



## Response to National Transport Authority Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy Issues Feedback Paper

Date: 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2021

### Background

**About Trinity:** Trinity is the largest trip attractor in Dublin City Centre. The majority of our 16,000 students and 4,000 staff, study or work on our College Green Campus. Whilst the central work of the university is education and research, Trinity also has 661 on campus student beds on College Green/Pearse Street, approximately 1 million visitors per year to the Book of Kells exhibition and multiple cafes and gift shops open to the public. Our conference, private dining and banqueting services are busy year-round and from mid-May to mid-August we operate as the largest accommodation provider in Dublin with over 1,500 beds a night across our College Green and Trinity Hall campuses<sup>1</sup>.

**Trinity's partnership with the NTA:** Trinity has partnered with the National Transport Authority as a Smarter Travel Campus since 2011. Through that partnership, data capture with the National Transport Authority has identified Trinity as a global leader in sustainable transport use with only 1% of our students and staff commuting by private car<sup>2</sup>. Trinity has participated in the National Transport Authority's annual walking and cycling challenges with participation of greater than 100 people every year. In 2019, Trinity participated in the National Transport Authority's Smarter Travel awards with one group of our students and one of our lecturers winning an award. Partnering with the National Transport Authority on the Smarter Travel Campus initiative has been a very positive and enjoyable experience and we look forward to continuing to do so.

**How Trinity is supporting #LiveableDublin:** In 2019, Trinity, PPI Ignite (a research project in Trinity) and BYCS Amsterdam (a Dutch not for profit organisation that promotes cycling) worked with the support of Dublin City Council to facilitate a city-wide debate on how Dublin can become more liveable. During the LiveableDublin events, participants defined and explored the question, "How can we speed up change in Dublin to make it more liveable?"<sup>3</sup>. Trinity made a submission to Dublin City Council on travel during COVID-19 restrictions calling for wider footpaths and safer cycling<sup>4</sup>. We were ranked as the top 'Green' University in 2020<sup>5</sup>. Trinity believes this work demonstrates that we are committed to working for and with the city to make Dublin more sustainable and liveable.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/corporate-services/assets/pdf/annual-report-2018-2019.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/healthytrinity/travel/Stats.php>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/healthytrinity/liveabledublin/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/healthytrinity/assets/documents/Covid-19/TCD%20DCC%20Covid%2019%20Submission%20Final.pdf>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.tcd.ie/news\\_events/articles/trinity-wins-best-green-campus-award-2020/](https://www.tcd.ie/news_events/articles/trinity-wins-best-green-campus-award-2020/)

