



c/o Eamonn's Bookshop
Sandy Cove Road
Sandy Cove

Mr Robert Burns
Director of Infrastructure and Climate Change
DLRCC
County Hall
Dún Laoghaire

21st September 2020

Dear Mr Burns,

On behalf of Sandy Cove and Glasthule Residents Association (SAGRA) I am contacting you regarding the recent DLRCC developments in Glasthule Village and along the coast road.

Firstly, it is important to thank you and your team for taking the time to engage with our organisation and to explain the DLRCC plans in what must be a challenging time.

Our association has a long-established role in helping to protect the interests of the residents and in supporting positive developments in the area. The association enjoys active community support. Twice a year we publish a quality newsletter circulated to 2,500 homes and businesses accompanying two well attended public meetings. We also have a dynamic Facebook Group. We are therefore well placed to help facilitate two-way communications, to share/support council plans and to feed local communications back to the decision makers in the Council.

As an association, the committee and many of our members see a great deal of merit in the latest DLRCC developments. The cycle path has received much support and is broadly welcomed. As with any change, particularly when the urgency for change requires rapid decisions, the potential for unintended consequences to occur is almost inevitable.

So, this letter is on the behalf of our members and indeed the community seeking to help improve an initiative that we broadly support. It is important for us to highlight to the Council key unintended issues that have come to light whose consequences we would ask the Council to consider and plan to mitigate.

Glasthule and Sandy Cove has developed into a thriving, pleasant place to live and visit. It has several amenities eg Sandy Cove beach, The Forty Foot, James Joyce Tower, The People's Park. It is a destination. People travel here from all over Dublin and beyond to enjoy the unique experiences that the area provides. One of the great successes of the area is the thriving, bustling strength of the village's retail offering. We really need the businesses to be successful and we're concerned regarding the number of members who have approached the committee in recent weeks to share worrying commercial feedback from the traders in the villages.

We are receiving reports of traffic delays of an unprecedented level. Many report signage frustrations, advising that finding and getting to Glasthule is becoming a challenge. Moreover, we are being told that people visiting by car are now experiencing hassle with parking. The most concerning communications centre on difficulties for emergency vehicles. The concerns expressed are listed below:

1. Parking

As you are aware, a number of car parking spaces have been removed in the area. Interestingly, this reduction in car parking availability hasn't been the biggest issue raised regarding parking. Almost without exception the changes to the in /out layout of the Cowshed carpark have been strenuously opposed.

Naturally, the Council will wish to conduct its own professional road management and traffic survey, and we do not wish to pre-judge this, but until this is completed our suggestion is that as this one element of the DLRCC developments has garnered such negative press, we would reinstate the original Cowshed carpark layout.

For reference, the comments received can be summarised as follows. There was a natural flow to the previous car park layout. It was quick to park, do business in the village and leave. If the carpark was full, drivers could loop around and drive out the exit. Now they find parking is lot more stressful. Accessing the carpark (especially from Dalkey direction) is tighter. If the carpark is full, the driver has to turn around to go back out – especially difficult with a big car or if there is a queue.

Critically this also has an impact on residents of Devitt Villas accessing their homes through the carpark.

2. Traffic through the village

Traffic is now regularly backed up all the way to Dún Laoghaire. This has a big impact on traders with deliveries and customers visiting the village. The biggest comment regarding the traffic through the village centres on the sequencing of the lights at Summerhill Rd by the People's Park. We agree that the light sequencing at this junction is problematic although we are concerned that fixing this in isolation will result in simply moving a bottleneck.

3. Emergency vehicle access

There have been situations reported to the Committee of an ambulance being forced to reverse down Marine Avenue.

The new road narrowing has made it difficult for vehicles to turn and for cars to pull in to allow emergency vehicles to pass. This is even more of an issue with the heavier traffic.

4. Road safety

With the traffic lane on the coast road being on the "wrong side" of the road, drivers can now be unsighted. A member reported seeing two near crashes. This is particularly an issue at the junctions with Ballygihen Ave and Sandycove Ave West.

5. Access to Glasthule and Sandycove

There are a number of other factors which could turn Glasthule and Sandycove into a backwater and not the thriving, bustling village we have today.

Signage is being identified as a major challenge. Locals understand the council's desire for the coast road to become a local access area. Local residents will find new routes when navigating home however visitors to our local shops are less familiar with the local minor roads. When the traffic is gridlocked it can be very frustrating to travel down a road only to find out that the new one-way system prohibits onward driving. The traders are worried and it is in no one's interest for such difficulties to occur.

The new multidirectional one-way system along the coast, undoubtedly makes it more awkward to get here. Notwithstanding, we do believe that the DLRCC developments have much merit and it is right to try explore how other modes of transport can be included / integrated into a road network plan. The cycle path is undoubtedly popular. There are more people swimming in Sandycove and in the 40 foot than at any time in the past. Newtownsmith Green is being enjoyed and appreciated by so many people, which is really fantastic.

SAGRA is appreciative and supportive of the DLRCC developments, however we wish to constructively ask the Council to urgently look at the following issues to refine the DLRCC plan. Interesting most of the comments pertain to helping our traders and non-locals with the exception of maintaining easy access for Emergency Vehicles.

Whilst appreciating that the Council will be awaiting a detailed report on road management and traffic management, we would ask that the Council urgently review and resolve the most urgent difficulties:

- **Restore the Cowshed Carpark to its original layout**
- **Review the sequencing of traffic lights especially those at the junction of Summerhill Road and Glenageary Road Lower at the People's Park to prevent backup of traffic from Glashule**
- **Improve signage in Glashule and directing people to Glashule**
- **Assess road safety of coast road at junctions with Ballygihen Ave and Sandycove Ave West**
- **Remove road narrowing measures in Glashule not related to facilitating social distancing**

The writing of this letter has also been supported by GS Group representing 39 businesses in Glashule and Sandycove.

Regards,



Liam Madden,
Chairperson Sandycove and Glashule Residents Association
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