



Core Bus Corridor 3: Ballymun - 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.

We believe the traffic dominance on Ballymun Road should be reduced. The NTA should do Option A for Mobhi Road. Phibsborough Village needs more traffic calming. The cycle route along Church Street should be reconsidered.

2.0 General Observations

2.1 Lot's of improvements

There's lots of improvements for cyclists along this route:

- Cycle tracks along Ballymun Road
- Improvements along Royal Canal Bank
- Constitution Hill cycle tracks

2.2 Cycling for All

Dublin Cycling Campaign advocates for better cycling facilities that will enable people of all ages and abilities to cycle. Currently, the people who cycle in Dublin are not representative of the general population. Cyclists tend to be adult, male and brave. This is a result of the relatively poor quality of cycling infrastructure, and no coherent cycle network in Dublin.

Without a doubt the BusConnect’s proposals, if implemented, will make cycling safer in Dublin. However, they will not enable people of all ages and all abilities to cycle because of the lack of segregation in many places. This will prevent cycling from realising it’s full potential as a transport solution in Dublin.

Many of our observations refer to the lack of segregation provided by the current designs at various locations. Along the routes there are segregated cycle tracks, but at some locations segregated cycle tracks become painted cycle lanes in order to allow for on-street parking or inline bus stops. At junctions cyclists are mixed back in with traffic. This loss of segregation will not enable people of all ages and all abilities to move to cycling. There are design solutions to these problems, like parking-protected cycle tracks, bus stop bypasses for cyclists, or using fully segregated junction designs like the Dutch-style protected junction.

2.3 Primary Cycle Route Width

This CBC will deliver on part of the GDA Cycle Network Plan (CNP). The target quality of service for primary routes in CNP is A+/A. Below is an extract from section 2.3 of the Written Report of the CNP, which outlines the desired width of primary cycle routes as 2.5m.

Basis for Target Quality of Service

ROUTE TYPE	PRIMARY / NATIONAL	PRIMARY	SECONDARY
Cycle Volume Existing (3 hour peak period)	n/a	200 -1000	100-500
Target QoS - Width Factor	A+ Two abreast + overtaking Width = 2.5m	A+/A Two abreast + overtaking Width = 2.5m	A/B Single file + overtaking Width = 1.75m
Target QoS - Other Factors	A	B	B

We recognise that achieving a 2.5m wide cycle track on all portions of this route may be challenging, however it is possible to achieve this width along large segments of the route by widening into the median or using grass verges beside the proposed cycle track. In constrained areas a cycle track width of 2m is acceptable, but should be implemented with caution.

