



Submission to Dublin City Council

East Wall Road interim two-way cycleway facility

24th May 2022

1 Introduction

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. We have over 800 paying members and are a member of the Dublin City Council Traffic and Transport Strategic Policy Committee. We have a vision for Dublin as a vibrant liveable city where people of all ages and abilities choose to cycle as part of their everyday life.

Dublin Cycling Campaign broadly welcomes this relatively short interim scheme for this busy and presently dangerous cycling route, which will improve cycling conditions over this stretch. We have a number of comments on the proposals, which we outline below in our detailed comments, and we look forward to a full scheme in the future which will link the Alfie Byrne Road all the way to East Link Bridge.

We have referred to the proposed facility as the 'cycleway scheme' in this submission.

2 Contextual issues

2.1 General context

The recent IPCC report confirms the extreme urgency of action on carbon emissions and climate change.

The research is clear. People swap to alternative transport modes – including walking, cycling and public transport – when they perceive those modes of transport to have a comparative advantage above other modes. The target modal share (Policy SMT1 of the City's Development Plan) for active transport of 26% is commendable, but the Council could be more ambitious.

Completion of even the short and discontinuous Grand Canal route in the last decade helped bring about a 200% increase in users¹, despite the then ongoing economic crash. The East Wall route, feeding commuters from the busy Clontarf cycleway and large residential neighbourhoods beyond, would potentially draw a similarly high usage rate, if not even higher: the North Strand to Amiens Street corridor is the busiest cycle route in the country.

The parallel Port Tunnel has taken the vast majority of heavy and cross-city traffic off this corridor. So it is now appropriate to reduce the motor domination of East Wall Road and facilitate sustainable transport modes: it is highly commendable to redeem the single lane of traffic from motor use. The sections of lane on East Wall Road and on Alfie Byrne Road are both short and both funnel into a single lane, so the impacts will be small.

2.2 Cycle Network context

Completion of the Sutton to Sandycove concept relies on the link provided by this cycleway scheme. S2S as a commuter, leisure and tourism facility will make an immense contribution to the City in economic, environmental and amenity terms. If the Sandymount Strand section was not held up by court actions, completion of this cycleway scheme would mean that a majority of the route the whole way from Sutton

¹ Cycle counts post-construction compared with census and traffic counts pre-construction.

to Sandycove would be done, if only to interim standards and broken by the hostile East Link/ Tom Clarke bridge.

As mentioned, huge numbers of cycling commuters use the Fairview corridor, and these will greatly increase when Clontarf to City Centre route is complete.

This cycleway scheme creates a vital link in Dublin's Strategic Cycle Network (Route 1E).

This cycleway scheme will also create synergy with Dublin Port's ongoing cycleway development programme. The Port's Tolka Estuary Greenway² is currently under construction with road surfacing laid in some stretches, and the Liffey-Tolka link (connecting East Link/ Tom Clarke bridge to East Point business park at Promenade Road along the Port perimeter of East Wall Road) has been designed by Grafton Architects and is now in preparation for detailed design.



(Above) Image shows Heritage District proposal by Dublin Port, termination of the Tolka Estuary Greenway which is currently under construction.

² <https://www.dublinport.ie/masterplan/masterplan-documents/>

This cycleway scheme will also help link with the proposed Blood Stoney Bridge, which will ultimately bring cyclists and pedestrians across the Liffey to the southern Dockland neighbourhood and Dublin 2 commercial districts. Neither Samuel Beckett nor East Link/ Tom Clarke bridge is pleasant or convenient for cyclists, and the gap between them is almost a kilometre.

2.3 Scheme uptake potential

In Dublin Cycling Campaign's 2020 members survey, 62.1% of our members said they chose to cycle because it was the most convenient mode of transport. They found cycling quicker, with more reliable journey times and ease of finding parking as the key reasons for why they chose to cycle for transport. 18.1% chose cycling for personal health benefits and 10.3% for environmental reasons. The number one reason that Campaign members quit cycling in Dublin is that they feel unsafe, mostly because of danger presented by fast-moving motor vehicles.

The recent NTA's Bike Life Report 2022³ shows the huge support of the general Dublin public for the provision of cycling infrastructure. A massive 71% of surveyed residents support building more cycle tracks physically separated from traffic and pedestrians, even where that means less room for other traffic.

