



**Submission on
BusConnects Lucan Core Bus Corridor
17th April 2020**



Introduction

Celbridge Community Council was established as a voluntary community group in 1975 and has for over forty years been actively involved in many aspects of community life in Celbridge. Our goal is to promote and improve community life and to influence in a positive way the physical development of the area for the benefit of all those who live and work there. As a voluntary group and representative voice for the community, Celbridge Community Council welcomes this opportunity to make a submission as part of the public consultation on the BusConnects Lucan Core Bus Corridor proposals.

Celbridge Community Council raised the following concerns in [our submission](#) during the 2019 BusConnects Core Bus Corridors public consultation:

1. The proposed reduction from two to one lanes on the M50 overbridge to facilitate provision of a bus lane will exacerbate traffic congestion on the N4
2. Ending the Lucan Core Bus Corridor at Junction 3 on the N4 would be a missed opportunity and it should extend west as far as Junction 5 in conjunction with the provision of a Park and Ride facility at Junction 5
3. Cyclists are not being prioritised in Palmerstown or Chapelizod and this will result in delays for buses as cyclists continue to use the bus lane on the R148

We wish to thank the NTA for its consideration of our concerns and for the attempts made to address them in the [Lucan CBC Public Consultation Report](#). We also greatly welcome the online publication of the [Lucan CBC Options Feasibility Report](#) background information. The travel time comparisons on pages 98-99 of this report quantify the reasons for Celbridge Community Council's views on the Lucan CBC proposals.

- **N4 Junction 5 (Celbridge/ Leixlip) – Junction 3 (Ballyowen/ Lucan)**
 - 10 minute saving inbound
 - 8 minute saving outbound
- **N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/ Lucan) – Kennelsfort Road**
 - 5 minute saving inbound
 - 2.5 minute saving outbound

Table 9.1: Inbound Travel Time Comparison

Route Section	Peak Hour Existing Travel Time (Mins)	Proposed Travel Time (Mins)
N4 Junction 5 (Celbridge/Leixlip) to N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/Lucan)	18:40	08:41
N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/Lucan) to Kennelsfort Road	10:47	05:46
Kennelsfort Road to Con Colbert Road	06:49	06:49
Con Colbert Road to City Centre	12:26	12:42
Total Travel Time	48:42	33:58

Table 9.2: Outbound Travel Time Comparison

Route Section	Peak Hour Existing Travel Time (Mins)	Proposed Travel Time (Mins)
City Centre Con to Colbert Road	12:07	12:20
Con Colbert Road to Kennelsfort Road	08:28	06:45
Kennelsfort Road to N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/Lucan)	08:03	05:35
N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/Lucan) to N4 Junction 5 (Celbridge/Leixlip)	16:06	08:10
Total Travel Time	44:44	32:50

One of the key benefits that passengers expect to realise from the BusConnects projects is a **reduction in journey times**. Journey times from the north of Celbridge to the Dublin Road (R403) in Celbridge are unpredictable and frustratingly long at peak-times due to traffic congestion therefore any time savings achievable from **N4 Junction 5** to Dublin will be extremely valuable to bus commuters. At almost 70%, the level of car dependency is unacceptably high for a town situated in the Dublin Metropolitan Area. A reduction in journey times from Celbridge to the places where people need to go is crucial if we are to encourage more people to use sustainable transport modes.

This submission revisits the concerns we raised previously in light of information shared with the public as part of this public consultation.



1. Measures to mitigate impact on M50 overbridge

Celbridge Community Council reiterates its assertion that the proposed reduction from two to one lanes on the M50 overbridge to facilitate provision of a bus lane will exacerbate traffic congestion on the N4 but acknowledges that this concern was responded to under **7.4 Issue 4: Issues Raised Regarding Increased Congestion for Vehicles** of the Public Consultation Report and with a small note on the preferred route map. In summary:

- The preferred route map of the section containing the M50 overbridge is merely annotated with “*Bus Lanes on M50 Interchange Subject to Further Assessment*”
- The Public Consultation Report indicates that
 - the plan is to relocate bus stops on the N4 at Liffey Valley Shopping Centre further west and that, based on an analysis of the lane allocation on the N4 eastbound crossing the M50 completed when examining this bus stop relocation, the NTA believes that this will result in an increased weaving length for N4 traffic heading towards the M50 North, the R148 to the city and the M50 South.
 - The NTA's conclusion was that "*While initial analysis suggests that the proposed arrangement is unlikely to have an adverse impact on traffic congestion, the lane allocation is the subject of on-going more detailed traffic analysis to confirm this.*"

Given that the journey time savings from the N4 Junction 3 (Ballyowen/ Lucan) – Kennelsfort Road section of the proposed Lucan CBC are the only ones that are likely to be realised (in light of the decision not to extend the CBC further west), Celbridge Community Council is extremely disappointed that this second round of public consultation still omits a solid proposal on how to achieve these journey time savings without causing traffic chaos.

