitution Hill to Doyle's Corner Phibsborough.

Phibsborough is the only village that will be served in 2027 by the metro coming from Ballymun and a LUAS extension from Finglas. Why would the NTA spend money and destroy Victorian suburbs for two Bus Connects routes, when exactly the same two routes are going to be served by proper rail-based, not on-street, public transport.

The following points must be taken into account and developed in tandem with the implementation of the Bus Connects Plan.

1. Urban Road Design and Driver Behaviour

- **Cross Guns Bridge**
Urgent provision of **vital pedestrian and cyclist safety measures** at **Cross Guns Bridge**. The current path width on the west side is **dangerous**. **A parallel pedestrian/cycle bridge needs to be provided** to cater for the volume of pedestrian traffic which includes many schoolchildren.
- **Provision of level-grade pedestrian crossings (pedestrian tables)**
At all pedestrian crossings in the village. Effect: to raise driver awareness of pedestrian safety and increase sense of village space for drivers and pedestrians.
- **Reduce carriage way width where unnecessarily wide**
'Recommended 3m in busy urban centres', Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
Carriageways in many places are unnecessarily wide, beyond ideal specified for urban villages (3m). Minimise wasted road space by transferring any surplus to pedestrian/cycle use. We propose a survey of carriageway widths leading to adjustment in accordance with recommendations to create extra space for pedestrians and cyclist facilities.

Example - the corner of NCR/Phibs Rd at Doyle's Corner beside the Old Bank – only one lane of traffic uses this carriageway at any time. The carriage way is much wider than 3m. Reclaiming this space would provide needed space for pedestrians and/or cyclists, shorten pedestrian crossing time, could host a tree and a bench and consequently signal entrance to village and influence driver behaviour.

- **Reduction of Forward Visibility**
'Reducing forward visibility is one of most effective ways of increasing caution and reducing speed', Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
This is especially needed on Phibsborough Rd. Can be achieved through the use of planting, breaking the straight line of median and street furniture.
Example - Talbot St near Connolly Station.
- **A sense of Entrance to a Village Space**
Provide entry treatment at all 4 approaches to the Village so that motorists know they are entering a village setting where the pedestrian and cyclist have priority.
- Use of speed bumps not cushions e.g. Connaught Street.

2. Pedestrian Safety / Traffic Calming

- **Create a 30k zone throughout Phibsborough village**
- **Crossing needed between Cross Guns Bridge and Connaught St Junction**
'Design must balance needs of all users...' *Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets*
The 5 lane width of this road, coupled with the extensive forward visibility creates a motorway type effect in the heart of our village.
- **Increase Footpath Widths**
'1.8 - 4m' from light to heavy use, Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets
There is potential for footpath widening in many parts of Phibsborough. A review of this

should be done in conjunction with the review of the carriageway width (refer example given under Point 2 in “Urban Road Design and Driver Behaviour” above)

- **Staggered pedestrian crossings with 'sheep pens'** are undesirable and best avoided.
- **Review and action needed re Pedestrian lights at all junctions, in particular:**
 - a) Installation of all around pedestrian phase crossings with pedestrian tables at Doyles Corner, Connaught St/Phibsborough Rd and Cross Guns junction
 - b) Implementation of traffic-calming measures at filter light for right turn from Phibsborough Road onto Connaught St. Routine light breaking is bringing cars into blind-sided path of pedestrians crossing at green light.
 - c) Installation of pedestrian Countdown Timers at all crossings
 - d) Red light enforcement cameras installed at all crossings
 - e) Wait times at all Pedestrian lights to be reduced
Recommendation in Design Manual is max 90sec wait time – lights throughout the village exceed this.
 - f) Correction of wait time at Phibsborough Road staggered crossing (at junction with Connaught St) where wait times at peak hours are 3 mins 40 secs to cross the road
 - g) Correction of pedestrian lights to automatic green light whether pedestrian has touched light signal or not at Cross Guns Bridge, Junction at Botanic Rd/Mobhi Rd, End of Connaught St, Connaught St/Phibsborough Rd crossing.
 - h) Amendment of all Pedestrian lights to automatically turn green when lights are red for traffic.
- **Installation of Zebra or Pelican** crossings to replace existing Pedestrian
- only crossings on Phibsborough Road (outside McDonald’s) and on the NCR (outside the Library) – effect: to create two pedestrian crossings in the current time frame for one, reduce pedestrian risk-taking behaviour and increase connectability.
- It is noted that there are pedestrian improvements contained in BC proposals. However, a number of pedestrian issues within these designs, like staggered pedestrian crossings, hinder efficient pedestrian movement. Pedestrians should also be included in the scheme objectives of this process to ensure that pedestrians are not disadvantaged by the proposals. Both the Dublin City Council Development Plan (section 8.4) and DMURS (section 2.2.2), include a transport mode hierarchy that places pedestrians first, cyclists second, public transport third, goods vehicles fourth and general traffic fifth. This also applies to all other Dublin Local Authorities.

