



FINGAL CYCLING

Introduction

Fingal Cycling Campaign is a sub-group of registered charity, Dublin Cycling Campaign (Registered Charity Number (RCN): 20102029). We strongly believe that Fingal should be an area that provides liveable villages and suburban centres that prioritise people over cars.

Design reviews are vital to the success of any scheme. They afford us the opportunity to highlight areas that require greater attention. Cycling is a key enabler of the four challenges stated in the strategy Climate Change and the Environment, Health and Equality, Growth and Change and the Economy.

Active travel infrastructure is far cheaper and quicker to implement than the equivalent for vehicles. It requires significantly less maintenance and gives the best Return on Investment of

all modes of transport. Combined with the equitability that active travel affords people, it is of little surprise to see it being ostensibly prioritised.

It is unfortunate to see that the Snugborough Interchange Scheme appears primarily designed to make private motor car usage more attractive for residents and visitors by increasing vehicle flow. This does not meet the design requirement as laid out in section 2.2.2 User Priorities in the Design Manual of Urban Roads (DMURS):

“To encourage more sustainable travel patterns and safer streets, designers must place pedestrians at the top of the user hierarchy [...] Designing for cyclists must also be given a high priority [...] the needs of the car should no longer take priority over the needs of other users or the value of place.”

The prioritisation of private vehicles above other modes of transport is clear with such features as two and three lane carriageways being increased to four, five, six and seven lane carriageways. Dedicating such vast tracts of public space for vehicles, through induced demand, will see a significant increase in vehicular traffic (Litman, 2004).

Consequently the interchange will witness increased congestion, emissions and pollution at nearby destinations such as Blanchardstown Village, Coolmine, Corduff and Blanchardstown Shopping Centre. The active travel provisions in this design do not meet the standards and guidelines established by the NTA and Fingal County Council and require urgent attention.

Though the number of pedestrian crossings necessary to cross the arms of the junction has been reduced, expecting pedestrians to navigate three or four phases of crossings is unreasonable. This approach directly contradicts the guidance detailed in DMURS section 4.3.2 Pedestrian Crossings that:

“that pedestrian movement at signalised crossings be given priority by timing traffic signals to favour pedestrians instead of vehicles by reducing pedestrian waiting times and crossing distances at junctions.”

The same section in DMURS also states that:

“Where staggered/staged crossings currently exist they should be removed as part of any major upgrade works.”

The reduction in crossings is also offset by the large increase in the width of the carriageways. There does not appear to be any placemaking included in the scheme to attempt to mitigate this, while it can be inferred from the existing kerbline markings that a number of trees will be felled. The junction design overall remains hostile to pedestrians, and in our view, it cannot reasonably be argued that it makes any serious attempt to promote walking contravening both national (NTA Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016-2035) and local policy (Objective MT13, Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023).

The cycling provisions are a marginal improvement on the current layout but need urgent revision and fall well short of best practice. Specific issues are discussed in detail in the following sections.

Sheet 1

North Arm (Blanchardstown Shopping Centre)

