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Executive Manager,
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4 February 2013

Part VII Application For Revised South Side Traffic Management Works To Facilitate Luas BXD

Dear Sir,

We would like to make the attached submission.

Yours Sincerely

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Part VII Application For Revised South Side Traffic Management Works To Facilitate Luas BXD

Submission by

Dublin Cycling Campaign

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Existing Situation

1. The current traffic layout on St. Stephen's Green came about in 2004-2005. Other measures that were proposed, including a cycle lane from Glover's Alley to Grafton Street, were not implemented. The lack of this cycle lane had, for a long time, left cyclists in the invidious position of not being banned from contra-flowing, but without other road users being aware of this.



Photo 1 – Existing arrangement on St. Stephen's Green West. The road markings and mandatory left turn sign are recent.

2. As the current left-hand traffic lane is wide enough for two cars, there is a problem with very poor lane discipline on St. Stephen's Green East and St. Stephen's Green North. On St. Stephen's Green East, as this traffic merges approaching the Merrion Row junction, this leads to congestion and a safety issue for cyclists.



Photo 2 – Poor lane discipline on St. Stephen's Green East-North. Both cars are in the same lane, but on different trajectories. The taxi is also encroaching on the cycle lane.

3. On St. Stephen's Green North it can be difficult for buses to move from the stops on the left hand side of the road to being on the right hand side of the road to turn down Dawson Street.
4. In addition, the bus stop layout on St. Stephen's Green North is very poor as the buses can't pull in to the kerb properly, due to the bus poles being on the road surface.

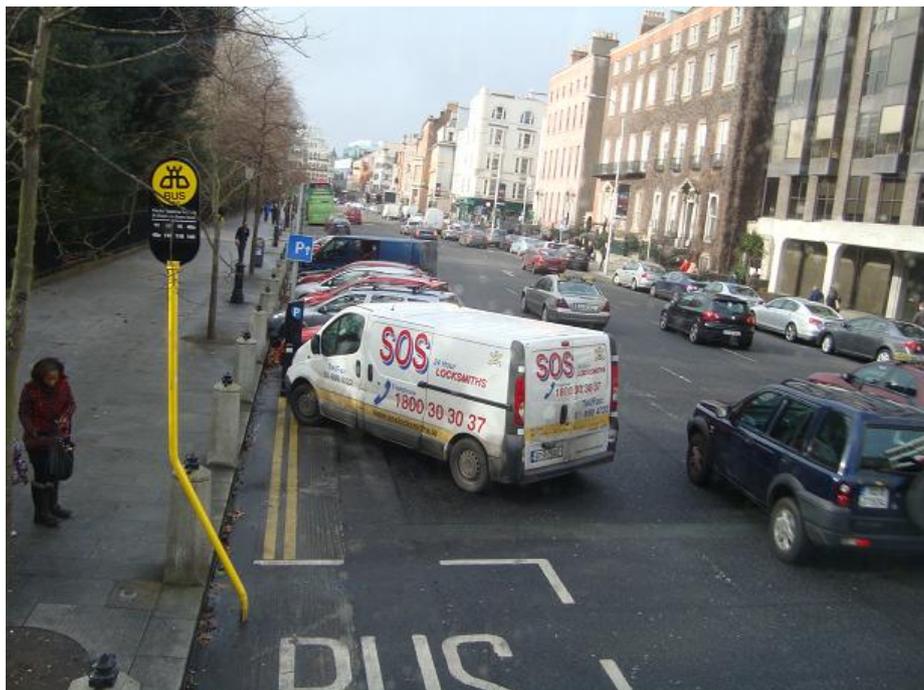


Photo 3 – Bus pole on roadway on St. Stephen's Green North. Note illegally parked

vehicle is a nuisance for buses and cyclists.

