

John Bruckshaw
Dublin City Council
Planning and Development Department
Civic Offices, Wood Quay,
Dublin 8

5th August 2014

Re. Phibsboro / Mountjoy Amended Local Area Plan – Issues Paper 2014

Dear Mr Bruckshaw,

The National Transport Authority submits the following comments on the Issues Paper, for the Council's consideration in the preparation of the local area plan.

Key Transport Issues pertaining to the Phibsboro / Mountjoy area

Given its location on the northern edge of Dublin's Inner City, the LAP area can be defined in terms of the numerous radial and orbital routes which segment areas of high density residential, commercial, industrial and mixed use development.

These routes, which are generally defined by active street frontage, short junction intervals, many side roads and private accesses, are required to accommodate large volumes of both local and through traffic – to and from the City Centre with very limited reserve vehicular capacity. In light of these circumstances, the key transport issues pertaining to the LAP area would therefore appear to be the challenge that exists in reconciling the competing demands of local trip making and the accommodation of through movements, and the manner in which local and non-local trips are accommodated across a range of different modes. Aspects of this complex relationship will need to be reflected in:

- the allocation/ reallocation of scarce available road space for mode-specific transport objectives, including the Quality Bus Network, the proposed Swords Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) route and the delivery of the GDA Cycle Network; and
- the delivery of improved levels of service for local pedestrian movements to reflect the high intensity of local trip making, to facilitate a reduction in the use of the private car for such trips, to facilitate better accessibility to existing and proposed public transport service nodes by optimising their walking catchment and to facilitate a further intensification of development at a number of key sites in the area, on the basis of the highest possible non-car mode share.

National Transport Authority's function in the planning and delivery of transport infrastructure and services

In regards to transport in the Greater Dublin Area, the Authority's current functions relate to the near-term and longer-term planning of transport infrastructure investment, public transport service planning and the regulation of public transport service provision.

These functions are being articulated through the Authority's preparation of a 20 year *Transport Strategy* for the Greater Dublin Area for the period up to 2030 (draft submitted to the Minister for Transport in 2012), the preparation of an *Integrated Implementation Plan* for a five year period up to 2018 (approved by the Minister for Transport), the preparation of a *Cycle Network Plan* for the GDA, and the preparation of a *Strategic Traffic Management Plan* for the GDA (one aspect of which includes the preparation of traffic management plan for the City Centre, in conjunction with Dublin City Council).

Underpinning all of the above functions is the objective of achieving the optimum level of integration between the functions of land use forward planning/ development management; and transport planning / investment and transport service provision.

It is in light of these functions that the Authority brings the following transport-related issues to the attention of the Council, for its consideration, in preparing the local area plan.

Strategic Transport Infrastructure Objectives pertaining to the LAP area and its environs

As stated above, the Authority's *Integrated Implementation Plan* for the period 2013-2018 is providing the basis for transport investment in the GDA in the short term whilst at the same time, facilitating the implementation of a number of large-scale public transport projects in the longer term. This implementation plan's *Infrastructure Investment Programme* includes four key investment areas – Bus, Light Rail, Heavy Rail, Integration Measures and Sustainable Transport.

The manner in which this investment is allocated is being informed by a number of different elements, including:

- Priority transport investment projects, including Luas Cross City, the Bus Rapid Transit network, the Phoenix Park Tunnel Link and the City Centre (rail) Resignalling Project;
- The *Dublin City Centre Traffic Management Plan*, currently being prepared by the NTA and Dublin City Council;
- The *Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan*, prepared between the NTA and the GDA local authorities; and
- The various measures presented in the *Draft Transport Strategy 2011-2030*, all of which are underpinned by the objective to achieve a greater coordination between land use policy and transport investment.

Further information on these can be found on the NTA web site:

<http://www.nationaltransport.ie/publications/transport-planning/>

Transport investment is being channelled through a number of programmes, including the Greater Dublin Area Capital Programme, through which funding is provided by the NTA to local authorities and public transport agencies for a broad range of transport projects, including traffic management schemes, environmental street improvements, cycle and pedestrian infrastructure to public transport information and integration measures.

