

BusConnects Limerick  
Public Input Summary  
Appendix to: Final New Network Report

# 1 Overview of the Redesign Process

## 1.1 Introduction

In 2022 the National Transport Authority (NTA) began work on reviewing the Limerick Area bus network, in collaboration with Limerick City and County Council, and Bus Éireann, and with assistance from Jarrett Walker and Associates (JWA) and SYSTRA Ltd. In March 2023 a Draft New Network was published and a six-week non-statutory public consultation was carried out. Over 650 responses to this consultation were received. Following consultation, the NTA, in conjunction with the working group<sup>1</sup>, reviewed the draft network and proposed some amendments taking into account the feedback received.

This report sets out the key findings from the 2023 Draft New Network consultation process. The focus of this report are issues relating purely to the network design. During the consultation, a number of submissions were received in relation to wider issues such as ticketing and bus infrastructure. Feedback on these wider issues was captured and will be shared with relevant implementation teams.

## 1.2 Development of the Revised New bus Network

Following the consultation on the Draft New Network a series of workshops were held with representatives of the working group during June 2023 to assess the issues raised and to determine the appropriate changes to the network. A new, revised network was finalised in November 2023. A full description of the revised network, and changes from the previous proposals can be found in the Final New Network Report.

## 1.3 BusConnects Limerick Draft New Network Consultation

Public consultation is at the heart of the BusConnects Network Redesign programme. A communications strategy was devised to provide as much information as possible and to facilitate potential for feedback. The public consultation on the Draft New Network took place from the 22nd February to the 7<sup>th</sup> April 2023 with feedback collected from the public via an online

feedback form, written submissions (mainly received during the in person events) and email submissions.

In summary, the communications strategy consisted of:

- Information available on the BusConnects Limerick website: including the Draft New Bus Network Report in multiple formats comprising English, Irish and accessible PDF
- Local Area Booklet delivered to homes and businesses in the BusConnects Limerick study area and available through the website
- Public Information Campaign throughout the duration of the consultation across all local media outlets
- Interactive Online Map to help people understand the proposed services and routes
- Online Feedback Form within a consultation portal on the website with an interactive survey for submissions and provision for documents to be attached
- Email and phone line made available for queries throughout the consultation period
- Two public webinars via Zoom and three public consultation events, the dates and times are set out in Table 1.1.

Location	Day	Date	Time
Great National South Court Hotel Raheen	Tuesday	7 <sup>th</sup> March	12:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Castletroy Park Hotel	Wednesday	8 <sup>th</sup> March	12:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Moyross Community and Enterprise Centre	Thursday	9 <sup>th</sup> March	12:00 pm to 7:00 pm
Online Webinar	Tuesday	14 <sup>th</sup> March	6.30 pm
Online Webinar	Tuesday	21 <sup>st</sup> March	6.30 pm

Table 1.1 List of BusConnects Limerick Network Redesign Webinar and Public Consultation Events

<sup>1</sup> The working group comprised Limerick City and County Council, Clare County Council and Bus Éireann, with assistance from Jarrett Walker & Associates (JWA) and SYSTRA Ltd.

## 2 Analysis of the Public Consultation Feedback

### 2.1 Overview

Across all feedback platforms the team received just over 650 submissions. In total 525 submissions were made through the consultation portal comprising 484 submissions from individuals and 41 from organisations. In addition, email submissions were received from 74 individuals and 15 from organisations and elected representatives. Finally, 49 paper submissions were received during the public consultation events or by post. There was a very small amount of duplication between online and email submissions; duplicate submissions were removed from the analysis so as not to distort the results.

The consultant team of JWA and SYSTRA was engaged by the NTA to review and categorise the consultation submissions to facilitate additional analysis and interpretation. All feedback was considered, categorised and used as an input into the preparation of the BusConnects Limerick New Bus Network. The methodology for this analysis is detailed below.

### 2.2 Assessment Methodology

The BusConnects team undertook an initial overview of the feedback to establish the scope of the comments. It was noticeable that a number of route specific and area specific issues and suggestions emerged. A breakdown of the more general, high level issues and suggestions are set out in Section 3. Area- and route-specific issues are set out in Section 4 below.

