



The National Transport Authority has published it's latest draft of the Bus Connects proposal. It is out for public consultation and you have the opportunity to raise any concerns with them again.

I've dissected their latest draft maps, plans and schedules in accordance with the concerns I outlined in my public submission last September. My own submission was shaped by the feedback I received at the public meetings I held in Lucan, Clondalkin and Newcastle and outlined concerns under five key headings, so these may be of interest to you...

1. Over-reliance on connections

- **First Draft of Bus Connects 2018 – my submission:** I set out my concern that there was an over-reliance on connections between buses to get to the most popular destination, city centre, and that there was over-reliance on connecting with the LUAS line.
Second Draft of Bus Connects 2019 - my observations:
- Additional direct routes and less reliance on connections, in particular during peak commuting times.
- LUAS connections still play a vital role and I believe this will only work if we radically increase capacity on the Red LUAS line. Investment should also be made available to upgrade the Red Cow and Citywest LUAS stations to make it safer and a better connection hub.

2. Disadvantaging local commuters:

First Draft of Bus Connects 2018 – my submission:

- I outlined my concerns that rural areas, in particular, were short-changed by the initial plan which proposed removing direct routes to the city centre for Rathcoole, Newcastle, Saggart and Brittas.
- I was also concerned that Weston in Lucan and Palmerstown village (north of the N4) would be totally cut off from a local service.
- I also outlined my view that Dodsboro and Hillcrest in Lucan and Monastery and Woodford in Clondalkin were underserved by the plan.
- I cited the absence of a replacement for the 25D in Lucan as a huge concern.

Second Draft of Bus Connects 2019 - my observations:

- Direct routes to the city centre from Rathcoole, Newcastle, Saggart and Brittas will now get a peak-time direct service. This is a major improvement but there is no full day time service direct to the city centre.
- Weston is now proposed to be served by a route and the Palmerstown bus crosses the N4 to serve Palmerstown village north of the N4.
- Dodsboro and Hillcrest are better served under the new plan, albeit that the proposed 322 is only a peak time bus.
- The 25D will now be replaced by a peak-time service called the 321 and a C1 and C2 will service Adamstown Train Station all day.
- Woodford is better served but I don't see an improvement in the service for Monastery.

3. Connectivity between villages

- **First Draft of Bus Connects 2018 – my submission:** I was concerned at the loss of the bus link between Rathcoole/ Newcastle and Clondalkin which is particularly important to school children attending school in the neighbouring area.
- I feel the second draft of Bus Connects missed an opportunity to link Rathcoole and Newcastle village. Given the upgrade of the R120 Lucan Newcastle Road last year there exists a high quality road that could provide a shuttle bus between Rathcoole, Newcastle, Grange Castle and the Adamstown Train Station

Second Draft of Bus Connects 2019 - my observations:

- Newcastle will be connected to Clondalkin under the new proposal and Rathcoole will be connected to Newlands Cross during peak times.
- There is still no direct link proposed between Rathcoole and Newcastle. A bus from Newcastle will go as far as the Fitzmaurice Bridge (Avoca) but won't go into Rathcoole village.

4. Future-proofing for population growth

First Draft of Bus Connects 2018 – my submission:

- I outlined my concern that the Clonburris Strategic Development Zone does not seem to be factored into these plans.

Second Draft of Bus Connects 2019 - my observations:

- I don't feel that this has been taken into account but accept that it may be premature to do so and expect the service will adapt as Clonburris homes come on-stream.

5. Frequency of Lucan buses

First Draft of Bus Connects 2018 – my submission:

- I said that the C1 and C2 need to be more frequent in order to meet the demand on the routes (currently the 25A and 25B).

Second Draft of Bus Connects 2019 - my observations:

- The fact routes C1 and C2 are key red routes on the C spine it makes no sense that their proposed average frequency is every 30 minutes.
- This is not in keeping with other red spine routes elsewhere in the city. The NTA need to revisit this and if they need to augment Dublin Bus services by hiring additional operators to provide this much needed service they must do so. Adamstown is again a rapidly growing area and the presence of the train station is not a justification for a less frequent city centre bus service.

While this version might not be perfect I am very pleased that many of the key concerns expressed by both myself and commuters have been taken into account. Direct buses during peak times for areas that were originally envisaged to have indirect services right throughout the day is a definite improvement.

It's important to note that these latest proposals don't contain any changes to the proposed frequencies. That is because that NTA want to finalise the routes before they finalise the frequencies. I believe that we need better frequency in particular on the C1 and C2 and will be including that perspective in my own submission.

Feedback is critical when it comes to devising this new vision for public transport in Dublin; please make sure to have your say by the deadline of December 3rd on www.busconnects.ie

Thanks,

Emer

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