

Alexandra Basin Redevelopment Project

and a

Possible Future Eastern Bypass

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1. Background

An Bord Pleanála confirmed on 8th July 2013 that the ABR Project is a Strategic Infrastructure Development. This confirmation followed a favourable Inspector's Report dated 26th June 2013. This latter report referenced the issues which arose in two meetings between DPC and An Bord Pleanála on 14th March 2013 and on 27th May 2013.

The notes of the latter meeting include the following:

The Board emphasised that the proposed development should not curtail any future Eastern Bypass route options or any options for the upgrading of the East Link Bridge. Noting this, the prospective applicant said that it is working with the NRA, NTA and Dublin City Council to ensure the acceptability of the project in this context.

This document details how the proposed ABR Project complies with the current planning framework as regards any future Eastern Bypass and, beyond this, how the design of the proposed works have been discussed with NRA and DCC and adapted to ensure that DPC's planning application to An Bord Pleanála is compatible with a possible future scheme to construct an Eastern Bypass.

2. Dublin Port and the Eastern Bypass

DPC supports the construction of an Eastern Bypass based on the improvement this would make to access to the Port's hinterland.

In particular, a doubling in port volumes to 2040 as envisaged in DPC's Masterplan would double the volume of freight requiring access to the Port.

Whereas the Port has an actively used rail connection, the proportion of the Port's volumes that uses rail is only in the order of 1/60th. A doubling or trebling of this proportion would have minimal impact on the imposition which an overall doubling of port volumes would put on the road network.

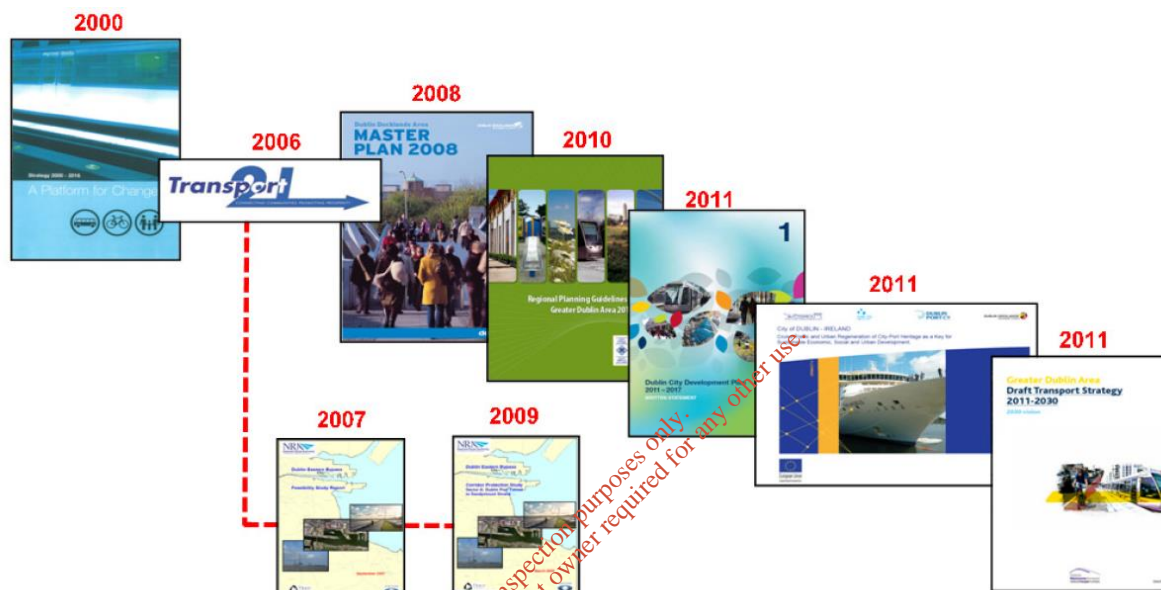
In these circumstances, the availability of a southern access route to the Port via an Eastern Bypass would complement the Dublin Port Tunnel and would divide Port traffic between the two links in accordance with the cargoes' origin and destination points.

3. Planning framework

The Eastern Bypass is a large infrastructure project, probably five times the size of the €800m Dublin Port Tunnel. It has featured in various plans for more than 40 years, at least as far back as An Foras Forbartha's 1971 study report *Transportation in Dublin*.

It is currently addressed in a variety of plans and reports as summarised in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Chronology of the principle plans and reports referencing the Eastern Bypass



The above plans and reports fall into two categories and the main documents in each category are summarised below.

