

**Draft Minutes of the Lord Mayor's Strand Road Cycle Trial
Consultative Forum 2nd meeting held remotely on Zoom
on 7th January 2021 at 5.30 p.m.**

Attendees

Lord Mayor Hazel Chu (HC) – Dublin City Council
Brendan O'Brien (BOB) - Dublin City Council Traffic
Claire French (CF) - Dublin City Council Traffic
Mary Taylor (MT) - Dublin City Council Director of Services South City
Brian Hanney (BH) – Dublin City Council
Leah Johnston (LJ) – Dublin City Council
Jennifer Wall (JW) – Dublin City Council
Antonia Martin (AM) - Dublin City Council
Deirdre Kelly (DK) - Dublin City Council
Vincent Ryan (VR) - Sandymount Avenue Residents' Group
Terry Byrne (TB) - BADRA
Colm Byrne (CB) - Irish Doctors for the Environment
Colm Clissmann (CC) - Local Parents for Cycling Group
David Timoney (DT) - Dublin Cycling Campaign
David Turner - SAMRA
Declan Hayes (DH) - Merrion Road Residents' Association
Aileen McGale (AMcG) - Merrion Gates Residents' Group
Hugh St. Leger (HStL) - Brabazon Trust
Katie Cremin Redmond (KCR) - Seafort Avenue Residents' Group
Mary Caulfield (MC) - Dublin Commuter Coalition
Mike McKillen (MMcK) - I bike Dublin
Leah McKenna (LMcK) – STC Sandymount
Patrick J. Byrne (PjB) - Ballsbridge Residents' Association Ballsbridge Living
Simon Coyle (SC) - Strand Road Residents' Group
Michael Griffin (MG) – Sydney Parade Avenue Residents Association
Catherine McGorrian (CMcG) – Providing forum feedback to Durham Road residents.
Peter G. Browne (PgB) – Church Avenue Residents' Group
John O'Donovan (JO'D) - Gilford Road Residents' Group
Kevin Byrne (KB) - Park Avenue Action Group
John Loughran (JL) - Sandymount Hotel

1. Greetings and introduction from Lord Mayor

BH/HC welcomed everyone to the second meeting of the Forum.

Agenda, minutes of first Meeting and draft terms of reference circulated. New groups welcomed.

2. Minutes previous meeting

VR said that it was unfair to review during the Covid19 Pandemic and compare to Pre-Covid levels; can we reconsider?

PB said it was like kicking the can further down the road. Merrion Gates no right turn. The Shelbourne Road right turn is going under Bus Connects with next right turn at Lansdowne Road. Serpentine Avenue will be next. Wants pre Covid traffic volume details on Merrion Road and how will it cope? The knock on effect on the Stillorgan Road to Anglesea Road will also be severe with traffic accessing Simmons Court Road to Sandymount Avenue. Merrion Road to Stillorgan Road changes will have knock on effects on Beaver Row and beyond. Bus Connects are not modelling what will happen if the trial is successful and becomes permanent. Need such information preplanning. There are flood alleviation work proposals for Strand Road and the Strand Road cycle greenway that should be

incorporated with the flood works. The Dodder Greenway was not integrated into flood relief plans at the time and should have been.

PgB - not present at first meeting and said the only mention he could see of Church Avenue was a 'pinch point' – is he right, and if so, can we elaborate?

BOB advised this is the time for the trial, with traffic down 30% during Level 5, and expected to reduce lower when construction stops in the coming days.

CF said that she can assist PgB with the Church Avenue query.

3. Updated Terms of Reference -

VR – Pointed out that disability was not yet in the terms of reference and also queried the potential loss of parking spaces along the route?

BOB said again DCC has no difficulty in adding disability here; asked whether it is wanted as a general issue or specific to the trial or a reference to mitigation? Happy to amend the terms of reference and recirculate. Regards parking spaces, he reminded all that proposals were only at discussion stage at the moment.

4. Membership

BH – We would prefer to deal with one rep from each organisation. Forum may become unwieldy if it gets too big.

CMcG - representing Durham Road residents. Thankful for invitation, glad to be included at this stage, as not helpful to find out information by drip feed. There needs to be wide access to information.

SC – agrees group could become unwieldy if too big.

DT – agrees but believes a wide forum is not the vehicle for resolving or explaining the technical issues emerging or for answering those questions being raised.

HC advised it is good to welcome all and we are collecting all opinions and suggestions. Agrees social media drip feeds not good and that DCC are working hard to get information out to all stakeholders. If one-to-ones or a separate space are needed to deal with technical problems that can happen.

