



Active School Travel Routes: November 2020

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1.0 Introduction

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

We thank Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown for the opportunity to make a submission on these proposals. Overall we welcome the proposal to increase permeability and connectivity throughout Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown in order to create a safer, more inviting environment for children to walk, scoot or cycle to school.

2.0 Summary

Our submission focuses on constructive suggestions to support and improve the existing proposal from Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council. We believe this project has the potential to be a tipping point for walking and cycling in the county and is a unique opportunity to create a coherent and useful network of routes suitable for all ages and abilities.

While we are overall positive, we have made some suggestions which we feel would make a critical difference to the overall safety, coherence and comfort of the routes being proposed.

We would very much welcome further engagement with the council, elected representatives, schools, members of the public and interested groups on any of the points raised or any other aspects to the proposals.

3.0 Positive elements to the proposal

3.1 Connected network

The greatest value of this project is the innovative way of using existing infrastructure with some new infrastructure added to complete the network. Without this connected, continuous, congruous network, the proposals would lose most of their benefit to local communities. We urge the council to proceed with each part of the network to gain full benefit.

3.2 New segregated cycle tracks

In particular the proposed 2-way segregated cycle track along Deansgrange Road will have a hugely positive impact on the area and on active travel to nearby schools. The new

2-way segregated track on Silchester Road with traffic calming is also a welcome design and we'd like to see even more of this.

3.3 Permeability links

We welcome both new and improved permeability links. Adding any new permeability links reduces the distance and increases the safety for people to walk or cycle on short local trips. Replacing u-chicane barriers at entrances to laneways and parks, with simple bollard systems is something we would like to become formal council policy.

3.4 Greenway upgrades

Upgrading of shared paths in parks and the Slang Greenway is very welcome. Where the space for paths is wider than 4m, our preference would be for segregated walking and cycling paths with a small grass buffer. Where this isn't possible in the short-term, we would prefer shared paths without markings.

3.5 Narrowing of junctions

Narrowing of junctions will reduce speeds and crossing distances e.g. Balally Drive. It will make residential streets not just safer for active travel but also for play and community use. We would like to see more of this across the routes, for example the green in Ardagh could receive the same treatment as Balally Drive.

3.6 Wayfinding

The proposal to paint wayfinding markers on the road along each route will be a large factor in the success of the Active School Travel Routes. We support the proposal to add wayfinding markers on the ground, rather than adding signpost clutter.

3.7 New walking/cycling crossings

This will slow down motor traffic and help enable linkages across main roads. We would also like to see the width of some existing crossings along the routes widened in order to more safely facilitate walking and cycling.

3.8 Communications

Clear communication about projects like this is so important and we commend DLR's communications approach, particularly in emphasising the general public benefits. Communication throughout the implementation phase will also be key, as sharing updates with stakeholders and publicly will help develop active support and active use.

3.9 Public consultation process

We welcome the opportunity for people, including interested stakeholders such as Dublin Cycling Campaign, to have an input into these proposals. We are especially welcoming of the fact that DLRCC have asked children for input. It has also been dynamic, with updated FAQs as the process has gone on. We would welcome seeing this style of public consultation for other initiatives in future.

4.0 General Feedback

4.1 30kph zones

All Active School Routes should be changed to 30kph as soon as possible. As this is a statutory process, this should start immediately. The executive made a commitment to councillors 5 months ago on 3rd June to commence a review of speed limits in the county. This needs to be expedited

4.2 Suitable access control

Laneways/access to parks should be protected from vehicular access by bollards, not restrictive barriers or gates. This should not be limited to the prescribed route, but also for all entrances so that residents of local estates can access the route in the most direct way possible. Bollards should be kept to a bare minimum and spaced not less than 1.2 metres apart and not less than 1.2 metres from adjacent walls or kerbs. The barriers along the Slang Greenway (particularly at Meadowbrook) and the Deansgrange - Loughlinstown Linear Park (particularly at Shanganagh Road) need to be changed. Example of anti-cycling barrier at Shanganagh Road:



Bayview kissing gates:



Bad access control for children cycling:



Good access control for children cycling:



The above two examples of access control are in Llewellyn estate, Ballinteer.

