

Dublin Cycling Campaign

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Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council,

Senior Engineer, Transportation Traffic,

County Hall, Marine Road, Dún Laoghaire, Co. Dublin

Submission by Dublin Cycling Campaign on the Proposed Road Development ESB Link Road and Link to Arena Road, PC/07/13, Nov-2013

Overview

The Dublin Cycling Campaign welcomes the proposed road development to the ESB Link Road. This route has the potential to create a good cycling route through to Sandyford Industrial Estate, Kilmacud, Stillorgan and beyond for people living in the nearby areas of Leopardstown, Ballyogan and Stepside. There are many schools and places to work that this route will serve and providing a way to reach these by sustainable means is a great improvement for the area.

It is important to note that even though this scheme includes the revision of the entry and exit point to the motor vehicle only M50, the majority of the scheme is on urban roads that permit all road users. The Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets shows the Road User Priorities to encourage more sustainable travel, section 2.2.2 of DMURS.

The extent of the proposal area needs to be widened to include how cyclists advance from Murphystown Road to the ESB Link Road. Currently the proposal doesn't take into account the Murphystown Road, yet this is an important consideration as the current design assumes that cyclists will be located in the off road cycle track. However many cyclists from Murphystown Road will choose to stay on the road on the approach to the main junction and therefore will progress through the junction on the roadway with vehicular traffic.

We are increasingly concerned to see the inappropriate use of shared space in proposals produced in Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. The shared space areas proposed at junctions and bus stops are where conflicts are most likely to occur, clarity and distinction needs to be given for both cyclists and pedestrians.

There is also a concern with unacceptable cycling facilities from previous works on Blackthorn Road East for cyclists. These are just outside the proposal area, but are an important issue to raise as the nature of the cycle facilities at the tie-ins need to be

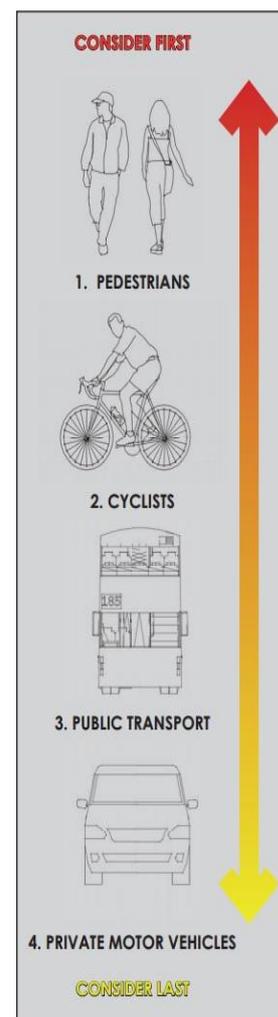


Figure 1: Road User Priorities DMURS section 2.2.2

examined in the context of the wider cycle infrastructure and any improvement works required should be carried out as part of this scheme.

We also discourage the use of the slip turn from Leopardstown Road to Murphystown Way as per the guidance of DMURS section 4.4.3 as “they generally provide little extra effective vehicular capacity but are highly disruptive for pedestrians and cyclists”.

Finally, this new road needs to be given a name in keeping with the local area, rather than ESB Link Road.

Murphystown Road and ESB Link Road

We feel the extent of the proposal area needs to be widened to include how cyclists advance from Murphystown Road to the ESB Link Road and to Leopardstown Road. Currently the proposal shown in blue in figure 2 doesn't take into account the Murphystown Road shown as orange box 1 in figure 2, yet this is an important consideration for cycling as the current design assumes that cyclists will be located in the off road cycle track.

However many cyclists from Murphystown Road will choose not to use the toucan crossing and stay on road to approach the new main junction with the M50 and therefore will progress through on the roadway with motorised traffic.

We feel therefore that there is a requirement to add on-road cycle lanes and through the new junction and ASL to cater for Northbound cyclists going straight through the junction and turning right on to Leopardstown junction.

This may also mean tightening the turning radius for left turning vehicles on to the M50 to reduce speed conflict. It will also mean adding a ramp to the North East cycle track to allow