Firstly, there are five formally adopted statements of policy which refer to the Eastern Bypass

- A Platform for Change, Strategy 2000 to 2016 (Dublin transportation Office)
- Dublin Docklands Area Masterplan 2008
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 to 2022
- Dublin City Development Plan, 2011 to 2017
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2010 to 2016

Secondly, there are a further five reports and draft plans which address the Eastern Bypass from varying perspectives:

- Dublin Eastern Bypass Feasibility Study Report, September 2007 (NRA)
- Dublin Eastern Bypass Corridor Protection Study Section A: Dublin Port Tunnel to Sandymount Strand, March 2009 (NRA)
- Dublin Eastern Bypass Corridor Protection Study Booterstown to Sandyford, January 2011 (NRA)
- Cruise Traffic Urban regeneration Local Action Plan, June 2011 (DCC, DPC and DDDA,)
- Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy 2011 to 2030, June 2011 (NTA)

The large scale and long term focus for the delivery of a possible future Eastern Bypass, combined with restricted Government capital expenditure has the potential to create uncertainty in relation to other major and more immediate infrastructure projects such as DPC's ABR Project.

For example, the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Draft Transport Strategy addresses the provision of the Eastern Bypass at some stage after 2030 whereas DPC wishes to commence construction of the ABR project within one to two years, subject to necessary consents.

Consequently, it is necessary to determine how the ABR Project can be implemented now without compromising the construction of the Eastern Bypass in the future, perhaps even decades from now

At the core of addressing this issue is to determine how the imminent strategic development requirements of Dublin Port as a key element of national trade infrastructure can be reconciled with the long-term safeguarding of a corridor for the Eastern Bypass.

In preparing this planning application and given DPC's acceptance of the long-term benefits of an Eastern Bypass to the Port, DPC has engaged extensively with DCC, the NTA and NRA to ensure that the ABR Project is developed in a way that is compatible with the construction of the Eastern Bypass in the future, whenever this might happen.

4. Adopted statements of policy

In approaching the design of its scheme, DPC has, in the first instance, had specific regard to the Regional Planning Guidelines and to the City Development Plan.

In the first instance, Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010 to 2022 address the Eastern Bypass as follows:

...the NRA undertook a feasibility and corridor study in relation to an eastern bypass from Dublin Port with the N11. No route selection has been finalised or approved. The corridor study should inform future decisions for the relevant Development and Local Area or Master Plans and development management purposes. The NTA will examine both of these corridors as part of preparing the new Strategy- Vision 2030. Until this process is completed and decisions are made in relation to planned transport investment for the GDA it is important that the corridors are protected to ensure future options remain viable.

Following on from this, the Dublin City Council City Development Plan, 2011 to 2017 includes policy SI 19 as follows:

To support the provision of a link between north Dublin Port and the Southern Cross/ South Eastern Motorway via an eastern bypass of the city, in conjunction and co-operation with other transport bodies, the National Roads Authority and local authorities. The preferred method is by means of a bored tunnel and the preferred route is under Sandymount and Merrion Strand and Booterstown Marsh. However, the route and detailed design of the link road will be subject to an Environmental Impact Assessment and all statutory requirements, including a public consultation process, by the relevant authorities. An Appropriate Assessment of the proposed project for the entire route is also required in accordance with the Habitats Directive.