4.3 Quiet streets must be safe streets

Roads that can be used as routes for through-traffic should not be considered quiet streets, particularly as these roads become busy at school pick-up and drop-off times. These streets should somehow be cut off to through-traffic.

The junctions going through or interacting with quiet streets should be similar to the work done on Goatstown Road recently - narrowing to reduce speeds. This is needed to slow down vehicles as currently yield signs are widely ignored, especially a lack of yielding

towards people travelling by bicycle. Consider stop signs to replace yields in some places.

Blind corners in residential areas can be quite dangerous while cycling on. If the route cannot be rerouted, traffic calming either side of the bend could slow it down. E.g. St Kevin's Villas, Rocwood.

4.4 Off-road routes

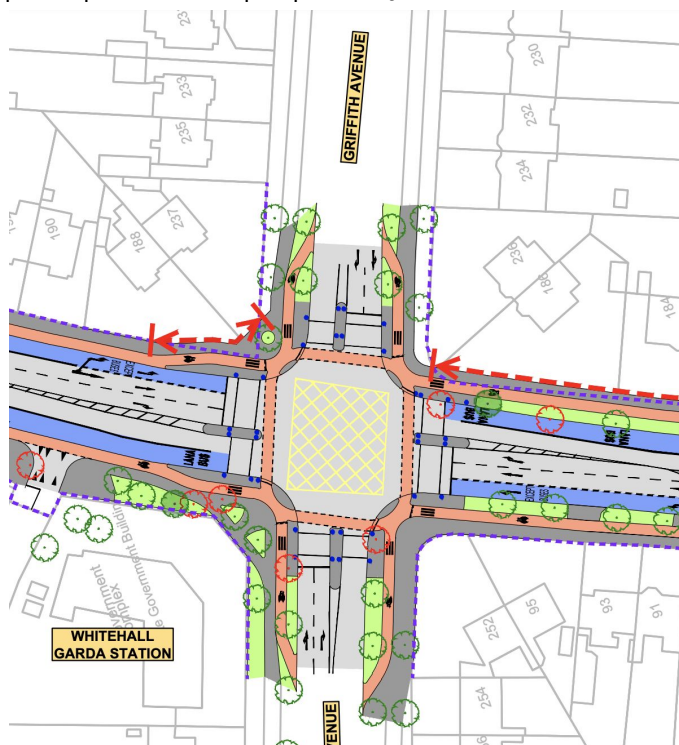
While we welcome the resurfacing of Blackrock Park and the Deansgrange Greenway, we would like to see similar works carried out along the Slang Greenway and laneways being used as part of the routes. For example the laneway behind Olaf's needs resurfacing.

Some of the paths and laneways get very overgrown such as the Slang Greenway and the path behind Olaf's.

Consider raised tables with "sharks teeth" to give park routes priority over minor roads.

4.5 Junction design

We would like to see a protected junction that meets international best practice implemented at the junction of Kilmacud Road and Drummartin Road. Following the principles of the proposed junction at Griffith Avenue and Swords Road.



The current designs suggest that there will be shared space with the pedestrian crossing waiting areas, which we don't think will be safe.

The junctions of Benildus Avenue/Drummartin Link Road and Benildus Avenue/Blackthorn Drive have two features that make them unsafe:

- Left slip turns.
- Cycle lanes between two traffic lanes.

These need to be addressed as part of this project.

4.6 Area-wide traffic filtering

One of the main concerns expressed from making roads one-way for motor traffic or installing traffic filters, is that drivers may choose to rat run through areas that are currently regarded as quiet.

We would like to see more comprehensive traffic filtering proposed across areas so that positive changes don't have real or perceived negative effects on surrounding non-arterial roads. E.g. traffic filters on St. Fintan's Park and Foxrock Avenue to counter-balance Deansgrange Road.

5.0 Variations on routes for consideration

We would like to propose some variations to the existing proposed routes. These are based on everyday local knowledge of cycling these routes including testing them with schoolchildren. Our overriding concern with these suggestions is safety. The variations mostly involve existing infrastructure with some minor tweaks.