### 2.3 Profile of Respondents

The respondents to the online survey were asked some general questions about themselves. The information presented below relates to the 484 individual submissions received via the online portal.

#### Do you use the bus to travel within the Limerick area? (Or did before the Covid?)

363 respondents answered this question with the majority, 76%, stating that they were bus users.

#### Where do you live?

325 respondents answered this question, of which the most commonly stated locations were Castletroy, Corbally and Dooradoyle (35, 34 and 31 respondents respectively).

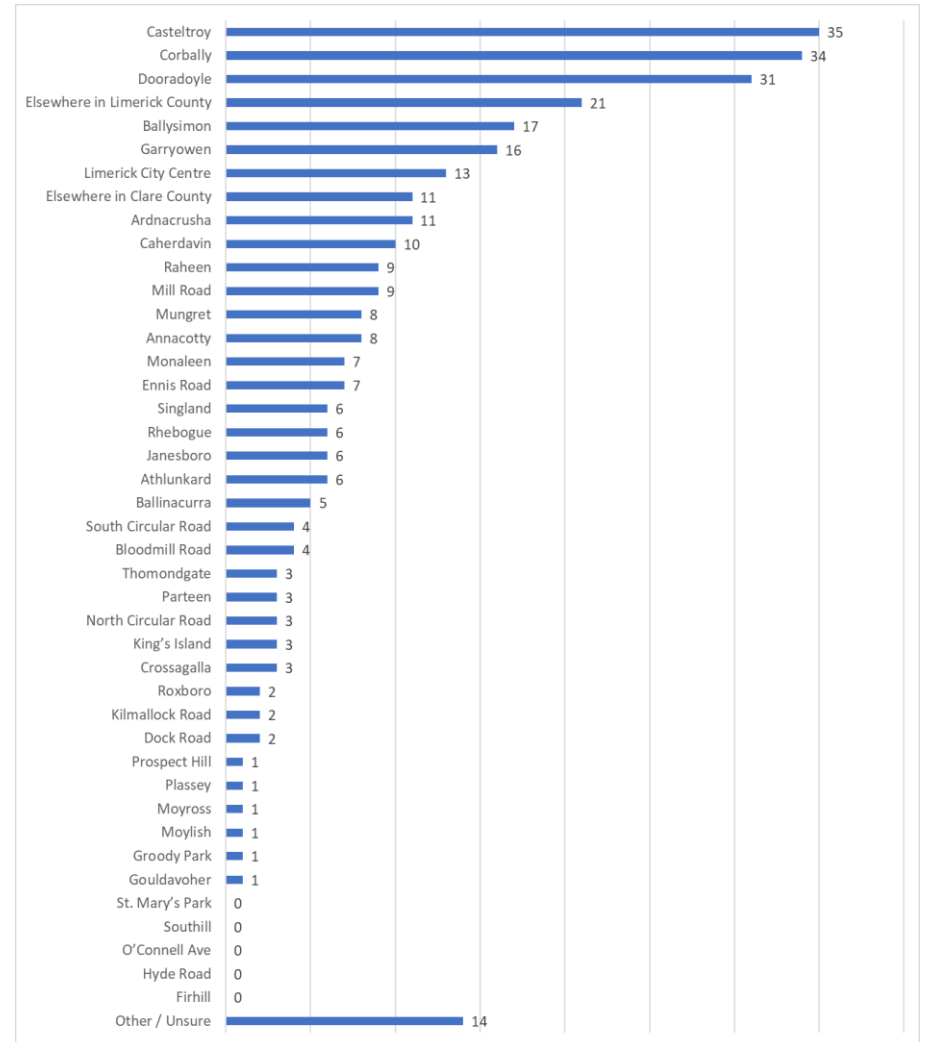


Figure 2.1 Number of submissions by area according to responses to "Where do you live?"

## Which bus(es) do you use most often?

Respondents could select up to three from a list of existing services to reflect the buses they use most often. Route 304: Ballycummin – University of Limerick was chosen most often, 198 times, with Route 304A: Raheen – University being selected an additional 162 times. The next most commonly used route among respondents was Route 301: Raheen – Westbury.

There was representation across the network with the most highly used services being chosen most often as would be expected. The primary exception to this was the high rate of response among users of Route 305, likely reflecting concerns specific to the Garryowen area (see Section 4).

