



Core Bus Corridor 15: Blackrock to Merrion - Preliminary Submission

1.0 Introduction

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. Dublin Cycling Campaign is the leading member of Cyclist.ie, the Irish Cycling Advocacy Network (ICAN). We want to make Dublin a safe and friendly place for everyone of all ages to cycle.

This route includes some great improvements along the Rock Road. However, the quality for cyclists is reduced in places from the NTA's previously proposed Sandymount to Blackrock Scheme. We'd also encourage the NTA to use this as an opportunity to improve some of the junctions on the existing Blackrock cycle scheme. We are disappointed that no reference is made to the possibility of an actual coastal greenway route (East Coast Trail), which would hugely enhance this proposed route for both commuter and leisure cyclists, but also provide a wonderful and distinct safe segregated cycle route. As well as providing a real safe alternative this route would also have the advantage of protecting the sea wall and the railway line.

We look forward to future engagement with the NTA to refine the details in later stages so that we can produce a high-quality result for all sustainable transport users.

2.0 General Observations

2.1 Cycling for All

In line with the theme of this year's Velo City conference in Dublin, '*Cycling For the Ages*' the designs need to cater for all ages and abilities. There are fully tested design

solutions available such as parking-protected cycle tracks, bus stop bypasses for cyclists, or using fully segregated junction designs like the Dutch-style protected junction.

2.2 Primary Cycle Route Width

All of this proposed cycle route is two-way and 3 metres wide. This proposed width is limiting for future growth of cycle traffic, and will inhibit movement along this potentially very busy route, much of which will act as both a commuting and leisure route.

2.3 Integration with GDA Cycle Network Plan

A single cycle route is only useful to people if their origin and destination are on or near the cycle route. A cycle network, where many cycle routes are connected together is far more useful to people. Similar to how a bus network is more useful than a single bus route.

This cycle route intersects with a number of other cycle routes, especially the Dodder Greenway route, included in the GDA Cycle Network Plan. This route should plan for the connection with these current or future cycle routes. Where possible, the ends of cycle lanes/tracks on these routes linking into the CBC cycle route should be constructed as part of the Core Bus Corridor. That will ensure that these junctions don't need to be re-designed when future cycle network projects are progressed.

2.4 Bus Stop Bypasses

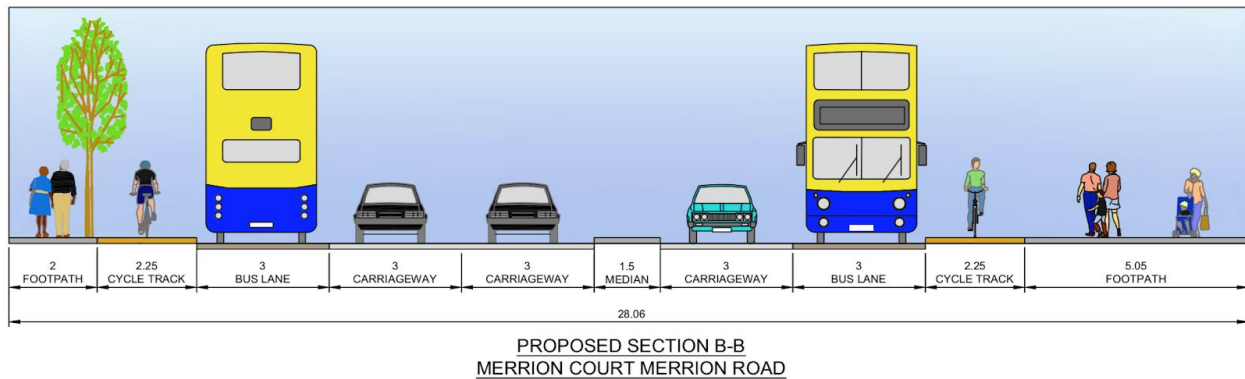
Bus stop bypasses for cyclists should be the norm as part of these designs. This is not currently the case for all bus stops. Some are and some aren't. In some cases it is a matter of reviewing bus stop locations, in others it is a matter of using the full available width.

There is a strong case to be made for the rationalisation of bus stop locations. We strongly urge the review of bus stop locations and frequency. This will ensure greater efficiency of the bus service but also allow for greater consideration of the preferred bus stop bypass design for safety of all commuters. The rationalising of bus stop locations has been carried out with great effect in the Clontarf to City Centre Cycle Route and we recommend that project as a reference tool for Bus Connects.

