



Transport & Mobility Forum

Cork County Council
Carrigaline TPREP Phase 1A
Senior Engineer, Traffic & Transportation
County Hall, Floor 3
Carrigrohane Road
Cork, T12 R2NC

Via online consultation portal
<http://www.yourcouncil.ie/>

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

<https://www.corkcoco.ie/en/resident/planning-and-development/public-consultations/active-part-8-development-consultation/part-8-proposed-carrigaline-transportation-and-public-realm-enhancement-plan-carrigaline-tprep-phase>

22nd July 2022

Public Consultation – Response

Carrigaline TPREP Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan Phase 1A

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.

SDGs, ...



Transport & Mobility Forum

Overview

The TMF welcome the opportunity to feed into the Carrigaline Transportation and Public Realm Enhancement Plan (TPREP). Carrigaline is known to be one of the most car-dependent communities in Ireland. It developed over recent decades as a commuter town nearby Cork City. Most of its 15k population lives in typical low-density housing estates that are interlinked to one another and the town centre and local services (e.g. schools) to a varying degree (connectivity, permeability).

Local retail and other everyday services almost exclusively concentrate on a small area along the Main Street, i.e. the ca. 300m between the roundabout at the church and Carrigaline Court Hotel in the North and Dunnes Stores in the South.

We feel that a number of measures proposed in this plan, as well as the implementation of this plan as a whole, have great potential to make Carrigaline a far less car dependent and a more pleasant, liveable, and desirable community.

While we are generally against the building of new arterial routes for motor traffic, we feel that the planned Western relief Road is more than justified given the very substantial improvements, in the public realm, and access to active and public transport in the town centre, which it makes possible.

Preferred options

In relation to the Lee2Sea routing, we are strongly in favour of Route Option 2 along the old railway alignment and would subsequently oppose Option 1 and oppose Option 3 in the strongest way.

In relation to the Main Street Public Realm Enhancement, we are strongly in favour of Option 4: Pedestrian Priority as by far the most appropriate and desirable treatment. We oppose Option 2 and oppose Option 1 more strongly, as while they offer some improvement over the current situation, they fall well short of the positive transformation that is possible and is offered by option 4.

Main Street Public Realm Enhancement

Welcome approach to consultation.

We welcome most strongly the format of presentation of the different options under consideration for Carrigaline Main St.

Consultations in Ireland are often perceived and even presented as an objection model of interaction. A completed project is presented to either be fully endorsed or strenuously objected to, rather than as a collaborative process where the input of the community, stakeholders, and experts can together enhance and improve the delivery of the project.

Transport & Mobility Forum

The practice demonstrated here of producing accessible drafts of a wide range of possible treatments is an extremely welcome move towards this ideal and should be acknowledged and complimented.

We also welcome and appreciate how this public realm enhancement aspect of the TPREP is laid out in the context of the construction of significant motor vehicle capacity in the surrounding area which removes the requirement for the vast majority of motor vehicle trips through the main street and allows all traffic to pass through the town while avoiding the street.

The character and Nature of a Main Street

The Main Street of a town like Carrigaline should be a destination, a social space, a commercial space, which is accessible, welcoming, and safe for all, rather than a thoroughfare where the movement or storage of vehicles takes priority over those using the space. This is as true for pedestrians and cyclists as it is for drivers. Even most pedestrians in this area will want to circulate, congregate, relax and visit the shops, services, and community facilities on the street rather than move quickly from one end of the street to the other.

The design character and atmosphere of the street should reflect this it should be a quiet place that is attractive and enjoyable to spend time in rather than an efficient allocation of space to facilitate high-speed movement or the storage of vehicles. We feel that this is well appreciated in the options outlined in this scheme.

Option 1: Do Minimum Scenario

This option continues to prioritise the use of space as primarily a thoroughfare for movement through the space rather than spending time or money in space. It does offer some improvement over the current arrangements in lessening the hostility or danger that traffic poses to pedestrians as well as prioritising the efficient movement of sustainable modes of transport over the private car to a greater extent than at present.

While it is an improvement, we feel strongly that is by far the least appropriate or desirable treatment of the options presented.

Option 2: Enhanced Scheme

This option attempts to balance the use of the space as a social, community, and commercial space while still trying to allow the space to be a road for traffic movement rather than purely a street that is a destination. It is well designed and thought out and would be appropriate in the absence of the other route which allows traffic to move around the main street rather than through it.

Transport & Mobility Forum

Again, option 2a again tries to balance the needs of various current users of the space which would be appropriate if there was no option other than to route the Lee2See Greenway down the main street. But as there are other options available for cyclists who want to move through the town rather than cycle into the town as a destination this option is on balance less appropriate and desirable than options 3 and 4.