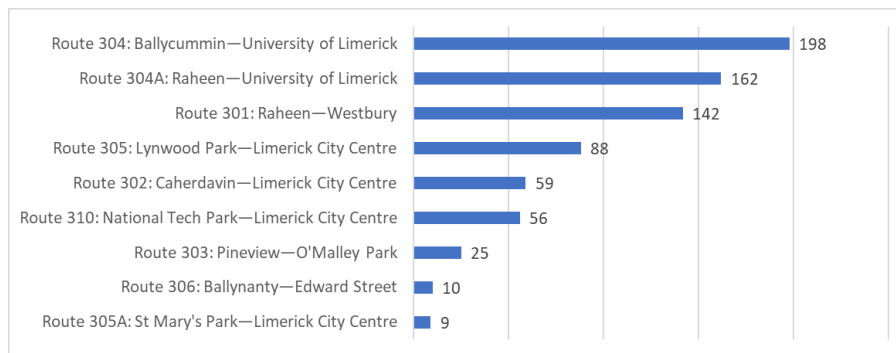


Figure 2.2 Number of submissions by route used most often by respondents in the Existing Network

## Design approach for the Draft New Network

Respondents were asked to give their opinion on a scale from 1 (no existing bus users should be inconvenienced in any way) to 5 (we should design a network that provides maximum benefits to large numbers of people, regardless of the inconvenience to some existing users). 446 respondents answered this question. Over half (57%) selected the upper end (4 or 5) (the network should be redesigned to provide maximum benefits) and 28% of respondents selected the lower end (1 or 2) (existing bus users should not be inconvenienced).

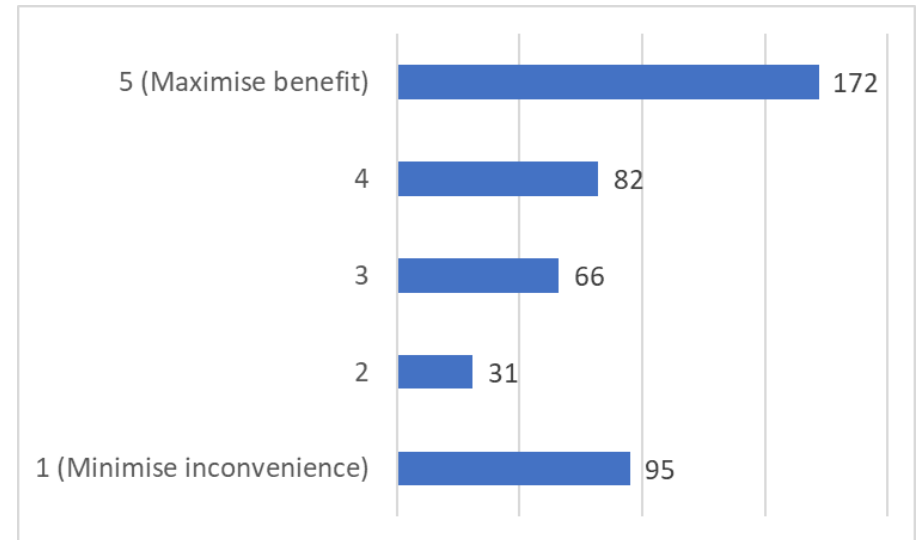


Figure 2.3 How should the New Network be designed?

## How does the Draft New Network compare to the existing Limerick network? ...for you?...for people you know?...for the Limerick area?

Respondents were asked to give a general indication as to whether the Draft New Network was better, worse or about the same as the existing network from different perspectives. About a third of respondents (34%) stated that, for themselves, they considered the Draft New Network better than the existing network. This increased to nearly half (46%) when asked to consider the Draft New Network for the Limerick City and its suburbs as a whole. Conversely, a third (34%) stated that they viewed the Draft New Network as worse for themselves. This reduced to a quarter (25%) when asked to consider the Draft New Network for the Limerick area as a whole.

This indicates that the network as a whole is viewed more positively, but that there are specific issues for individuals. This is an expected feature of public comment, because people are more likely to provide feedback to proposals with negative impacts on them personally. Many respondents provided positive feedback on the Draft New Network which further demonstrates that overall the proposed changes are welcomed.