Nothing in the information provided as part of this public consultation suggests that the NTA acknowledges that reality of morning traffic, namely that both lanes between the M50 overbridge and Kennelsfort Road are regularly full so the volume of traffic inbound on the R148 is significant and can tailback quite far out the N4.

It would be great if the increased weaving length for traffic is enough to prevent serious traffic congestion at this location but the failure to include traffic analysis amongst documents for this public consultation means that the public is unable to assess this.

While the right answer to reducing traffic congestion is obviously to ensure a modal shift away from car dependency, if the NTA has no plans to dramatically increase the public transport and park and ride offerings for commuters who use the N4, then the proposals for addressing this issue must be realistic.

Celbridge Community Council feels that it is imperative that the NTA presents solid proposals to the public when this next comes to public consultation.

2. Start the Lucan Core Bus Corridor Further West

Celbridge Community Council reiterates its assertion that ending the Lucan Core Bus Corridor at Junction 3 on the N4 would be a missed opportunity and it should extend west in conjunction with the provision of a Park and Ride facility but acknowledges that this concern was responded to under **7.1 Issue 1: Starting Point of Core Bus Corridor 6 – Lucan to City Centre** of the Public Consultation Report as follows:

"In giving consideration to extending the CBC further west, it was noted that the Spine and Branch bus routes C3 (Maynooth-Ringsend) and C4 (Celbridge-Ringsend) run through Lucan



village and not along the N4 between Junctions 4a and 3. It is also noted that there are existing bus lanes on the N4 for the majority of this section serving a number of regional bus services. It was further noted that TII have a proposed improvement scheme on the N4 between Maynooth and Leixlip. As such consideration of further improvements to the bus lane provisions on the N4 between junctions 5 and 3 will be considered as part that scheme. The provision of Park and Ride facilities are being considered as part of the wider BusConnects programme."

The NTA's response in the Public Consultation Report highlights the interdependencies between BusConnects initiatives, namely the Core Bus Corridors project, the Bus Network Redesign and the provision of Park and Ride facilities and the TII N4 Improvement Scheme.

The decision not to invest in extending the Lucan Core Bus Corridor further west at this time is understandable given that no Park and Ride adjacent to the N4 is currently proposed and the only Dublin Metropolitan bus services proposed to be routed by the Lucan Bypass are the express bus services. The interdependencies between the various BusConnects projects need to be honoured so we request that you direct our comments below to the correct teams in the NTA.

Lucan Core Bus Corridor + Bus Network Redesign Projects

The projected journey time reductions detailed on pages 98-99 of the [Lucan CBC Options Feasibility Report](#) (reproduced in our introduction above) are significant on the segment between N4 Junction 5 (Celbridge/ Leixlip) – Junction 3 (Ballyowen/ Lucan) but it is probably fair to say that this is less attributable to infrastructural proposals and more attributable to **Option LN01** (the preferred option) being to route buses on the Lucan Bypass rather than through Lucan village.

Page 50 of the Feasibility Study concludes as follows:

Based on the assessment undertaken, LN01 provided the most benefits and advantages out of all the options. Route option LN01 is therefore the preferred route for the following reasons:

- It's comparatively low capital cost coupled with the opportunity for journey time reliability and bus service efficiency;*
- Provides good cycling integration*
- Better able to service overall population catchments in the sectors of residential, employment and educational.*
- It has comparatively lower potential to impact on the environment across all sub criteria*

We have been unable to find anything that explains why Option LN01 was not progressed as part of the Bus Network Redesign project but acknowledge the difficulty with taking such a decision as, while the routing through Lucan is frustrating for those who travel between North Kildare towns and anywhere in Dublin east of Lucan, the bus connection between North Kildare towns and Lucan is still important for a number of residents along the existing 66 and 67 bus routes.