Figure 2: Proposal area orientated
Top = North, Bottom = South

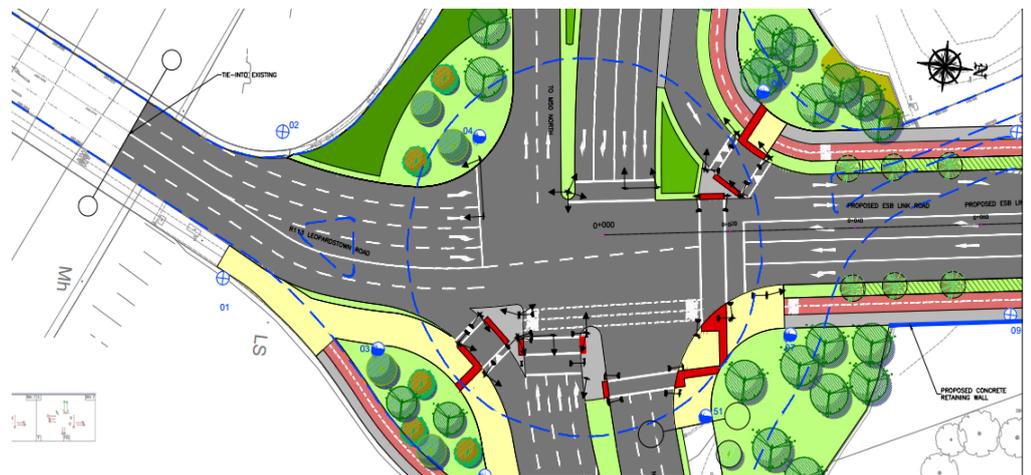


Figure 3: Proposed new junction layout at Murphystown Road and ESB Link Road



Figure 4: Looking North from Murphystown Road towards Murphystown Way with the existing Toucan crossing



Figure 5: Concerns for illegal parking in key cycling transition



Figure 6: Murphystown Way toucan crossing



Figure 7: Looking North on the flyover Murphystown Way towards the proposal area.



Figure 8: Looking South, the existing narrow two way cycle track

Blackthorn Road East and incomplete cycling facilities

There is a concern that the tie in to Blackthorn Road East for cyclists has some unacceptable items in the current design and from recent works. These are just outside the proposal area, but are an important part of the wider cycle infrastructure in the area. This is highlighted in the orange box number 2 in Figure 9.

As the nature of the cycle facilities at the tie-ins need to be examined in the context of the wider cycle infrastructure and any improvement works required should be carried out as part of the scheme.

The design on Blackthorn Road East is quite astonishing in an era of higher standards espoused by the National Cycle Manual and in an era of DTA policy makers having aspirations for a quality cycle infrastructure on a par with Dutch best practice.

The layout in question is a legacy of recent works which removed high quality on-road cycle tracks to make for a third lane on the roadway. Poorly designed off-road cycle tracks were then constructed on existing grass verges. One particular issue is the placement of the cycle track inline with a bus stop, requiring cyclists to use the footpath to weave around the obstacle. This is highlighted in blue as number 1 in Figure 10 and with a picture taken recently in January 2014 shown in Figure 11. This is simply an unacceptable layout for cyclists and pedestrians. The bus shelter should be moved to the back of the footpath or removed altogether.



Figure 9: Proposal area orientated Top = North, Bottom = South

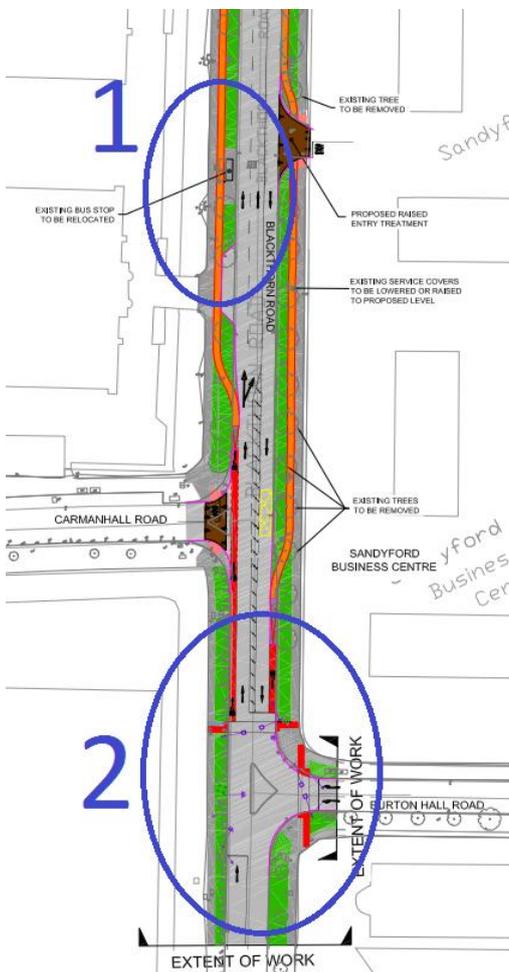


Figure 11: Unfinished cycle track where Bus Stop remains in the way of cycling. Picture taken in January 2014.

Figure 10: Previous works from design January 2013 on Blackthorn Road East, January 2013.

In the current scheme proposal there is nothing showing how the cycle lane will integrate properly in either direction with the junction of Blackthorn Road East and Burton Hall Road. This is highlighted in blue as number 2 in Figure 9 and in blue in Figure 10. The remainder of Blackthorn Road East needs to be brought into the proposal in order to correct the cycling facilities from the recent works.



figure 12: The current proposal for Blackthorn Road East junction with Burton Hall Road

Slip turns and crossings

The design shows two significant slip turns, but the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets recommends that designers of new or upgrade road schemes should “omit left turn slips, which generally provide little extra effective vehicular capacity but are highly disruptive for pedestrians and cyclists”, section 4.4.3 of DMURS.

Slip turns allow motorists to quickly turn, thus putting pedestrians and cyclists in greater danger and they increase the number of crossings pedestrians must navigate.

The slip turn from Leopardstown Road Murphystown Way needs to be omitted from the design, shown in blue number 1 in figure 13. This will remove the need for an extra signalised crossing for these priority road users and make it easier to cross the Leopardstown Road to continue on their journey.