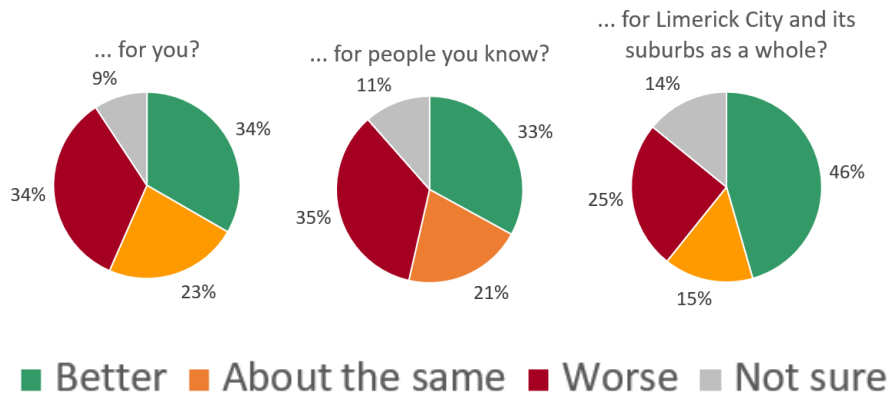


Figure 2.4 General response to whether the respondents viewed the Draft New Network Better, Worse or About the Same as the Existing Network

### How old are you?

481 respondents answered this question. Nearly 40% were in the 25 to 44 age group, and nearly 40% were in the 45 to 64 age group. 12% of respondents were aged over 65. In addition, many of the written responses received at the public consultation events were submitted by older people.

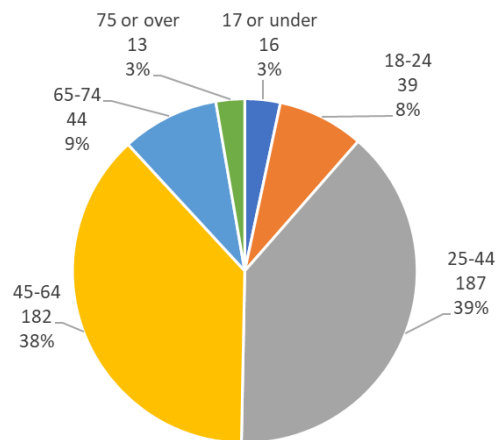


Figure 2.5 Number of submissions by age group

### Examples of Positive Feedback from Submissions on the Draft Network as a Whole

“I think that the new network is a large improvement and look forward to it.”

“I am glad to hear that there is plans for an improved bus scheme for Limerick City and suburbs over the coming years, and I welcome this upgrade wholeheartedly.”

“Early morning bus service and late night bus service will be great.”

“We are waiting over 30 years for this and the benefits for reducing cars and congestion on the road will be huge.”

“Overall this proposal is a vast improvement on the current network.”

“The new draft network is really exciting. I think it may be a massive improvement on the network on limerick and will transform how people get around.”

“Fantastic choice of routes & frequent to give opportunities to travel around city.”

“This will be significantly better than the existing network for me and everyone I know here in Limerick city.”

“Great Job. Looks very well for the future.”

“The Draft New Network proposes improved bus coverage for Limerick City and Suburbs and has made good use of Bus Connects principles to achieve this.”

### Feeling about the Draft New Network By Age

There was variation across the age groups in response to whether the Draft New Network was viewed as better or worse compared to the existing network. More people over 75 considered the Draft New Network worse than better. In all other age groups, the respondents thought the Draft New Network better than the existing network.