5. Update on Strand Road cycle track trial (DCC)

BOB advised that he is awaiting an update on the Covid 19 Level 5 restrictions, with the ceasing of construction works from Friday. Cannot say if current Sandymount Village works will continue, awaiting Dept. / LGMA advice on what constitutes essential work? Believes essential maintenance or critical transport work may continue.

So no specific date for the trial yet - originally to have been delayed until February to facilitate the completion of works on Sandymount Green.

CF/BOB:-

1. One-way option on Sean Moore Road to Beach Road:

. Modelling outputs for the 2 way running on Beach Road and for 1 way running on Beach Road were shown. One way running on Beach Road shows that instead of a 63% increase on Sandymount Avenue with 1 way it's at 11%. Marine Drive is not reflective of Sandymount as a whole and the volume being put out there (as 322%) is unfair and disappointing.

The modelling shows that Sean Moore / Ringsend and Irishtown would have reduced volumes.

2. Bath Avenue: believes traffic would be down slightly and with the low bridge and HGV restrictions, it is not expected to be an issue.

3. Promenade/Boardwalk options:

Using the Promenade would require a Part 8 and Environmental Assessment. Boardwalk option would not be short term and would not work at the Merrion Gates end due to the residential properties. Sensitive Environmental issues might also require an NIS, approval not guaranteed. Detailed designs and construction might also require cofferdams. The number of years for the promenade option would be 2 years (Part 8), and the boardwalk etc. might be at least 2025/26.

4. Closing date of Beach Road consultation extended to 22 January following a request for an extension.
5. Reminder that this is a trial; we want the least amount of intrusion to the environment.
6. Strand Rd not a dedicated route to the Port; HGVs should use M50/Port Tunnel.
7. Brexit posing no issues here with the HGV 5 axle ban and 3.5 tonne limit.
8. School Zones: 4 mentioned at
Star of the Sea, Leahy's Terrace- completed; Shelly Banks - completed
St Matthews Cranfield Place - designed;
Scoil Muire, Gilford Rd – on hold, due to local objection regards traffic issue and aesthetic look.
9. Air Quality Monitors are being installed at moment.
10. An EIA and an AA screening has been carried out. Screenings concluded that neither an EIA or an AA is required for the trial. The reports will be circulated to members of the Forum.
11. Trial Assessment Criteria as mentioned at the previous Forum are has a safe cycle route been provided, data collection - Increase/Decrease of all modes in the area (Traffic counts), and a public consultation 5 months into the trial. Propose to add in "Has the safe protected cycle route along Strand Road increased or decreased safety along Strand Road, adjoining roads and within the village".
12. Communications extensive - Forum, email, letters, webpage.
13. Flood Defences - consultants have been engaged and work started. Looking at Sean Moore Rd to Promenade - either to extend into the bay or increase the Wall height; both require applications to Bord Pleanála and timescale would be 2025/2026.
14. The Cycling Unit are also looking at permanent options along the route, that can be long term, timescale about 2024.

HC reminded all that while this is so divisive we must all be respectful.

VR

Figures should represent Sandymount as a whole.

Why is the Beach Rd consultation extended until 22nd January?

Documents ambiguous, not detailed or; informative enough. Maps not enough

Sean Moore Park to be mentioned as well as roadways, indicate where do cyclists then go?

Does not accept that only 14% traffic will be redirected towards Sandymount and the remaining 86% will find alternatives – why only 14%?

5 months too far for consultation and suggested 2 months.

JO'D

Regarding school Zone at Lakelands/Gilford Rd – The proposal wasn't rejected on grounds of aesthetics – the problem was with the consultation which was very disturbing. DCC rep. called to school re School Zone. DCC said they would come back with drawings and would give plenty of time to digest drawings (Nov). Next, DCC rep visited to say School Zone would be implemented later that week. The school were taken aback. That was reason Gilford Road stakeholders asked that the process was stopped so info could be processed. Few days before Christmas, Dublin Bus drives up Gilford Road at 11am with DCC reps. This was unfortunate and has led to worry and concern. The process Dublin City is employing is not good. People need to visit the site, be there on the ground. Communication remains open with School.

PjB

Asked at last meeting to get estimated increases in traffic for Merrion Rd/ Ballsbridge. Measurements should be both Pre Covid19 and Current volumes.

Feels it's poor not to consider Bus Connects impact now and this should be included in any modelling.

SC

Thanks to all for their goodwill. We must find solution that will not impinge badly on anyone.