The Council's canal cordon counts 30, 31, 32 and 33 cover the main arteries from the city centre in the vicinity of the East Wall area. The most recent counts (pre-Covid) recorded a total of 3,817 cyclists inbound – averaging the two count days – and 3,709 outbound per day. This represents a reasonable estimate of the catchment of the East Wall cycleway and illustrates the substantial numbers the cycleway is likely to serve.

This cycleway scheme will not only serve these large numbers of existing cyclists coming towards the Docklands and Dublin 2 commuter centres from the northern suburbs, it will – if completed and connected properly to the Liffey via an improved East Road – encourage additional cycling movements by those currently scared off cycling by the hostility of East Wall Road. The precedent set by the Grand Canal indicates that a doubling of the 3,000 or so users could be expected. This will form a significant change in transport patterns, reducing pressure on DART, bus and road

³ 2021 Walking and Cycling Index:
<https://www.nationaltransport.ie/walking-and-cycling-takes-330000-cars-off-dublins-roads-every-day-according-to-walking-and-cycling-index/>

capacities. It will yield benefits for users in increased physical activity which combats several serious health conditions³.

Local cyclists, existing and new, will also make significant use of the cycleway scheme. Several new apartment schemes, particularly at Johnny Cullen's Hill (East Road) and at the former Campus motor service station (corner of Alfie Byrne and East Wall roads) are being built with few motor parking spaces, so these will contribute to local demand for cycling and walking space.

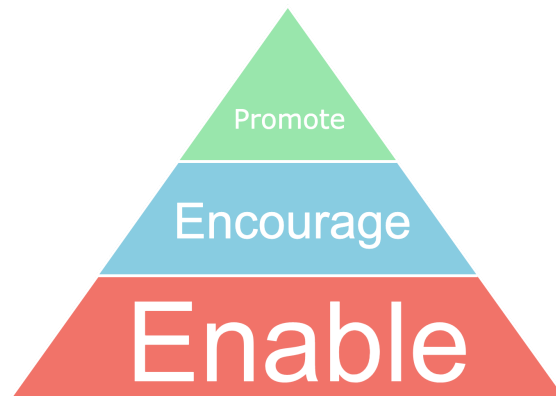
The latter planning permission, as granted by the Council, includes 160 bicycle parking spaces, but only 45 car spaces. These are to serve a 15-storey hotel of 195 bedrooms, 88 apartments and a cafe/ retail unit. The number of cyclists in the catchment of the East Wall is set to increase sharply, with a resulting increase in demand for cycle infrastructure.



(Above) Image shows permitted development at corner of Alfie Byrne and East Wall Roads. 45 car parking spaces provided.

The widely used 'enable, encourage, promote' model illustrates the importance of providing continuous, smooth, protected infrastructure as the foundation of increasing

cycling numbers before encouraging/ expecting people to take up cycling. This East Wall cycleway scheme offers the opportunity to put this into practice and boost cycling numbers significantly. We would submit that, once the cycleway scheme is up and running, budget be reserved for promotional events and publicity around it highlighting the convenience, cash, climate and cardiac benefits users would gain.



3 Scheme-Specific Comments

3.1 Island Bus Stops

Dublin Cycling Campaign welcomes the proposed island bus stops, with the caveat that the highest available international design standards, and best consideration for users of all abilities – pedestrians, bus users and cyclists, should be observed at detail design stage.

3.2 Cycleway Width

While we acknowledge the constraints of this urban environment in terms of allocation of road space, it is disappointing to see that the width of the proposed 2 way interim cycleway is only 2.5 metres. There is opportunity within the available public space to increase this width along parts of the stretch, and provide a more workable and comfortable biking experience.

3.3 Side Roads and Bicycle Access

We note that no provision is given at 2 important locations for cyclists to easily access or leave the proposed route. These are:

- Alfie Byrne/East Wall Road Junction where cyclists appear to be only given the option of turning along the allocated interim cycleway. There needs to be a clear option for cyclists travelling southwards to take a right turn into East Wall Road, and for those travelling westwards to continue straight along East Wall Road.
- Forth Road Junction provides no safe cycling access or egress to/from the proposed route. This needs to be rectified.