5. For peak-time flows, there is a problem with undersized pedestrian waiting spaces and long time delays at pedestrian crossings.
6. There is nuisance parking, especially by some taxis and users of the Shelbourne Hotel on St. Stephen's Green North and Merrion Row and by general traffic on St. Stephen's Green East. This is further exacerbated by some vehicles parking other than parallel to the kerb.



Photo 4 – Nuisance parking on St. Stephen's Green East, which causes a hazard for cyclists and other road users.



Photo 5 – Nuisance parking on St. Stephen's Green North, which causes a hazard for cyclists and other road users.

cyclists and other road users.

7. St. Stephen's Green is a fundamentally important pedestrian and cyclist location, dominating as it does, access to the central business district.
8. St. Stephen's Green is a fundamentally important bus location serving various guided tours and private hires and at a minimum:
9. Aircoach (various Dublin Airport-Dublin South routes);
10. Ardcahan Coach Tours Limited (various Dublin-Wexford routes);
11. Bus Éireann (routes 2, 5, 100x, 101x, 109, 111, 133);
12. Dublin Bus (routes 7b, 7d, 11, 14, 15, 15a, 15b, 25a, 25b, 25x, 32x, 37, 38, 38a, 38b, 39, 39a, 41x, 44, 46a, 51d, 51x, 61, 67x, 70, 84x, 116, 140, 142, 145);
13. St. Kevin's Bus Service (Glendalough-Dublin) and
14. Wexford Bus (various Dublin-Wexford routes).
15. The current Earlsfort Terrace traffic light timing typically only allows about two buses through in each green phase, despite it being served by at least eight bus routes.
16. There is localised rutting of and worn patches on road surfaces and the consequent loose gravel on surfaces is not being removed in a timely manner.



Photo 6 – Severe pothole and debris field at the junction of Earlsfort Terrace at Hatch Street



Photo 7 – worn patch on Earlsfort Terrace approaching St. Stephen's Green



Photo 8 – Poor road surface, ill-fitting manholes and damage to kerbs at St. Stephen's Green East–Leeson Street.

17. The current nose-to-kerb parking on St. Stephen's Green North presents safety and congestion issues. See Photo 3 above.
18. It is imperative that the proposed works rectify the existing problems.

General

19. The works need to extend beyond St. Stephen's Green East. In particular, Merrion Row and the St. Stephen's Green-Leeson Street-Earlsfort Terrace junction are particularly hostile to pedestrians and cyclists.

20.The application fails to explain how the proposals interact with the proposed traffic measures on the rest of St. Stephen's Green North.

Strategic

21.There is a risk of drawing in traffic from the wider city to use the 'new' St. Stephen's Green South-St. Stephen's Green East-Merrion Row route, as this is potentially more desirable than the detour via Dawson Street-Molesworth Street or Hatch Street-Adelaide Road. This risk needs to be countered.

Pedestrians

22.The proposed wider footpaths are welcome, in particular at pinch points, pedestrian crossings and bus stops. It would be useful to minimise the radius of the kerb when travelling from Kildare Street-St. Stephen's Green North, St. Stephen's Green North-St. Stephen's Green East

23.Pedestrian crossing improvements are needed at the St. Stephen's Green North-Kildare Street junction. In particular, an extension of the footpath into the road and/or a pedestrian refuge would be desirable

24.It would be desirable to see footpath improvements to Merrion Row and Lower Baggot Street (as far as Rogers Lane, as this suffers severe pedestrian congestion at peak times.



Photo 9 – *Substandard width of footpath on Merrion Row.*

Cyclists

25. Due to the problem of high traffic flows and speeds and traffic coming from multiple directions, there is a need to facilitate less confident cyclists in the turn from Leeson Street to St. Stephen's Green East and to a lesser degree, those going from Earlsfort Terrace to St. Stephen's Green East. As it stands, the proposal makes things worse, as there is the loss of the substantial ghost island on St. Stephen's Green East.



