

Salthill Temporary Cycleway

10th February 2022

**Agenda Item 4. (a) Proposed Temporary Cycle Lane at Salthill
Ordinary Meeting of the 14th November 2022**

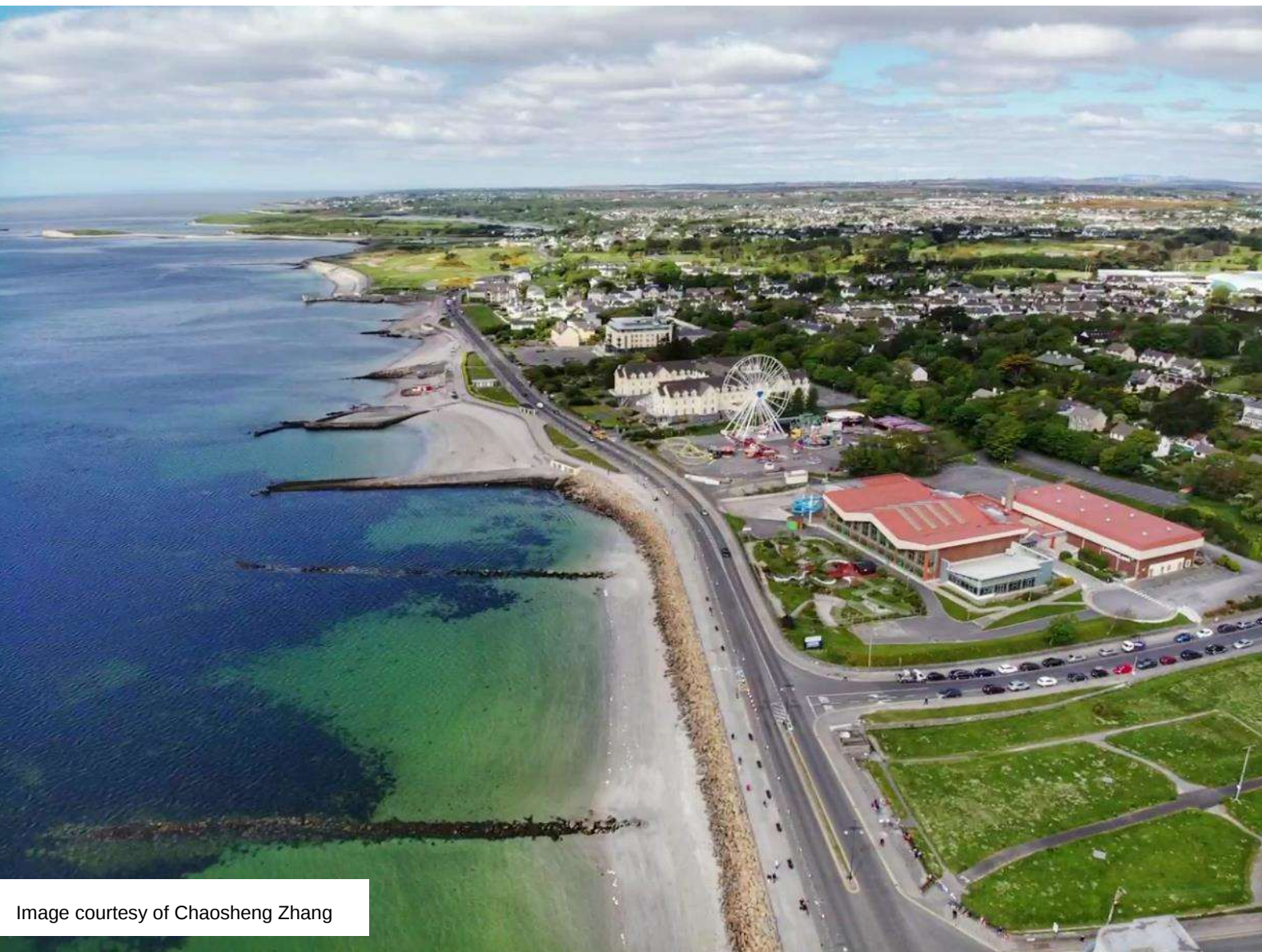


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Context

At the July Ordinary Monthly Meeting of Galway City Council, held on the 19th of July 2021 under Agenda Item 4(b) Cycle Networks Projects Update, a Motion was tabled as follows;