Option 3: Informal Scheme

This option gives far more priority to the street as a destination, as a social and commercial space, while still maintaining the allocation of significant space for vehicle traffic moving through the street. This option represents a dramatic and significant improvement on the present arrangement and if it was presented in isolation would have our full and enthusiastic support. It is well designed and well thought out and it is an appropriate and desirable arrangement.

However, it still compromises the use of the space as a social and commercial destination, a central focus for the community and town, in order to maintain a level of service for motor vehicles which is unnecessary in this case as the other aspects of the TPREP plan will allow motor vehicles to avoid the street without any inconvenience.

We, therefore, suggest that this option is not proceeded with unless option 4 is not possible for whatever reason in which case it is by a significant margin the second best option.

Option 4: Pedestrian Priority

This option is by a significant margin the best option

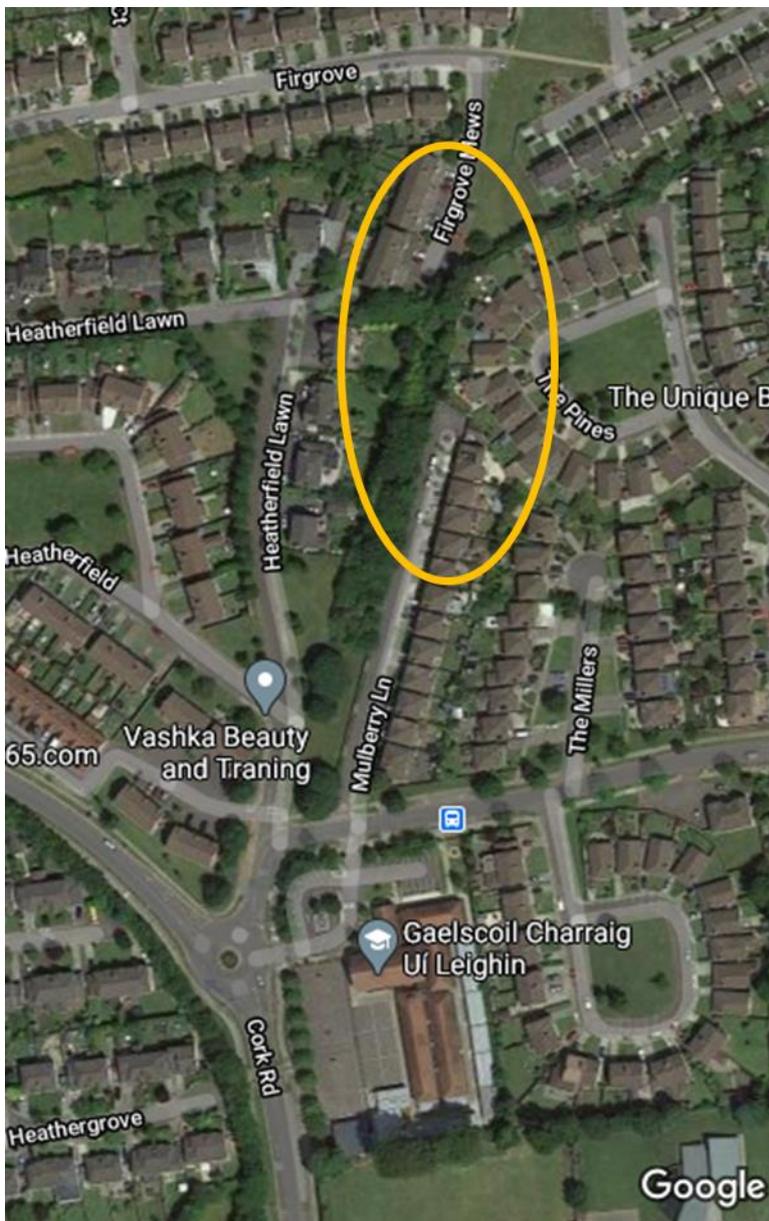
This option is designed from the ground up exclusively to treat the main street of the town as a destination which is a social and commercial space that should attract people to linger on the street to shop, socialise and visit community resources without any compromises to facilitate the through movement of any type of traffic motorised or non motorised.

This is therefore in our opinion by far the most appropriate and desirable treatment. This option presents the opportunity For Carrigaline to have a Main Street and focus for the community and town that is of the highest quality of design by national and international standards. Which could revitalise the community socially, economically, and culturally.