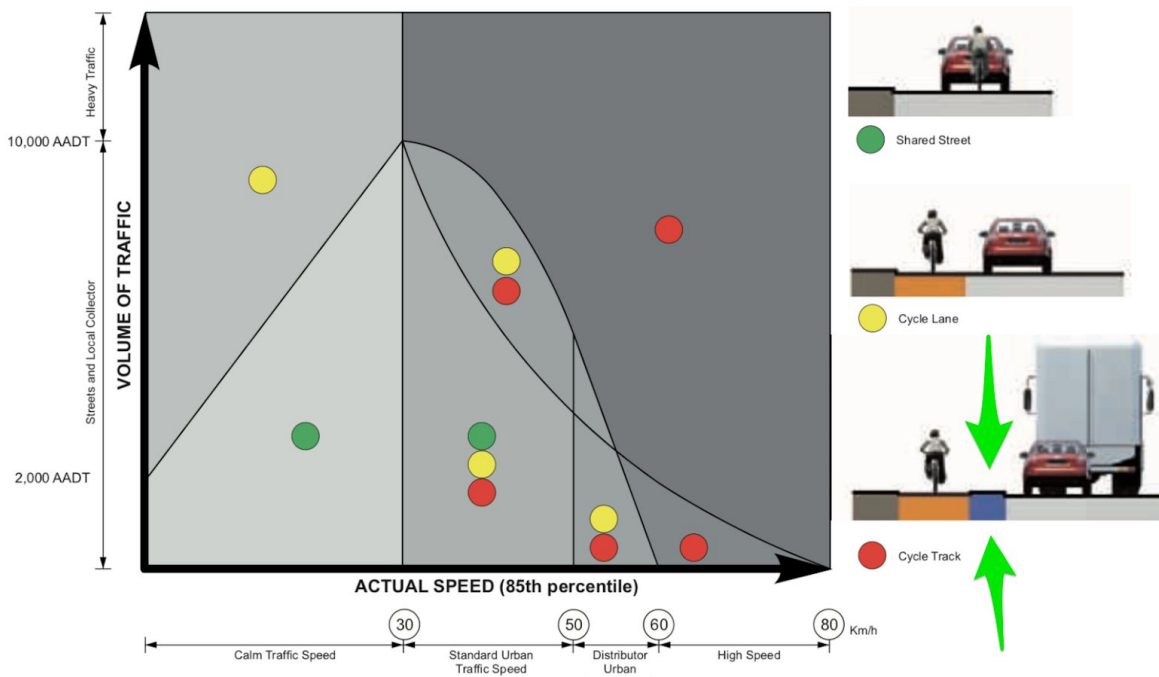
2.4 Buffer Space

The NTA’s own National Cycle Manual (NCM), section 1.7.4, recommends that there should be a buffer space of either a hard paved area or grass verge between the cycle

track and the roadway when the AADT and 85th percentile speeds are both high. (i.e. Ballymun Road)

This buffer space increases the comfort level for cyclists (one of the five needs of a cyclist). It also allows for overtaking using the full width of the cycle track, without partially overhanging the adjacent traffic lane. It is important to point out that the buffer space is not an area that should be cycled on and it should not be included in the width of the cycle track.

We encourage the design team to, where possible, match the design of “Cycle Track Behind Verge” in the NCM, which has grass/planted buffer between the cycle track and the road.



There is no guidance within the NCM for the size of this buffer space (the area marked in blue in the cycle track image above). However, this design guidance from the UK may be useful:

Speed Limit (km/h)	Desirable Minimum Horizontal Separation (m)	Absolute Minimum Horizontal Separation (m)
50	0.5	N/A
60	1.0	0.5
80	2.0 (including any hard strip)	1.5 (including any hard strip)
100	2.5 (including any hard strip)	2.0 (including any hard strip)
120	3.5 (including any hard strip)	3.0 (including any hard strip)

UK Interim Advice Note 195/16 for Cycle Traffic and the Strategic Road Network

2.5 Junction Design

There are a number of junctions in this scheme that don't meet the guidelines in the National Cycle Manual. These include a number of slip lanes across cycle lanes that should be either removed or converted into left-pocket turns. Our preferred option would be to create protected junctions at the larger signalised junctions.

2.5.1 Protected Junction Design

This form of junction design has been achieved along the soon to be constructed North Strand/Fairview cycle route project from Dublin City Council and the NTA. It uses a modified version of the protected junction design. The protected junction design also allows for right hand turns for cyclists.



5 Lamps Junction along North Strand - Junction Design Template

The junction design also segregates pedestrians and cyclists by providing parallel crossings and designated spaces. This would eliminate shared spaces for pedestrians and cyclists. Shared spaces are disliked by pedestrians, cyclists and by people with disabilities. Parallel crossings also mean that cyclists don't have to use islands in the middle of the road that frequently are too small for bikes to easily manoeuvre around.

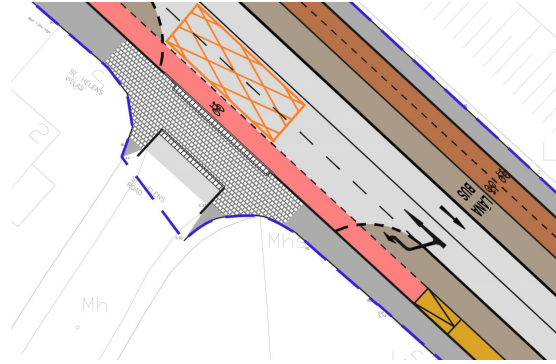
There is a good explanation of the principles of this design at www.protectedintersection.com.

2.6 Side Roads

At side roads it should be clear that cyclists and pedestrians have priority over traffic exiting or entering to or from the main road.

2.6.1 Continuous Footpaths/Entry Treatment

Entry treatment or continuous footpaths/cycle tracks, encourage and promote priority for pedestrians and cyclists. They also encourage lower speeds. In general this would be exemplified by a raised table exit/entry from all side roads.



A raised continuous footpath over a side road as part of the proposed Merrion Gates to Blackrock Scheme - AECOM/ROD for NTA

2.6.2 Buffer Space Design

An alternate method for providing for safer minor road junctions is to bend the cycle track away from the road at the junction. This provides better visibility for cyclists by moving them out of the blind zones of turning vehicles. It can also provide space for turning vehicles to wait for cyclists to pass by. Priority for cyclists over minor roads needs to be reinforced with this design. The cycle track should also be clear to motorists, the use of red surface treatment to mark the conflict area is a must.



With this design the area between the road and the cycle track places the cyclist well outside the blind zone of the truck and clearly visible to the driver without the use of mirrors. The use of different surface treatment, in this case block paving, helps to highlight the conflict, indicates a change in driving conditions from main road to side road, and acts as a traffic calming measure.