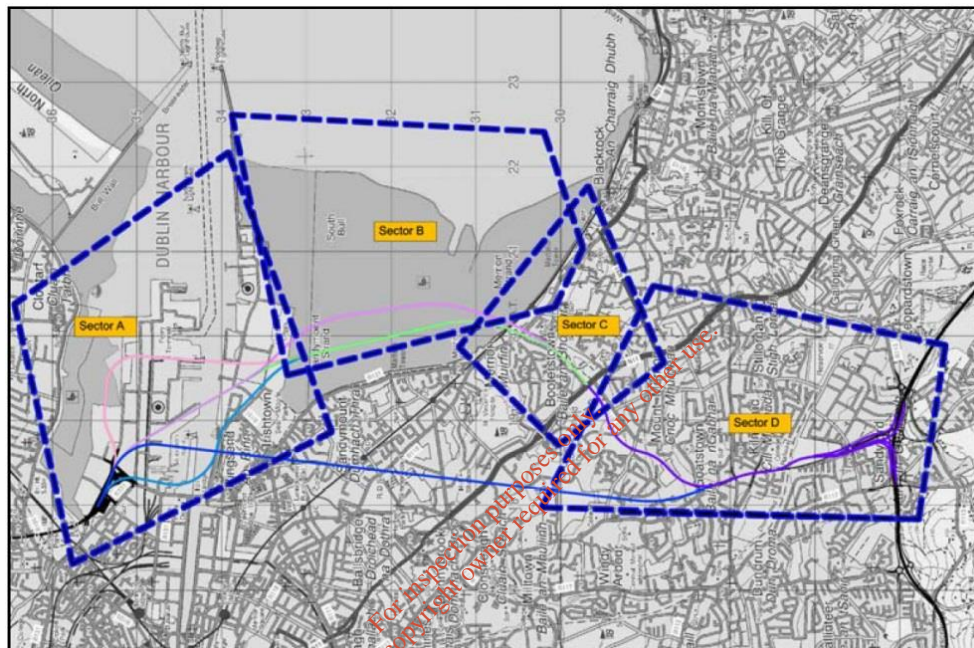
Beyond this statement of policy, Map F from the City Development Plan (see Appendix 1) highlighted an **indicative only** route for the Eastern Bypass to cross the Liffey.

5. NRA's ongoing analysis

The NRA's *Dublin Eastern Bypass Feasibility Study Report* of September 2007 analysed the specific route options that might be considered for the Eastern Bypass.

The study broke the possible routes for the Eastern Bypass into four sectors as shown In Figure 2 below and, for each sector, identified a range of options.

Figure 2: Sectors for analysing Eastern Bypass route options



Having looked at the options within each sector separately, the NRA study identified five overall route options and accepted three as viable as summarised in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Summary of Eastern Bypass route options identified and costed by NRA

Route Option		Cost (2013)	Study conclusion
1	(a) High viaduct across the Port (A4) (b) Viaduct across the strand (c) Bored tunnel under Booterstown (d) Cutting and part tunnel N11 to Sandyford	€3.95 billion	Accepted
2	(a) High viaduct across the Port (A4) (b) Bored tunnel across the strand (c) Bored tunnel under Booterstown (d) Cutting and part tunnel N11 to Sandyford	€3.10 billion	Accepted
3	(a) Mid-level bridge (b) Bored tunnel (c) Bored tunnel (d) Open cut	€2.95 billion	Rejected

Route Option		Cost (2013)	Study conclusion
4	(a) Cut & cover tunnel across the Port (A2) (b) Bored tunnel across the strand (c) Bored tunnel under Booterstown (d) Cutting and part tunnel N11 to Sandyford	€4.35 billion	Accepted
5	Direct tunnel	€3.70 billion	Rejected

The three accepted options envisaged crossing the Liffey in one of two ways, either by a high level bridge (A4) or by a cut and cover tunnel (A2) as shown in Figure 3 below.

The bridge crossing (A4) envisaged a minimum clearance beneath the bridge of 45m above the level of the river at high tide. However, this is far less than ships already calling to Dublin Port require.

Figure 3: “Sector A” options to cross the Liffey



6. Outcome of DPC / DCC / NRA engagement

Against this background, there was a series of meetings between NRA, DPC and DCC which led to NRA commissioning a *Dublin Eastern Bypass – Port Crossing Engineering and Urban Design Study* to look in greater detail at how the Liffey could be crossed. The outcomes from this study were presented by NRA to DPC and DCC in November and December 2013.

From these efforts, the alignment shown in Appendix 2 emerged as an option compatible with the Regional Planning Guidelines, in line with the City Development Plan's indicative alignment and consistent with DPC's proposal to develop North Wall Quay Extension as part of its ABR Project.

The 2013 study identified that the alignment could be achieved either by a cut and cover tunnel or by an opening bridge.

The identification of this alignment and the inclusion of the urban design element create a positive framework for the NRA and DCC to move forward to completing and agreeing a corridor protection in line with the Regional Planning Guidelines and in line with the City Development Plan.