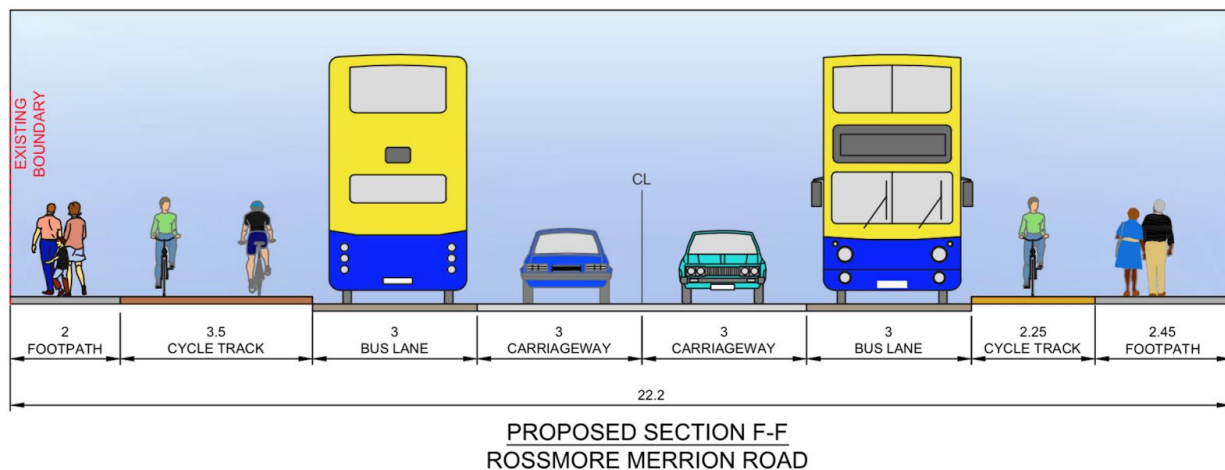
3.0 Route Observations

3.1 The Sandymount to Blackrock Scheme

These proposals are an altered version of the Sandymount to Blackrock Cycle Scheme that the NTA put out to public consultation in October 2016. Those proposals included higher-quality cycle proposals than this Core Bus Corridor. The one way cycle tracks in that scheme were 2.25m wide where possible in many locations. Given that this is Primary Route 13A of the GDA Cycle Network Plan, the one way cycle track should aim to be more than 2m, where possible. It is requested that the national cycle manual advice - <https://www.cyclemanual.ie/manual/thebasics/width/> - is followed in this case and the one way cycle tracks are minimum 2.5m in width.



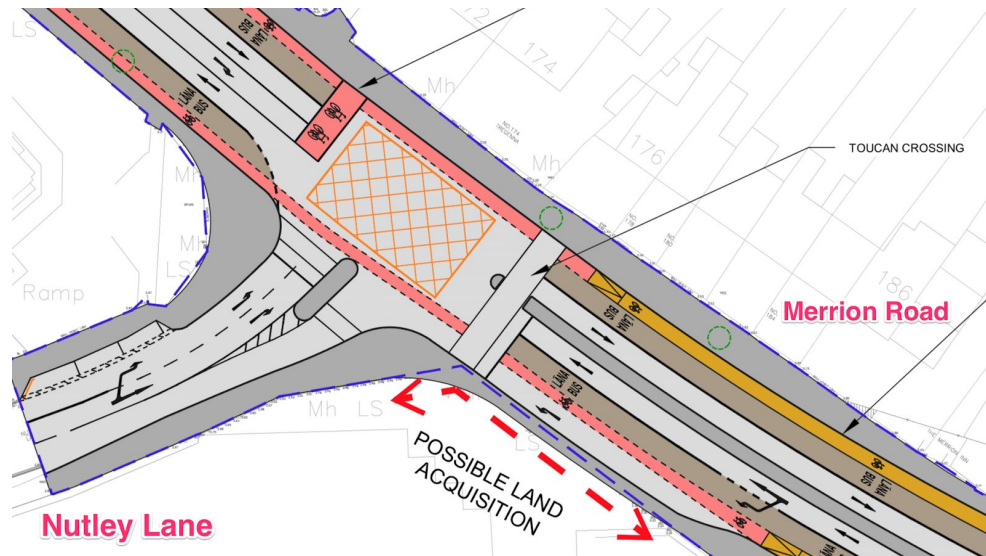
Extract of the Sandymount to Blackrock Public Consultation, October 2016, showing 2.25m one-way cycle tracks