This kind of design could be suitable on some of the outer sections of the Malahide Road where the cycle track will cross over entrances to industrial areas or garages. It's important at these locations to ensure the cycle track does not place cyclists in HGVs' blind zones.

2.7 Bus Stop Bypasses

Bus stop bypasses for cyclists should be the norm, as part of these designs. There are many reasons we'd encourage the design team to include bus stop bypasses at all bus stop locations:

- Bus stop bypasses are recommended by the NTA's National Cycle Manual, given the frequency of buses along this route
- Bus stop bypasses remove conflict between buses and cyclists. There is nothing more terrifying, particularly for a beginner or tentative cyclist, than a 30 ton bus pulling into a bus stop on top of you
- Buses will operate more efficiently at stops because bus drivers will not need to wait for a slow cyclist to pass the bus stop before pulling in

2.7.1 Bus Stop Locations

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.

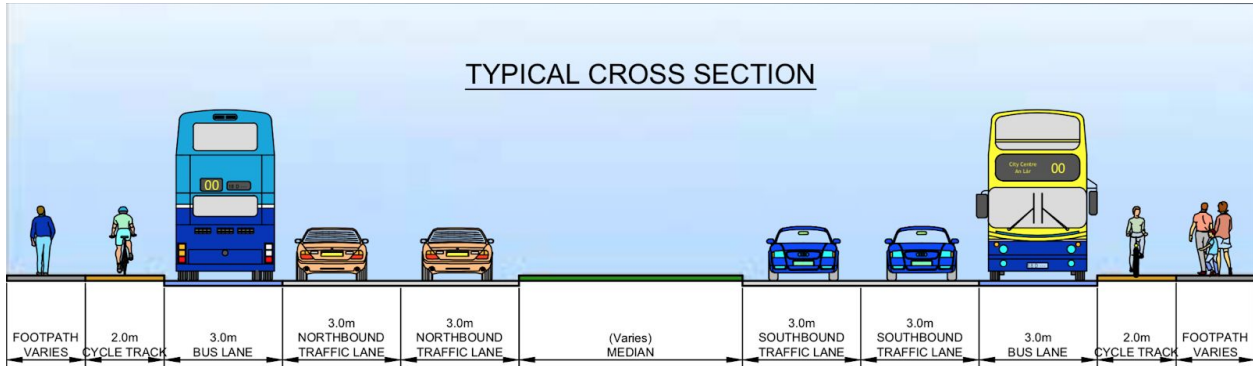
2.8 Development of Public Realm

We urge the Bus Connects team to clearly indicate where these benefits will arise along all the newly designed routes, as these positive developments will be critical in 'selling' the project, as was the case for the North Strand/Fairview cycle route.

3.0 Route Observations

3.1 Ballymun Main Street

The proposed cross-section of Ballymun Main St includes three motor traffic lanes, a cycle track and a footpath in each direction, separated by a large median.



Ballymun Main Street will be well catered for by high capacity public transport with a Core Bus Corridor and MetroLink. There is no need to maintain two general traffic lanes. Particularly if a one-way system is introduced on Mobhi Road. There will be less through-traffic and no need for two general traffic lanes per direction. This proposed arrangement is a legacy of 1970's traffic planning, and needs to be fully reviewed today. Compare Bus Connects proposals on the Finglas Road, where only one lane of general traffic, in each direction, is planned. In some places it appears that footpaths are being narrowed to accommodate cycle tracks, while two general traffic lanes are maintained.

There is a great opportunity here to reduce the motor traffic domination through the middle of Ballymun and build a boulevard style road with one general traffic, one bus lane and one cycle track in each direction. The extra space could be given over to tree planting, wide footpaths and good public realm.

3.2 Ballymun Road/St Mobhi Road Gyratory

It is disappointing to see the large one-way gyratory at Ballymun Road/St Mobhi Road (map 7A/7B) being maintained, in particular for cyclists, vulnerable road users. This large one-way gyratory is poor for cyclists. We recommend that a contra-flow cycle track link be added to St Mobhi Road (map 7A/7B) as it would provide a more direct cycle route. The potential is also there to improve the cycling links between Mobhi Road and DCU by adding this contraflow route.

3.3 St Mobhi Road

Our preferred option for St Mobhi Road is Option A. This option will:

- Save the trees

- Provide a continuous cycle track (Option B is not continuous on maps 9B-10B). The narrower but continuous cycle track will be beneficial to more cyclists than a discontinuous cycle track
- This one-way traffic restriction will lead to traffic evaporation, which will be good for the city

However, the proposed shared space designs need to be reviewed to provide dedicated space for pedestrians, cyclists and waiting bus passengers. Shared space is bad for pedestrians and cyclists. No one wants it.

