



Submission on the Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge

July 2019

Introduction

Dublin Chamber welcomes the opportunity to make this submission to Dublin City Council regarding the Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge.¹ Dublin Chamber, which represents 1,300 businesses in the Dublin region, is a strong advocate of improved cycling infrastructure in the city. Dublin Chamber is proud to have partnered with the CyclingWorks Dublin campaign in July of 2018, to call for the Government to significantly increase the amount of money it is spending on cycling infrastructure.

Dublin Chamber supports the objective of the Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge, which will enhance the safety features of the bridge area to making it more accessible to cyclists and pedestrians through the introduction of the contra-flow bus/cycle lane, traffic calming measures and signalised crossings. The proposal also reflects the need for prioritisation of both public and sustainable transport in order to encourage modal shift.

The Need for Investment in Cycling Infrastructure

Dublin is one of the most traffic-congested cities in the world, and sustainable solutions are needed to address this. Policy on transport provision in Dublin City should be informed by the climate change emergency, the current and future demographic pressures facing the Greater Dublin Area, the need to facilitate compact and high density growth. In particular, local government must do what is within its power to accelerate the shift towards low carbon transport modes. The Chamber notes the sharp increase in the number of cyclists over the past decade, despite the lack of safe and attractive cycle lanes in the city. Significant investment in cycling infrastructure is essential in order to meet the goals of reduced traffic congestion, cyclist safety, improved quality of life, and a transition to a low carbon economy.

It is a source of frustration for the business community that so little of the Greater Dublin Area Cycle Network Plan, launched in 2013, has come to fruition. Dublin Chamber notes with concern that the Canal Cordon Report 2018 showed a 2% slip in cycling numbers based on the previous year. While the current figure represents an increase of 153% when compared to 2006, it is disappointing to see a decrease.² Cycling infrastructure is one of the key barriers preventing people from changing their mode of transport. Failure to deliver

¹ <https://consultation.dublincity.ie/traffic-and-transport/royal-canal-premium-cycle-route-broome-bridge-broo/>

² https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/Canal_Cordon_Report_2018.pdf

proper cycling infrastructure will impact on Dublin's ability to reduce congestion and carbon emissions. Smaller projects like the Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge are necessary to build up the network around the city, but cannot exist in isolation.

A campaign group called 'Women on Wheels' have recently carried out research on why women represent just one in four people who travel by bike in Dublin. The responses indicated that safety was the biggest concern and that segregated purpose-built cycling infrastructure would be particularly effective in increasing the number of female cyclists³.

The Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge

Investment in cycling infrastructure needs to be prioritised and developed around key transport hubs, such as Broombridge station, which will support the development of a more integrated transport system with sustainability as its focus. Dublin Chamber supports the Dublin City Council plan to enhance the area for pedestrians, cyclists and buses.

The plans for the new road layout prioritise walking, cycling and public transport as the first option for travel and will hopefully encourage a shift to more sustainable modes of transport as well as improving access. The introduction of a contra-flow bus and cycle lane across Broome Bridge will significantly improve access for users and provides a vital linkage to the Broombridge Luas and Dart stations. It also reflects the reality that cyclists currently use the footpath to cross the bridge and continue their journey to the station or DIT sporting facilities.

The introduction of the elevated signalised toucan crossing for pedestrians and cyclists using the canal towpath is welcome. There is considerable demand for improvements to the safety of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure in the city. The proposed traffic calming measures, introducing ramps and a mini roundabout will also enhance the safety of pedestrians and cyclists and slow traffic over Broome Bridge. Similarly the signalised left-turn slip will further enhance the safety of cyclists.

The area around Broome Bridge currently has limited cycling infrastructure and there is significant scope for further improvements. Luas⁴ and Dart⁵ information indicates that there is currently no bicycle parking at Broombridge station. The introduction of Sheffield stands should be included as part the enabling works to ensure adequate parking. The towpath, which is part of the Royal Canal Way, is underutilised and further investment would be beneficial here.

In summary, Dublin Chamber:

- ✓ Supports the proposals outlined by Dublin City Council for the Royal Canal Premium Cycle Route Broome Bridge and encourages their speedy implementation.
- ✓ Notes that cycling infrastructure leading up to Broome Bridge could also be enhanced through the installation of segregated cycle routes.
- ✓ Supports enhanced bike parking at Broombridge Station to encourage modal shift and to promote an integrated sustainable transport system.

³ <https://www.rte.ie/news/ireland/2019/0609/1054355-cycling-women/>

⁴ <https://luas.ie/bike-parking.html>

⁵ <http://www.irishrail.ie/travel-information/broombridge>