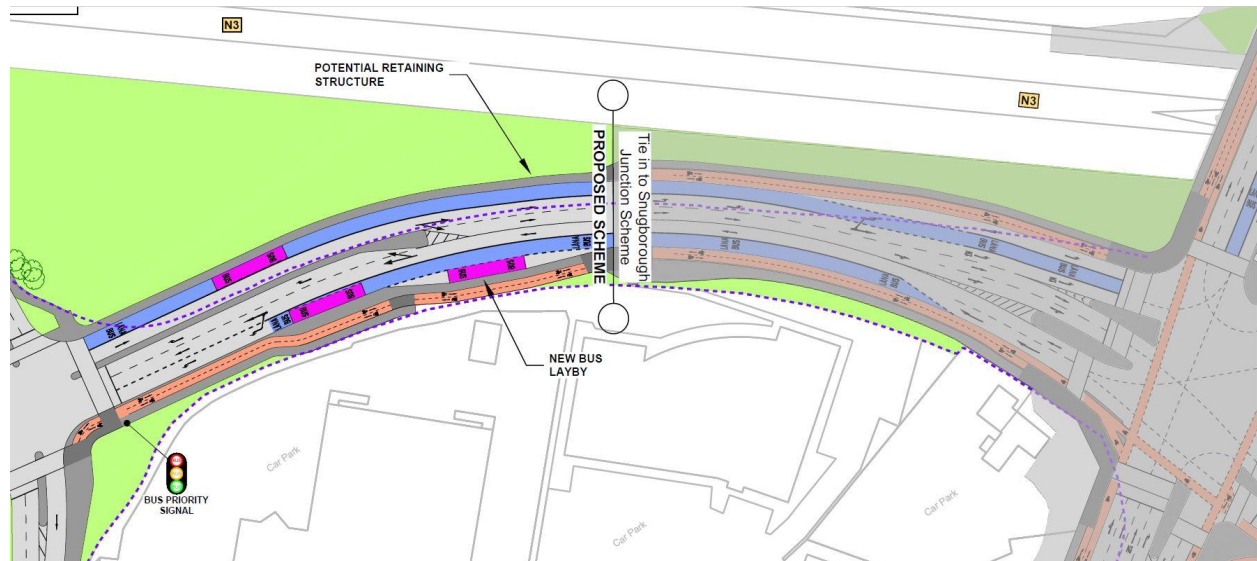


Figure 1 Illustration of BusConnects CBC05 Joining Snugborough Junction

Figure 1 sums up the lack of accommodation for pedestrians and cyclists in the Snugborough Junction Interchange. The two-way cycle path coming from Blanchardstown Shopping Centre will flip from cycling on the left to cycling on the right all the while forcing pedestrians to cross the direction of travel of cyclists. The southbound cycle lane abruptly ends in a shared pedestrian space (use not recommended in National Cycling Manual section 1.9.3) before the junction itself, inevitably leaving cyclists stranded.

The two-way cycle lane on the east side of the road continues to force cyclists to cycle on the right. It provides no clear route for cyclists to continue on over the bridge as it abruptly ends in a shared pedestrian space. Furthermore, there is no direct southbound cycling route connecting Blanchardstown Village and Blanchardstown Shopping Centre.

South Arm (Blanchardstown Village)



Figure 2 Schematic Showing Two Vehicle Lanes Merging Into One Immediately After the Junction.

There is strong evidence to suggest that cyclists and pedestrians are not prioritised in the design process. Figure 2 shows that there is enough space to merge two vehicle lanes into one yet there is not enough space for a dedicated cycle track into Blanchardstown Village from the shopping centre.

There is a distinct lack of safety design features for cyclists throughout the interchange.

- The northbound cycle track/lane alternates between raised cycle track and carriageway-grade 'painted' cycle lanes unnecessarily.
- The cycle track has no physical segregation from the carriageway, even though there is space for it.
- The junction design is not protected and makes collisions with left-turning vehicles likely.

Protection should be provided for cyclists who are travelling throughout the junction. Cyclists travelling through such a large interchange will not feel protected by red coloured tarmac. Nor will it provide the segregation necessary to increase cyclists' safety. At present the design seems to prompt these cyclists to stop in the middle of the left motor vehicle lane.

East Arm (N3 Bridges) and West Arm

There is an absence of appropriate design features for cyclists travelling on the Snugborough Rd wishing to turn into Blanchardstown Village. Cyclists are expected to cross the N3 overpass to navigate their way to the underpass to come back under the N3. There is significant shared space along the N3 bridge, reducing space for cyclists and pedestrians alike to increase the number of vehicular traffic lanes.

The carriageway width on Snugborough Road clearly prioritises vehicles at the expense of pedestrians and cyclists. The lane widths should be reduced to a standard 3m or 3.25m recommended in Section 4.4.1 Carriageway Widths (DMURS). The additional space could then be repurposed to provide wider footpaths and segregated, wider cycle tracks, on the road that is in the scope of this project.

The cycle tracks on this road connect residential areas to the shopping centre and thus serve a wide mix of users, including groups and families. The cycle track widths proposed do not appear to appropriately reflect these journey types.

The cycle track 'slip lanes' and dedicated turn lanes are not necessary and should be removed. These are design features intended for cars, not bicycles. The scale of the carriageway at the junction will discourage walking and cycling. The value of place is very important to walking and cycling, and 20+ metre wide carriageways are extremely unattractive in this regard. If the number of motor vehicle lanes needs to be increased, then a substantial buffer between pedestrians and cyclists and the carriageway should be provided, with placemaking measures to mitigate the negative impact of the excessive carriageway.

The appropriate widths for cycle lanes (Figure 3) and their respective buffers (Figure 4) can be found in the NTA's National Cycling Manual.

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

Figure 3 *Target Quality of Service for Primary Cycle Routes according to the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan*

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

Figure 4 Details from National Cycling Manual on Minimum Horizontal Buffer Between Vehicular Traffic and Cyclists.

