

Mary Fitzpatrick

Fianna Fáil Dublin Central



September 28, 2018

Submission on Bus Connect Proposal

The public bus service in Dublin City as provided by Dublin Bus is hugely valued by residents, visitors and workers alike. It provides a trusted service to Dubliners of all ages. It gives them independent travel to work, school, training, medical visits, other essential and amenity activities and home.

An accessible, efficient, affordable public transport service is essential for any large city. The bus is a highly flexible above ground public transport service which meets transport, social, economic and environmental objectives for the city. Every effort must be made to protect and enhance this valuable public service.

The function of public transport is to enable all members of the public to travel without the need for private car ownership. If implemented as proposed, the changes will undermine this objective. The proposal will reduce access by removing local bus services and concentrating service on sixteen high frequency routes. The removal of local bus services from roads like Carnlough road, Homefarm road, Skreen Road and Ashington will isolate the elderly, the young, and those with mobility issues. The proposal completely disregards the needs of existing public transport users.

At its very core, an effective public transport system should be accessible to all and enable mobility for all. The Bus Connects Proposal fails in this regard as it proposes to exclude large numbers of existing public bus users by removing service from local communities and increasing demand on core routes which are already oversubscribed and under capacity.

An **affordable and accessible** bus service is essential for city dwellers and workers. The proposal to concentrate services on frequent bus corridors raises legitimate fears for bus users that this is a first step towards privatisation of the bus service and abolition of the free bus pass. Affordability and accessibility must be prioritised, protected and guaranteed in any re-design.

The removal of local bus routes will deny residents access to independent transport to do local shopping, hospital visits, transport to school and/or work or entertainment. It will lead to social isolation and increased dependence of the private car. The removal of the bus service will inhibit direct access to the Mater, Rotunda and Temple Street hospitals. Passengers will have to change buses rather than avail of direct routes. This will severely impede the elderly, infirm and those with intellectual challenges.

I object to the abolition of a local bus service on the roads currently served by the 11, 13, 37, 46a, 120 and 122 buses. Removal of the bus service on the Ratoath Road will affect the pupils of the 7 schools on Ratoath Road/Nepin Road, including special needs schools. I call for a commitment from the NTA to guarantee a dedicated local service for these areas.

See attached petition of 500+ signatures objecting to the removal of the local bus service

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Other elements of concern relate to the following:

Public Consultation: Members of the public were dissatisfied with the following elements of the public consultation:

- It was difficult for the public to access detailed information on proposed route changes
- The maps on the website were illegible and required downloading of large files
- Consultation documents resembled marketing materials as opposed to detailed information
- Information on proposed changes failed to indicate details relating to bus corridor changes and/or metrolink
- No public information sessions held in Dublin Central in the month of August
- Only three information sessions held in all of Dublin Central in the month of September
- Venue for the information session held in the Skylon in Drumcondra was unsatisfactory
- **Local bus service connections** to schools, educational institutes, Health Care Facilities, Post Offices and other meeting places should be prioritised. The proposed re-design prioritises city-wide travel over and above local travel and inappropriately takes no account of local movement needs and patterns.
- **Mobility Issues** have not been adequately considered in the proposal to have passengers changing for connecting buses. The suggestion that passengers will make multiple changes/connections takes no account for inclement Irish weather or the delays that this will have on travel times.
- **Transfer Volume and Delay:** Removal of the direct bus service for residents will force them to compete with distance commuters for the already overly subscribed and under resourced bus routes on main routes. Removal of direct routes will mean that wheelchair users, those travelling with prams and buggies and those with intellectual difficulties will be forced to make transfers. In poor weather conditions this will be a cause of great inconvenience.
- **Public Safety concerns** arise with the proposal to remove the local bus service which will cause some passengers using the early morning and late-night services to walk in the dark to avail of the new routes. This will cause personal safety concerns for many passengers
- **East Wall** is very poorly served with an infrequent and unreliable bus service. The NTA should increase frequency and reliability of the bus service in East Wall to serve and encourage increased bus usage.
- **Infrastructural Problems:** It is questionable whether the protected structure of Broombridge can accommodate two-way traffic and three new bus routes. The increase in traffic volume could put the structure at serious risk of damage and/or collapse. There is currently a three-tonne limit on this bridge.

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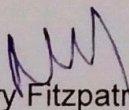
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- **Bus Shelters** in Dublin Central are critically inadequate. There is mention of an increased number of bus shelters, but no detailed information was provided. Many stops in Dublin Central do not currently have bus shelters and despite my repeated requests passengers of Dublin Bus in Dublin Central are poorly sheltered and deserve better accommodation.
- **High frequency Bus Corridors** are proposed yet there is insufficient detail of how these will be achieved. It is unsatisfactory that a separate public consultation will be conducted on this element. The creation of bus corridors along Prussia Street, Old Cabra Road and Mobhi road will have implications for residents on these streets and the wider area. There was no impact projections or analyses provided and this must be addressed as a matter of urgency. The potential negative impact of this traffic displacement on surrounding residential roads, streets and villages is enormous.
- The proposed **CPO** of private property, homes, gardens and land has been introduced in a far too casual manner and with no regard for the impact this will have on individuals and community's day to day lives. It is totally inappropriate that details on the proposed CPO were not included in this consultation.

Thank you for considering this submission and the attached petition for the retention of local bus services.

Sincerely,


Mary Fitzpatrick

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