

7.00 ROADS LAYOUT/PARKING AND TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT

Survey and Analysis

7.01 Introduction

In examining the roads layout, parking and traffic management, the Authority has not sought to replace the Roads Authority in looking at traffic movements through the wider city centre area. Rather it has focused its attention on the enlarged site and its immediate vicinity and the localised traffic management required in that area. The Authority is fortunate in that many of the local distributor routes are operating well below capacity, i.e. Sheriff Street, Commons Street, Guild Street. These streets are wide and have been designed to cater for goods traffic so that they offer not only opportunities to cater for an increase in localised traffic, but also for extensive landscaping proposals which will improve the locality.

It can be argued that any redevelopment will increase the traffic loading onto the city centre network. However, the sites within the enlarged Custom House Docks Area must be seen within their historic context where they catered for very extensive movements by heavy goods vehicles.

The traffic movements have also been examined in the context of the Ministerial amendment to the Planning Scheme in 1987 that the road layout within the original Area shall be so designed as to serve only traffic arising from the development within the Area. The Authority, in meeting the Ministerial amendment, has sought, in consultation with the Roads Authority, to provide for two major access points to the site. The first operational access is from the Amiens Street/Memorial Road/Store Street junction where a new signalised junction was installed. This is designed to cater for the western side of the site including the entire residential development. The eastern side of the site will be served from the main access from Commons Street opposite Mayor Street. Through traffic, or 'rat-running' will be prevented by the erection of bollards at the new Mayor Street Bridge which will be removable for emergency vehicles. It would be appropriate to apply similar principles to other areas such as the National Sports Centre site and the Sheriff Street flats.

7.02 Public Transport

The new extended area is fortunate in its location close to major public transport nodes and the integration of Connolly Station into the overall development is an objective which will be pursued to maximise the use of public transport facilities. To date the primary public transport node being used is the Tara Street Dart Station.

7.03 Pedestrian movement

The main pedestrian movement from outside the site has occurred from the west of the site feeding down from the Talbot Street/Store Street/Memorial Road area, as well as some movements along the quay frontage and from the Dart Station.

7.04 Car parking

The original Planning Scheme envisaged that 2,000 car parking spaces would be required for the entire site and the numbers proposed in the winning scheme in 1987 were in the order of 1,800. The original Planning Scheme also envisaged that this parking would be preferably provided underground. In development to date the Authority has achieved its underground objective which has enabled considerable areas of ground level to be devoted to pedestrian use. Parking space has been provided at an average rate of one space per 850 sq. ft. of nett lettable offices. However, demand level would seem to be in the order of one space per 300-400 sq. ft. on the assumption that the spaces might be free to the individuals parking. As a result there has been pressure on the Authority to provide additional parking space. The Authority has decided that a multi-storey car park should be provided to cater for this parking demand. Aside from commuter demand there will also be a demand for short-term parking to cater for visitors to the offices, the retail facilities, the hotel and any major visitor attraction. It is envisaged that a facility catering for a minimum of 500 spaces will be required. In a visual sense an underground car park would be better than a multi-storey car park, however the cost is obviously higher. Previous studies costing one facility versus another have contributed to the Authority's view that a multi-storey car park is the only practical solution. However, given the visual disamenity often associated with such car parks, the Authority will require it to be designed to a very high standard and be suitably screened by other buildings to avoid negative edges or visual disamenity.

The original Planning Scheme foresaw most vehicular movement as well as the parking being underground. However, a certain amount of traffic movement and surface car parking can help animate a space. It is also recognised that very considerable numbers of pedestrians can be required to animate certain spaces, so that the Authority, in re-examining the Planning Scheme, is designating areas which are primarily for pedestrian use, and other areas where mixed vehicular and pedestrian use can occur. There are also particular instances where underground parking is simply impossible, e.g. Stack B, and the Authority will consider surface level parking.

7.05 Access

Map no. 7 shows in broad terms the access pattern considered suitable for the enlarged site. The Authority will consult the Roads Authority in determining the exact points of access and their design at an appropriate time.

This layout incorporates the Minister's requirement that the road layout be designed to serve only traffic arising from development within the original Custom House Docks site. It also incorporates similar approaches to other sites.