## How people travelled to Trinity pre COVID-19

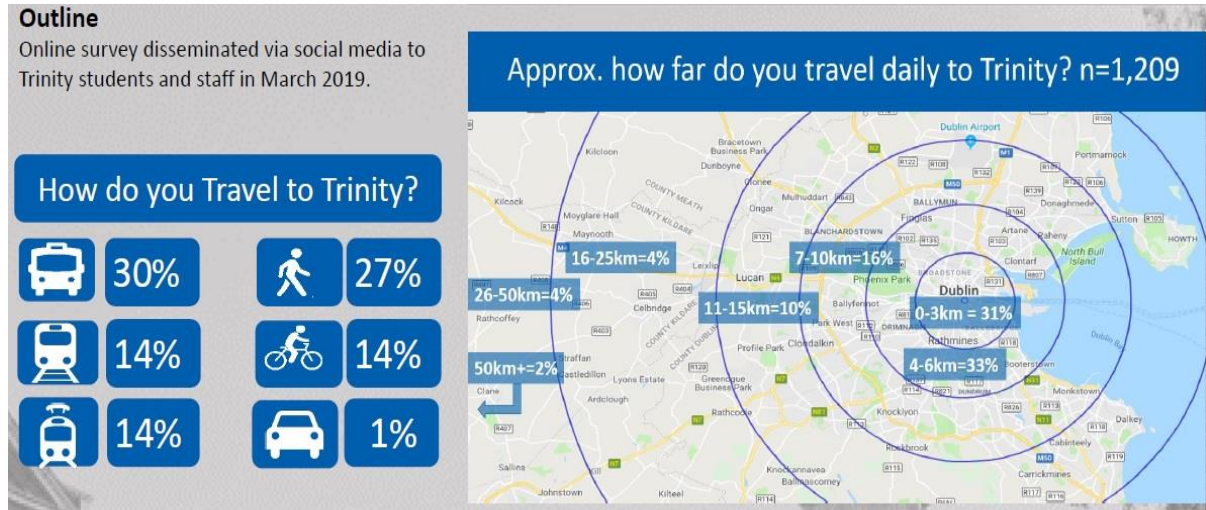


Figure 1. Shows how Trinity students and staff travelled to campus in March 2019

Trinity is a global leader in sustainable transport use. We are lucky, due to our location, to be served by all forms of public transport except safe, segregated cycling.

**Completing this document:** Trinity notes the primary ongoing and to be completed transport projects for the GDA:

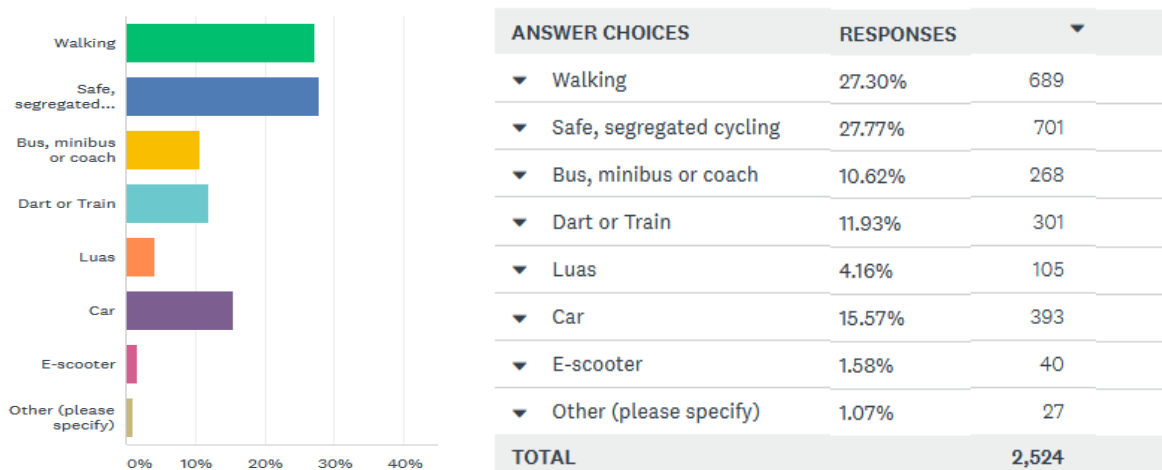
- Luas Cross City
- Reopening of the Phoenix Park Tunnel Rail Line
- On-going roll out of cycle tracks and greenways
- Metrolink and DART+ Programme; and
- Investment in bus priority and bus service improvements – BusConnects

We thank the NTA for their progress on these schemes and welcome the review of the Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy. We have written this document under four headings set out in issues paper.

### Trinity's Feedback on the Issues Paper

1. What are the things that we should look at first while working on this plan?

**Walking and Cycling:** In June 2020 Trinity conducted a transport survey of our community. See Figure 2 for details.



**Figure 2:** “If all of the following were available on YOUR commute to Trinity during the phased lifting of Covid-19 restrictions, which would be your preferred mode?” Response rate = 7.9% n= 2,524, Total population ~20,000

Walking and cycling were the preferred modes for Trinity students and staff to travel to campus during the phased lifting of COVID-19 restrictions.

Trinity thanks the NTA for the investment of tens of millions of euro in walking and cycling across the Greater Dublin Area since 2016, and the delivery of significant additional investment for these modes under the Covid-19 and stimulus programmes in 2020.

We would like to see the rapid roll out of the GDA Cycle Network Plan<sup>6</sup> and safe coherent routes to and from the main campus and all our satellite campuses (St. James’ University Hospital, Tallaght University Hospital, Iveagh Grounds and Santry Grounds (Sports), Grand Canal Innovation District (in pipeline), halls of residences (Trinity Hall, Dartry), School of Nursing (D’Olier Street), etc.