7. Conclusions

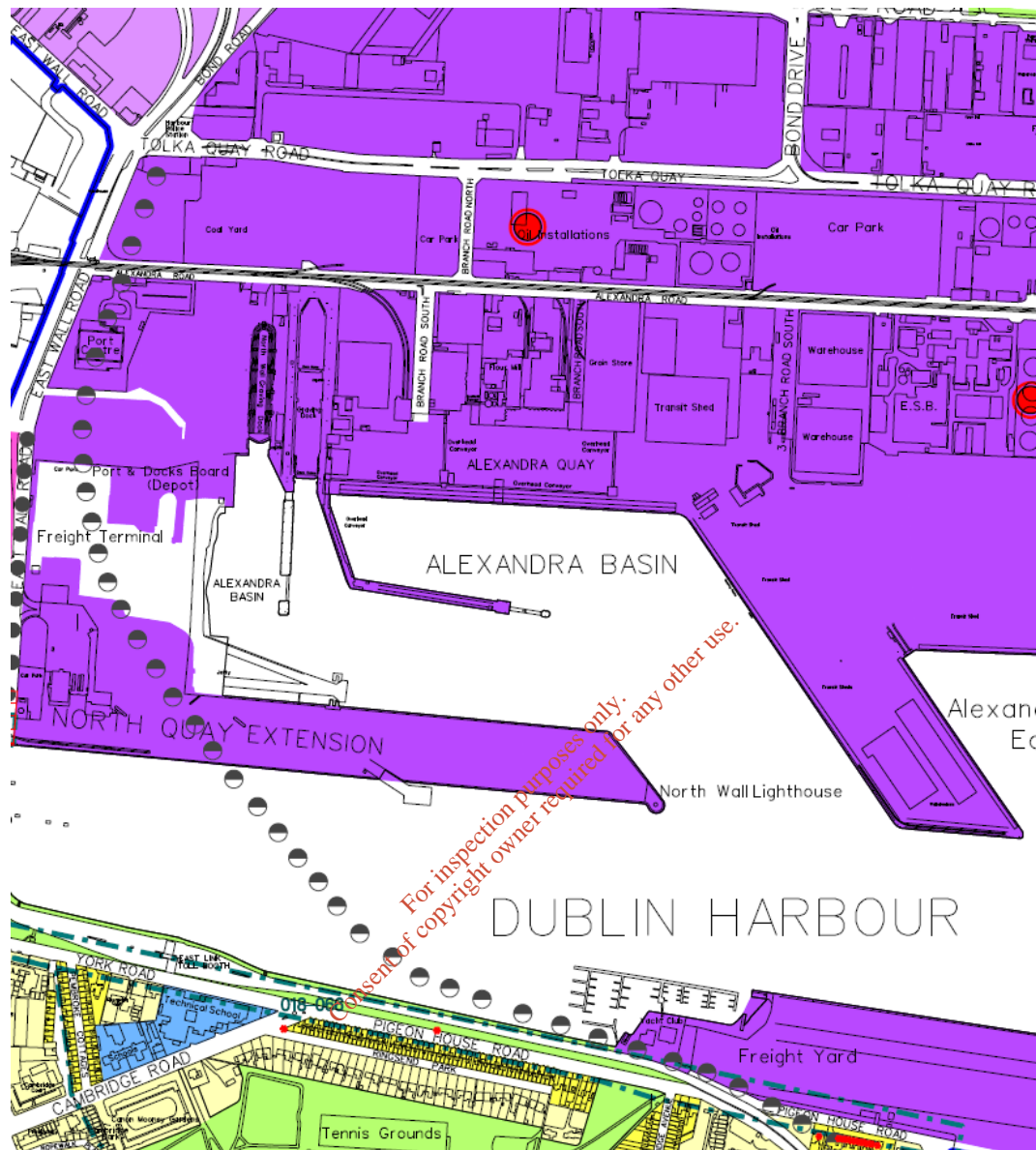
The ABR Project has been designed by DPC following consultations with the statutory authorities to be compatible with the indicative route for the Eastern Bypass project identified by DCC in its City Development Plan.

Furthermore, it has been established jointly between DPC, DCC and NRA that the ABR Project is compatible with viable corridors for the river crossing required for a future long term Eastern Bypass project while also contributing towards other important objectives of Dublin City Council including:

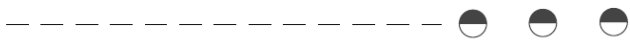
- The relocation of cruise liners closer to the city centre
- The provision / enhancement of public realm areas
- Increased connectivity between the Port and the City Centre.

As a consequence of the above, DPC believes that the proposed development would not curtail any future Eastern Bypass route options or any options for the upgrading of the East Link Bridge.

Appendix 1 - Extract from DCC City Development Plan Map F



Eastern By-Pass (indicative only)



Appendix 2 – Possible alignment for an Eastern Bypass river crossing identified between DCC, NRA and DPC, December 2013