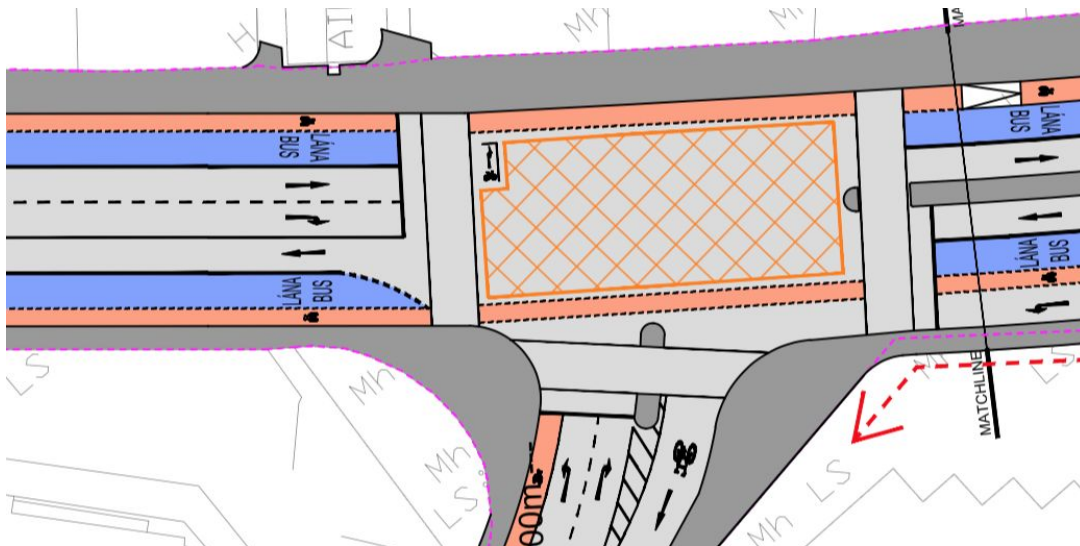
Extract of the Sandymount to Blackrock Public Consultation, October 2016, showing 2.25m one-way cycle tracks and a 3.5m two-way cycle track

3.2 Nutley Lane Junction

Although the Nutley Lane Junction is just outside this CBC on CBC14: UCD we will comment on it here too. The previous public consultation and the feasibility designs from AECOM included continuous dedicated cycle lanes through the junction.

