

Dublin City Council COVID-19 Mobility Response

Strand Road Trial Rapid Deployment Cycle Route

FAQs

Why implement this scheme?

What is proposed is a rapid deployment six month trial of a two way fully protected continuous cycle route between Merrion Gates and Sean Moore Road. This is different to anything that has been proposed before as it does not involve major civil works, it is reversible and it is being done at a time when normal traffic volumes and behaviours have been completely changed due to COVID-19.

Why is it important to do it now?

If it is agreed to trial this route it will allow the City Council to immediately start work on linking to the Dun Laoghaire coastal cycle route and from Sean Moore Road to the city centre. Without this link it is difficult to provide a high quality cycling route in the area. It is necessary to ensure that safe protected cycling is provided as a means of transport for work, schools and leisure especially given the impacts of Covid-19.

Why does the cycle track have to be on the road? Why can't you use the footpath or the green space?

We are using a small section of footpath at Sean Moore Park to allow two way traffic in this section to accommodate the number 18 bus route. Using all the footpath on the sea side for a cycle route would require us to extend the footpath over the entire length, narrow the carriageway to 6m and remove all informal parking along the entire length of Strand Road. Even if this was implemented there is still 300m on the approach to Merrion Gates where it is not possible to provide any cycle protection without the removal of a traffic lane.

Regarding using the green areas for a cycle route, 40% of the route between Merrion Gates and Sean Moore Road does not have green space available to use and we would still not end up with a safe, continuous, protected route.

How will the cycle lane be protected?

Initially a combination of bollards and orcas will be used, buff coloured surfacing will be put on the cycle track to highlight its presence and some other minor changes will take place. All of the measures are reversible and do not interfere with the structure of the road or the existing kerbs except at Sean Moore Park. If the cycle track is to remain for longer than 6 months then a more permanent design will be put in place.

Why is the outbound traffic chosen to be kept rather than the inbound traffic?

Outbound traffic has a higher volume than inbound traffic. Also, the inbound traffic that currently uses the Merrion Gates has multiple options to reach its destinations, depending on its origin some will divert via the M50, others via the Stillorgan Road and Merrion Road. If we made Strand Road one way inbound, then the outbound traffic could not use Strand Road and would have no alternative but to use Sandymount Village or Irishtown in order to reach its destination.

Will I lose the parking outside my house?

At present there is no pay and display or permit parking along Strand Road, however there is some informal parking. Mostly this will be retained as we are only removing one lane of traffic.

Why is the cycle track on the sea side?

To minimize the impact on driveways and the informal parking that exists at the moment.

What changes are being made to the bus routes?

The No.18 route will stay the same. The No.1 and No.47 will use Gilford Avenue and Park Avenue instead of using the Strand Road.

Will there be a large increase in traffic in Sandymount village and other residential streets?

The scheme will reduce the total volume of traffic on Strand Rd by approximately 40%, bearing in mind only around 10% of traffic on Strand Rd is locally generated. This will have a substantial benefit in this area. Regarding the traffic that can no longer travel inbound along Strand Rd, depending on its origin there are multiple alternative routes that can be taken. Traffic volumes are at present substantially reduced and it is not proposed to remove any banned turns along the Merrion Road. During the trial the City Council will monitor traffic volumes throughout the area and make adjustments if required.

There are plans for 3 additional pedestrian crossings in Sandymount and these will be advanced in line with this trial.

Can the scheme be modelled?

The scheme is currently being modelled by the NTA and more information from the modelling will be made available as it comes to hand. Please note that the modelling work is based on census data, traffic patterns and volume data collected pre COVID and can only give a result based on pre COVID levels of traffic and not the current situation. It is useful to determine the origin of traffic using Strand Road pre COVID and shows that only 10% of the Traffic on Strand Road is locally generated. However, it cannot show the current situation which is why a carefully monitored trial with a lot of data collection will provide us with a far more accurate picture of the benefits and impacts of this scheme.

Will there be thousands of extra vehicles using Sandymount village and other routes that would normally use Strand Rd to get to the East link?

At present in the peak hour the right turn at Merrion Gates is in the order of 400 vehicles of which an almost equal number have their destination in the city as has their destination for the Eastlink.

The Strand Road is not a designated HGV route to the port or the waste to energy plant and has not been since 2007. The entire area from Merrion Gates through Sandymount has a ban on 5 axle HGV vehicles with these vehicles required to use the M50 and Port Tunnel to access the Port area.

Why has it been so difficult to come up with a design for a cycle route on Strand Rd?

The roadway is too narrow to allow for a protected cycle route and two way traffic. The footpath is too narrow to allow for it to be reduced to provide a cycle lane on the road or to use as a two way cycle track. The section of Strand Rd approaching Merrion Gates is a real pinch point with properties on both sides, narrow carriageways and narrow footpaths.

The beach area along Strand Road and Beach Road is an important natural heritage site

- Special Area of Conservation (South Dublin Bay SAC ref. 000210) designated under the EU Habitats Directive (1992).
- Special Protection Area (Sandymount Strand/Tolka Estuary SPA ref. 004024) designated under the EU Birds Directive (1979).
- The entirety of Dublin Bay was designated as a UNESCO Biosphere in 2015.

Schemes to provide an alternative bridge over the DART line and to provide a boardwalk around the properties on the sea side have been proposed. They all present significant environmental and construction difficulties, will struggle to get approval and take many years to implement.

The reduction in traffic due to Covid-19, the alteration of commuting patterns due to working at home and the increased desire to ensure there is safe continuous protected cycle routes means that there is an opportunity now to undertake a 6 month trial of the rapid deployment cycle way.

Why a 6 Month Trial?

Six months will allow time for the scheme to settle in, for new patterns of movement to be established and for movement data to be gathered.

Will other traffic calming or public realm measure be considered in the area by DCC?

As part of the consultation process we are inviting people to submit suggestions for complementary measures, which people feel should be implemented along with the trial.

How will the trial affect schools in the area?

The city Council will, as part of this consultation make contact with all schools in the area to ensure that we are aware of any concerns or issues that may arise due to the trial.

How will this trial be funded?

If it is decided to proceed with this trial, funding of up to €250,000 has been provided for this scheme in the Governments Stimulus package and will be allocated to the City Council by the NTA.