



Core Bus Corridor 12: Rathfarnham

17th April 2020

1.0 Introduction

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a membership-based charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. We have a vision for Dublin that is a vibrant city where people of all ages and abilities choose to cycle as part of their everyday life.

The goal for this cycle route must be that it is safe for people of all ages and abilities. There have been some very significant improvements along this route, particularly on Rathgar Road, Rathmines Road, and Camden Street.

We understand that the designs are a work in progress. We have made a separate submission recommending design approaches to be taken across all corridors. This submission includes localised comments.

2.0 Welcome Changes

There are a number of welcome changes along this corridor including:

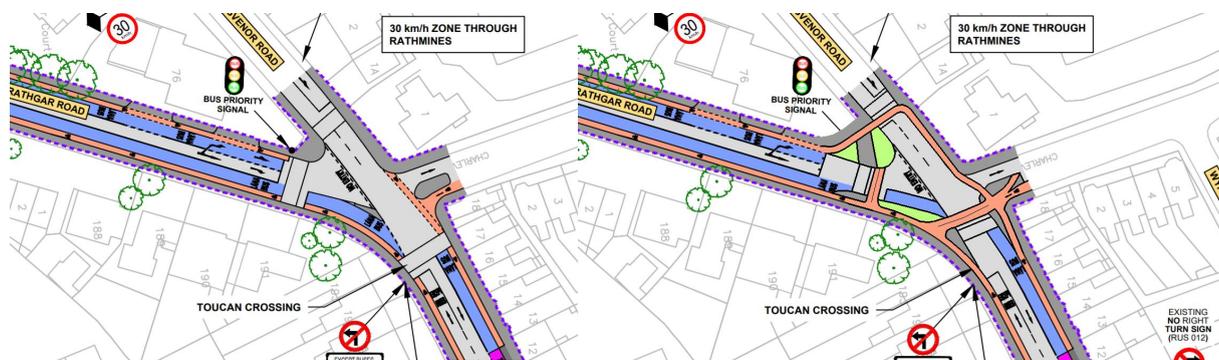
- The reduction of Rathgar Road and Camden Street to three lanes to accommodate sufficiently wide cycle paths.
- The bus gate in Rathmines Village, which will dramatically improve the public realm, and make cycling much safer.
- The junction with Rathmines Road Upper is significantly improved, with the removal of the slip lanes, and the installation of corner kerbs to protect people cycling.

3.0 Major Outstanding Issues

Unfortunately, there are still major issues with the design, and in some places, these designs are more hostile to people cycling than in the first round.

Junction Design

The proposed junctions throughout this corridor are unfortunately very hostile to people cycling. Many junctions have dangerous conflicts between cyclists and left turning vehicles. For example, at the Grosvenor Road junction, inbound cyclists are given a narrow, 1.5 m wide painted cycle lane immediately before a sharp left turn. This clearly puts people cycling at serious risk of being left-hooked. This issue can generally be addressed by moving the cycle path away from the carriageway. In this case, the cycle lane could be routed through the edge of the petrol station.



At other junctions it is impossible, or unsafe, for cyclists to make certain turning movements. For example, in Terenure, cyclists are specifically exempted from the right turn ban onto Terenure Road East. But no safe way to make this right turn is provided.

There isn't a single junction in this scheme (with the exception of the Rathmines Road Upper junction) which can be considered safe for all ages and abilities. BusConnects will not be able to achieve a significant increase in the modal share for cycling if people cycling are still expected to compete for space with cars and buses at every major junction.

Bus Stops

There is only one island bus stop proposed in this entire scheme. This is very disappointing, especially given that there are a number of wide roads like Camden Street where island bus stops could be installed without major design changes.

Island bus stops are vital to make cycling safe for all ages and abilities. The use of shared spaces at bus stops throughout this scheme is dangerous for bus users and cyclists alike, but particularly for people with visual impairments.