“That Galway City Council shall urgently seek to create a two way segregated cycle track on a temporary basis along the coastal side of Salthill promenade, specifically the R336 from the junction with Grattan Road up to where the R336 meets with the R337, and shall immediately apply for COVID-19 funding or any available alternative source of funding to facilitate this”

That Motion was not taken at the July Meeting, and with no meeting in August, it carried over onto the September Ordinary Meeting agenda. A report was issued to Councillors on the 17th September for discussion at the adjourned meeting on 27/09/2021, a copy of this report is included in Appendix A.1. The extract summary of that advice is as follows:

“As such, a two-way temporary cycleway cannot be accommodated along the Salthill promenade as to proceed without going through a planning consent process and undertaking environmental screening would be in contravention of the statutory provisions of the Planning and Development Act and the Environmental Impact Assessment Directive.”

At the city council’s meeting on the 27th September, an amendment to the above Motion was tabled, and it was that Motion that was adopted at that meeting. The amended Motion that was adopted is as follows:

“That Galway City Council shall urgently seek to create a two-way segregated cycle track on a temporary basis along the coastal side of Salthill promenade, specifically the R336 from the junction with Grattan Road up to the junction of the Prom/Blackrock Tower and a one-way cycle track from the latter junction up to where the R336 meets with the R337, and shall immediately apply for COVID-19 funding or any available alternative source of funding to facilitate this”.

This amendment to the original July Motion, brought about significant and material changes to the proposal. The original Motion had called for a two-way cycleway throughout the whole 3-kilometre area from Grattan Road to Barna Road, whereby the amended Motion changed the proposal to a one-way cycleway between Blackrock and the Barna Rd. This amended Motion then removed the requirement to acquire lands and to undertake works outside of the boundary of the Road.

The advice issued by the executive in the report of the 17th of September was relevant to the original July Motion but not the amended Motion tabled at the September meeting. When this amended Motion was considered at the meeting of the 27th September, the advice given prior to the meeting in the report of the 17th September was no longer fully applicable to the amended Motion tabled at that meeting. As the Motion was taken without debate, the executive did not have the opportunity to provide updated advice tailored to the amended Motion.

At the ordinary council meeting held on the 11th October, further discussion and clarification was provided by Councillors in relation to the intention of the Motion to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill. A legal opinion had been sought by the Chief Executive so as to give advice to the City Council to ensure that it would not be in contravention of any statutory procedures. A summary of the key elements of that legal advice was provided to the City Council meeting in October.

The Executive received and considered the legal advice, and having received further clarification from Members in relation to the proposal to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill, that it is temporary for a period of six months and that it involves no hard engineering measures so that all interventions are easily removable at the end of the temporary period, the Executive then examined how to progress the Motion.

Based on the amended Motion adopted by council in September, and having considered the legal advice in addition to the clarifications provided by council on the 11th October, the proposed cycleway scheme was then deemed to be compliant with a consent procedure under Section 38 of the Road Traffic Act 1994.

At the October meeting, the Executive was requested to bring a report back to council. Therefore, the City Council Executive undertook further consideration of the Motion and the proposal to provide a temporary cycleway including on-site surveys, preliminary concept designs and considerations of impacts of each proposal as well as reviewing possible options with other authorities with a view to capturing all relevant experience and knowledge to inform the cycleway proposal as stated within the Motion.

Two feasible options were developed to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill, and details of those proposals were provided in a report to councillors on the 10th of December (Copy attached in Appendix A.3) and discussed under Agenda Item 4 (a) of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council on the 13th of December 2021.

Both options provide for the proposed temporary cycleway along the coastal side of the road, generally in the area where parking is currently provided.