If we leave Park and Ride out of it and only consider the BusConnects Network Redesign and the BusConnects Lucan CBC proposals, peak-time commuters will continue to benefit from journey time savings on the existing bus lane on the Lucan Bypass by using the express bus services (327, 328) and it is only those who must take the C4 who will be subjected to delays due to routing through Lucan.

To our knowledge, the findings of the options feasibility study were not shared as part of a public consultation before now and this topic is one that would benefit from vigorous debate and creative thinking. It is probably best considered in the context of a focused public transport review for North Kildare and West Dublin to assess desire lines for public transport in our area rather than as part of a much larger Dublin Metropolitan Area review where the needs of our area tend to be overshadowed. As in previous submissions to the NTA during BusConnects public consultations, Celbridge Community Council urges the NTA to instigate a deeper analysis of the public transport needs of



North Kildare/ West Dublin and to include groups such as ourselves as stakeholders to provide local insights during rather than after development of proposals.

Lucan Core Bus Corridors + Park & Ride Projects

The information that plans for Park and Ride facilities will be progressed as part of another BusConnects project with neither an indication of when this might happen nor what the parameters for this are is less than encouraging. Evidence of advancement of these plans and willingness to engage with the public on them is essential.

If the option of a Park & Ride and new train station at Collinstown is pursued, this would be an extremely positive development for our area however, Park & Rides sites for bus users are also crucial to serve the needs of those whose destinations are not served by train - Park & Rides for bus users could also be progressed much faster as there would be no reliance on a rail infrastructure project and temporary sites. In light of the need to dramatically reduce private car usage amongst commuters, Celbridge Community Council wishes to emphasise how crucial it is to progress Park & Ride options for both bus users and train users. Celbridge Community Council requests that you pass these views to the relevant team in the NTA and that they consider prototyping the idea of Park & Ride for bus users near Celbridge.

3. Prioritise Cyclists

Celbridge Community Council's concerns remain relating to how cyclists are not being prioritised in Palmerstown or Chapelizod and that this will result in delays for buses as cyclists continue to use the bus lane on the R148. This is despite the NTA's response under **7.3 Issue 3: Physical Issues that Negatively Impact Cyclists** of the Public Consultation Report saying

In giving consideration to continuity of cyclist provision, it was noted that the section of Core Bus Corridor 6 between the N4 junction 3 and the start of the R148 Chapelizod Bypass also forms part of the Primary Cycle Route 6 within the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan – with Primary Routes described therein as “Main cycle arteries that cross the urban area and carry most cycle traffic”. Alternative proposals for cyclist provision are now proposed which comprise a continuous segregated two-way facility between the N4 junction 3 and the start of the R148 Chapelizod Bypass. This will include the removal of the kissing gates at the pedestrian / cycle bridge between Mount Andrew and St. Edmunds Estate. From the start of the Chapelizod Bypass Primary Cycle Route 6 will run along the eastbound off slip through Chapelizod village and along Chapelizod Road to connect to Primary Cycle Route 5 which runs along the North Quays to the city center. As such no cycle facilities are proposed along the Chapelizod Bypass. Primary Cycle Routes 5 and 6 are being developed separately by the NTA cycle network team and are not included as part of Core Bus Corridor 6.

Reassurances that prioritisation of cyclists will be handled as part of the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan projects rather than as part of the Core Bus Corridors project are only positive if the projects are progressing and if the public has visibility of the status of them including information regarding impediments to their delivery.

Another initiative that would greatly benefit cyclists on the N4 corridor is the completion of the missing link along the Grand Canal Greenway – this currently ends at Lucan Sarsfields (12th Lock) but completion of the missing section between the 12th Lock and Hazelhatch would give some cyclists the option of a more direct commute to Dublin.



Celbridge Community Council would like to see the **Primary Cycle Routes 5 & 6** and the **Grand Canal Greenway** projects be prioritised and requests that explicit status updates on them be included in the next public consultation; non-committal assurances based on projects that may or may not happen any time soon are not very useful.

Conclusion

We trust that the points raised by Celbridge Community Council will be taken into consideration in finalising the details of the Lucan Core Bus Corridor. We wish the NTA every success in getting this extremely valuable project implemented.

With our local knowledge and connections to the community, we feel that the members of Celbridge Community Council could bring many local insights to the table during a deeper analysis of the public transport needs of North Kildare/ West Dublin. Celbridge Community Council's only agenda is to realise the best possible public transport service for those who travel to and from our town and we would be delighted to engage with the NTA to assist in any way possible and invite you to reach out to us by emailing info@celbridgecommunitycouncil.ie.