Conflicts with loading/parked vehicles

There are numerous parking and loading bays scattered throughout this corridor. Unfortunately, at every single one of these, the cycle lane runs between the parking bay and moving traffic. This creates a hostile environment for people cycling, and it comes with real danger. In these situations, a driver opening their door carelessly can easily knock a cyclist into the path of a moving vehicle. A much safer layout would be to put the cycle lane between the parked vehicles and the footpath. This protects cyclists from moving traffic, and creates a much more pleasant cycling experience. In general, this does not require more space.

4.0 Location Specific Comments

Rathfarnham Cycling Diversion

The newly proposed diversion for cyclists is certainly an improvement on the previous design, and for some people (e.g. families with kids), it will be a popular option. However, it is still less direct and less convenient than a cycle path on the main road, making it unsuitable for many commuters. Additionally, these sorts of diversions tend to be poorly lit, and with very little passive surveillance, they are often unsafe at night, particularly for women cycling alone. It is therefore imperative that cycling infrastructure is provided on the main road.

In order to achieve this, the road between Rathfarnham Main Street and Terenure Village would need to be reduced to 2 or 3 lanes, which would require a one way system and/or bus priority lights/gates. For example, installing a bus gate in one or both directions at Rathfarnham Main Street would significantly reduce traffic volumes between Terenure Village and Rathfarnham, making space for the installation of cycle paths.

Terenure Road East

Terenure Road East is one area of this corridor where the quality of cycling provision has actually got worse with these new proposals. Given the significantly improved cycling infrastructure proposed for Rathmines and Rathgar, it makes little sense not to extend these cycle paths the whole way to Terenure to connect with CBC 10 and the rest of CBC 12.

The simplest way to achieve this would be with a bus gate restricting westbound traffic into Terenure. Much of this traffic will already have been removed by the bus

gates in Rathmines and Rathgar, so this would be a painless way to reduce the number of lanes on Terenure Road East from 4 to 3. Additionally, using bus priority lights, the road could be further reduced to two lanes between Terenure Village and Brighton Road, which would significantly reduce the amount of road widening needed to support cycling and public transport.

Rathmines Road

We enthusiastically welcome the proposed bus gate for Rathmines Road. As the traffic counts show, this is an extremely busy road for people cycling, so wide segregated cycle paths are absolutely essential here.

However, we are concerned that island bus stops have not been proposed. As already mentioned, this is a concern throughout the corridor, but the problem is particularly acute on Rathmines Road, where there are extremely high volumes of cyclists and bus passengers. We believe that there is sufficient space to build island bus stops. Rathmines Road is about 16 m wide. The cross section below shows how island bus stops could be fit into that space.



Here, we have proposed a 2.2 m wide island bus stop. We do not believe this is excessively narrow for an urban village. In Copenhagen, there is a comparable road to Rathmines Road, which has recently had a bus gate installed. In order to fit in bus stop bypasses, they have used island bus stops even narrower than those proposed above (~1.6 m), and they have created a chicane between the opposite direction stops to minimise wasted space.



There are also a number of locations where the road can be widened beyond 16 m to provide island bus stops. For example, there is a 14 m wide plaza and a bus lay-by outside Swan Leisure. Narrowing the plaza by about 2-2.5 m would accommodate full size island bus stops on both sides of the road. The cross section below shows how this could be laid out. The current cross section of the road is shown in black above.



Camden Street Upper

There is no outbound cycle path proposed here, and the inbound cycle path is only 1.5 m wide. From the traffic counts, it is clear that pedestrians, cyclists and bus users vastly outnumber people in private cars. Two right turn lanes is completely unreasonable given the lack of space for people cycling here. We would like to see one of the right turn lanes removed and for that space to be re-allocated for people walking and cycling.