The next section of this submission outlines a number of projects which are of particular relevance to the LAP area, and which it recommended are taken into consideration in the preparation of the plan.

Projects of Particular Relevance to the Local Area Plan area

Metro North

This project, which received planning approval from An Bord Pleanála, is currently being re-assessed as part of a Fingal / North Dublin Transport Study, currently being undertaken by the Authority. The outcome of that study will be available early next year and will assist in determining the ongoing status of the Metro North project. It is noted that within the LAP area, the project would involve the provision of two new stations, at the Mater and Drumcondra, providing for interchange with the Maynooth Line.

Cross-City Luas

This project was prioritised by Government for delivery within the *Integrated Implementation Plan* period and will have a major bearing on the LAP area's public transport accessibility, both from the City Centre/ wider Luas network and from areas served by the Maynooth Line through interchange at Broombridge. Enabling works have already commenced in the City Centre and the project is expected to be completed by end 2017. Two of the stops (Grangegorman, Phibsboro) will be located within or at the western edge of the LAP area, both of which, in combination with the development of the Grangegorman campus, will have a major bearing on movement patterns and the intensity of pedestrian movement within the stops walking catchment.

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

As part of the BRT network proposed in the *Integrated Implementation Plan*, priority is currently being given to the delivery of a route connecting the City Centre with Swords. This follows a recent public consultation on all of the proposed routes and associated stops (see BRT Core Network Report on the NTA web site).

Within the LAP area, it is currently proposed to accommodate the City Centre to Swords route on the Drumcondra Road, with a stop proposed near Drumcondra Rail Station.

Quality Bus Network (QBN)

Bus forms the single most important element of Dublin's public transport offer, carrying 60% of all city-bound public transport trips. This importance is reflected in a strong commitment to the further improvement in the quality and extent of the QBN, with associated investment in bus fleet, bus stops and shelter provision and general bus network improvements.

The LAP area benefits from a large number of cross-city and other bus services operating through it, providing public transport accessibility across an extensive part of the Dublin Metropolitan Area, including the City Centre. The operational requirements and the scope for further improvements in bus services within the Drumcondra / Mountjoy area should be critical consideration in the preparation of the LAP.

Phoenix Park Tunnel Link

The completion of this project, within the period of the Integrated Implementation Plan, would allow for rail commuter services from the Kildare Line to operate past Heuston Station, connecting with Drumcondra, Connolly, Tara Street, Pearse and terminating at Grand Canal Dock station. As the completion of the City Centre Resignalling project would provide for extra train paths through Connolly Station, allowing a portion of these to be used for the running of through services from the Kildare Line.

The completion of this project would provide for a substantial improvement in the level of rail-based accessibility in the LAP area, to areas served by Kildare Line commuter services, and a higher frequency of rail services connecting with city centre stations and major employment destinations in the south eastern quadrant of the city centre.

In the longer term, it also opens the possibility of additional stations being provided on the line at Cabra and Cross Guns Bridge, with associated opportunities for interchange with Cross-City Luas and bus routes connecting both Finglas and Ballymun with the City Centre. For the area in the vicinity of Cross Guns (which could also connect with Maynooth Line services), the potential for a rail station in this area should be taken into consideration in regards to any future development proposals.

GDA Cycle Network Plan

Prepared in 2013, the Cycle Network Plan was prepared to give effect to the National Cycle Policy Framework, which requires that cycle-friendly planning principles be incorporated in all national, regional, local and sub-local plans. Cycle network proposals pertaining to the LAP area can be found here: http://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Proposed_Network_Dublin.pdf. This sets out a clear hierarchy of routes, focused in particular on the principal radial and orbital routes through the area, and the Royal Canal Green Route. In addition to this, a number of local linking routes are proposed. The delivery of these network improvements, in tandem with other traffic management, bus network and other on-road transport infrastructure measures, needs to be undertaken in tandem with the preparation of the local area plan.

I trust the views of the Authority will be taken into consideration in the preparation of the local area plan. In regard to the issues raised, the Authority would welcome the opportunity for further discussion, with the Council.

Yours sincerely,



Hugh Creegan
Director of Transport Investment and Taxi Regulation