Found the STC Circular misleading regarding the 322% increase in traffic, as it could undermine the validity of the consultation. Asks the STC group to correct the misinformation.

DCC went to the trouble to come up with mitigation options such as cycling route through the village and Park Avenue residents are under the illusion that this was going to be mandatory.

Believes what constitutes failure is equally important as is success.

Strand Rd Residents feel the virulent and abusive comments, especially by those who use social media, are unacceptable and the matter should be taken back to the various residents/groups/constituents.

Wholesale abuse of the 5-axle ban by Port users and enforcement needs to be addressed. Could NTA adopt a 4-axle ban or a 24 hour ban? He thinks this might go some way to alleviate the 'landed' residents' concerns about the trial.

CC

Good time for the Trial and wants it done in the childhood time of his children; recognises it is a trial and we need time to try things, to adapt, change, remodel.

Thinks 5 months is a good time for public consultation but accepts may be tweaking and adaptations along the way.

HGVS are an issue and less would be great; the law is there so enforcement should be better too.

DT

Support suggestions on reducing banned trucks and can the 5 axle ban be extended? Dublin had worst traffic in Western Europe pre-Covid. 35% of journeys less than 2k. Cycle lane give options to take some of the journeys to bike and walking. Maybe some difficulty in initial months until it settles down. Meeting frequency may need to be increased.

PgB

Has there been a traffic modelling for Church Avenue?

Agrees reduction traffic in heavier/larger vehicles needed.

Has there been a speed survey for Church Avenue?

Acknowledges Church Avenue residents came late to the table, wondered if it had been ignored? Can feel house shake when large vehicles go by.

CF

Advised no speed survey for Church Avenue but they do have traffic counts and it is in the modelling. Email strandcycletrial@dublincity.ie for the info

DH

Ballsbridge – if traffic goes up by 110%, will be gridlock. Doesn't seem to have been analysed properly?

BOB advised that compromise is always good and the public consultation can be 2 or 5 months or somewhere in between. It is up for discussion. BOB advised Bus Connects would have to take account of trial outcome, whether it works or not; Bus Connects is some years down the line so the trial is stand alone.

CF will provide stats requested (though Merrion Rd on the maps).

BOB reiterated Strand Road not a dedicated route to the Port; HGVs should use M50/Port Tunnel and when those rules first came in, that traffic reduced 75%. Waiting also to see how Level 5 construction restrictions will impact. BOB very open to a 4-axle ban and extension of 5-axle ban to 24 hours, which might be easier. There may be an impact on some construction sites. Gardaí have also been contacted regards breaches and enforcement. New webpage includes all information from the Strand Road Consultation. There is a range of measures that have been suggested and could be put in place. Filtered permeability takes a lot more discussion – welcome input.

6. Discussion regarding proposed mitigation measures and opportunities for improving walking and cycling in the area.

BOB - DCC's plan is to have discussions, reach agreements and to add as much detail; TAG and Gardaí would also have to be consulted before any implementation.

CF/BOB discussed/suggested

1. Village Cycle route, plan to improve safety, not part of any definite scheme yet, the concept is open to suggestions, such as
Tritonville to Sydney Parade Avenue, 2 way / no parking one side
'Quiet Route' filtered permeability on Durham Rd
2 Way, 1 way vehicular Park Avenue. Just for discussion.
2. The Bus Route Gilford Road, proposed by DCC in response to loss of existing two way bus service on Strand Road in light of elderly community in Brabazon, was firmly rejected by both Brabazon and the Gilford Road residents community.
3. No Right Turn from Merrion Road onto Serpentine Avenue.
4. No Right Turn from Tritonville onto Church Avenue.
5. Changes to parking on Church Avenue.
6. Possible Permeable filter /cyclists at Farney Rd.
7. Seafort Avenue, cul de sac or 1 way option.

8. Park Avenue; quite a different number of submissions such as 1 way, no parking, no Left Turn onto Park Avenue at peak hours.
9. St. Alban's – no right turn from Strand Road to St. Alban's Park

DH

Said there are issues with traffic on Merrion Road, if traffic is up 110% then the redistribution of northbound traffic not looked at properly and there will be gridlock.

CMcG

"Dizzying on how to figure out where to go?"

What is a quiet zone? Some may welcome, however many don't know what it means; what happens with parking?

Believes mobility issues for a lot of elderly residing south of the filter who need their cars.

Residents Durham Rd voted against paid-parking, plebiscite welcome regards any works/changes on Durham Rd.

AMcG

Have DCC considered moving the traffic lights at Strand Road/Merrion Gates back up to Merrion Hall as there would be benefits, will DCC consider? This was suggested previously.

