

Fitzgerald House
Summerhill North
Cork
T23 TD90
1st July 2020

Thank you for the opportunity to submit observations on the proposed interim cycling infrastructure and traffic calming measures on the South Mall, which is one of Cork's most important thoroughfares. A European study on cycling in cities notes that the objective is not just to increase the numbers cycling but to improve accessibility, liveability and overall attractiveness of the city for citizens, business and tourism. Many successful European cities view vibrant cycling culture as a competitive advantage in attracting new businesses, tourists and key workers, and have adopted world leading approaches to encouraging and supporting cycling¹. It is with this in mind that the public realm proposals for integrated cycle infrastructure within the environs of the South Mall are considered a very positive development for the city.

The high profile success we are seeing with the recent pedestrianisation of Princes street shows that there is appetite for bold measures which enhance the experience of the city for its inhabitants and the proposed infrastructure for the South Mall will only further enhance this. With the proposed upgrade to Morrison's Island the cycling infrastructure can form part of the regeneration for this whole area to accommodate walking and cycling safely.

This will also be a welcome step in meeting the increased demand for safer active travel methods, enhancing placemaking within the city and creating a more people focussed experience in the City centre as we continue to build confidence and create momentum in the face of the current global pandemic. On the most basic level, it will help people traverse this busy road in safety. Additionally the fast-tracking of cycling infrastructure due to be part of Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy can aid the societal response to COVID-19. We believe it timely to review our shared public realm and the space allocated to pedestrians and cyclists, and where possible and appropriate adapt our urban and community recreation spaces to meet this challenge going forward.

Active travel policies that incorporate cycling and walking have an important role to play as an interconnector for public transport and although there has been a significant increase in cycling in the past number of years poor cycling infrastructure is one of the key barriers active

¹ CiViTAS (2020) https://ec.europa.eu/transport/sites/transport/files/cycling-guidance/smart_choices_for_the_city_cycling_in_the_city_0.pdf



travel in urban areas. Cycling should be encouraged in multi-modal commuting, switching between buses, trains and cycling. Ambitious investment in cycling infrastructure is essential to meet the increased demand in active travel and also to meet the goals of reduced traffic congestion, cyclist safety, improved quality of life, and carbon emissions reduction.

The proposed measures are a positive step in redressing the balance of infrastructure towards more active travel methods away from the car and begin to create a network of safe walking and cycling spaces. This offers an alternative to existing under pressure public transport and helps reduce the number of cars moving into the city daily as we begin Phase III of the exit from Covid-19 lockdown procedures. The proposed enhancements to the public realm will encourage more sustainable commuting behaviours and will also positively contribute to the city's existing measures such as the Patrick Street bus corridor and the forthcoming reintroduction of two-way traffic on MacCurtain Street. By continuing to invest in active mobility we create an environment where safe mobility is available to all from children, to the elderly and regardless of income bracket. To illuminate this point, we refer to the principles set out by 8 80 cities <https://www.880cities.org/>.

In addition to the planned measures we encourage consideration of a progressive agenda in the city with the implementation of a calmer and safer speed limit throughout the city of 30kph, to add greater balance in areas where vehicles must continue to travel. While we must continue to reprioritise, it is also important for us to better share our valuable space. As a supplement to the proposals an additional pedestrian crossing should be considered at the junction of Fr Matthew Street given the level of foot traffic that cross here at present and also to reduce the barrier to north-south pedestrian movement that the current number of crossings presents.

Thank you for pursuing a progressive agenda that makes the most of what little silver lining the current pandemic presents.

Yours sincerely

CEO

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