



## **Finglas Luas Emerging Preferred Route September 2020**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. We have a vision for Dublin where large numbers of people of all ages and abilities choose to cycle because it is safe and comfortable.

Our comments are mostly focused on the walking and cycling route parallel to the proposed Luas line and cycle parking.

In general we support the proposal. This project has huge potential to better connect Finglas to the rest of the city by offering significantly improved walking, cycling and public transport options.

In particular we welcome the parallel cycling route alongside the Luas alignment. We hope to see future designs deliver on the potential for a high-quality cycling route from Charlestown to the Royal Canal Greenway.

### **2.0 Cycling for All**

One of the core principles that we strongly encourage you to take into the design of this cycle route is that it is safe and comfortable for people of all ages and abilities. What we mean by this is that the route is suitable for everyone.

For example, children should be able to cycle this route with their parents. They need simple and clear routes without complicated junctions or transitions. The route should

provide the parents with a sense of safety. A great rule of thumb is to ask parents would they let their children cycle this route.

The design should ensure the cycle route is easily accessible to people using differently sized cycles and not just bicycles. Consider how an elderly person with a balance issue would use a tricycle or how a parent could use cargo on this route. For both of them barriers, like kissing gates, would make the route completely inaccessible as their larger cycles would not pass the barrier.

The design of the cycle route will absolutely dictate the kind of diversity of people and types of cycles that will use the route. The Coastal Mobility Route in DLRC is a prime example in Ireland of a high-quality route that has a huge diversity of users.

The Irish National Cycle Manual does not provide good guidance in this area, and it is one of the shortcomings being addressed in the planned new National Cycle Manual. The UK group Wheels for Wellbeing provide great guidance in their [A Guide to Inclusive Cycling](#), particularly designing for people with disabilities and designing for non-standard cycles.

Dublin Cycling Campaign is more than happy to connect TII with people who cycle with their kids, people with disabilities who cycle, or people who cycle larger cycles, if you are looking for specific advice.

### 3.0 Sections, Routes and Cycling Network

In the emerging preferred route there are sections of cycle lanes. That's a good first step. The next step is to connect up those sections into a coherent cycling route. There are two elements in particular that will need to be improved in order to create a great cycling route:

1. Fill in the missing sections in order to create a continuous cycling route.
2. Ensure each of the transitions between the sections of cycle routes, particularly at road junctions, are safe, clear and easy to follow.

The final step then is to figure out where this cycling route will connect up to other cycling routes in the Finglas area to form a connected network of cycling routes.

### 3.1 Continuous Cycle Route

A cycling route is only as good as its weakest section. If there are sections without safe cycling infrastructure then the route will not meet the needs of people of all ages and all abilities. Children will not be able to cycle this route with their parents if there is even a short section of the overall route that doesn't meet their safety and comfort needs.

The two major gaps in the cycle route that need to be filled in are between Tolka Valley Park and the Royal Canal Greenway, and between Patrickswell Place and the Finglas Village luas stop.

### 3.2 Transitions Between Sections

A cycling route only works if the transitions between the sections of cycle routes are safe, clear and easy to follow. For example, at Tolka Valley Road (map 4-5) it isn't clear how people cycling connect from Tolka Valley Park to the proposed cycling route beside the Luas tracks. How do they cross the road and where is the cycling entrance to the park? It should be accessible without cycling along the footpath.

One of the other difficult transitions to manage will be when the cycling route transitions from an off-road two-way cycle track to an on-road cycle lane. The best way to manage this transition is to eliminate it. Particularly at Patrickswell Place (map 9-11) we strongly recommend that you continue the two-way cycle track beside the road. This removes confusing conflict for people cycling to know should they transition from the on-road to off-road section on the pedestrian traffic light phase or the motor traffic light phase.

The two-way cycle track that uses its own cycling traffic light phase eliminates this problem. The main reason for avoiding two-way cycle tracks beside roads is it can be difficult to safely manage vehicles crossing the two-way cycle track to access side roads or driveways. There are no side-roads or driveways on this section of Patrickswell Place.