7.06 Pedestrian/vehicular use

The layout also shows the areas which are considered to be primarily for pedestrian use and those areas where both vehicular and pedestrian use are either in parallel or intermixed. The objective is to create a safe environment whilst animating the space.

7.07 Roads

In dealing with individual roads it is the Authority's objective and policy to achieve the following:

7.07.01 Custom House Quay

The Authority recognises the importance of Custom House Quay as a major traffic artery to the port. Whilst it would be its objective to seek the pedestrianisation of the quays, this, of necessity, must be a long-term objective and depends on the provision of major new access routes to the port. The space lying between the river and the Custom House Docks site is extensive and to animate it will require very dense levels of pedestrian usage, and some vehicular access will probably be required. It is recognised however, in the meantime, that the density and speed of traffic on this section of the quays detracts from the environmental qualities of the area. It will therefore be the policy, in cooperation with Dublin Corporation as the Roads Authority, to take measures to reduce the speed of traffic on the road with traffic calming measures and create an enhanced environment for the pedestrian.

It will not be the Authority's policy to provide for parking in the general area of the quayside other than for specific bus accommodation to cater for parties visiting any major visitor attraction on the site. The Authority will be prepared to allow for set-down space for any shopping/hotel area, again in consultation with Dublin Corporation.

7.07.02 North Wall Quay

This area lies outside the direct control of the Authority, however, it would encourage the provision of traffic-calming measures along this roadway. The Authority would also encourage the continuation of the pedestrian amenity area proposed for Custom House Quay in the area lying between the carriageway and the quay edge.

7.07.3 Commons Street/Mayor Street/Guild Street

The Authority envisages these three streets acting as the main distributor roads to the various sites. Both Commons Street and Guild Street are envisaged as catering for through traffic as part of the general road network in the area. However, in the case of Mayor Street, traffic-calming measures will be taken by the introduction of a central square and monument to inhibit traffic and allow the street to act primarily as a significant residential street.

7.07.4 Sheriff Street

Sheriff Street falls into two distinct sections - the first outside the An Post Sorting Office and the second to the north of the Sheriff Street flats. In the case of the section outside the Sorting Office, the Authority considers it vital to retain both pedestrian and vehicular animation to the street. To this end it will require the main access to the Sheriff Street Sorting Office, in either its existing or redeveloped form, to be from Sheriff Street. On the other section of the street, the Corporation has already introduced a cul-de-sac element to the east of the street in order to enhance the residential amenities of the inhabitants of the new housing being erected there.

7.08 Parking policies and objectives

Aside from the provision of the 500- space minimum multi-storey car park on the original site, the Authority will also consider the provision of a multi-storey car park on the National Sports Centre site should there be a sufficient demand for such a facility.

The Authority will apply the following standards to various development uses as follows:

Offices:

1 space per 850 sq. ft. nett lettable maximum.

Residential:

70 space per unit.

Other uses:

As per the Dublin Development Plan.

7.09 Provision for the handicapped

The design of all pedestrian systems and access to facilities should relate to national and international standards for free movement of the handicapped. Additionally, primary circulation routes should be capable of facilitating such traffic as shopping trolleys, perambulators, etc.

7.10 Servicing

The Authority will seek to service individual building elements by the underground parking network as appropriate. However, it recognises that surface level servicing will be required, in particular for retail/public house/restaurant use, given the intended location of these elements in either conserved structures or close to them.

7.11 Utilities vehicles

Full provision must be made for refuse collection, emergency vehicles and in particular fire-fighting tenders, in accordance with the Fire Authority's requirements.

PLANNING SCHEME

7.12 Key elements:

7.12.1 Traffic system

The Authority will seek to create an efficient, functional, safe system for both vehicle and pedestrian.

7.12.2 Pedestrian areas

It is selecting certain areas for pedestrians only and will seek to animate other areas with a judicious mix of vehicles and pedestrians as shown on Map 7. The Authority will seek to develop a direct pedestrian link to Connolly Station.

7.12.3 Car-parking

Car-parking should be located underground or at semi-basement level but consideration will be given to ground level parking where appropriate or where underground parking is not feasible.

7.12.4 Multi-storey car-park

A multi-storey car-park, catering for a minimum of 500 spaces shall be provided on the original site and consideration will be given to a similar facility on the former National Sports Centre site.

7.12.5 Car parking standards

Car parking standards shall comply with those listed in paragraph 7. 8 above.