



Transport & Mobility Forum

Cork City Council

Traffic Operations Division
City Hall
Cork T12 T997

Via online consultation portal

<https://consult.corkcity.ie/en/>

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<https://consult.corkcity.ie/en/consultation/cork-city-speed-limit-review-%E2%80%93-initial-consultation>

20th July 2022

Public Consultation – Response

Cork City Speed Limit Review - Initial Consultation June/July 2022

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.

Thank you for providing the general public and stakeholders with the opportunity to feed into the 2022 City Speed Limits Review at an early stage. We see lower speed limits as a crucial element of the transition to a more sustainable and future proof transport system in Cork and beyond.

General considerations

We are strongly supportive of 30km/h speed limits in all urban, residential, retail, commercial minor, and side street) roads. International research has clearly shown that speeds above 30km/h greatly increase the risk of death and serious injury in the event of collisions, intimidate cyclists and pedestrians from using the streets, and produced a far less pleasant, attractive, and universally accessible environment for all road users.

Therefore, 30 km/h should be seen as the default speed limit, with any exceptions to this having to be justified on a case-by-case basis. Rather than the present situation where the reduction of speed limit to 30kph requires a case-by-case justification which places a considerable workload on City Council officials and engineers. We are mindful of the existing legislative framework which at present results in considerable time and expense for every individual street or road which is to be designated as 30km/h.

We would strongly suggest that the processes for speed limit reductions are streamlined, to minimise this cost and workload while maximising the rapid adoption of widespread 30km/h inner urban speed limits. Rather than the process of speed limit reduction proceeding street by street it should be instead applied over wider areas. Average speed surveys, public consultations etc. should be carried out over as wide and coherent an area as possible as a single exercise, reducing the time and expense involved.

This approach would also reduce the need for signage (which is, as we understand, also a limiting factor today). Rather than being placed at all junctions to an individual street, signage would only need to be erected at the (often limited number) of access points to a specific area. This would significantly reduce the time and expense required to ultimately ensure that the vast majority of streets and roads in the city have the speed limit reduced to a more appropriate level.

For illustration of the effects of wider coherent 30km/h zones, please see maps in the Appendix as examples.

We suggest that Cork City Council try and lobby towards Government/ Dept of Transport to get these processes streamlined.

There are also significant advantages in motorists, cyclists and pedestrians knowing that 30km/h is the speed limit over a wide area rather than the confusion which may arise when speed limits change from street to street. Ultimately, there should be a clear and consistent policy that Cork city is a 30km/h zone except on main arterial routes that do not see significant pedestrian or cycle (without dedicated infrastructure) usage and only when clearly signposted with a higher limit.

Relevance to Sustainable Development Goals

On a global scale, lower speed limits in the city would be in line with the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, in particular with

- SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-Being),
- SDG 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and
- SDG 13 (Climate Action).



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A swift transition to lower speeds on Cork's streets would also support the City's commitment as being part of the 100 Mission Cities to achieve net carbon neutrality by 2030.

Suggestions for 2022 Speed Limit Review

While the designation of 30km/h slow zones should continue for residential and housing estate streets at high pace (where no fundamental discussions seem necessary), another emphasis shall be put on bottlenecks with high motor traffic load, high footfall and narrow cross sections.

Another (partly overlapping) category would be streets in the vicinity of schools (Safe Routes to School), and streets that are part of the Cycle Network (CCNP 2017 with no dedicated cycle lanes or tracks. (...))

In connection with the BusConnects programme, we also make reference to the plans for its Sustainable Transport Corridors (STC) as published on 30/06/2022.

List of Streets suggested for 30km/h (as examples)

Below we are listing a number of streets/areas that we'd like to see included in the next round of speed limit reductions. We are listing a variety of streets that we see as urgent to become 30km/h zones for varying reasons. These should be seen as examples that should be transferred to other streets city-wide, hence this list shall not be seen as exhaustive.