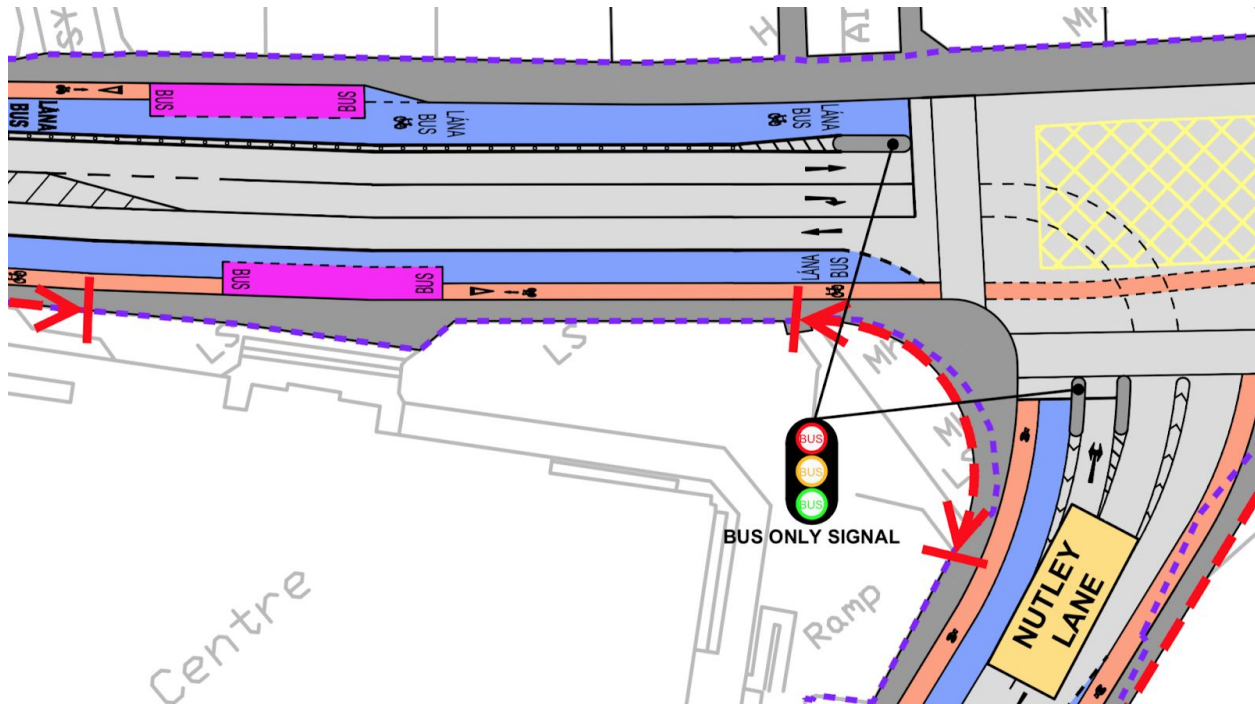


Extract of the Sandymount to Blackrock Public Consultation, October 2016, with continuous dedicated cycle facilities



Extract of Dun Laoghaire to City Centre CBC Sheet 9 of 20 - background information, with continuous dedicated cycle facilities

These dedicated cycle facilities have been compromised for a traffic island for bus priority lights. We understand the need for bus priority lights for right turning buses, however, it must not come at the cost of dedicated cycle facilities at this location.



Extract of CBC14: UCD public consultation document showing loss of the outbound dedicated cycle facility in order to make space for a bus priority light

3.3 End of Two-way Cycle Track

At the end of the two-way cycle track on map 2 where is an inbound cyclists supposed to go? We understand that this is only a larger section of the East Coast Trail but cyclists need a legal location to go before the next segment of the East Coast Trail is constructed?

3.4 Reversed Two-Way Cycle Track

The two-way cycle track is reversed with cyclists cycling on the right. This is confusing for cyclists who will naturally want to cycle on the left. The intent behind the recommendation in the National Cycle Manual for on-road two-way cycle tracks to reverse the cycling direction was about mitigating the risk of side roads and re-establishing cyclists on road again. None of these situations arise in this circumstance. A buffer should also be included between the two-way cycle track and the bus lane, and cyclists should cycle on the left.

3.5 S2S / East Coast Trail

Our preference is for the S2S route / East Coast Trail route to be on the sea side of the DART line. The two-way cycle track along the Rock Road should not be seen as a replacement for the coastal S2S route. We believe that the two-way cycle route on the Rock Road should be built.

We understand that the NTA has funded Irish Rail to investigate coastal flooding defenses for the DART line between Merrion Gates and Blackrock. It may be possible to include a coastal walking and cycle route as part of the necessary flood defenses.

3.6 Bus Stops & Locations

The outbound bus stops on map 4 are very close together. The outbound bus stop on map 4 beside the Booterstown Marsh also seems to have the bus shelter on the other side of the two-way cycle track to the bus island. This creates lots of conflicts between waiting bus passengers and cyclists as bus passengers want to run out to wave down an approaching bus. Given that these two bus stops are very close together and there are unnecessary conflicts these two bus stops should be merged and relocated slightly away from the Booterstown Marsh so that the appropriate amount of space can be found to provide the right solution for pedestrians and cyclists.

Consider adding in bus stops to locations where the turn is closed to traffic. This offers extra space to be able to add a bus stop bypass, without using road space. E.g. Sydney Parade (fig2) and Ailesbury Park.

Map 4: We recommend changing Trimbleston Avenue to combined turning lane for both right and left - currently the two lanes barely fit two vehicles side by side. We recommend adding an unsignalised cycle lane for filtering left, as well as sufficient segregated waiting space for cyclists turning right towards Blackrock. This is the main cycling route from UCD to the DART/Rock Road as well as serving a large residential area.

3.7 Proposals Map 6-7

The proposals for maps 6-7 are a good improvement from the previous Sandymount/Blackrock scheme as there are full bus lanes and full cycle lanes.

There are a few detail issues that require clarification. What are the proposed bus stop designs on map 6? The bus stops are indented and so is the cycle lane. We recommend these are converted to island bus stops.

The parking outside Emmet Square (map 7) overhangs the cycle track. Can extra space be CPO'd from the opposite side of the road to remove this conflict?

3.8 Cycle Track Width Map 8

The width of the cycle tracks on map 8 looks narrower than 2m. Can the detail here be improved to make better use of the available space.

3.9 Junction with Rock Hill

The junction of the Rock Road and Rock Hill needs to be improved for cyclists. This is not an approved design in the NTA's National Cycle Manual. The long turn off lane leaves cyclists over-exposed to weaving traffic. Minor kerb-line alterations would drastically improve safety for cyclists at this junction.