3. Cycling Infrastructure

- **Bus Connects should provide for the following 5 ‘Cycling for All’ standards:**
 1. Cycling for All Ages & Abilities – to enable a mode shift through segregated cycling
 2. Fully segregate cyclists at junctions – with protected design & different light phases
 3. Design safe bus stop bypasses for cyclists which also protect vulnerable pedestrians and bus users
 4. Plan for parking protected cycle tracks

5. Explore and implement better solutions at pinch points especially in Phibsborough Rd / NCR area

- Re-opening of Blacquiere Bridge underneath North Circular Road and conversion to a cycling and pedestrian underpass. This would hugely complement the unsatisfactory Bus Connects Route 3 cycle provision for Phibsboro also. This facility was costed under DCC's Local Area Plan 2008, 2015 & still awaited under the 2016 Local Environmental Improvement Plan.
- **Review of potential for contraflow bikes routes**
A contraflow for bikes has been installed on Leinster St and has been very successful in creating a shared space for all road users. This formalised an existing situation in which all cyclists coming from the Shandon area and many from Cabra use the quiet streets of Shandon and Leinster St to avoid the traffic congestion on Connaught St, which has no space and no cycle lanes. Many of these are children heading for local schools. A contraflow on Munster St needs to be installed and a review of potential use elsewhere.
- **Bicycle parking bays**
Recent provision of bicycle parking bays in Phibsborough is very welcome. Continued rollout of parking bays when needed to continue
- **Provision of separated cycle tracks** to enable circulation through and around the village of Phibsborough extending into Dublin City Centre and to all local schools.
- **Harts Corner** is treacherous for cyclists on all sides and all pedestrian road crossings are two phase (three sets of staggered pedestrian lights). Its current design exclusively favours the use of motorised traffic. It is objectively and subjectively an unsafe and unpleasant place for pedestrians and cyclists.
- **Review of underutilised public spaces**
Although heavily congested, Phibsborough has a significant number of underutilised public spaces. In addition to cycle tracks on main arterial routes, we propose a survey be undertaken to assess the suitability of using other spaces: quiet roads, lane ways, parks, alleys and the canal tow path to develop a cycling and pedestrian network for commuting and leisure purposes. Countries such as the Netherlands use such spaces to provide their extensive cycling infrastructure.

The key to these alternative routes being effective would be signposting, resurfacing and lighting to create clearly marked attractive routes that are easy to identify and follow.

What can we do?

Countries with strong everyday cycling (for transport, utility, leisure & recreation) have nurtured their cultures over decades often in response to grassroots movements demanding safer and more liveable environments and more prudent energy policy. There is no single solution – rather it's complete systems that are needed. So, we urge people to

- Make a submission – however short (check ideas on www.dublincycling.ie)
- Focus on the impact of 3 routes on Phibsborough, in particular Routes 3, 4 & 5
- Encourage positive aspects - especially investment in segregated cycleways

- Highlight improvements you want to see where this is not the case
- Urge coordination with LEIP – especially Doyle’s Corner improvements
- Seek high quality, safe cycling infrastructure
- Contact local councillors and TDs to ensure these important improvements are included