

Item No.

Report to the Chairperson and Members of the Central Area Committee.

Protected Cycle Lane on Manor Street

1. Introduction

This report concerns the installation of approximately 60m of protected cycle lane on Manor Street which was installed on July 6th 2020. The works were implemented as part of Covid-19 emergency traffic measures in accordance with the policies and objectives of the DCC/NTA report, *Enabling the City to Return to Work: Interim Mobility Intervention Programme for Dublin City* which recognises the need to increase the number of people walking and cycling in the city. The objective of this particular element of work was to address a longstanding issue with the blocking of a section of the outbound cycle lane through Stoneybatter by illegally parked vehicles.

2. Background

There is an outbound cycle lane on Manor Street starting just north of Arbour Place. The cycle lane passes a series of commercial premises and residential properties on Manor Street before heading further north up Prussia Street as far as the North Circular Road. The total length of this section of cycle lane is approximately 800 meters.

Records from the last decade show that the first 60 meters of this cycle lane is regularly blocked by delivery vehicles and parked cars accessing the various businesses along Manor Street. The safety of cyclists is compromised when the cycle lane is blocked as cyclists must leave the cycle lane to overtake these vehicles and pull out into the remaining narrow outbound traffic lane. Cyclist may also have to contend with buses and larger vehicles making any such overtaking manoeuvre even more hazardous.

The blocking of the cycle lane occurs despite the fact that this section of the carriageway has also been a Clearway (7am-10am, 12pm- 7pm, Monday –Saturday) for well over a decade. The increasing of the operational hours of the Clearway in late 2019 to (Monday to Saturday 7am to 7pm) would appear to have little effect and

prior to installing the bollards recently, illegal parking in the cycle lane was a regular occurrence.



The photograph above, looking south down Manor Street, was taken on the 26th of May 2020 and shows both commercial and private vehicles parking on the outbound cycle lane through Stoneybatter during the operational hours of the Clearway.

3. Installation

On July 6th 2020 approximately sixty meters of bollards were installed along this section of the outbound cycle lane to provide a physical barrier between the cycle lane and the general outbound traffic lane. The bollards physically prevent any vehicle from pulling into or parking on the cycle lane over their length.





4. Feedback from Local Businesses

Since the bollards were installed there has been a considerable amount of communication between the businesses in Stoneybatter and Dublin City Council.

The Covid Mobility Business Liaison Officer recently contacted the Manor Street businesses located immediately adjacent to the protected cycle lane with a view to determining their attitude to the recent interventions.

The issues raised by the local businesses varied to some degree depending on the type of business they operated but the main issues raised and Dublin City Council's Traffic Section response to them are summarised below.

1) *Issue:*

The installation of the bollards has caused difficulties receiving deliveries/loading/unloading of goods. The Loading Bays in Stoneybatter are often full. There are not enough of them and they are too small for certain deliveries.

Response:

It is accepted that it is no longer possible to load/unload directly outside businesses adjacent to the protected cycle track and that this is causing difficulties for certain businesses, especially those that receive heavy deliveries or multiple deliveries during the course of the day. However it must be pointed out that prior to the installation of the protected cycle lane such activity was already illegal during the hours 7 am to 7 pm when the majority of these deliveries would be taking place.

There are two loading bays on the west side of Manor Street immediately before the start of the protected cycle lane.

There is a bay of Pay and Display and Permit Parking outside the row of residential houses immediately north of where the protected cycle lane ends. This bay provides parking for up to 10 cars. In response to requests for more loading bays, a 10 meter section of this bay was converted during July into a new loading bay. The hours of this loading bay are quite restrictive (10am - 12noon, M-F) after which time it reverts to P&D&P. These hours were chosen to minimise the impact on the existing residential parking. However the length of this loading bay could be increased and the hours extended.

Furthermore to address the issue of loading bays being full we can request that Parking Enforcement vigorously enforce the rules for Loading Bays- namely that vehicles must be actively loading and unloading and are subject to a maximum stay of 30minutes.

2) ***Issue***

Some businesses have reported that their customers now have difficulty accessing parking and this has had a direct impact on their sales. Prior to the works, customers could park legally in in the cycle lane after 7pm and on Sundays to access those businesses open during these hours. This is no longer the case.

Response:

It would appear that some customers were in the habit of parking illegally in the cycle lane, during the operational hours of the Clearway, to access the local shops. Some businesses have reported a marked downturn in sales since this activity has been prevented by the installation of the bollards. While Dublin City Council's Traffic Section would be sympathetic to any businesses suffering a drop in sales, especially in the current climate, we would see it as our role to prioritise cyclist's safety over commercial sales.

