



Dublin Cycling Campaign

% Tailor's Hall

Back Lane

Dublin 8

D08 X2A3

1st December 2023

Submission to Draft Dublin City Centre Transport Plan 2023



1 Introduction

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity, number 20102029, that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. We are a member of Cyclist.ie, which in turn is the Irish member of the European Cyclists' Federation. We have sub-groups in Fingal, South Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown.

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.

The Draft Plan has an equally visionary approach to the city. The breadth and scale of the concepts – to radically alter not just transport, but how our urban space is used, and to transform whole districts such as the ‘Tara Triangle’ – is commendable and to be applauded.

We strongly welcome the vision to eliminate the 60% of private motorist traffic that currently travels through the city core without a destination there. That this startling level of traffic has been allowed to develop, choking and polluting our streets but serving no business or cultural use in the city, is deeply wrong. That data is now available to demonstrate this fact, illustrates the high value of collecting detailed and timely data on traffic flows, and of high-quality analysis.

2 Transport & Climate Planning

It is remarkable how a few essentially minor changes in traffic allocation can potentially alter the feel and use of a city centre. This has been illustrated by changes made over the past 7 years as outlined in the Plan. Similarly, we believe these proposals will also lead to transformative changes in mobility and transport in the City Centre.

We welcome the ambition to more than double cycling modal share from 6 to 13% in compliance with the Dublin City Development Plan. This is an important re-affirmation of these targets, although still way below the original targets set by previous policies.

We would like to see a more ambitious statement of movement priorities, particularly in relation to pedestrians and cyclists. This needs to be stated more emphatically in the plan, and clear examples given of how this will be achieved. In turn we note the contradictions exhibited by the differences between the Primary Cycle Network Map shown in this plan, the Dublin City Active Travel Network, and the NTA Cycle Network. These contradictions need to be sorted, as they lead to levels of confusion in the public mind as to exactly which plan has precedence?

We query the proposed layout plans for the South Quays on page 30 which indicate no specific provision for cycling and would seem to contradict present plans outlined by the Active Travel Unit of the City Council.

There appear to be a number of minor anomalies in the Primary Public Transport Network, which need to be addressed.

We note the Draft Plan’s statement that retail expenditure by sustainable transport users was over 76% of all retail spend, supporting the Draft Plan’s proposed reduction of dominance by motor traffic of our public space.

We note the proposed changes that provide opportunities for safer and more direct movement of active travel users, both pedestrians and cyclists, throughout the City Centre.

We strongly support the removal of through traffic, especially private motorist traffic, from the Quays.

We acknowledge the role of taxis as an important element of public transport, but would submit that the use by taxis of bus lanes and standards of driving should be monitored on an ongoing basis. Given existing difficulties with taxis stopping suddenly to pick up fares, often into cycle lanes, and parked taxis sometimes overflowing at on-street rank space into cycle lanes, we would support

consideration of converting a multi-storey car park into a taxi hub as noted in the Draft Plan. Such a hub could also provide shared car storage.

We support the proposal for micro-consolidation centres where cargo carried on trucks can be broken down and split into smaller loads to be transported by cargo bike or hand truck (sometimes referred to as cycle-logistics hubs or nano-hubs).

As recognised in the plan, the proposed changes will have a positive impact in supporting Dublin City's climate targets.

3 Health impacts

The potential health impacts of the Draft Plan need to be highlighted. The Draft Plan can help to provide significant improvements to local population health by reducing car dependency and encouraging physical activity through transport. We would submit the following evidence in support of this–

- Reduction of dependence on car use for transport will increase the transport independence of those who don't themselves drive — for instance, 42% of the UK population can't drive or don't have a driving licence, and this percentage is likely considerably lower for central Dublin;
- Encouraging walking through better public transport and public realm improvements will boost population health: 30+ minutes per day of light exercise like walking or cycling reduces the risk of heart disease and stroke by 50% (Healthy Ireland figures);
- Completing the cycle network and reducing car journey dependence will improve life-long health: Teenagers who cycle are 48% less likely to be overweight as adults;
- The NTA's research (BikeLife Report, 2019) shows that 21% of people don't cycle but would like to;
- Exercise derived from cycling for transport helps prevent serious long- term health conditions such as hip fracture, depression, dementia, type 2 diabetes, stroke, breast cancer, colorectal cancer and coronary heart disease. In the Dublin Metropolitan area the 2019 figure was 490 health conditions each year, saving the HSE €4.6 million (ibid).

