



Transport & Mobility Forum

Cork Docklands to City Centre Road
Network Improvement Scheme
Cork City Council
Cork City Hall
Cork
T12 T997

Via consultation portal

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c/o Cork Environmental Forum
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Public Consultation – Response

Cork Docklands to City Centre Road Network Improvement Scheme

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.

As such it is the TMF's aim to support the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being), SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and SDG 13 (Climate Action).

General Considerations

The Transport and Mobility forum strongly supports the provision of interurban and rural dedicated/segregated cycling infrastructure and greenways.

We strongly support the general tone objective and intent of this scheme. We think it is generally well laid out and we would firmly welcome its implementation. We strongly support the hierarchy of

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provision prioritising pedestrians first, then cyclists, then public transport and other commercial traffic and finally considering the needs of private motor vehicles. This scheme is generally consistent with this approach throughout the scheme.

The greatest impact and benefit of this particular scheme will be on cyclists. In this context our priority is to provide cyclists with safe, attractive, convenient, and direct links wherever possible while also prioritizing a positive pedestrian experience, an attractive public realm, without negatively affecting public transport. Infrastructure for cycling should be suitable both for infrequent recreational cyclists and for regular commuters who require an efficient and direct route with minimum delays. Ensuring a route is welcoming to less confident beginner recreational cyclists will allow people to begin cycling. But for the city to achieve the significant shift in modal share away from personal motor vehicles - that we require to meet our climate goals - we also need to facilitate direct higher speed cycling to allow regular cycle commuters to move without delay efficiently and predictably through the city.

Detailed comments on the proposed road layout

With the expected volume of 2-wheeled traffic along this route, we are concerned that the **width of the 2-way cycle lane on Albert Quay and Victoria Rd.** at 3.3m in total will be insufficient. A 3.3m width for a two-way cycle route is adequate for light traffic and shorter stretches of moderate traffic but causes difficulty in overtaking at higher level of traffic particularly where recreational and commuter traffic is mixed.

This route will have to accommodate all the local docklands traffic as well as all of the Greenway traffic (as part of the Lee-to-Sea Greenway), both recreational and utility cycling, accessing the South East of the city, and already sees very significant levels of both recreational and commuter traffic.

The redevelopment of the docklands with the construction of a large amount of housing and office space will result in a substantial increase in commuter traffic as will the modal shift required to reach our climate commitments. Even at present traffic levels before any redevelopment in the docklands or anticipated modal shift towards cycling, we would anticipate significant issues with congestion and delays in overtaking at peak commuting time and very serious overcrowding when events (e.g. at Pairc Ui Caoimh) or good weather draw large numbers of recreational cyclists. Two lanes in each direction – or at least alternating 2+1 - will be required to deal with the expected traffic in the short to medium term.

We strongly recommend that the reverse herring bone parking on **Victoria Rd. north** be replaced with 2.4m wide parallel parking allow an extra cycle lane in each direction. On Albert Quay East we recommend the planting strip be narrowed to 1.5 m and the Pedestrian Public Realm space narrowed by 70cm to allow the two way cycle lane be widened to 4.5m to allow both greater capacity, reasonable overtaking opportunities for commuter cyclists stuck behind large volumes of recreational cyclists and to ensure large volumes of cyclists queuing at traffic lights don't obstruct oncoming cyclists.

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Albert Quay West does not appear to have sufficient space to allow the easy widening of the cycle lane beyond 3.3/3.5m making it necessary to ensure there is provision for a significant volume of cyclists crossing Eamon De Valera Bridge to reduce the volume of cyclists which must use Albert Quay West.

We have some concerns that the **junction with Centre Park Rd** (former roundabout) may be confusing with two-way cycling on one arm and one way across on the other three arms. But we recognise the rationale behind the design and the need to treat one arm differently and recommend look both ways signs for motor traffic approaching these three arms.

While the proposed **2-way cycling across the Centre Park Rd arm** of the junction makes sense to give a direct routing from Centre Park Rd towards the 2-way lane on Victoria Rd (north), the same should apply **to the arm across Monahan Rd**. This is to allow for direct (West-East) cycle routing from Marina Terrace (Rockboro Bridge) into Monahan Rd and Victoria Rd east, without having to cross three arms of the junction.

We have some **concerns at how the scheme terminates the edge of the project area**. We recognise that some of these issues may be outside the scope of the project and will be addressed as part of upcoming schemes. But historically this has been the greatest weakness of active travel infrastructure in Ireland that top class infrastructure too often ends by placing pedestrians and cyclists in road positions which are not ideal to continue their journey.

In particular, we are concerned that the **abrupt beginning/end** of the lane at the **western end of Terence MacSwiney Quay** on the footpath does not allow cyclists to appropriately merge into traffic continuing on to either Anglesey St or Parnell Bridge.

As stated above this scheme has to be suitable for both timid recreational cyclists and allow direct efficient travel by a large volume commuter cyclists. As such there should be both the option to cross via the pedestrian crossing to the off-road cycle lanes on Anglesey St. and Parnell Bridge and also to merge into the traffic to allow more confident cyclist to take the more direct route.

At **Terance MacSwiney Quay / Parnell Br**, there is no room for westbound cyclists arriving at the pedestrian crossing to stack up. This crossing should be upgraded to a toucan crossing to reach the 2-way cycle path on the western side of Parnell Br.

Further, cyclists turning south into **Anglesea Sea towards City Hall** via the bus lane should be catered for, as changing to the western side of Anglesea St for 100m and crossing same again unprotected will not be an option for most cyclists.

The **Albert Quay area** will see larger volumes of **origin/destination cycle traffic** on its southern side. In the approach to the junctions at both E de-Valera and Clontarf Br, there should be room provided for cyclists leaving the cycle path and waiting to cross to the southern side to reach their destinations (One Albert Quay, Navigation Square, Old City Hall / Millenium Hall) without blocking through cyclists coming from behind.

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At the **start of Kennedy Quay** (opposite the Idle Hour bar), we welcome the closure of the direct motor traffic access to Kennedy Quay across the cycle path, as this has been a highly hazardous situation for years.

Regarding the pedestrian crossing there, we are wondering about the proposed **surface material** on the cycle lane, as granite paving across a cycle lane in a bend (and in potential braking situations) has proven hazardous (slippery) in wet weather in the past (e.g. recently removed at Grand Parade/ South Mall).

Conclusion

The Cork TMF strongly supports this project, and we trust that our observations / suggestions made above will be considered.

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

Kind regards

Dr Darren McAdam-O'Connell,

TMF Coordinator

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/>