### 3.3 Connecting to the Cycling Network

The last strategic design element you need to consider is how this continuous safe cycle route will connect up to other existing or proposed cycling routes in the Finglas area. Connecting this route to others will help form a cycling network in Finglas. This has the added advantage of aiding more people in Finglas to cycle to the Luas stops.

The NTA's [Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan](#) document 4B Sheet N3 lays out what are the proposed cycling routes in the Finglas area. The walking and cycling route proposed in this project isn't included in the cycle network plan. However, the cycle network plan should make clear what other cycle routes intersect this route.

Consider what design elements you may need to add to this cycle route where it crosses existing or proposed cycle routes. Consider how someone could safely cycle from this cycle route to the other or vice-versa.

## 4.0 Cycling Design Principles

This cycle route is still early in the design phase. So we will hold off on suggesting improvements at particular design locations. We would recommend you consider the following principles as the design progresses:

1. Always design the cycle route to be safe and comfortable for everyone to use
2. The cycle route must be continuous and easy to follow for all users
3. People cycling and people walking shouldn't be mixed into shared spaces. Shared spaces are unsafe for many people with disabilities, particularly the visually impaired.
  - a. Use a kerb, separator, or grass buffer so there is a clear distinction between the cycle track and the footpath
  - b. Provide clear pedestrian priority over the cycle track at crossing points using zebra crossings and raised tables
  - c. Avoid using shared toucan crossings in favour of separate but parallel pedestrian and cycle crossings to avoid shared spaces at junctions
4. At all locations where the cycle track crosses the Luas tracks the crossings should be as close to 90 degrees as possible
5. Do not install restrictive barriers like kissing gates that would prevent people of all ages and abilities from using the cycle track

## 5.0 Cycling and Public Transport Integration

Cycling has a huge potential to increase the catchment area and usage of the Finglas Luas extension. There are two key elements that will enable and encourage people to cycle to the Luas stop: a safe cycle route to the Luas stop, which is mostly the

responsibility of Dublin City Council, and secure and sheltered cycle parking at the Luas stop.

At this stage you need to start calculating the quantum of bike parking needed at each stop. This is necessary as you need to start allocating physical space near Luas stops for this cycle parking. On the MetroLink project they were surprised how much cycle parking they needed and lacked the space at later design stages to provide it at all stops.

There are a number of guidance documents for cycle parking:

- Dublin City Development Plan 2016-2022, section 16.39 (mandatory development standards on quantum and style of parking)
- Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023, page 454, (mandatory development standards)
- National Cycle Manual, section 5.5.7 (guidance on stands and layouts)
- [Dublin Cycling Campaign Bike Parking Guidance](#) (guidance on types, accommodating cargo bikes)
- Wheels for Wellbeing' [A Guide to Inclusive Cycling](#) (guidance on accommodating larger cycles; pages 51-59)

The Dublin City Development Plan is quite clear that the amount and style of cycle parking that needs to be provided at each Luas stop. Given it is mandatory planning requirements it is a great place to start.

## 6.0 Luas Park and Ride

Currently the 600 park and ride spaces are inside of the M50. Our preference would be for that parking to be outside the M50. The current plan proposes to bring hundreds of vehicles inside the M50 into the future residential and commercial area at Charlestown. This leads to larger roads with larger junctions to provide motor vehicle capacity. It will result in more noise/air pollution in this residential area as a result.

Moving the park and ride outside the M50 keeps the negative effects of motor traffic on population and human health away from a residential area. These negative impacts on population and human health were not considered as part of the P&R Working Paper 1 or 2.

## 7.0 Conclusion

There is a fantastic opportunity to create a cycling route that is safe and comfortable for people of all ages and all abilities as the design develops.

If you have any questions or would like further information feel free to get in touch and we'd be happy to help.

Kevin Baker,  
Chairperson,  
Dublin Cycling Campaign,  
% Tailor's Hall,  
Back Lane,  
Dublin 8

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