



## Transport & Mobility Forum

### **Cork City Council**

Roads & Transportation Directorate  
Roads Design & Construction Division  
City Hall  
Cork

*Via online consultation portal*

Transport and Mobility Forum, Cork

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### **PART 8 Public Consultation - Response**

## **Togher Public Realm Enhancement**

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 helps reduce congestion on roads, improve air quality, supports a low carbon economy, reduces noise pollution and improves public health.

In general, we support and welcome the scheme of enhancing the public realm in Togher village, but we have serious concerns about the lack of adequate infrastructure for active travel (i.e. cycling and walking), which are on top of the hierarchy of travel modes according to recent planning documents (e.g. RSES, CMATS draft). In particular, we oppose the proposed mixed-use facility for cycling and walking, as we feel this would compromise the quality of service for both road user groups, especially vulnerable road users, such as children walking or cycling to the two local primary schools in Togher village.

### **Observations / Suggestions**

Positive aspects

The proposed scheme offers a number of very laudable improvements which we support, such as

- The redistribution of street space, i.e. narrowing the excessively wide carriageway, giving more space esp. to the western side foot / cycle paths,

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- The narrowing of junction radii in connection with raised table junctions, resulting in lower motor traffic speeds and shortening of crossing distances for pedestrians
- The introduction of a green verge along the western side of Togher Rd
- The high quality path link between the Tramore River Greenway (from the east) to Elmvale estate to the west, creating a direct and quiet route for active travel up to the Sarsfield Rd interchange
- The proposed landscaping measures with additional trees and other vegetation.
- In short: the creation of a town centre street as a public space, replacing a motor traffic runway with some public facilities to either side.

### Critical points:

#### Mixed facility for cycling and walking

The main point of critique is the proposed active travel infrastructure as a “mixed facility” for cycling and walking for the entire length of Togher Rd within the scope of the scheme.

Togher Road and Spur Hill are defined as a primary cycle route in the Cork Cycle Network Plan (CCNP 2017), and as such part of route CSW-U17. While a mixed-use facility might cater for the needs of local access, it can by no means be regarded as suitable cycling infrastructure for through bicycle traffic in a way that would support a significant modal shift towards sustainable travel modes. In this regard, the scheme is in direct breach of the City and County’s own plans and ridicules the CCNP.

While a concentration of high-quality active travel infrastructure on the western side of Togher Rd seems reasonable, given the concentration of trip attractors – schools, church, Centra - on that side), through passing bicycle traffic must also be considered.

We see a mixed facility as a severely reduced Quality of Service for both pedestrians (among them many school children) and cyclists, which should not be the option of choice for a primary cycle route. We hence firmly suggest that dedicated and segregated) spaces for be defined on the western side of Togher Rd.

#### Connection into Spur Hill

The defined primary cycle route continues into Spur Hill to the south, with access to several interconnected housing estates (Sandown Crest etc.). This means passing the pinch point at the roundabout, where the dentist’s practice in the old lodge narrows down the available space for cycling and walking. In order to provide a state-of-the-art active travel infrastructure, which would be safe for independent school trips by primary school pupils, a dedicated cycle and walking path shall be considered that passes at the rear of the dentist’s lodge. This would require a minor land take from the Centra car park. This shall definitely be considered in the present scheme, or at least be prepared for to be achieved at a later stage soon. Continuing south, there is ample space to provide a segregated path that connects into the west-going greenway and into Sandown Crest estate.



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The result would be a show case safe and comfortable cycling and walking connection from major residential areas into Togher Village, incl. the two national schools.

### Bus stop in Spur Hill

We strongly see the need for an additional pedestrian crossing at the bus stop that connects into Sandown Crest estate at the bus stop to provide safe access to public transport.

### Set-down area outside Church and School

We see the set-down areas outside the church and the school critical, as they would be an invitation for permanent parking and provide level access for motorists onto the footpath / cycle path level. The church has ample space for parking on its land. Set-down areas outside schools are seen more and more critical in terms of attracting motor traffic to the school gates (compromised safety for children), air pollution due to idling of engines while waiting, and for contravening the attempts to increase pupil's physical activity (compare "park and stride" idea).

### Cycle parking

We observe that there is no provision for public cycle parking in the plans. We suggest that cycle parking shall be installed wherever suitable space is available. Otherwise bike will end up being locked to sign poles etc, compromising safety and adding to street space clutter.

### Speed limit

With the proposed re-design of Togher Rd, the character of the street will radically change, which will also affect motor traffic speeds on the ground. To underline the new character of Togher Village, a speed limit of 30km/h shall be introduced between the Spur Hill bus stop and the Community Centre, close to the N40 bridge.

### **Summary:**

While we acknowledge the many positive aspects of the proposed scheme, the solutions regarding active travel infrastructure stop half-way and don't provide a really attractive, high quality network of walking and cycling paths in a way that would be expected in this day and age. Many of the recent relevant planning documents (CMATS, RSES) declare active travel as first priority for the future City's transport system. The proposed scheme falls severely short of this aspiration. The omni-present calls for action facing Climate Change are not being addressed. We see an important opportunity for a show-case solution missed for years to come, if the Togher scheme doesn't get the active travel infrastructure right - NOW.



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Subsequently we cannot fully support the scheme in its present shape and form but see the opportunity to get it right with some important alterations.

Should you require any clarifications, please email me at [tmfcork@gmail.com](mailto:tmfcork@gmail.com).

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Stephan Koch".

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/>