3.4 Side Road Crossings

Dublin Cycling Campaign recommends that all side road junctions include an at-grade raised table crossing to facilitate safer and easier pedestrian crossing, and also to slow on-road vehicles in the vicinity of the junctions.

3.5 STOP Line Locations on Church Road and East Road

We note the proposed (and existing) STOP line locations are excessively far back from the East Wall Road at both these junctions. In particular we recommend a review of the position of any Advanced Stop Line (ASL) at these junctions, to bring the cyclists as close as possible to the actual junction.

3.6 Church Road Junction

The arrangement for cyclists leaving the cycleway to head down Church Road is not clear from Drawing Number 4. This is an often used less trafficked route by cyclists, and clarity needs to be provided on how Church Road can be accessed.

3.7 East Road Junction

There are a number of puzzling features in this drawing:

- We note the proposed use of the RUS058 sign, which denotes a shared space between cyclists and pedestrians. But no shared space is indicated?
- We would like clarity on the number and function of the proposed jug turns at this junction

We would also recommend that the bike lanes on East Road, and that on East Wall Road travelling westwards, be protected with temporary bollards to prevent encroaching by vehicles into the cycle lanes.

3.8 St Joseph's School

Why are the bike lanes on East Wall Road not extended fully to ensure they at least encompass the local national school? Clear access for pupils on bikes needs to be designed into this cycleway scheme. A build-out outside the school would help suppress informal pupil drop-offs by motor vehicle (the road width is more than

adequate for the single lane of traffic without the stacking lane at the East Road left turn).

3.9 East Point - Alfie Byrne Junction

Provision needs to be made for bikes turning into East Point from both directions at this junction. This is also a direct link into the under construction Dublin Port Tolka Estuary Greenway, and will ultimately link to the Liffey-Tolka route to East Link/ Tom Clarke Bridge.

3.10 Scheme Extents

While this cycleway scheme addresses a number of issues for cyclists travelling north south, it is disappointing that a full cycle facility has not been designed for the full extent of the East Wall Road, which is an unwelcoming environment for cyclists. We look forward to an extended scheme in the near future, in advance of completion of Dublin Port's planned Liffey to Tolka route.

3.11 Early Start Bike Lights

We welcome the proposals for early start bike light signalling at junctions, and low level signal heads (for bikes), but note that, despite inclusion on the drawings' Key, that these signal heads do not appear to be featured on any of the exhibited drawings? These locations should be clarified.

3.12 Vehicle Lane Widths

Along sections of Alfie Byrne Road the main vehicle lane widths are proposed at 4 metres. This area has a 50kph speed limit, and in general the narrower the lane width the greater likelihood of speed limit compliance. A 4 metre lane width only promotes higher speeds.

3.13 Signposting

We recommend clear advanced signposting for cyclists, to guide them on this route, and to alert cyclists to the access points for off routes, such as East Wall Road towards North Strand, and to Church Road. Liaison on completion with mapping providers (eg OSM, Google) would be beneficial.

Measures on East Road to increase 30km/h compliance are badly needed; East Road has evolved in recent years (with opening of Centra, pharmacy, recent Polish merchandise retailer, and Credit Union shop) as a residential, village-centre road, but has no trees, build-outs, chicanes or any other traffic calming measures. It needs a

major investment in environmental measures to achieve its deserved spatial quality and a safe environment for residents.

4 Conclusion/Summary

Dublin Cycling Campaign strongly supports this progressive and positive cycleway scheme. We look forward to its quick construction on an interim basis pending fuller final routes. We do also seek an extension of the scheme to encompass the full length of East Wall Road to East Link/ Tom Clarke Bridge in coordination with Dublin Port.

We have raised a number of specific points in relation to layouts along the scheme, particularly at junctions, but also in relation to cyclists' protection and vehicle speeds related to lane widths. General lanes should be narrowed, and cycle lanes widened.

Dublin Cycling Campaign is happy to meet with City Council designers at any stage to discuss any of the design issues raised, and we look forward to the implementation of the proposed cycleway scheme.

Will Andrews

will@willandrewsdesign.com

Dublin Cycling Campaign

% Tailor's Hall,

Back Lane,

Dublin 8

Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20102029