

Cork County Council
Senior Engineer Traffic+Transport
County Hall
Cork



By email to
Peter O'Donoghue peter.odonoghue@corkcoco.ie

16 March 2018

Part 8 Public Consultation **Vehicular Capacity Improvement Interventions at Little Island**

Dear Mr O'Donoghue,

The Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork (TMF) is a representative group of organisations who have a common interest in sustainable and active travel. TMF fully support measures and policies to promote and facilitate the use of sustainable and active modes of travel. Sustainable and Active Travel helps reduce congestion on our roads, supports a low carbon economy, reduces noise and air pollution, improves public health and quality of life.

Ireland is currently experiencing an obesity crisis, a significant rise in people suffering from diabetes and significant pressures on our health system. How we design our roads, streets, towns and cities plays a huge part in our choices to walk, run, cycle, use public transport to access local services and facilities, to get to work and to return home. The carbon footprint related to travel and transport is another critical aspect in this context.

We would like to take the opportunity to comment on the proposed vehicular capacity improvement interventions at Little Island, which is interlinked to the overall Dunkettle Interchange improvement works and part of the larger scale Little Island transportation strategy.

We understand that currently the access to Little Island and its numerous work places is very much car based, as there is no bus connection to either Cork City or adjacent towns to the East (Midleton etc), and Little Island train station is peripheral to the area with no bus shuttle in place. Hence pressure of motorised traffic volumes is great on the access junctions and the N25 interchange, and motor traffic volumes must be catered for also in connection with the forthcoming works at the Dunkettle Interchange.

Nonetheless, we strongly think that non-motorised traffic, meaning cycling and walking ("active travel") must be catered for as well, to make Little Island accessible without a car at adequate comfort levels, and for the general reasons outlined above. We feel that the current proposal has some short comings in this regard and would

like to make the following suggestions, mainly in relation to accessing the local train station:

We understand that the main pedestrian / cycling access to Little Island station will in future be at a new facility further west, near the Radisson Hotel, but in the interim, access via the present route (road bridge at N25 interchange) must be maintained at high levels of comfort and safety.

N25 road bridge (drawing 5)

The footpath on the western side will slightly be widened, while the motor traffic lanes will be narrower (3.00m from 3.50m for western lane). HGVs will be likely to get closer to the kerb. The footpath shall be designed in a way (surface material change or similar) to provide a visible verge towards the motor lane, so that pedestrians don't walk too close to the kerb. The footpath should be open to cyclists, too.

We assume that speed limits in the entire area up to the junction north of the railway will be 50km/h.

R623 Roundabout (An Crompan, drawing 2)

Pedestrian traffic in this area will be primarily on the western side of the R623 (south). There must be a safe crossing for pedestrians (and cyclists) at the western arm of the roundabout, ideally a tucan crossing, as high speeds of cars will be expected, especially exiting the roundabout. The fact that the roundabout is double lane throughout and a large proportion of HGVs are to be expected, visibility also becomes an issue for crossing pedestrians and cyclists.

The crossing should be ideally 2 car lengths (1 HGV) into the entry/exit lanes to disjoin stopping for pedestrians and for entering / exiting the roundabout lanes. The western traffic island should be extended to the west in case.

R623 south (drawings 1 and 5)

Following the cross section on drawing 1, the western footpath between the signals at the Topaz station and the retail park (SuperValu etc) will only be 1.50m wide, while the upgraded footpath on the eastern side will have 2.00m. From the drawings it is to be assumed that the main pedestrian route will be on the western side, while the eastern footpath only serves one residential premises.

An adequate footpath width on the western side shall hence be realised (e.g. by shifting all lanes slightly to the east, or by leading the main pedestrian route into the grounds of the retail park). Further, the pedestrian route (western footpath) shall continue all the way to the crossing at An Crompan roundabout, which according to the drawings (No 5) is not the case.

Roundabout at KFC (drawing 4)

There are no pedestrian crossings planned at any of the 4 arms of this roundabout, while there are footpaths on all four arms, and the retail park (KFC, Supervalu etc) will be a trip attractor for pedestrians e.g. at lunchtime for the surrounding business premises and the Radisson hotel. Pedestrian crossings shall be installed here.

We understand that the here present project proposal is part of a longer term strategy in a larger scale spatial context, and details on the latter are not visible in this isolated project.

The above suggestions will only affect the present project at a minor scale, but will in our views be necessary to maintain access quality and safety for non-motorised traffic at an adequate level.

We further assume that in the longer term plans, access options for alternative modes (active travel and public transport) will see significant improvements in order to reduce the present extreme car dependency for everybody living or working in Little Island, a situation that is not sustainable in a longer term future perspective. We hence also trust that provisions for later bus stops, pedestrian access routes to same, improved access to the train station etc. are already being considered in any present plans.

We trust that our suggestions will be taken into consideration. Should you require any clarifications, please do not hesitate to contact us at transportandmobilityforum@gmail.com

We look forward to hearing from you in due course.

Kind regards



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.