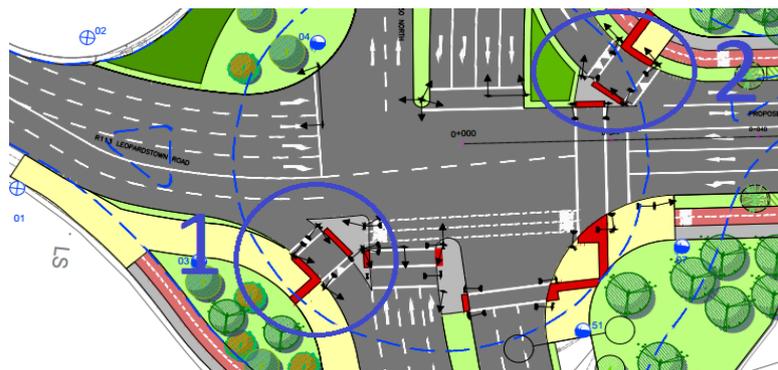


Figure 13: Slip turns in the current design

Other official advice in the National Cycle Manual, produced by the National Transport Authority, says that the slip turns “often gives drivers an unreasonable sense of priority,” and allows “vehicles to take corners at higher speeds” and “restricts views of cyclists and pedestrians”, section 4.5.5 of NCM.

ESB Link Road and Blackthorn Road junction

There is a lot of Shared Space at this junction between pedestrians and cyclists.

- This junction layout is confusing for both cyclists and motorist
- Traffic light sequencing would be difficult
- There is little provision in the junction to protect cyclists

We have a revised drawing of what we think the junction should look like. This revision offers the following benefits.

- The cycle passage through the junction simple and clear.
- Junction should be narrowed to make it more pedestrian and cycle friendly, a narrower junction will reduce crossing times for pedestrians and cyclists and reduce traffic speed through the junction.
- Cyclist crossing should follow a straight line from the cycle track.
- Separate cycle traffic lights should be installed and integrated with the traffic light sequencing.



Figure 14: The proposed layout, which will be confusing to cyclists and motorists



Figure 15: A revised layout, which is more cycle friendly and easier for all users

Shared Space with Pedestrians and Cyclists on links

There are sections in the proposal that show unnecessary shared space. On Blackthorn Road East there is a turning pocket for the “Proposed Eircom access road”. The placement of this turning pocket takes away the space for pedestrians and cyclists. This is not acceptable as it would be better to remove the turning pocket as this is only an access road or take enough space to ensure the pedestrian and cycle track remains consistent and separate.



Figure 16: Proposed shared space along Blackthorn Road East, document “Layout 7 of 7”

Blackthorn Road West cycle track

The current proposal along Blackthorn Road West shows incomplete cycling provision. In figure 17 the current proposal shows the cycle start and end in blue. However, in figure 18 there is existing cycling provision that ends just short of the proposal area. It would appear the current proposal will create a disjointed cycling provision along Blackthorn Road West.

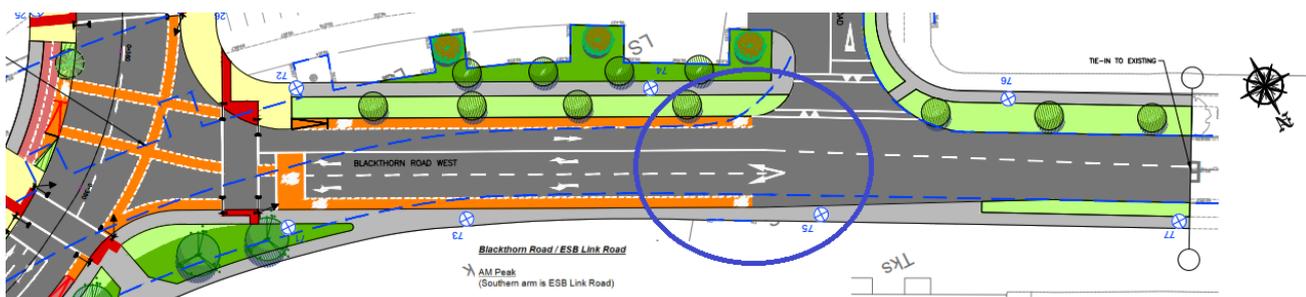


Figure 17: Blackthorn Road West proposal



Figure 18: Cycle track ends along Blackthorn Road West on the east ward approach to proposal area. Picture January 2014

Tree planting

The existing environment is distinctly lacking trees, so it is important that the trees illustrated in the designs are actually implemented in the project. Trees offer a benefit of traffic calming around vulnerable road users as well as keeping the road looking more like a street rather than a motorway.



Figure 19: Trees featured in the design

Yours Sincerely,

Keith Byrne

Dublin Cycling Campaign

References

National Cycle Manual, December 2009,
<http://www.cyclemanual.ie/>

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<http://www.dlrcoco.ie/aboutus/councildepartments/planning/proposedpart8schemes/pc0713-proposedesblinkroadandlinktoaren/>

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