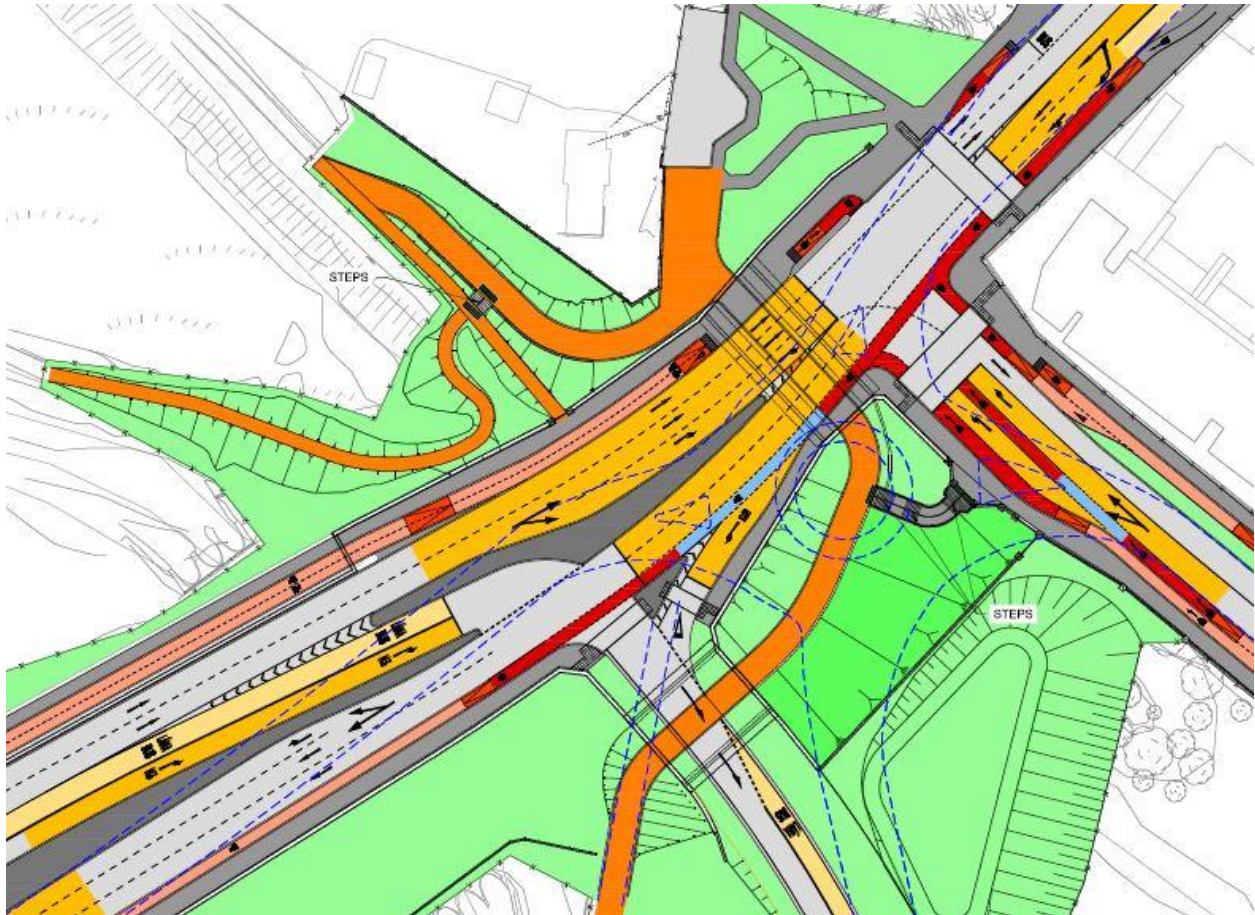


Figure 5 Schematic Detailing Lack of Direct Access to N3 Cycling Underpass

Cyclists wishing to cycle from Blanchardstown Shopping Centre to Blanchardstown Village are forced to cycle away from their destination. They then must negotiate shared space with pedestrians to connect to the cycling underpass. There are no clear indications to direct cyclists travelling from Blanchardstown Shopping centre to the village to the underpass.

The journey from the Ebay Offices southbound through Snugborough Interchange to the junction of Clonsilla Rd and R806 takes approximately two minutes. The proposed alternative route will triple the journey time.

Providing cycle lanes across slips lanes is not recommended by the NTA's National Cycle Manual (section 4.4.4). These slip lanes should be removed (DMURS 4.4.3) or converted into pocket turns where complete slip lane removal isn't possible. Furthermore, these slip lanes increase crossing movements for pedestrians and significantly increase the risk of injury to cyclists. The slip lane on Waterville Rd (Figure 5) unnecessarily prioritises vehicles over cyclists. The slip lane onto the N3 from the Snugborough Rd doubles the crossing movements for pedestrians and directs vehicles travelling at significant speed across the path of cyclists. These cycle lanes across slip lanes are known as "Murder Strips." This can easily be resolved by removing these dangerous and outdated slip lanes.

Snugborough Rd provides the only connection to the National Sports Campus (NSC). The scheme does not provide a dedicated cycling route north in the direction of our National Sports Campus. This is despite the fact that SNugborough Rd is the location of Route NO5 of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network (3.4.1 Dublin North West - Proposed Cycle Route Network, Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network).