The planting of trees, and access to quiet, nature-based spaces free from the noise and pollution of motorised traffic, also provide acknowledged health benefits. These potential outcomes of the Draft Plan merit additional analysis and emphasis.

In addition, the contribution towards reducing economic inequality should be highlighted: Reducing the burden of forced car ownership placed on lower income households – by providing better options for public and active transport – can be a hugely positive outcome.

4 Public Realm

The proposed plan opens a myriad of opportunities to enhance the City Centre public realm. We welcome the proposed new and enhanced public spaces in Lincoln Place, Dame Street, Custom

House Quay and other locations. Enhancing the public quality and liveability of the city is to be commended.

We are conscious that the outlined sketch plans illustrated in the Draft Transport Plan are just that; outlines that can change depending on the public response, and the requirements of the transport and mobility detailed plans. We would wish to see a more coherent development of plans for the areas of the public realm targeted for specific improvement. In particular we would welcome consistency of approach to the present illustrated design of the different areas, some of which detail different features for the same area in different sketch designs, as for instance in differing layouts shown for the Eden Quay/Custom House Quay junction in different sketches, which in turn differ from actual proposed designs available on the [Dublin City Active Travel webpage](#).

The Christchurch junction stands out as an exception to the positive vision of the Draft Plan. At Christchurch junction, the BusConnects design used includes fast, sweeping turns for motor traffic and restrictive, staggered crossings for pedestrians. We would submit that small design revisions here would greatly improve the experience for people on foot or cycling.

5 Monitoring

We welcome the plan for increased monitoring of traffic flows, but would recommend even greater traffic monitoring than that proposed on Page 66 of the Plan. Dublin City Council has acknowledged that off-peak cycle traffic is a major user of the existing cycle network, and many journeys made for social and household reasons, as well as internal city centre work journeys, have not been fully recorded or processed. These critical journeys by bike or on foot need to be acknowledged and logged, to ensure we have a full picture of the all day use of our city thoroughfares. This is critical for ongoing understanding of the forces shaping our City Centre.

We look forward to regular publication of these monitoring results to illustrate the positive changes taking place in our City.

6 Delivery timeline

Dublin Cycling Campaign submits that, given the envisaged reduction of the 60% of private car through-traffic that is currently crossing the city and its transfer to other routes, the bridges across the Liffey – which will as a result carry orbital traffic – will suffer increased congestion, leading to more hostile conditions for cycle traffic.

This increases the urgency of the need for the proposed Fishamble Street and Blood Stoney bridges, for the new sustainable transport bridges parallel to the East Link toll bridge, and the bridge across the mouth of the Dodder. We would hope that these projects will also be realised within the timescale of this plan.

We are also conscious that ongoing funding may well be a constraint in the delivery of the ambitious timelines outlined for this plan, and we seek a clear statement of expected costs and funding required, over the lifetime of the plan. We would hope this draft plan does not go the way of previous city centre proposals.

7 Summary and Conclusions

Dublin Cycling Campaign strongly supports this Draft Plan, which could have a transformative effect on transport and mobility patterns throughout Dublin City Centre. We have pointed out a number of inconsistencies, which raise questions as to the detail of what is proposed in particular locations.

In particular we wish to see:

- Clarity on the proposed (primary) cycle network, and ideally a single cohesive agreed network across all agencies;
- Increased traffic monitoring to include off peak journeys and general in-city-centre journeys, and not just cordon counts/ at Liffey Bridges;
- Agreed coherence and consistency on the layout plans for the proposed areas of public realm enhancement;
- Outline of approximate costings for the various proposals and sources of income, to ensure delivery timelines are held to.

Dublin Cycling Campaign welcomes the vision and ambition outlined in this Draft Plan, which if implemented will improve the overall experience of living in the City, the quality and usability of the public realm, public health, and ease of movement for citizens, business, and visitors alike.