It is accepted that prior to the installation of the protected cycle lane it was possible to legally park in the cycle lane after 7pm at night and on Sundays. However as the inbound bus lane on the opposite side of the road is not in operation after 7pm Monday to Saturday and all day Sundays it is felt that there is adequate opportunities for parking during these time.

A greater turnaround of the existing parking in Stoneybatter could be encouraged by reducing the allowable parking period from a 3 hour max to a

1 hour max or even a 30 min in the existing Pay and Display and Parking Bays in the village.

3) **Issue**

One business has reported that there is now no safe place to leave their bins as they used to leave them in the cycle lane.

Response:

This matter was investigated and on the day on the inspection it was found that two bins had been neatly left at the edge of the footpath directly outside the business that had reported the issue. Even though the business had also placed a table and chairs on the footpath outside their property there was still sufficient space for pedestrians to get by. It is recommended that the business continues to place their bins in this location.

4) **Issue**

Some businesses have pointed out that an unintended consequence of blocking parking/loading in the cycle lane on the western side of Manor Street is that now there are a lot of vehicles parking illegally in the inbound bus lane on the eastern side of Manor Street.

Response:

Illegal parking in the bus lane on the western side of Manor Street can be addressed through greater parking enforcement. However in the short term it would be preferable to maximise the loading and parking opportunities in the village before requesting increased parking enforcement.

5) **Issue**

Many businesses have questioned the value of installing such a short length of protected cycle lane compared to the negative effect it has on local businesses and customer parking

Response:

This protected cycle lane was installed to address a longstanding issue with the regular blocking of the cycle lane over this 60 meter section. We consider

it is justified as it not only provides a safe means for cyclists to pass through this busy section of Stoneybatter but it also links with the cycle lane continuing further north up Manor Street and Prussia Street.

6) **Issue**

Many Businesses have referred to the small number of cyclists that they have observed using the facility

Response:

It is accepted that the volumes of cyclists throughout the city dropped significantly during the Covid 19 lockdown and have been slow to recover. However we would argue that it is an expressed objective of Dublin City Council to grow cycling numbers and the most effective way of doing this is by improving cycling infrastructure. We would anticipate the cycling numbers will recover as colleges re-open and more people return to work.

7) **Issue**

Some businesses have pointed out that the protected cycle lane doesn't operate as intended as the entrance to it can be blocked by buses at the bus stop or parked vehicles and the exit near Mi Thia Takeaway can also be blocked by parked vehicles.

Response:

It is accepted that blocking of the start of the cycle lane is unavoidable when there are buses in the bus stop. However cyclists have the option of waiting until the bus pulls out to access the cycle lane.

In the case of vehicles parked illegally at either end of the cycle lane this can be deterred by regular parking enforcement.

8) **Issue**

Of the eleven businesses surveyed, seven of them wanted the bollards removed and a return to the way things were before. Four businesses were

open to some form of compromise that would facilitate some parking and deliveries outside their properties during certain hour of the day.

Response:

The Traffic Section of Dublin City Council is of the view that it can't remove the bollards as to do so would be seen as condoning the illegally blocking of the cycle lane though Stoneybatter.

Any compromise that allowed some parking or deliveries (for instance outside peak rush hours) would either require the removal of the bollards and/or their replacement with a lower type of bollard that motor vehicles can drive over. Either solution would require motorists to observe whatever loading/parking window was provided. Unfortunately the regular illegal blocking of the cycle lane before these bollards was installed would lead the Traffic Section to believe that any such compromise would be abused by a significant number of motorists and the situation would quickly revert to how it was before.

5. Conclusions and Options

Since the introduction of the protected cycle lane in Stoneybatter many of the businesses adjacent to the cycle lane have reported difficulties with the new arrangement. Unfortunately it has become clear that these businesses had come to depend to varying degrees on both delivery vehicles and customers illegally blocking the cycle lane to access their businesses. While the Traffic Section of Dublin City Council is sympathetic to the commercial difficulties these businesses are experiencing we are of a view that we can't be seen to condone this activity and must look for other alternatives.

There are very limited options for increasing the number of loading bays and customer parking spaces in Stoneybatter.

One possible option is to increase the length and operational hours of the new Loading Bay located in the Pay and Display and Permit Parking bay outside the row of residential houses immediately north of where the protected cycle lane ends.

Another possible option is to restrict the maximum length of stay in the Pay and Display and Permit Parking bays in Stoneybatter near the shops to 1 hour or even 30 minutes. This would encourage a faster turnaround of available parking spaces in Stoneybatter.

A faster turnaround of the available loading bays could be encouraged by a strict enforcement of the rules whereby loading bays are restricted to commercial vehicles actively loading or unloading with a maximum permitted stay of 30 minutes.

The Councillors views on these possible options are sought.

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