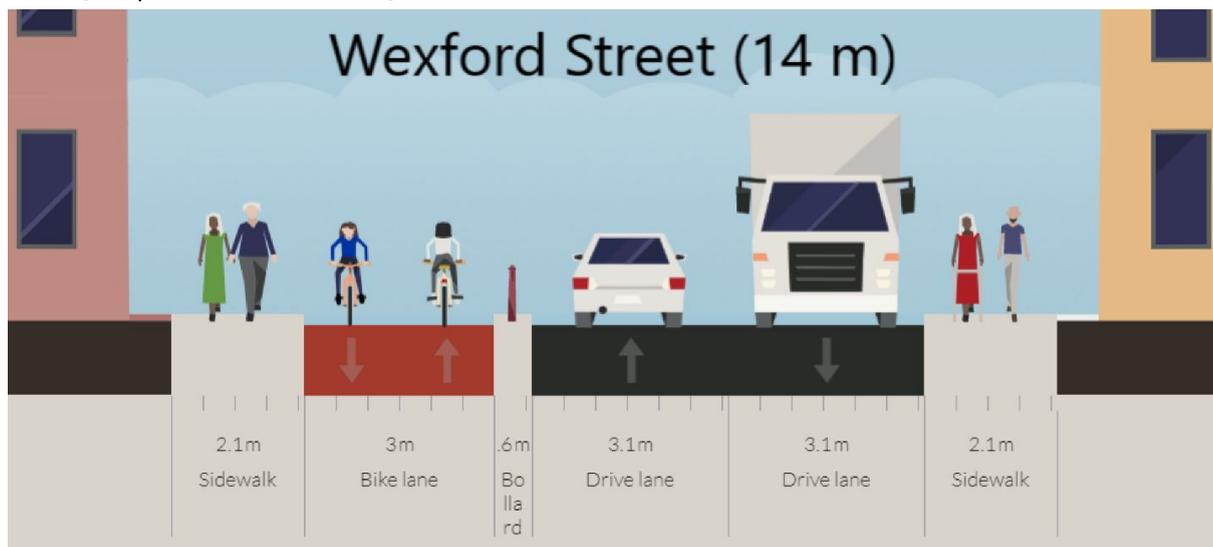
Camden Street to South Great George's Street

We welcome the decision to reduce the number of traffic lanes on Camden Street and Wexford Street in order to provide space for people cycling. However, we think the proposals could be more ambitious. Given the extremely high levels of pedestrian activity in this area, we believe that all private through-traffic should be removed. This would improve bus priority and create a much more pleasant space for people walking and cycling.

We are also concerned about conflicts between cyclists and loading/parked vehicles, particularly the fact that the cycle lane goes straight through loading bays, making it completely unusable when the loading bay is occupied.

Our preference would be to install a 3-4 m wide bidirectional cycle path on one side of the road, with all the loading bays on the other side. This would eliminate all conflicts with loading vehicles, and discourage illegal parking in the cycle path.

Even at the narrowest section of Wexford Street, the road is 14 m wide, which is enough space for this design, as shown below.



Other than this pinch point, the road north of Camden Street is generally between 16.5 and 20 m wide. This means that there is more than enough space for wide cycle paths and footpaths, trees, buffers, island bus stops, and loading bays.



Possible layout for George's Street/Aungier Street with a 9.5 m wide carriageway, and 2.1 m wide loading bay