PB

There are already on-street parking issues on Church Avenue, what is the plan here? Unsure if mitigation is for a one-way street, would parking be removed?

MC

Thinks recently installed filtered permeability on Pigeon House Rd works very well-suggests others have a look and see. Initially a lot of consternation – trial initially and then embraced – makes road far more pleasant.

Asked what were the mobility issues raised that resulted in a 2 week consultation extension? Especially regards e-bikers.

DT

SAMRA wrote to DCC on the 7th December and got a reply on the 4th January.

Reiterated that meaningful points/ valid questions need to be discussed and answered at higher level; there are better ways to do this, 1-to-1s may be required. Not happy that he received an adequate response here.

LMcK

Read out the following statement:-

"STC and a large number of other community groups to include SAMRA, Park Avenue, Sydney Parade Avenue, Gilford Road, BADRA, Ballsbridge, Brabazon House, Sandymount Avenue, Seafort Avenue and Merrion Road believe that the DCC proposal as presented requires planning permission given its scale and its cumulative effect on the Sandymount, Ringsend, Irishtown and Ballsbridge communities.

DCC has stated in a reply to our solicitors that it believes its proposal qualifies as exempted development but we do not agree with this proposition and have received advice to the contrary.

As you are aware provisions already exist under current legislation to deal with such situations and accordingly we have now instructed our professional

advisors to prepare a S.5 referral to An Bord Pleanála [pursuant to the provisions of the Planning and Development Act 2001/2017] in order that the matter can be adjudicated upon.

In such circumstances Lord Mayor, we would ask DCC/NTA/Dublin Bus to wait for the result of this referral before the trial period or any works are commenced. We believe this to be a fair and balanced approach. As a consequence therefore the business of the Forum should also be paused until this matter has been dealt with by An Bord Pleanála.

I would like to thank you for facilitating the forum to date.

For the avoidance of all doubt we wish to put on the record that all of the above community groups are” Pro Cycling” and support the “Off Road” Cycle-Way as envisaged by the original S2S proposal which has been in existence for many years. We would sincerely ask that DCC re-engage with the NTA and Minister Ryan to make it possible so it can be enjoyed by everyone including visitors to our wonderful capital City.”

LMcK said that the statement will be forwarded by email to DCC.

JL

Advised that he was owner of the Sandymount Hotel, Dublin’s oldest family run hotel which for 65 years has been employing generations of locals. To-date , feels ‘the success of the trial’ appears to hinge on Safety along Strand Rd but the diverted traffic into Serpentine and Tritonville needs to count also and those roads carry equal standing.

He wished to make 3 points:

1. The Trial Assessment Criteria should include “Has the safety and protection of cyclists on Tritonville Road been ensured.”
2. The displayed DCC presentation slide shows Strand Road 24-hour Northbound Traffic of almost 8,000 vehicles in February 2020. (Slide was on page 10 of the DCC presentation to Lord Mayor’s Strand Road Trial Community Forum of 3rd December 2020.) Much of this traffic will have no alternative but to redirect through Sandymount.
3. Some years ago, a young employee of the hotel was killed while cycling to work. She was crushed under a lorry on Tritonville Road. DCC are now on notice of this in the event of future death or injury. Family members still work in the hotel, so disclosure of her name is a sensitive matter.

VR

Sandymount Avenue residents have submitted a range of questions re safety, and not happy with replies which were very light and some questions were not answered. Not happy with those replies. Believes road users- pedestrians, cyclists and those with mobility issues – are vulnerable as per recent data (75% of fatalities) and would go up with this proposal.

MG asked can we have a response to the statement from STC?

BOB

No difficulties with plebiscites and will come back to Durham Rd residents. Will come back on traffic light relocation suggestion as well. CF will talk to Church Avenue

residents as no specific plans for there as yet. Will revert with the mobility issues raised when he receives them. Yes one-to-ones can be arranged, this process is fluid.

BOB cannot comment on statement from LMCK – will await Law Department advice. BOB feels this is the appropriate time to do this trial. DCC is serious about safety and the protection of vulnerable people. Looking at pedestrian crossings, dropped kerbs etc. which can go ahead anyway if needed, Trial or no Trial.

DT asked if we have recorded the issue with the problem of progressing this forum.

HC

Agreed 1-1s can be arranged. Meaningful engagement and debate for resolution of everyone's issues. Issues raised to be responded to. Asked if DT wishes still to engage with the Forum given that his group was one of the parties to STC Sandymount's statement? DT said yes.

Meeting over.