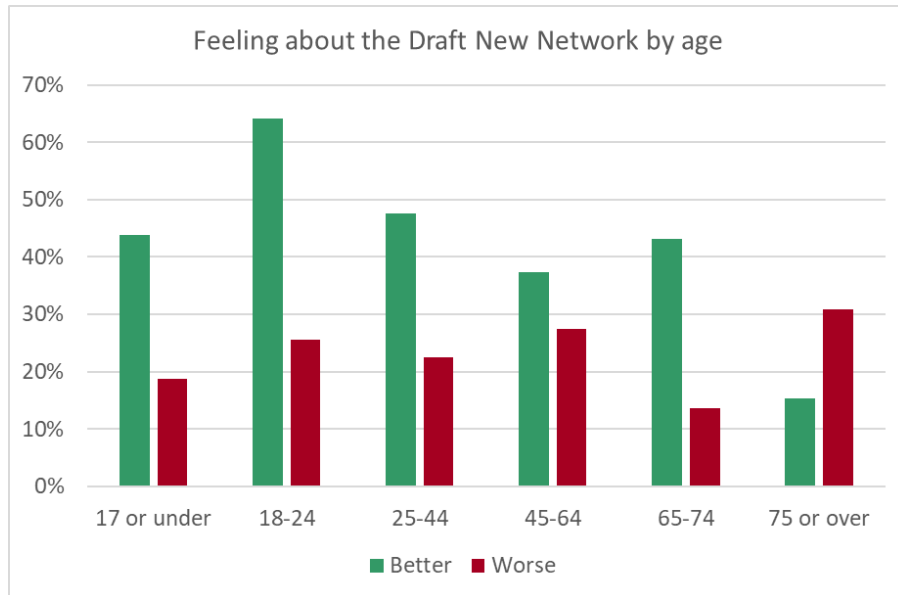


Figure 2.6 General response to the network by age group

### Responses to the Draft New Network by Route

Respondents were invited to provide feedback on each route in the Draft New Network. Some respondents provided feedback on multiple routes. Respondents were asked if they liked or disliked the route or whether they had questions on routes proposed. The most commonly commented on are listed in the table below, with the full list of routes illustrated in the figure overleaf.

As shown in Table 2.1, the issues most commonly raised by those who expressed a dislike for a route were:

- Milford Care Centre;
- Mill Road;
- Westbury;
- Areas served by existing Route 305 (Lynwood Park);
- Annacotty terminus; and
- Father Russell Road.

Route	Liked	Disliked	Number of comments per route	Issues commonly raised
4: St Nessans Church – University of Limerick	25%	<b>39%</b>	71	Milford Care Centre (29 references)
2: Moylish – UL North Campus	20%	<b>51%</b>	61	Milford Care Centre (36 references)
1: University Hospital Limerick - Athlunkard	14%	<b>46%</b>	56	Mill Road (15 references); Westbury (11 references)
6: Coonagh Shopping Centre -UL	24%	<b>41%</b>	41	Route 305 (16 references); Milford Care Centre (10 references)
1B/1C: UHL - Westbury	18%	<b>45%</b>	40	Westbury (20 references); Mill Road (13 references)
4A: Father Russell Rd - Annacotty	23%	<b>39%</b>	31	Annacotty terminus (8 references); Father Russel Road (6 references)
4B: Raheen Industrial Estate - Annacotty	<b>45%</b>	17%	29	Annacotty (12 references); Longer hours of operation
1A: UHL – Shannon Banks	15%	<b>27%</b>	26	Mill Road (16 references)
13: Colbert Station – Ardnacrusha via Corbally Rd	<b>64%</b>	4%	25	Various
14: Colbert Station – Ardnacrusha via Kileely Rd	<b>83%</b>	0%	18	Various
5: UHL – St Mary’s Park	<b>47%</b>	29%	17	Various
12: Jetland Shopping Centre – Colbert Station	<b>27%</b>	9%	11	Various
2A: Coonagh Shopping Centre – UL North Campus	<b>45%</b>	27%	11	Various
2B: Jetland Shopping Centre – UL North Campus	<b>36%</b>	27%	11	Various