Option 1 provides for a two-way temporary cycleway along the coastal side of the Salthill Promenade in the area that is current used for roadside parking, and a one-way temporary cycleway between Blackrock and the Barna Road.

This Option provides for the making of the Salthill Promenade one-way to general traffic from West to East, between the Barna Road and Seapoint/ D'Arcy Roundabout.

This option then creates the greatest space available to provide for the temporary cycleway to be fully in accordance with the recommendations and guidance in the National Cycle Manual. It also retains an element of parking on the Salthill promenade.

Option 2 provides for a two-way cycleway along the coastal side of the Salthill Promenade in the area that is current used for roadside parking, and a one-way cycleway between Blackrock and the Barna Road. This option retains two-way traffic along the Salthill Promenade between the Pollnaroona West Junction and Grattan Road but provides for one-way traffic in a West to East Direction between the Barna Road and the Pollnaroona West Junction.

This option reduces the impact from traffic diversions as a result of the one-way system on the main Promenade but requires going below the recommended 4m width for a two-way cycleway as contained within the Cycle Design Manual and has a greater loss of parking than Option 1.

As advised at the council meeting in December 2021, and as both options were feasible options to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill in accordance with the Motion, we proceeded to public consultation on both options.

Public Consultation

Public consultation commenced on Friday the 14th of January 2022 and submissions could be made up until the 28th of January 2022. Notices were provided in the Galway Advertiser and the City Tribune, and the consultation was publicised on our social media outlets over the period of the public consultation.

An email invite was also sent to a wide database including bus operators, emergency services, community groups, cycling groups and business and residents associations.

Full details of the proposed temporary cycleway scheme and the associated drawings and reports were available for viewing in person at City Hall or online on our website. The public could make submissions through an online portal or by post or email.

The objective of the consultation was to identify the preferred option and to seek the public and stakeholders' opinion in relation to the proposal. All submissions would be considered to inform

the proposal to provide a temporary cycleway. However, any proposals to be implemented that materially alter either Option 1 or Option 2 would require a new Section 38 Procedure.

A more detailed report on the public consultation is attached to this report. A significant level of submissions were made in relation to this proposed temporary cycleway. 1,740 number submissions were received by post/e-mail and 4,978 submissions were received via the online portal.

That gives a combined total of 6,718 submissions.

Our summary analysis of the combined submissions gives the following public opinion in relation to the proposal.

- 246 submissions made under this public consultation gave a preference for Option 1;
- 2,204 submissions give a preference for Option 2.

Public consultation is one of the key tools that is used to improve transparency, efficiency and effectiveness of the quality of our delivery of infrastructure in support of our community and it gives stakeholders ownership of the ultimate outcome. It is important that the public can fully express their views on the proposed scheme.

At an early stage in this public consultation process, feedback received from the public was that they should not be constrained to selecting Option 1 or Option 2 if neither of those options is a true reflection of their viewpoint. Therefore, the facility of 'Neither/ Do Nothing' was added to the public consultation feedback form, to allow all stakeholders express this sentiment, and allowing them to participate in the public consultation via the on-line portal rather than reverting to a written/e-mail submission in order to express their viewpoint.

It should be noted through the public consultation, the following number of submissions indicated their preference not to proceed with the temporary cycleway as proposed in either Option 1 or Option 2:

- 4236 submissions indicated their preference not to proceed with a temporary cycleway as proposed in Option 1 or Option 2.

Submission from Blue Light Emergency Services

Submission received from Garda North Western Region HQ

Summary of the key extracts from these submission (a copy has been provided previously to Elected Members):

An Garda Síochána indicated that neither Option 1 or Option 2 can proceed as both options would severely restrict emergency access along the Regional Road to Barna and West Galway, and diverting traffic onto the Threadneedle Road would cause substantial backlog of traffic and seriously impede the free movement of Garda vehicles and this in turn would have a negative impact on their response times.

Galway Fire and Rescue Service

Both Option 1 and Option 2 provide for one way traffic in a West to East Direction between the Barna Road and the Pollnarooma West Junction. Both options presented would create serious challenges to the mobilisation of Fire and Rescue Services to the west side of the city, Knocknacarra, Barna, and the areas beyond.