3.10 Bus Stops Map 9

We're disappointed that none of the existing bus stops will be upgraded in order to provide a better quality-of-service for cyclists. The proposed bus stop at the junction of Carysfort Avenue and Frascati Road is an inline bus stop very close to a junction.

3.11 Bus Stops Map 10

The existing indented bus stop and the proposed inbound bus stop on map 10 should be converted to island bus stops with bus stop bypasses. This would remove the bus and cyclists conflicts.

We recommend prohibiting motor traffic from turning into Sweetman's Avenue outbound. There is sufficient access through Temple Road and the 4 other roads that feed into/out of Blackrock village.

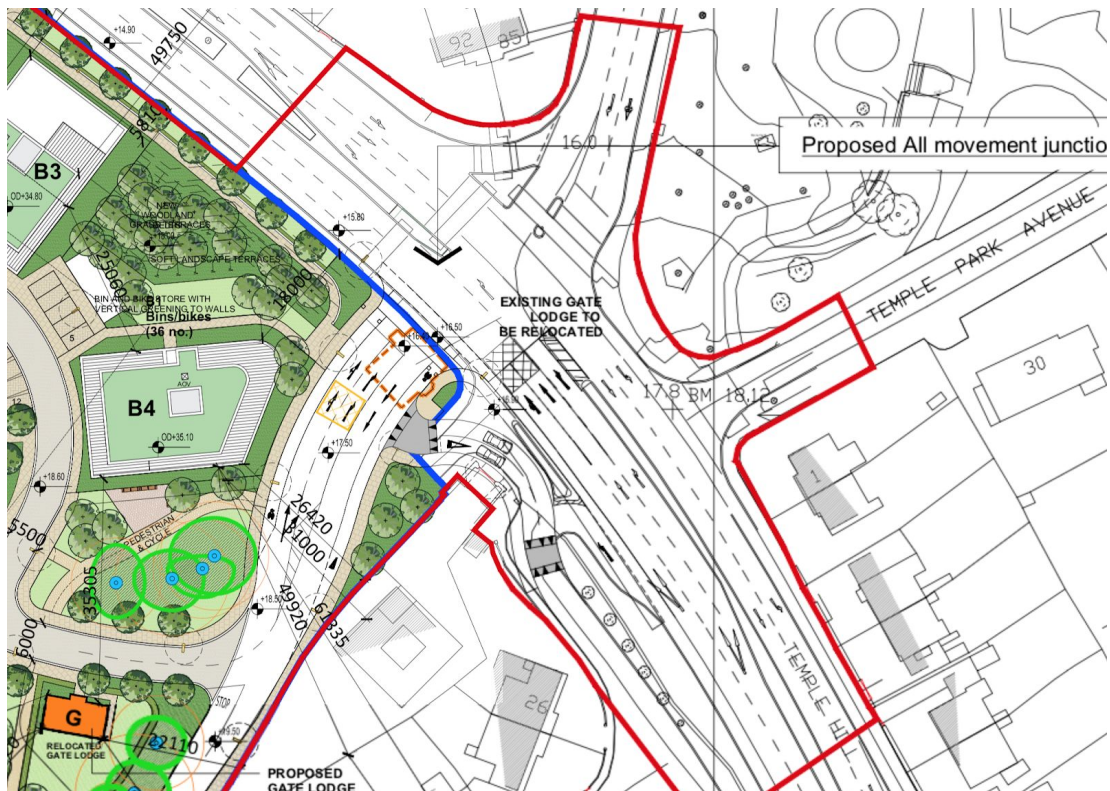
3.12 Bus Stops Map 11

We note the proposed new bus stop locations on Map 11. The proposed indented bus stop is unusual. Why is an indented bus stop proposed at this location? Instead of an indented bus stop this could be an island bus stop instead.

3.13 Proposed St Teresa's Junction

There is a proposed junction improvement scheme as part of the private St Teresa's development lands (ABP SHD REF: 303804 - not yet approved). The opportunity should be taken to close off the St Vincent's access road and require access via the

proposed signalised junction. This will remove the number of conflict points for pedestrians and cyclists, improving safety.



Proposed junction upgrade as part of the St Teresa's development (ABP SHD REF: 303804)

4.0 Conclusion

We trust that our observations will be taken into account as the design for this scheme progresses from a concept design to a preliminary design. We particularly would like to see a coastal option design for the route from Merrion Gates to Blackrock. We look forward to engaging with the NTA as the design progresses.

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