

		An Taisce, Tailors Hall, Back Lane, Dublin 8.
Executive Manager Planning Department Dublin City Council Block 4 Floor 3 Civic Offices Wood Quay Dublin 8		

Fri 7th August 2015

## City Centre Transport Plan - Submission

Dear Sir/Madam,

I wish to make a brief submission on behalf of An Taisce in regard to the above study.

Overall we are very supportive of the city centre plan which entails prioritising high quality public transport, walking and cycling in the city centre.

- We strongly support the principle of **protecting “the investment** that already has been, and continues to be, made in public transport in the city”.
- We fully agree with the proposal to remove **through traffic** from the city centre. Currently the ‘gyratory’ of **Westmoreland Street, D’Olier Street and College Street** is a horribly dangerous and scary environment for the ever growing cycling population in the city - the bicycle user can end up in between lanes of traffic lanes filled with buses and taxis and which weave dangerous between lanes. This is an unpleasant experience. Proposals to make these streets cycle friendly have been developed previously - as far back as the early 2000’s - but disappointingly none were developed. It is high time that the city centre of Dublin is cycling friendly for people of all ages and abilities.
- We strongly support the **BRT** concept and the reallocation of road space in the city centre area to allow for a high quality public transport system to develop.
- There are no explicit references to **30kph speed limit** zones in the reports. We are concerned that while the city centre area does currently have such a speed limit, there appears to be little impetus to ensure that speeds remain under this threshold. We strongly recommend that a core design principle in advancing the plan is to ensure that the city centre area becomes a safer lower speed zone which is then attractive and safe for those spending time in the city shopping, socialising and going about their business.

- We feel that the concept of **cycle-logistics** is under-explored in this study. More and more cities are developing lighter vehicle solutions to the movement of freight in the city centre, to include (electric) cargo bikes - thus leading to quieter streets and less hazardous conditions for pedestrians (in relation to interactions with good vehicles). This is an approach being pioneered by the City of Gothenburg in Sweden in particular ([http://www.bestfact.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CL1\\_QuickInfo\\_Gothenburg-21jan2014.pdf](http://www.bestfact.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/02/CL1_QuickInfo_Gothenburg-21jan2014.pdf)).
- In regard to **car parking**, we feel the proposals could go much further in terms of removing the car parking from areas from which there is an aim to remove private cars. South William Street continues to be dominated by (often very large 'SUV' type) motor vehicles emerging from the Brown Thomas car park and driving along this narrow street, often dangerously close to the many shoppers on foot in this area. This street deserves more than this!
- In relation to **bicycle parking**, we stress the need to incorporate high quality (and in some locations high capacity) cycle parking facilities into all of the streets within the plan. We are conscious of the strategic study on cycle parking that is underway and urge the Council to advance high quality proposals as a matter of urgency - there are far too few spaces for parking bicycles (and indeed cargo bicycles which are now on the increase) in the city centre. It is especially important that abundant spaces are provided at transport interchanges especially at Bus Aras - the busiest bus station in Ireland which hardly has a single cycle stand outside it!
- Re: **Suffolk Street**, we stress the need to maintain two-way cycling access on what is proposed to be a motorised traffic free street (which we support). If bicycles are banned from this route, this goes directly against the principles of creating/maintaining a permeable city centre (as explained in the NTA's new 'best practice' guide on the subject: <https://www.nationaltransport.ie/news/permeability-in-existing-urban-areas-best-practice-guide/>).
- Re: **St. Stephen's Green North**, we seek clarity on the proposed 'pedestrian area' which indicates in the graphic that cycling would be permitted, but under present regulations for pedestrian zones this could not happen.
- We do welcome however the broader commitment to the enhancement of safety for cyclists, the development of **contra flow routes**, and the cycle friendly land use cells.
- We would urge the designers to address the striking lack of **public seating** in the city as the specific elements of the plan are advanced.

In summary, we are very supportive of the vision for Dublin City Centre as per the plans of Dublin City Council and the National Transport Authority. The realisation of these plans will facilitate greatly in the process of making Dublin a much healthier city and one that visitors and residents will choose to spend more time in. With the emphasis on high quality public transport, extensive pedestrian zones and a much more serious integration of cycle friendly principles into the designs, this will ensure that Dublin becomes much more like continental city centres (such as Nantes or Copenhagen) in which the sustainable modes are given the greatest priority and the city centre experience is a far better one.

Yours faithfully,

Damien Ó Tuama  
National Cycling Coordinator  
An Taisce