

Part 8 Carrigtwohill to Midleton Inter-Urban Cycleway Phase 1

To Whom It Concerns,

Cork Chamber represents 1,200 members together employing 100,000 people throughout the city, metropolitan area and county. Our vision is to be a world-leading Chamber of Commerce, delivering on a progressive economic, social and sustainability agenda at the heart of a vibrant business community.

As such, we are determined to ensure that our 202-year-old Chamber continues to create a positive legacy. Our direction is guided by our formal pledge to uphold the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals five of which have been identified by the Chambers Ireland network.



Cork city region is on the cusp of major transformation with projected population growth of 55% under Ireland 2040, plans for the redevelopment of the South Docks area of the city and the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy which looks set to transform commuting life in the city. It's more important now than ever that the modal share of cyclists is increased and the proposed Carrigtwohill to Midleton Inter-urban Cycleway (Phase 1) is a significant step towards achieving this goal.

The cycleway will provide greater regional connectivity from Youghal to the harbour and City and is a key component of CMATS. Cork Chamber as ever, encourages an onwards link to the Waterford Greenway. Locally it can provide exemplary connectivity, and a link between the IDA park and the Carrigane Road, with an additional connection to the IDA's Ballyadam site. This cycleway is intended to connect onwards to Little Island via the Carrigtwohill to Bury's Bridge pedestrian and cycle route. Together these initiatives will enhance the continuity of active transport along the N25 corridor

which can be an exemplary case study in road infrastructure, active infrastructure and rail working in harmony for all transport requirements.

Little Island is a major employment centre in the city and providing alternative transport options to this employment hub from Carrigtwohill and Midleton is not only important from a commuter perspective but also from an environmental one. A study carried out on behalf of the European Cyclists' Federation shows that cycling, as an alternative to driving, is a realistic and effective way of reducing air pollution¹. The cycleway, if complemented by the ongoing rollout of recommendations from the Little Island Transportation study, can retrofit this historically car focussed infrastructure to provide sustainable options for commuters.

The cycleway can equally be an asset for IDA lands at Ballyadam and the Carrigtowhill Science and Technology Park. It is essential that throughout design, close liaison is maintained with the IDA to ensure that it does not inadvertently inhibit development potential, but rather facilitates sustainable mobility at both sites.

As well as providing a means of transportation, the broader design of this entire network is intended to link with the planned Midleton to Youghal Greenway. This will also increase the attractiveness of the area as a destination to visit. In the wake of COVID19, 'cycle tourism' boomed across Europe with many travel plans affected by restrictions. As part of recovery plans many European cities are investing in their cycle networks including Italy where 630 miles of new urban and metropolitan cycle paths for transport and leisure are in the pipeline as well as 1,000 miles of tourist cycle paths. Krakow also intends to expand their cycle network further while Belgium is also planning to increase cycling connectivity between its towns and cities.² It is therefore vital that this project is fully supported and given the opportunity to prove its worth.

The cycleway will be an opportunity to showcase the East Cork region once it links through to the planned Midleton to Youghal Greenway. It is therefore imperative that the cycleway is of the highest standard and that where possible obstacles to cycle continuity are removed. There are some areas on the designed cycleway that will require cyclists to stop, which will add time onto journeys for those who wish to use the route as a means of transportation to work and school. Where possible alternatives are available it would be beneficial to minimise the number of junctions and remove access control gates to allow for cycle flow continuity. As a rule of thumb, the cycleway must be child friendly. In the design detail, the question must always be asked, would a child be able to safely travel on this route without fear of vehicles?

It is vital that conflicts between pedestrians, cyclists, traffic and agri-traffic are kept to a minimum. The proposed four metre width of the cycleway will somewhat reduce conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians, however in general it could result in cyclists being forced to slow down to a walking pace at times. Shared pedestrian and cycle infrastructure will become more of an issue for those using the cycleway for daily commutes, rather than those who are using the cycleway for leisure purposes. The design in relation to the requirement for cyclists to share space with traffic must be very carefully considered, this is particularly the case with the shared space on drawing 22 (contained within the drawing pack). If it is the case that the cycleway must share space with cars, there must be overt and considered traffic calming measures in place to ensure vehicles, cyclists and

¹https://www.ecf.com/system/files/Cycling_and_Urban_Air_Quality_A_Study_of_European_Experiences_1.pdf

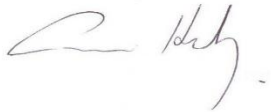
²<https://www.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/2021/mar/12/europe-cycling-post-covid-recovery-plans>

walkers meet with parity and respect. Safety and traffic calming cannot be over emphasised in design.

Cork Chamber would also like to take this opportunity to encourage full engagement and collaboration with the IDA and local businesses in the area to minimise disruption during any necessary works. It is vital that local businesses are consulted at all stages of this development.

Cork County Council should be commended for their work on bringing the proposed Carrigtwohill to Midleton Inter-Urban Cycleway to fruition and the high-quality design that has been proposed. It is infrastructure that will encourage a modal shift as well as enhancing the N25 corridor. It has potential to link to the planned Midleton to Youghal Greenway and its value from a tourism perspective must also be acknowledged. We, at Cork Chamber, fully support the cycleway and we hope that it will result in similar infrastructure being developed and planned in other areas of Cork and we ask that our comments be taken into consideration.

Yours Sincerely,



Conor Healy
Chief Executive