Photo 10 – *The existing ghost island provides cyclists with a modest amount of protection. It would be very useful to have a similar design in the proposed works.*

26. Cycle lanes inside left turning traffic are problematic. However, the reduction of St. Stephen's Green South to one lane eastbound is welcome. It will be necessary to slow traffic at this point and at the corresponding St. Stephen's Green East-St. Stephen's Green North junction.
27. An option to cycle from St. Stephen's Green South direct to Leeson Street, without having to dismount, would be highly desirable.
28. No bus lane should be between approximately 3.1 and 4.5 metres wide, as this creates an overtaking hazard for cyclists

29. On St. Stephen's Green North, the bicycle parking should be away from the loading bay to prevent vehicles that mount the kerb from damaging cyclists. It would be desirable for this bay to not have the kerb build-outs so as to better allow vehicles to park parallel to the kerb, however, this would mean a loss of kerb space at the Kildare Street pedestrian crossing.
30. On St. Stephen's Green East, there should be an adequate safety zone between parked cars and cycle lane – in particular, the doors on some vehicle types open very wide and can infringe on the cycle lane.
31. Traffic sensors should be installed at all junctions that can detect cyclists.
32. It would be useful to create a cycle contra-flow on St. Stephen's Green North from Dawson Street to Kildare Street, thereby reducing the cycling distance from Grafton Street to Lower Baggot Street by approximately 400 metres.
33. It would be useful to create a cycle contra-flow on Lower Baggot Street from Pembroke Street to Ely Place, thereby reducing the cycling distance from Lower Baggot Street to Grafton Street by approximately 700 metres.

Buses

34. Taxis should not be allowed use St. Stephen's Green East southbound bus lane.
35. The proposal for only two bus stops on St. Stephen's Green East would appear to be inadequate.
36. There is a need to put control / enforcement measures in place for the Hume Street-St. Stephen's Green East junction, as traffic from Hume Street causes a severe nuisance (delay and safety) for southbound buses and cyclists. This might ideally be achieved by making this junction fully signalised.



Photo 11 – traffic from Hume Street encroaching on the bus lane

Other road users

37. There may be a need to consider cash-in-transit arrangements for banks and other premises.

Speed limit

38. Given the high pedestrian flows, existing narrow footpaths and the less safe nature of all construction works and the associated disruption, it would be desirable if the speed limit, especially on the St. Stephen's Green North-Merrion Row-Baggot Street axis, be reduced to 30km/h.

39. While in the short term this could be done with a road works speed limit order, it would be desirable if it was made permanent via bye-laws.

Planning Report

40. Section 2.0 "National Transportation Authority (NTA)" should read "National Transport Authority (NTA)"

41. Section 6.0 "Bus stop locations will be discussed and agreed in the final design stage with Dublin Bus and other stakeholders." - did any consultation take place with non-council / developer (RPA/NTA) organisations?

42. At the moment, the Leeson Street-St. Stephen's Green North-Dawson Street bus stop spacing arrangement is adequate. The Charlotte Way-Earlsfort Terrace-St. Stephen's Green North-Dawson Street bus stop spacing arrangement is less than ideal, with no stop between Charlotte Way and the north end of Earlsfort Terrace. It may be useful to consider moving the Earlsfort Terrace stop closer to the Hatch Street junction and moving the St. Stephen's Green North stops to St. Stephen's Green East. With the proposed construction works, it is difficult to see how stops can be put in place between St. Stephen's Green East and Nassau Street.

The Drawings

43. North points are wrong on the drawings.

Drawing No. RT 4125 7B1 Site Plan

44. No specific comment. See other notes.

Drawing No. RT : 4125 9 Site Location Map

45. No comment.

Drawing No. RT 4125 11 Stephens Green East / Merrion Row Jct.