A dedicated eastbound cycle lane, to appropriately design for the GDACN Route, could easily be implemented in this junction however a dedicated right hand turn lane, in addition to the two vehicles lane, is provided in its place. These two general vehicle lanes will then abruptly merge into a single car lane immediately after the junction.

A segregated cycling underpass along the River Tolka Valley is a welcome design feature. Although the lack of detail provided is a concern. Furthermore there appears to be no obvious entrance to the underpass from the Snugborough Rd itself. The only ingress points take cyclists along footpaths and/or steps to enter it. Steps are not universally accessible nor is it appropriate to require cyclists and pedestrians to interact on such narrow points of entry onto the underpass.

SHEET 3

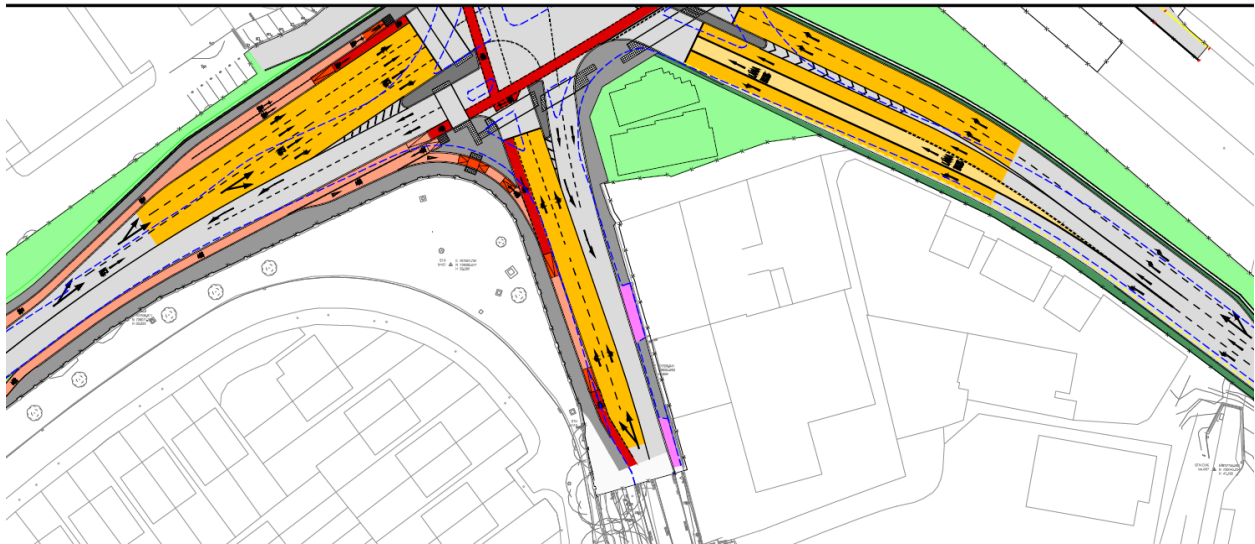


Figure 6 Schematic Illustrating Absence of a Southbound Cycle Lane From Blanchardstown Shopping Centre to Blanchardstown Village and a Shared Northbound Cycle Lane.

The northbound cycle lane from Blanchardstown Village (Figure 6) is either sharing space with pedestrians or a cycle lane that shares the space with vehicular traffic. This section will significantly increase the risk to cyclists travelling to Blanchardstown shopping center/Ben Dunnes Gym. The same applies for people who cycle heading west from Coolime along the Snugborough road. The cycle lane goes from segregated to shared at the junction where it

is most vital. The left turn is unprotected onto L3020 to Ben Dunnes Gym Westpoint and Blanchardstown shopping center and leave cyclists vulnerable to left turning vehicles.

Conclusion

While effort was made to facilitate cyclists with cycle lanes, the quality falls below the standard needed to promote active travel, and this appears to be caused by promoting vehicular traffic needs over pedestrians and cyclists. The new interchange might provide temporary easing of congestion in the very short term but will then be followed by increased congestion through Induced Demand. There are glaring breaches of design requirements for active modes of transport in the proposed design.

Unless significant improvements are made, as outlined in this submission, it will not encourage the Modal Shift desired by both the NTA and Fingal County Council. Active travel infrastructure is far cheaper and quicker to implement, requires significantly less maintenance and gives the best Return on Investment of all modes of transport. Prioritising active mode of transport in the design of the Snugborough Junction will bring enormous benefits. We sincerely hope that the designers will take our feedback onboard and resolve these shortcomings to the benefit of the residents of Corduff, Coolmine, Blanchardstown Village and users of Blanchardstown Shopping Centre.

References

Litman, Todd. (2004). Generated Traffic and Induced Travel: Implications for Transport Planning. Institute of Transportation Engineers Journal. 71. 38-47.

National Cycling Manual (2011)

Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan (2013)

Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2019)