In conclusion, the Fire & Rescue Service opinion is that the current proposals would have a significant impact on the ability of the Fire and Rescue Service to respond in a timely manner to incidents on the west side of Galway City and County. Both proposals put forward would lead to unacceptable delays in reaching incidents where lives are threatened and significantly increase the risk to members of the public and service personnel. Therefore, Galway Fire and Rescue Service cannot support the proposal put forward to date.

HSE West - Regional Emergency Management Unit

The consequences of proposed traffic management systems will potentially affect the National Ambulance Service response time to the catchment area affected and contribute to increased traffic on the proposed diversions.

The proposed diversions will send the emergency services to already busy and congested routes on the west side of the city.

It is the feared that the implementation of these measures as currently proposed will create an increased risk of delayed response times for the National Ambulance Service

Conclusions

The Public Consultation was undertaken to identify the Preferred Option to proceed with in order to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill in accordance with the Motion. Some of the Outcomes from the Public Consultation are as follows;

Primary Concerns Raised in the Public Consultation

- **Impact on traffic** –one way system –impact on emergency services, bus operations and residents
- **Impact on parking and residents** –loss of parking, overflow parking, creation of rat runs, additional traffic in residential areas
- **Access for mobility impaired/ older amenity users** –including access for swimming

Key Learnings from Public Consultation

- Of those who are in favour of a temporary cycleway in Salthill, Option 2 is the Emerging Preferred Option
- Submissions from 'Blue Light' Services raise concerns regarding emergency response times, in relation to the proposed temporary cycleway
- Submissions from Bus Éireann raise their concerns about impacts on service delivery (delays, catchment)
- Public consultation has raised local, isolated issues, as would typically have been identified through a constraints study
- 63% of submissions were not in favour of a temporary cycleway, as outlined in Option 1 or Option 2

The Public Consultation has shown that Option 2 is the preferred solution to deliver a temporary cycleway in Salthill. In order to comply with that Motion, the next steps sets out the mechanism to delivery on that Motion;

- Complete detailed design for Option 2. This is currently underway with the assistance of the National Transport Authority's Cycle Design Office
- Further engage with the emergency services and public transport operators to mitigate as far as possible issues relating to the Option 2 proposal

- Procurement of materials such as road bollards. This has already commenced, and Galway City Council has placed an order for the supply of materials required for the provision of the temporary cycleway scheme
- We also have engaged contractors to undertake the removal of road markings where required, the provision of new road markings, signage installations and to undertake pavement works. Site meetings have been completed with the contractors for the works
- Amendment to road signage, current road signage will be amended to direct traffic onto the Threadneedle Road to Kingston Road. We would also advise Google Maps / TomTom/ Garmin to amend their navigation system taking account of the one-way section of Road between that Threadneedle Road Junction and Barna Road.
- As the scheme requires the provision of regulatory signage under the Traffic Signs Manual, it is necessary to further consult with the Gardaí before installing any such signage or road markings
- Commence a review of Appointed Stand byelaws to facilitate the relocation of existing taxi ranks to facilitate the implementation of Option 2
- Closeout the Environmental Screening for the Option 2 proposal
- Closeout the Road Safety Audit for the Option 2 proposal
- Relocate bus stops
- Install the temporary cycleway
- Remove the temporary cycleway after 6 months

Members should note the concerns raised by the emergency services and this is also a concern for the Executive. It is also a statutory requirement to further consult with An Garda Síochána under the Road Traffic (Signs) Regulations, 1997 and the Traffic Signs Manual in regard to the provision necessary regulatory signage.

We should also be conscious of the fact that as a local authority, we are here to serve our people and to listen to their voices and their opinion. We should be cognisant of the fact that the majority (63%) of those who engaged in the public consultation were not in favour of Option 1 or Option 2.

The Council needs to consider how to engage with this sector of our community to bring them on board with the proposal to provide a temporary cycleway in Salthill in accordance with the Motion. Galway City Council is committed to delivering on the active travel measures as set out in the Galway Transport Strategy.