However, by removing any facility for the through the movement of public and active travel, particularly cycling, it is vital that the other aspects of TPREPS which facilitate public transport and active travel, particularly cycling, in the other areas of the town are delivered. See below.

Options Assessment – Bridgemount Link

With reference to the Planning Report, chapter 4.2, we are **strongly in favour of Route Option 2 along the old railway alignment**. As we already stated in our previous submissions in connection with Carrigaline TPREP, we see this route as the only viable option to enhance connectivity between the north-eastern housing estates (Heron’s Wood, Janeville) and the eastern side of Carrigaline’s central area, with access to the redesigned Main Street, and most importantly to the three schools around Bothar Guidel/Waterpark.



Transport & Mobility Forum

While Option 1 along Cork Road would inflict a detour and the quality of service for pedestrians and cyclists would be compromised by its routing along a main traffic artery, Option 3 along Fernhill Road at the town's eastern edge would impose even further detours for accessing the schools, not to mention for access to the Main Street area. We would subsequently oppose Option 1 and oppose Option 3 in the strongest way.

The advantages of Route Option 2 (Railway Line) are well summarised in the Project Report. The most important points we see in

- Creating an additional link for active travel between the North-East and the central parts of town (Main Street, schools)
- Following the desire line, as cyclists and particularly pedestrians are sensitive to unnecessary long detours
- Creating a protected environment, largely away from (through) motor traffic

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

- 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.

In a larger scale context, the new Bridgemount Link will be **an essential part of the Lee to Sea Greenway** within Carrigaline which – apart from being sustainable commuting infrastructure locally – is a public amenity and has the potential to boost tourism and contribute to the local economy.

Strategic Transportation Interventions proposed by Carrigaline TPREP

Cycling and Walking routes

Connectivity for cycling and walking must be improved between housing estates, to schools and the Main Street. This requires high-quality walking and cycling infrastructure on key routes. We strongly support the layout proposed in Fig1 insert 1 & 2 on page 7 of the plan. We are unclear if the difference between the two plans (insert 1 & 2) represents different phases or different options. The layout proposed in insert two is significantly better but both have our strong support as they represent a well-designed and comprehensive network. With a good mix of dedicated arterial routes and connections between housing estates with “quiet routes” that avoid busy main roads.

However, we note that if our preferred option 4 on the main street proceeds, cyclists should not be encouraged to use Mian St a through route rather only as a destination. Therefore, in that case the

Transport & Mobility Forum

secondary cycle routes identified around Main Street need to be upgraded to attract cyclists passing through the town centre away from the main street in order to maintain pedestrian priority on Main Street.



Traffic management

We support the general approach of TPREP and the plan laid out in inserts 3 and 4 in the area of traffic management and reduction as they are a well thought out and comprehensive plans which allow pedestrian priority on the main street and significantly increased priority for active travel and public transport in the core of the town.

We are generally opposed to the construction of new roads for motor traffic, as increased road capacity inevitably leads to increased induced demand, greater levels of traffic, and congestion. However, we recognise the reality of the existing car dependant nature of Carrigaline and the quality of design of this plan, including the traffic management plan, represent, a significant improvement on the current situation

Missed opportunities

Permeability

Carrigaline appears to be a mixed bag regarding connectivity and permeability. While some areas are well interconnected to other parts of the town, other areas see severe gaps in walking and cycling links that in return have led to cementation of car use, even for short distances. As we mentioned above much thought has obviously gone into designing a comprehensive Cycle Network but permeability remains an issue for pedestrians. With a large number of cul de sacs and the lack of connections between estates we feel that while this plan uniformly improves the situation in this regard more should still be done to address the pedestrian permeability.



Speed limits:

As Carrigaline mainly consists of a cluster of housing estates, the default speed limit for all traffic should be 30km/h. Exceptions should only be the arterial main roads (primarily R-roads). In the vicinity of the three schools at Cork Rd, 30km/h should also apply here locally.

Conclusion

We welcome the draft TPREP for Carrigaline and the opportunity given to feed into the planning process. As Carrigaline is an example of how planning has gone wrong in the past decades, creating a largely car dependant community, this is an opportunity now to correct planning mistakes and improve conditions for more sustainable forms of everyday travel, particularly within the town. We feel that the draft TPREP document takes this opportunity and Carrigaline can become a showcase town where active travel can be promoted, connectivity retrofit and general travel conditions can be improved by targeted interventions – Carrigaline as a showcase how to make a Celtic Tiger town futureproof in terms of place making and active and sustainable travel.

We are looking forward to being part of the further development of the Carrigaline TPREP.



Transport & Mobility Forum

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/>