5.1 Park to Park

5.1.1 Use Avondale Lawn instead of Brookfield Terrace

The building providers on Brookfield Terrace makes this an unsafe route. Using the Carysfort Avenue cycle track, Avondale Lawn (which has a brand new crossing) to enter Rockfield Park would be much safer.

5.1.2 Use Benamore Road instead of Mount Albany

There are existing segregated cycle lanes on Benamore Road for a more direct route to Deansgrange Road. This would require some works on the junction with Deansgrange Road and Brookville Park.

5.2 Mountain to Metals

5.2.1 Use Raphaela's Rd, Stillorgan Heath, Clonmore Park instead of Blackthorn Avenue

We have identified a number of issues with the proposal to use Blackthorn Avenue, the path behind the Luas depot and Leopardstown Avenue:

- Blackthorn Avenue is not currently safe.
- The path by the Luas depot is overly narrow and can get busy with Luas commuters.
- This route doesn't pass by St Raphaela's school.
- Leopardstown Avenue is a rat run.

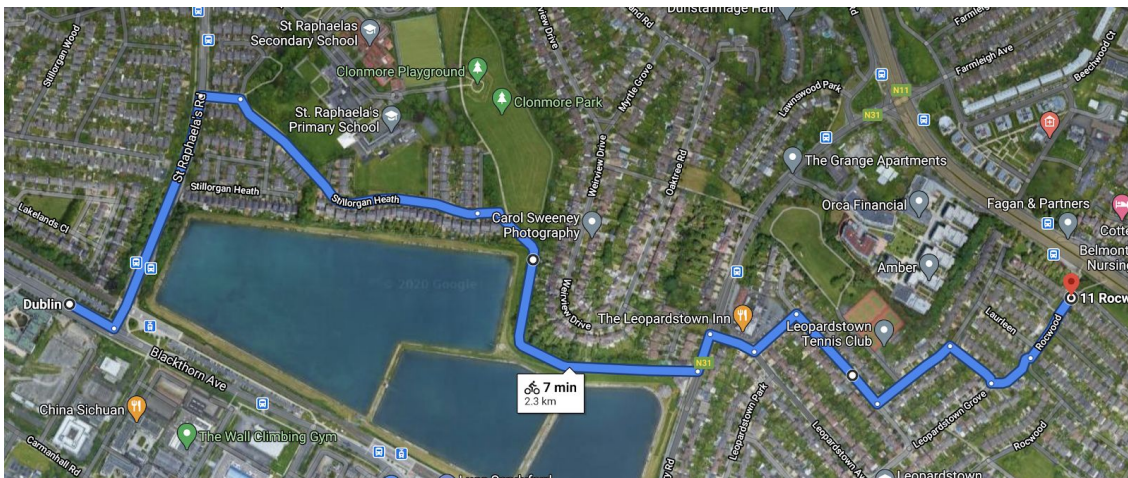
We propose the following route:

1. From Blackthorn Avenue, turn left onto Raphaela's Road across the Luas tracks.

2. Use crossing just after Stillorgan Heath. To continue to Leopardstown, enter Stillorgan Heath, a quiet street.
3. Use the path that runs adjacent to the reservoir. The barrier at the end should be changed to a single bollard.
4. A short 50m section of 2-way cycle track would be needed on Brewery Road to connect to Leopardstown Avenue. This might mean removal of the right filter lane.



5. Use Leopardstown Gardens, Leopardstown Grove, Laurleen to reach Rocwood. Our proposal is only 100m longer than the current proposal:





Our proposal also involves avoiding this blind bend between Leopardstown Grove and Rocwood if using Laurleen instead:



5.2.2 Use Sallynoggin Park instead of Sefton

The transition from the NRH to Sefton is not safe.

Exit the NRH at the new crossing (pictured below) on Rochestown Avenue.



