



Transport & Mobility Forum

Senior Engineer,
Sustainable Travel Unit,
Cork County Council,
Floor 2, County Hall,
Carrigrohane Road,
Cork,
T12 R2NC

Via OnlinePortal

Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork
www.transportandmobilityforum.com
tmfcork@gmail.com

c/o Cork Environmental Forum
Bernadette Connolly
Mount Carmel, Kilcolman
Enniskeane, Co. Cork
P47 C578

29th Feb 2024

Public Consultation – Response

Part 8 – Carrigtwohill to Midleton Inter-urban Cycle Route Phase 2

<https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/public-consultations/active-part-8-development-consultation/part-8-proposed-carrigtwohill-to-midleton-inter-urban-cycle-route-phase-2>

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF) is a representative group of organisations who have a common interest in sustainable travel *. The TMF fully supports sustainable modes of travel measures and policies. Sustainable and Active Travel (walking and cycling) helps reduce congestion on roads, improve air quality, supports a low carbon economy, reduces noise pollution and improves public health.

Add SDGs

Transport & Mobility Forum

General Considerations

The Transport and Mobility Forum strongly supports the provision of interurban and rural greenways. A particular priority for us is the connection of Cork city areas to the west via the city to the national Greenway network via Youghal and Dungarvan.

Greenways are often considered primarily leisure and tourism focused projects and we strongly support this aspect of Greenway use. However, the utility use of greenways by local residents and workers/students is also of critical importance. The leisure aspect of greenways requires that they are pleasant inviting places free from traffic noise, pollution, and risk. These are also a key consideration for local residents and workers using the Greenway. But the utility use of a Greenway to allow local residents, employees and students to use the route as an alternative to reach the destinations they require reaching in their daily routine also requires that the Greenway has frequent access points connecting directly to residential areas, places of employment/education, services, and amenities. That it is direct and flat and allows cyclists to make fair progress without being impinged upon by pedestrians or impinging upon the pedestrians who also need to be considered as core Greenway users. Sufficient width and clear way marking is key to avoiding cyclist - pedestrian conflict.

General route choice.

We are **strongly in favour of Route Option along railway alignments**, this may be on the alignment of disused railways or as in this case parallel to an active railway. As already stated in our previous submissions other routings particularly on to existing roads would inflict a detour and the quality of service for pedestrians and cyclists would be compromised by its routing along a main traffic artery.

The advantages of route along the existing Railway Line

- A flat direct route.
- Following the desire line, as cyclists and particularly pedestrians are sensitive to unnecessary long detours.
- Direct town to town link allowing access to services amenities and public transport as well as the largest population concentration.
- Creating a protected environment, largely away from (through) motor traffic

In the immediate surroundings of the towns (up to ca. 3-5km from the centre), however, it is of high importance that local services, workplaces and amenities are best served, so that the new active travel infrastructure can unfold the potential for a modal shift for local everyday travel within the towns and their immediate environs. It will be especially here where the utility use purpose is at least equally important as is the leisure aspect.

Such an environment would encourage and attract a broad demographic of residents in the area to walk or cycle in their daily routine, and first and foremost would put even younger children in a position to access the schools independently by means of active travel. The positive side effects of this must not be under-estimated in relation to

Transport & Mobility Forum

- Gaining independence and self confidence
- Acquiring travel habits and skills beyond the private (family) car
- Raising levels of physical activity and hence promoting public health and
- Contributing to a substantial reduction in school run related short-distance motor traffic.

For these reasons we very strongly support the general route choice proposed.

Detailed comment on Drawings.

Narrow Cross Section

We have some slight concerns that the 4-meter paved cross section is too narrow long term. We feel that this is likely to be sufficient initially as long as the greenway traffic, particularly pedestrian traffic, remains light, but is inappropriately narrow width for a mixed-use by cyclist and pedestrian trunk route in the situation/location where it is heavily used. In the event of heavy use, the 4-meter cross section would result in pedestrian/cyclist conflict and prevents cyclists using the Greenway for utility transport, such as reaching employment, from making reasonable progress. We note that the buffer strip along the majority of the route easily allows the expansion of the paved area in future when the level of walking/cycle traffic requires this. Our concern is that this may not be possible in 2 instances.