**Pearse Street:** Trinity is developing a new campus “Trinity East” formerly known as the Grand Canal Innovation District<sup>7</sup>. Trinity would like to see segregated cycling and footpaths between College Green and the new “Trinity East” campus. This route is not currently part of Bus Connects. We are encouraged to see the changes being proposed on Sandymount Strand, strongly support them and suggest there is an opportunity for a route between College Green and Trinity East to connect to the Sandymount Cycle Route.

**St. James’s Hospital and D’Olier Street:** Our St. James’ University Hospital campus connection to College Green (main campus) and D’Olier Street (Nursing) is a cycling-hostile route with many complex junctions on it. Trinity would like to see safer cycling and walking here.

**Rathmines and Nassau Street:** The two other key routes for Trinity are Rathmines and Nassau Street. Thank you to the NTA for the work you are doing through Rathmines as part of Bus Connects and for your support of the changes to date on Nassau Street.

**Switching from the private car:** Less than 1% of our total population or <7% of staff use the private car to commute to Trinity. We would like to persuade more to shift to active travel modes, but that will only be possible if the routes they would use are perceived to be safe for cycling.

A cluster analysis of our June 2020 survey found that staff aged 35-45 who prior to COVID would use rail to get to Trinity, would like to work from home 3+ days a week and when travelling to college would choose to cycle. (N = 873 (36.8%))<sup>8</sup>

**E-bicycles:** Some staff live too far away from campus for the bicycle to be a realistic travel option. The availability of segregated cycle routes for e-bicycles and the provision of better bicycle storage at stations and transport hubs (Bus Aras, in particular) may help with this cohort.

**College Green:** Trinity has made a submission in support of College Green public realm upgrades. It would help if Westmoreland Street/D’Olier Street could be included in the works.

## 2. How should we evaluate future transport needs?

**Needs analysis:** It would be beneficial to have data with representative samples that asks people what transport they would like. The most available mode of transport in the Greater Dublin Area is the

<sup>6</sup> [https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Written\\_Report11.pdf](https://www.nationaltransport.ie/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/Written_Report11.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.tcd.ie/innovation-district/>

<sup>8</sup> Data not published yet. Email for source.

private car. If other modes were available, for example safe, segregated cycling, would people use it?

**Inclusive Transport:** Research should be stratified across different sectors of the population. For many people, walking, cycling and public transport are the only transport available. These groups include everyone under the age of 17, many of our students who don't have a drivers' licence, people who can't afford the ~€600 for instruction and a drivers licence, people who can't afford to run a car at €10,000 per annum, people with disabilities who can't drive e.g. those with visual/hearing impairments or a learning difficulty that precludes them past the test, visitors to Ireland who don't feel comfortable driving on the left hand side of the road. The private car excludes all of these people and yet so much public money and space is given to the private car. By assessing how all people in our society wish to travel, we can make the case for a fairer allocation of public space and funding.

### 3. What are the key components to a forward-looking transport strategy?

Commuters will not easily give up car use when the private car is now essentially an extension of their living room (in-car digital connection, etc). Public transport and active travel modes must be promoted and made easier and more convenient to use. Just as with our learnings from tobacco and health impacts, society needs to increase the cost of private car use – access control, road pricing, parking charges, etc.

There should be no 'free parking' at places of work in a congested urban area.

Surface transport modes should be reliable. The Luas works due to the reliability/punctuality/frequency parameters. Similar reliability, punctuality, frequency across other services is required.

From a health perspective, walking and cycling should be prioritised as the last mile technology of choice.

### 4. What does the future of transport in this region look like to you?

The transport of the future is inclusive of all, including children, students, women, people with disabilities and those who cannot or do not want to drive. It is safe, reliable and people focused.

Some of our students and staff commute from their residences over quite long distances, due in part to the high cost of rental accommodation in the city and the equally high cost of private housing in the GDA. The transport of the future focuses on local communities who may not travel to the city centre every day but can do so efficiently and safely when they need to, by walking or cycling to local transport stations and travelling sustainably to the city centre.

Up until the '80s Trinity had a clause in its staff employment contracts precluding any key staff member living more than 25 miles from the campus. Permission had to be obtained from the Board to breach this stipulation. The world has changed, especially since COVID-19. That distance restriction can no longer be applied!

#### Contact Details

For questions/comments on this submission please contact:

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