The proposed 30kph zone on Botanic Road may well calm traffic speeds on this stretch, but the option is also there to CPO some property fronts and provide the necessary segregated infrastructure. Increased traffic calming measures might also be employed if this present proposed design goes ahead.

3.4 Prospect Way & Botanic Road Gyrotory

We're disappointed with the proposals for the Prospect Way/Botanic Road Gyrotory (map 11 in relation to cyclists' safety and encouragement of novice cyclists). The cycle tracks are discontinuous. It is not at all clear how a cyclist leaving the city will safely make it to Botanic Road in a coherent or safe way. The compulsory purchase on Botanic Road (map 11) seems unnecessary as there are two general traffic lanes at this location, where one would suffice.

We have commented on this gyrotory in our submission on CBC4, Finglas Route and recommend:

1. Consider contra flow cycling route through Prospect Avenue northwards to link with Botanic Road/Ballymun Scheme
2. This contra flow route to be complemented by well designed toucan crossings at Prospect Way, and at the southern Phibsborough end

3.5 Cross Guns Bridge

We're only going to lightly comment on this area at Cross Guns Bridge (Westmoreland Bridge, map 12). Given that there are multiple projects including BusConnects, MetroLink and the Royal Canal Greenway all joining at this spot we don't suspect these are close to the final proposals. Good integration between all of these plans is needed.

The Phibsborough Local Environment Improvement Plan 2017-2022 (LEIP, Dublin City Council) recommends installing two bridges either side of Cross Guns Bridge in order to provide the necessary space for pedestrians and cyclists. It is clear that the current proposals do not provide enough space for pedestrians and cyclists given the amount of shared space proposed.

3.6 Royal Canal Bank

We welcome the routing via Royal Canal Bank as it is primary route 3 of the GDA Cycle Network Plan. Currently there is a rat running on Royal Canal Bank. This needs to be stopped if this is to be a safe route for cyclists. The “no straight ahead except cyclists” sign and the note saying “access maintained” on map 12 isn’t clear. Are bollards proposed at this location? We recommend through-traffic is removed using bollards.

The narrow laneway beside Phibsborough Library is unsuitable for motor traffic and two-way cycling movements. There’s hardly even a footpath here. The NTA should consider completely closing this to motor traffic. Access would be maintained via the road to the Mountjoy Prison car park.

The NTA should explore possible re-opening of Blacquire Bridge underpass of North Circular Road. This was the old bridge over the Royal Canal Spur that has been filled in. If it could be reopened for pedestrians and cyclists it would remove a delay point for cyclists. This is objective MTO16 of the Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022.

3.7 Phibsborough Village

The Royal Canal Bank route is good for cyclists heading into the city centre, but it does little to provide access to either Phibsborough village or the housing areas west of Phibsborough Road. Access to the village is important. Phibsborough village is dominated by traffic.

We support the requests by residents to introduce a 30km/h speed limit to the village, the removal of staggered pedestrian crossings and the requests for bus-friendly traffic calming measures. All of these measures will reduce traffic dominance and make it safer to cycle to the village.

3.8 Blessington Street Basin

The Royal Canal Bank route divides into two cycle routes near Blessington Street Basin. The route via the basin and Blessington Street is primary route 3. A connection

between this cycle route and the planned cycle route on Dorset Street (CBC2: Swords) only 450m away should be considered.

3.9 Constitution Hill

The proposals around Constitution Hill (map 15-16) are messy. They do not provide a coherent cycle route. Cyclists are forced to wait and cross roads multiple times as it changes from one-way to two-way and back again. We recommend that a two-way cycle route is provided on the inbound side of Constitution Hill as this would provide a more logical and direct route for cyclists. It might still be possible to maintain a one-way cycle track on the northbound side of Constitution Hill in order to facilitate easier access to TUD Grangegorman.

3.10 Coleraine Street

We reject the proposals to re-open Coleraine Street to through-traffic. This is a quiet residential street. It should not be re-opened to cater for through-traffic.

3.10 Church Street

We are surprised that the cycle route is continued along Church Street (map 16-17). The GDA Cycle Network Plan recommends no cycle facilities on Church Street, but instead suggests that route C6 continue along Beresford Street and Greek Street. The proposals for Church Street include lots of cyclists sharing with buses and discontinuous cycle tracks.

4.0 Conclusion

There are some hard choices along this route. At the northern end the NTA should prioritise pedestrians, cyclists and the public realm in Ballymun by removing the extra traffic lane. The NTA should choose Option A on Mobhi Road. The NTA should reconsider the cycle route along Church Street and instead provide a cycle route via Beresford Street and Greek Street instead.

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