- First at the underpass (cross section F-F on sheet 6)
- and second where the alignment of the Greenway is between the railway line and an agricultural access lane (cross section D-D on sheet 9)

We would suggest that these two cross sections be re-examined to allow future widening.

Shared Space

While we also generally would prefer to avoid shared space on a roadway as part of a Greenway of this sort, however, we note that the shared space (Castle Roch Ave, sheet 9) is short and close to the end of a Cul de sac so acceptable in this case.

Sharp turns & unnecessary short detours

Our greatest concern is that the drawings indicate a number of sharp turns. These sharp turns both contribute to the route being less direct and are inappropriately sharp turns for cyclist proceeding at a reasonable speed. Sharp turn also contribute to cyclist-pedestrian conflict.

We would strongly suggest that the alignment in the vicinity of the Carrigane Rd. (sheets 4 & 5) be realigned as shown in figure 1 to remove both sharp turns and to “cut” the corner resulting in a shorter route.



Figure 1

Similarly on sheet 3 there are four 90 degree turns in quick succession which should be avoided as shown in fig. 2 and on sheet 11 the alignment has a number of unnecessary turns which should be avoided.



Figure 2

Use of Toucan crossing

The use of a Toucan crossing where all traffic must stop and possibly dismount to activate a beg button on a major interurban route which is primary part of a national network to cross a minor local road is

Transport & Mobility Forum

inappropriate. The use of Toucan crossings can also pose issues for disabled access, as not all adaptive and cargo bikes allow the operation of beg buttons and disabled riders may not be able to dismount without assistance.

We strongly suggest that the Greenway be given clear priority over minor local roads. This may be achieved by use of a detector on the roadway which gives the road a green only when waiting traffic is detected.

Other issues

Lighting

Light pollution is a serious issue affecting human health, nature and the visibility of the night sky. Street lighting and the lights on motor vehicles are a major contributor to light pollution. We recognise that the provision of Greenways by reducing the volume of motor traffic is an important contributor to reducing light pollution. However, to mitigate the impact of Greenway lighting on light pollution we would like the following measures to be considered.

- That lighting only be used when and where it is required.
- That timers and sensors be used to ensure illumination is activated only when necessary.
- That appropriate cowlings are used to direct light only where needed.
- That the use of non-reflective or directionally reflective surfaces are considered to minimize the escape of light from where it is most needed.
- that the wavelength or colour temperature of the light is as red or of as long a wavelength as is practical as these frequencies both have less of a physiological impact on humans and the natural world and also are more rapidly attenuated within the atmosphere

Impact of Greenways on nature, biodiversity, and landscape.

We recognise that the provision of Greenways by reducing the volume of motor traffic is an important contributor to reducing the need for road widening and new road development. As a result, Greenways are a key strategy to reduce our impact on nature, biodiversity, and landscape.

However, to further mitigate the impact on nature, biodiversity, and landscape we would ask that care and consideration be given to minimizing the impact of the construction on the Greenway on nature. In particular, that the removal of scrub, hedgerows and trees should be kept to a minimum. We would ask that care and consideration be given to minimizing the impact of the construction of the Greenway. That minimising the removal of scrub, hedgerows and trees be a key part of the proper planning of the construction phase. While a certain amount of removal of vegetation may be required particularly where scrub, hedges, or trees cross the proposed alignment, our experience is that the vast majority of removal of vegetation occurs not on the permanent alignment but rather to facilitate the access of construction vehicles and the parking associated with construction.

Transport & Mobility Forum

We would particularly ask that steps and guidelines are provided to minimize this impact. Where removal of some vegetation is unavoidable that remediation is carried out with planting as near as possible to the site of removal.

Conclusion

The Cork TMF strongly supports this project and its general alignment. We recommend some minor amendments to ensure the route is direct, has appropriate priority and capacity and is free of inappropriately sharp turns.

Should you require any clarifications, please email me at tmfcork@gmail.com.

Kind regards

Dr Darren McAdam-O'Connell, Coordinator

Stephan Koch, Chair

Transport and Mobility Forum

Note: *The comments within this submission are solely the view of the Transport and Mobility Forum (TMF) as a whole and not the opinion or view of any individual partner of the TMF.*

*) A full list of partners in the Transport and Mobility Forum can be found at

<https://transportandmobilityforum.com/partners/>