This also aligns with national policy to maintain a focus on the development of sustainable transport measures in order to achieve greater sustainability in transport modes, tackle climate change and to enhance the environment and people's quality of life.

On that basis, the proposal is aligned with our strategy to bring about modal change in Galway.

Furthermore, as this proposal is for a temporary cycleway, it is an objective to provide a permanent cycleway scheme in Salthill. After the 6 month phase of the temporary cycleway, a review and learning report will be produced to inform that permanent scheme. The permanent scheme will be developed in a project management model similar to the other cycle schemes that were presented to Council in July 2021.

The following is a summary of the Project Management Phases in developing that proposal.

- The progression of any infrastructural (permanent) transport related scheme involves the progression of the scheme through the phases and reporting requirements of the Project Approval Guidelines. The purpose of the Guidelines is to provide a framework for, and a phased approach to, the development, management and delivery of sustainable mobility projects of all types and for all capital values. The Guidelines set out arrangements for project development, reporting and monitoring. The phases of the guidelines are such that the development of any transport related project undertakes a series of studies, investigations, with current phases being developed and informed through the findings or reports, studies and investigations undertaken during the previous phase.
- **Phase 1** of the Guidelines (Scope and Purpose) outlines the application process for the scheme.
- **Phase 2** Concept Development and Option Selection seeks to develop a Constraints Study to identify all constraints within the receiving environment which need to be considered during the scheme development. These Constraints would include all physical constraints (Land, Land Use, Archaeological, Architectural Heritage, Zoning, Environmental and the like). The Constraints study then informs the identification of the potential options available to be developed within the constraints. The Options Report, in conjunction with the objectives of the scheme are assessed in accordance with the Common Appraisal Framework for Transport Projects under predefined criteria which include Economy, Safety, Integration, Environment, Accessibility and Social Inclusion and Physical Activity.

The requirement to assess options against these criteria ensure Value for Money, Alignment with National, Regional and Local Policy and result in a scheme that is balanced and considered. The option which ranks highest is termed the Emerging Preferred Option.

- Once an Emerging Preferred Option is then identified, the scheme progresses to **Phase 3** Preliminary Design and the scheme is developed into a series of drawings. Supporting studies and reports are also undertaken, such as Traffic Surveys, Traffic Modelling, Bus Routing Studies (where necessary), Road Safety Auditing, Environmental studies and Environmental reporting requirements (EIA and AA Screenings).
- On completion and approval of the preliminary design, the scheme then progresses to **Phase 4** Statutory Processes. It is at this stage that the planning route and environmental reporting requirements for the scheme are then identified. Subject to the identified planning and environmental requirements, the process dictates the type and form of Public Consultation to be undertaken. The documentation is developed in line with prescribed formats. Additional studies and reports are prepared to provide backup to the application and the scheme progresses through the relevant process.
- Following statutory approval, the scheme then progresses to **Phase 5** Detailed Design and Procurement. During this stage, refinement of the scheme design is undertaken, within the confines of any conditions and requirements arising from the planning process. Further studies at a more localised level are undertaken to complete the design to a level of detail which facilitates construction. Tender documentation is then prepared based on the detailed design and the scheme progresses to tender.
- The remaining **phases, 6 and 7**, relate to the construction phase of the project and the defects period and close out of the project.
- At each phase of a scheme's development, the studies, investigations and reporting requirements for the scheme are further developed/detailed and refined from the previous phase. This approach allows for the finer details of a scheme, its receiving environment and public input to inform the scheme design and to reduce conflicts and disturbance arising from the scheme. The timelines also allow for input by various stakeholders throughout a scheme's development, ensuring buy-in and alleviating concerns.

The above, like all projects that are being brought forward from the Galway Transport Strategy require additional staff resources to effectively deliver on those projects. The recruitment of

additional is underway under active travel staffing approval Once all of the required additional staff are in place, the proposed permanent cycling solution in Salthill and beyond can be progressed as quickly as possible as set out above.

Uinsinn Finn
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Transport