- 46. Point 1 (see drawing) - The proposed relocation of arch sculpture should not interfere with pedestrian desire lines or capacity on the traffic island.
- 47. Point 2 - The vehicular desire, which encroaches on the cycle lane, line is marked in green. Such manoeuvres are the single largest cause of cyclist deaths.
- 48. Point 3. - A cyclist advanced stop line should be put in place and the main stop line pulled back to allow for buses turning from St. Stephen's Green North.

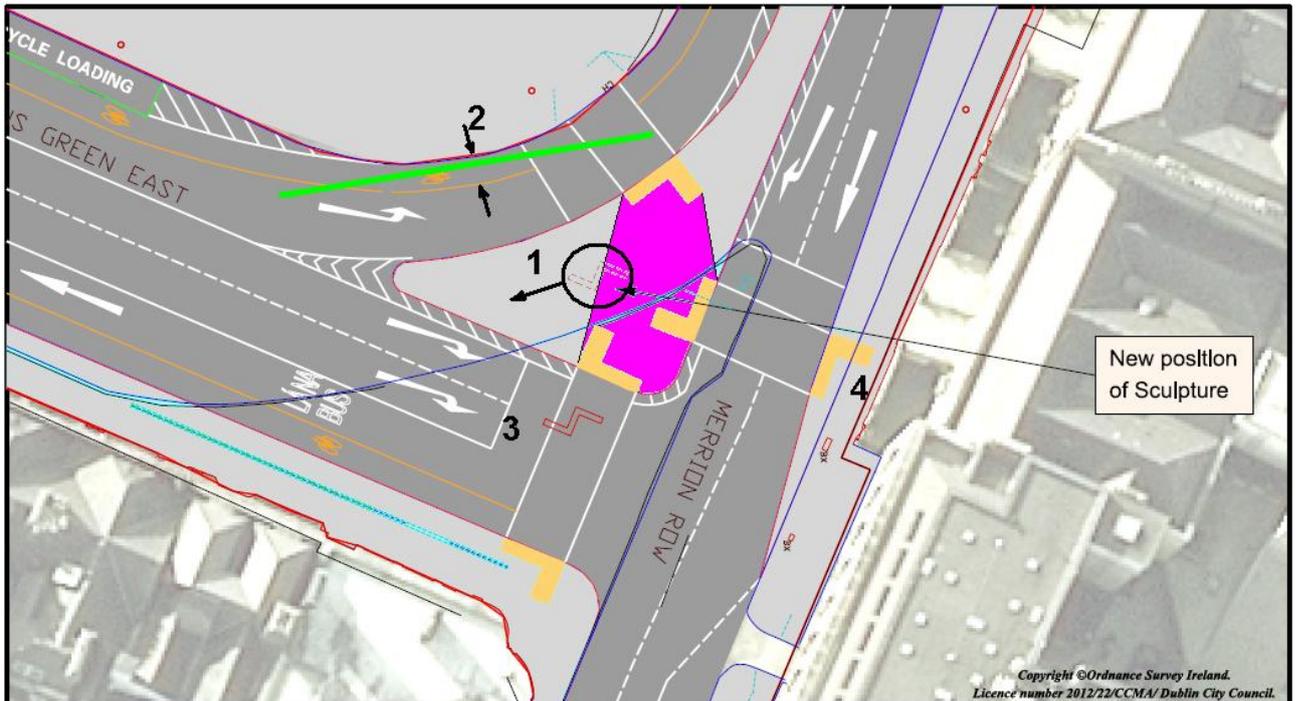


Photo 12 - Extract from Drawing No. RT 4125_11.

Drawing No. RT 4125 12 Existing Roads Layout

- 49. See section titled "Existing Situation" above.

Drawing No. RT 4125 13

- 50. The footpath detail is maintenance / cleaning intensive. Similar details on O'Connell Street are subject to flooding in rainy weather. This can be a particular problem at busy locations and narrower footpaths.
- 51. Care should be taken that surfaces have adequate grip. Some newer stone and concrete paving slabs used by the council in recent years have low grip in wet weather.