UCC area

College Rd >> high footfall, frequent road crossings by pedestrians (in eastern part), primary cycle route (CCNP route CCC-U23)

Gaol Walk >> sharp bends, limited sightlines, high footfall around river bridge, partly no footpath, primary cycle route (CCNP CCC-U25)

Highfield Avenue >> important walking route to UCC, narrow footpaths, primary cycle route (CCC-U26)

Dorgan Rd >> important walking route to UCC, narrow or partly no footpath, primary cycle route (CCC-U26)

The latter 3 streets will potentially see higher car traffic load in future in connection with the proposed bus gate on College Rd and subsequent new access routes (at Boole Library, see BusConnects STC E).

St Finbarr's Area:

Gilabbey St >> narrow street and footpaths, busy through road, access to primary school, primary cycle route (CCC-U22)



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Bishop St at cathedral entrance >> bottleneck for motor traffic, pedestrians and cyclists, tight bends, limited sightlines, access route to two primary schools – St Finbarr’s and St. Mary of the Isles – and a secondary school – St Aloysius >> (un)safe route to schools, primary cycle route (CCC-U21)

Dean St >> currently a rat run from Gilabbey St towards Barrack St, Friar St and Douglas St, which might even increase with plans for a bus gate at St. Finbarr’s cathedral (BusConnects STC G).

Middle Parish (all)

The entirety of streets between Prospect Row and Grattan St, especially after the recent redesign of several junctions, would by nature only allow for 30km/h.

Grenville Place/Prospect Row/ Bachelor’s Quay as the main through road to the North Channel quays. >> passing Mercy hospital, tight narrow bend at St. Vincent footbridge

Grattan St >> primary school, two lane/one-way zebra crossing, residential street, would allow for a coherent 30km/h zone between Sheare’s St, North Main St and River Lee North Channel

Courthouse St >> narrow footpaths and extremely high traffic volumes in a tight bottleneck with two 90* turns, access route to primary school

Friars Walk/Deerpark area:

Deerpark Rd / Rose Lawn >> already 3 speed ramps existing, rear entrance to Greenmount NS, nursing home, primary cycle route (CCNP Route CCC-U28).

Ros Barra >> short housing estate cul-de-sacs opposite Deerpark that were left out in 2021 speed limit byelaws.

Patrick’s Rd >> secondary school, de facto single lane west of Mount Pleasant Rd, primary cycle (CCNP Route CCC-U28)

Friars Walk (Quaker Rd to Mount Pleasant Ave) >> densely populated residential, narrow busy footpaths, through road despite being de facto single lane road, vicinity to school (at Patrick’s Rd)

Deerpark Rd/Patrick’s Rd are likely to become rat-runs for motorists between Pouladuff Rd and Summerhill South for access to City Centre if the proposed bus gate at St. Finbarr’s cathedral will be introduced (see BusConncts STC G).

Other areas

Douglas St >> busy, attractive and lively high street in the South Parish, high footfall, dangerous crossing at Nano Nagle Place towards Red Abbey Square (street going downhill), narrow footpaths, secondary cycle route (CCNP CCC-U35)

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Union Quay >> attractive hospitality hot-spot with recently established outdoor seating across the street on river quay, secondary cycle route (CCNP CCC-U37)

Sth Douglas Rd around Half Moon Lane >> bottleneck on a major through road, partly no footpath on southern side, entrance to Tramore Valley Park (Greenway), secondary school primary cycle route (CCNP CSE-U1A / CSW-GW7)

Well Rd (R853, between Woodview roundabout and Douglas Rd) >> winding road, no footpaths on eastern side along numerous residential property entrances, primary cycle route (CCNP route CSE-U13)

Knapps Sq / Lower St John St >> narrow street being re-designed to improve active travel conditions, alternative quiet route to primary and secondary cycle routes (CCNP routes CCN-U12 and CCN-U11)

Low-cost road layout interventions

Tactical urbanism

Speed ramps are not the ultimate solution to support 30km/h limits and should only be considered as last option. They tend to be most effective in unnecessarily slowing down the non-motorised road users and inflict frequent speed changes from motorists.

