



**Submission: BusConnects Dublin Area Bus Network
Redesign**

Date	24 th September 2018
Body	Fingal PPN
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Community Groups contributing to this submission	<p>Aer Lingus Swim Club</p> <p>Balbriggan Community Council</p> <p>Baldoyle Forum Clg</p> <p>Blanchardstown/D15 Citizens Information Centre</p> <p>Briarswood Huntstown Lawn Woodlands Residents Association</p> <p>Donabate Portrane Community Council</p> <p>Dublin 15 Community Council</p> <p>Fingal Environment Network</p> <p>Fingal Orienteers</p>

Huntstown Summer Camp

Irish Telegus Welfare Association

Kirkpatrick Rockfield Coolmine Residents Association

Malahide Yacht Club

Meakstown Community Council

Naul Community Council

NIFTI

Nifty Needles

Polonus Polish Community Association

Portmarnock Community Association

Prosper Fingal

Rekindle Talent

Revival Group

Rivervalley & Rathingle Residents Association

Rolestown Community

Rush Community Council

Skerries Age Friendly

Skerries Community Association

Skerries Cycling Initiative

Slovak Centre Ireland

St Margarets Concerned Residents Group

Sursargam Musical society

	<p>Suttonians Rugby Football Club</p> <p>Swords Bridge Club</p> <p>Swords Mens Shed</p> <p>Swords Tidy Towns</p> <p>Torcaill Residents Association</p> <p>YouthBank Fingal</p>
<p>Context</p>	<p>The members of the Fingal PPN Planning and Transport Linkage Group met on 4th September 2018 and the members of the Rural Development, Social Inclusion, Youth and Enterprise Linkage Group met on 6th September to consider the BusConnects Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign.</p> <p>The Linkage Groups are made up of volunteer led Community Councils, Residents Associations, Sports Clubs, Social Clubs, etc.</p> <p>This document reflects the views of those members.</p>

1. Issues with Consultation Process

- 1.1 **Refusal to Engage.** BusConnects and the National Transport Authority have refused at least two formal invitations from Fingal Public Participation Network to engage with community groups in the Fingal area on the BusConnects programme. Furthermore, communications through website forms on BusConnects.ie have been ignored.
- 1.2 **Poor number of Public Meetings.** The number of public information sessions held in the Fingal area was poor. Just 1 in August and 3 in September (out of 33 in total). On each occasion, no pro-active notice

was sent to the Public Participation Network in order to circulate to the 600+ member organisations of the network in Fingal.

- 1.3 **Web first approach.** The majority of consultation was focused on web based documents and applications. Documentation in relation to the consultation was not widely available offline, or in Government buildings such as local authority buildings or libraries.
- 1.4 **Narrow feedback mechanism.** This consultation encouraged feedback only through a survey on the BusConnects website. There was no invitation or information on how to participate in the consultation outside the means of an online survey. It is only after further investigation of the 'Contact Us' page of the BusConnects website, is it stated that submissions can be emailed to consultations@busconnects.ie.
- 1.5 **Lack of informed representatives.** Some members of the PPN who engaged in the public meetings facilitated by BusConnects felt that the representatives of BusConnects at those meetings were not fully informed of the network redesign and were not in a position to answer critical questions.
- 1.6 **Redo consultation.** Supplementary information on the network redesign was introduced throughout this consultation period. Public Meeting dates were introduced throughout the consultation period. All this information should be made available for the full consultation period and not on an ad-hoc basis. A polling company could also be brought in to engage public transport users on various bus routes.

Due to the insufficient means of the approach to this consultation on what is a critical issue for the daily lives of citizens in Fingal, it is difficult to make a fully informed submission.

However, the following comments come direct from communities who will experience changes to their daily lives due to the redesign of BusConnects, as they understand it.

Invitation

This submission invites BusConnects/National Transport Authority to engage with the Fingal Public Participation Network on future BusConnects activity, in particular in relation to public consultations. To explore opportunities, please email ppn@fingal.ie or call 01 890 6235.

2. Suggested Ammendments to Redesign

- 2.1 **A Dublin Wide Transport Study** needs to be conducted to establish:
 - 2.1.1 How people travel
 - 2.1.2 Why people travel
 - 2.1.3 Travel patterns – by car, bike, train and bus
 - 2.1.4 Public Transport Access to critical services such as Hospitals, Schools, Town Centres, Industrial Estates, etc.
 - 2.1.5 What it would take to get people to make the switch from Car to Bus.
 - 2.1.6 The age profile of neighbourhoods.
- 2.2 **Greater and more seamless integration** with other public transport services such as Dart, Train and Luas. Timetable cooperation required.
- 2.3 **Capacity of all public transport modes need to be considered.** Train stations car parks are already full, trains cannot be extended as platforms are not long enough, frequency will reach a peak due to the availability of trains, trains are running at passenger capacity as it stands. If more people are encouraged to connect via train, dart, luas, it must be ensured that the capacity is available to deliver.
- 2.4 **Built in review** of Network Redesign to assess change.

2.5 **Supply greater level of evidence** that the proposed strategy of redesign will work in Dublin. Proposed Strategy is based off grid based cities, which Dublin is not.

2.6 **Introduce Safety as a core pillar** of the redesigned network (alert buttons at stops like those available on the Luas network).

3. Service Delivery

- No orbital route to connect Blanchardstown and Swords, two major urban centres for Fingal.
- No bus service in Donabate and Portrane on a Sunday morning and the X commuter service currently running from the village is being cancelled.
- Capacity of planned services is not sufficient. How is manpower and infrastructure from current network going to translate to new network. Will the area if Fingal retain the same level or better of bus driver hours and buses?
- Clarification sought on how the main hubs in Blanchardstown and Swords will work.
- Waiting times for connecting buses will be 23 minutes for Rush, Lush and Skerries Residents who are connecting in Swords.
- Needs of those with disabilities have not been reasonably considered in the redesign of this network.
- Some routes have been made longer.
- Some routes have up to 3 connections with potential users apprehensive about connectivity and reliability.
- Communities believe the network redesign does not take account of natural human behaviour, the weather and existing congestion.
- There is an interpretation that 50 buses per hour at peak times will pass through Swords main street, this needs to be clarified and revised.

- Lack of incentive for Drivers to change mode of transport.
- Adherence with and performance of buses in relation to their schedules and timetables should be measured and published with a mechanism put in place to review services consistently underperforming in order to enhance the user experience.

4. Questions for further consideration by BusConnects team

- Does the proposed network redesign support the reduction of rural isolation (i.e. by increasing service provision in these areas)?
- Does the proposed network redesign support access to employment?
- Does the proposed network redesign protect and increase access to critical services such as hospitals, schools and town centres?
- Does the proposed network redesign reasonably consider the needs of the more vulnerable of society (i.e. people with disabilities, seniors, young families, children, etc., especially wheelchair users and parents with buggies)?
- Does the proposed network redesign complement the implementation of the Fingal Local Economic and Community Plan, the Dublin City Local Economic and Community Plan, the South Dublin Local Economic and Community Plan and the Dún Laoghaire Rathdown Local Economic and Community Plan (in the context of achieving their objectives on education, enterprise, community development and social inclusion, etc.)

The answer from the perspective of the community, in relation to all these questions, is no.