Use the pathway through Sallynoggin Park, staying along the path until O'Rourke Park, join back to the existing proposed route. This path, where you can see the NRH in the background:



5.3 Sea to Mountains

5.3.1 Relocate Avoca Avenue filter

We feel that the Avoca Avenue filter would work better and receive better community acceptance by being located on the other side of Avoca Park. i.e. only allowing a left turn out of Avoca Park, not a right turn. This will allow access for Avoca Park residents to Avoca Road (as route to the N11) and Grove Avenue (as route to Rock Road via Mount Merrion Avenue).

5.3.2 Use Grove Avenue, not Woodlands Park

Cycling uphill to turn right from Avoca Avenue onto Woodlands Park, there is a blind bend coming from Priory Avenue. There are then 2 more blind bends within Woodlands Park.

We recommend that instead, the route turn into Grove Avenue to connect to Mount Merrion Avenue.



5.3.3 Deer Park

We ask that you consider using the northern path in Deer Park for cycling instead of southern path. The southern path is too narrow when it runs along the tennis courts.

6.0 Specific improvements to existing routes

We will share a more detailed document on proposed improvements to existing routes as part of ongoing engagement with the council. Here are some of the most important items, in no particular order:

6.1 Pottery Road NRH crossing

We suggest a toucan crossing right at the NRH back entrance on Pottery Road. Potentially relocating the crossing from outside the Lidl.

6.2 Path behind Olaf's

This path between Benildus Avenue and Balally Drive needs resurfacing and relining. In the meantime, it could be improved by clearing of growth and rubbish in order to increase the usable width, especially at blind bends.

6.3 Blackthorn Drive

The cycle lanes here are regularly blocked by parked cars on both sides of the road. The road is very wide so can cater for widened, protected cycle tracks on both sides. As mentioned above, the junctions at either end are not safe either.



7.0 Spurs and additional routes for future consideration

It is our understanding that the council intends to expand the Active School Travel network over time. Here are some of the routes that we would like to see strongly considered as soon as the current phase has been completed.

7.1 Schools in Booterstown

We would like to see the following in order to connect the many schools in Booterstown to the rest of the active travel network:

- Create a quiet street zone by adding traffic filters on roads such as Waltham Terrace and Sydney Avenue.
- Revert the on-path cycle lane to footpath space on Mount Merrion Avenue to make a better pedestrian facility.
- Install a 2-way segregated cycle track on Mount Merrion Avenue, similar to Carysfort Avenue. Make space by removing the un-used bus lanes/additional turning lanes. At rush hour when bus lanes would be useful, they are full of left

turners at both ends of Mount Merrion Avenue for an irregular bus route. See below images of the 17 bus not being able to use the bus lanes:



- Install a segregated 2-way cycle track on Cross Avenue by installing a one-way system.
- Install a segregated 2-way cycle track on Booterstown Avenue by installing a one-way system.

7.2 Schools outside the M50

Consider expanding the initiative to schools in Sandyford/Stepaside/Ballyogan which are currently poorly served by active mobility options.

7.3 Continue the Park to Park route to Shanganagh Park

This could be done with little more than signage. We understand that bye-law changes may be needed in order to allow cycling in Shanganagh Park.

7.4 Schools in Cornelscourt and Cabinteely

This could be achieved through:

- Traffic filters on Beech Park Road and Mart Lane
- Changing bye-laws to allow cycling on designated tracks in Cabinteely Park.

7.5 School Streets countywide

While we welcome the School Zone concept at Carysfort NS, the School Street concept could be the way to greatly improve safety for active mobility among a number of schools in DLR.

7.5 Highlight sporting and other after-school activities on the maps

We believe that significant mode shift is also possible among after-school journeys. The existing routes already link many sporting facilities and it would be a fantastic opportunity to include these as part of the communications and wayfinding.

7.6 Take schools and amenities outside county boundaries into account

The most prominent example of a cross boundary opportunity to connect existing infrastructure would be to connect the Slang Greenway to the Grange Greenway via wayfinding on quiet streets and upgrading barriers.

8.0 Conclusion

Dublin Cycling Campaign look forward to the implementation of the Active School Travel Routes. It will make a huge difference to all people who live, work and study in DLR.

We hope that Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council will take on board our suggestions to improve the proposals. We are happy to meet at any stage to discuss the details.

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