We acknowledge that funding is tight to physically change the road lay-outs in order to support lower speeds. However, we believe that nonetheless low-cost but effective solutions can and should be found to physically support lower speeds.

This can be e.g. re-arranging kerbside parking (on alternating sides, instead of continuously on one side), change in road surface colour or material at junctions or entrances to 30km/h zones, '30km/h' stencils on the carriageway, planter boxes to go onto now hatch marked areas, and similar measures, in brief everything that lessens the character of the street as primarily laid out for free flow motor traffic.

Anything would help that interrupts existing visual straight lines for driving which at present inevitably invites to higher speeds. Following the concept of 'legible streets', the visual appearance of a street should indicate that it is not laid out for speeds higher than 30km/h.

In this context, additional funding to fill a budget for physical interventions should be sought (also see Director's Report (David Joyce) to Roads and Transport SPC of 31/05.).

Other aspects:

Separate from speed limits, the City Centre and its businesses would largely benefit in its attractiveness for shoppers and visitors if HGVs were kept out of the city centre (initially Patrick St, later extended to the island) after an early morning delivery period. After 8am, trucks should be confined to a defined route only (e.g. North Channel quays) to pass the City Centre where inevitable.

Exceptions should be granted only by a case-by-case application.



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Conclusion

We see the continuous transition to lower speeds as an essential element in the transition to a sustainable transport system, that is further promoting Active Travel (a high priority also in the new City Development Plan). Although lots of streets have already become 30km/h zones in the past years, it is important that this process takes up momentum and proceeds faster than before, also including wider categories of streets than in the past (i.e. going beyond purely residential streets).

With regard to Cork being part of the 100 **Mission Cities** to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2030, we ask the City Council to take extra efforts to push the transformation of Cork's transport system to a healthier mix of increased levels of Active Travel, higher share of Public Transport, and adequate accessibility of remaining necessary private motor traffic.

We are looking forward to an extensive list of streets with reduced speed limits to be included in the next round of bye-laws on Special Speed Limits.

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

Kind regards

Dr. Darren McAdam O'Connell (coordinator) and

Stephan Koch (acting chair)

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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/>


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Appendix

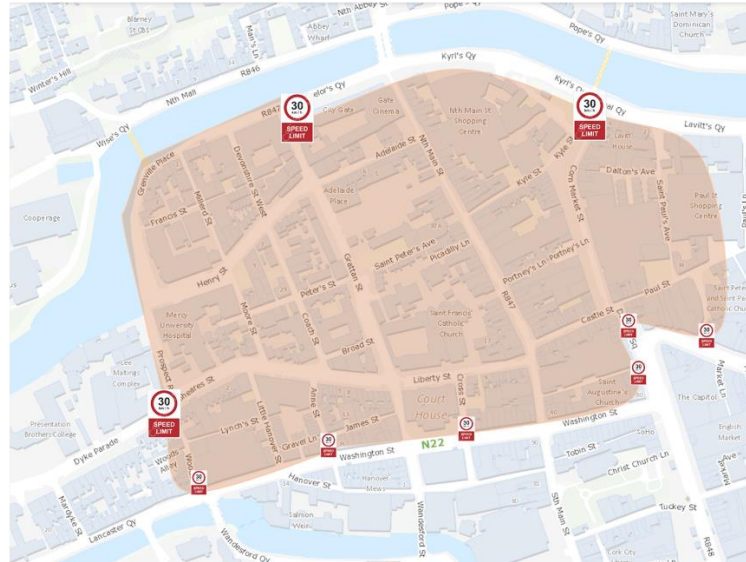
Examples of larger scale coherent 30km/h zones

Middle Parish 30km/h Zone




 An entry point to the area where signage is required

 An entry point to the area where signage is required only if Washington & Patrick Streets are not also 30km/h



City Centre 30km/h Zone



 An entry point to the area where signage is required