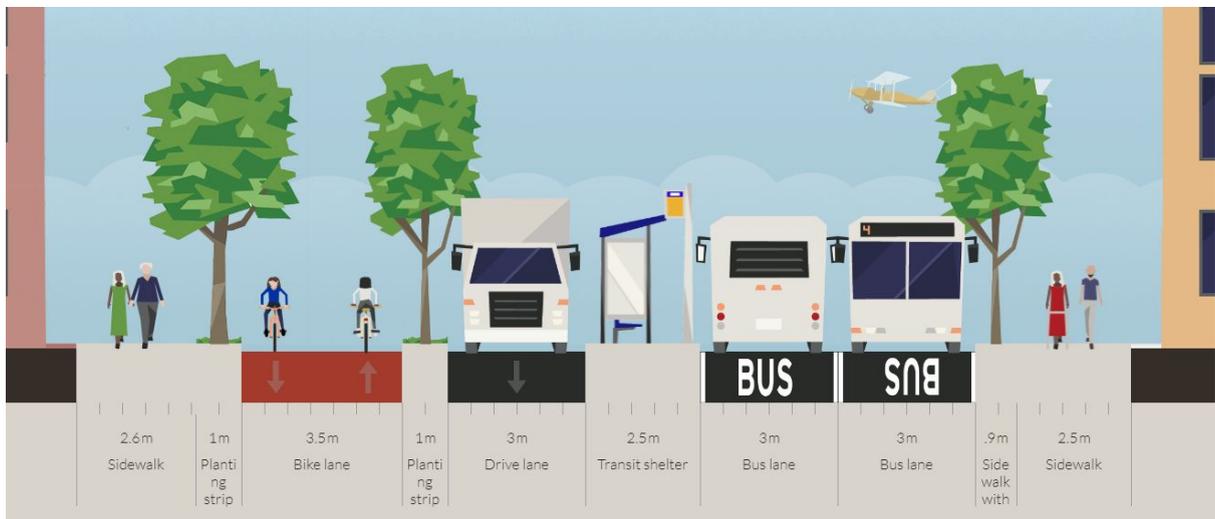
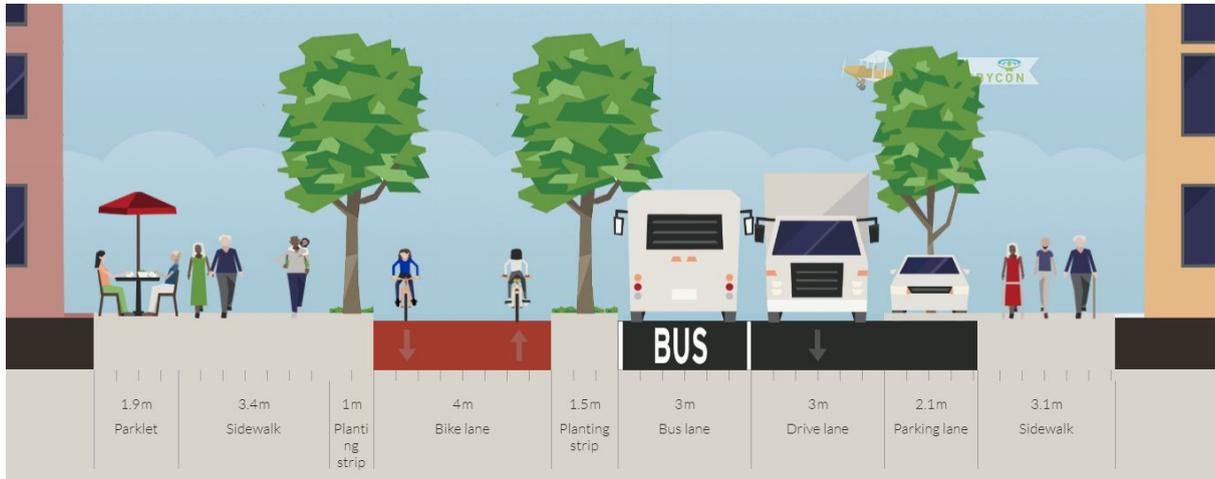
Same road width as above, but with a 2.6 m wide island bus stop.



Where there are no bus stops or loading bays, there is space for trees, benches, bike parking, and a wider cycle path.

On Camden Street the road is wider still, with widths of between 23 and 26 m. Here, it is possible to be much more ambitious than the current proposals. First of all, we do not believe there is any justification for the retention of car parking spaces

on Camden Street. The Stephen's Green multi-storey car park is 600 m away, and there are a number of other multi-storey car parks within 1 km of Camden Street. Where loading bays are necessary, they should of course be installed, but they should not be used for private car parking.



Two suggestions for how the 23 m of Camden Street could be allocated.

Kevin Baker
Chairperson

Dublin Cycling Campaign
% Tailor's Hall,
Back Lane,
Dublin 8

Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20102029