*Table 2.1 General feedback on the routes receiving the most comments*

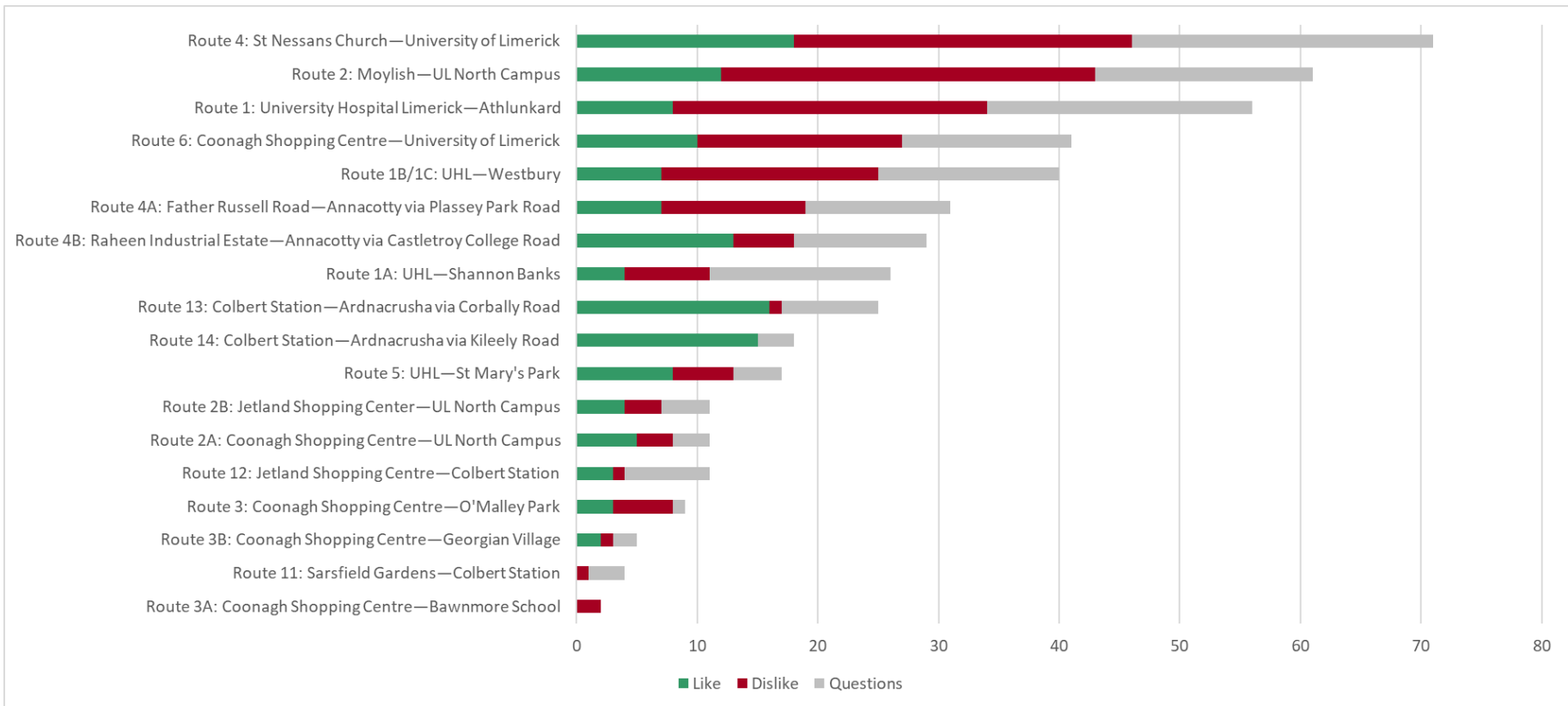


Figure 2.7 Routes commented on and general response to those routes



## 3 General Feedback and Responses

### 3.1 Issues Mentioned Frequently in Feedback

While the content of the individual submissions varied across Limerick City and surroundings, a number of themes emerged frequently. As an overview, the most commonly referenced issues are represented by the themes listed below. These themes are not necessarily mutually exclusive, and often submissions cross reference numerous issues. For example, many comments on bus services to UL also referenced the impact of the proposed new bus access route on Milford Care Centre. It is also worth noting that some issues were commented on favourably and negatively; for example, some submissions relating to school travel viewed the Draft New Network as an improvement whilst others suggested further changes. The general issues are presented in more detail below.

- University of Limerick 23%
- Milford Hospice / Care Centre / Infinity Gardens 22%
- Congestion / Traffic 16%
- Frequency 15%
- Travel to school 12%
- Disability / elderly / mobility impaired 9%
- Access to Hospital 7%
- Colbert Train Station 4%

Note: Respondents' submissions could contain more than one theme, therefore percentages will sum to more than 100.

### 3.2 Access to Key Destinations

Many of the submissions made references to particular journeys that are currently undertaken by bus highlighting how the existing network serves particular categories of passenger demand well. These include trips to schools and colleges and University Hospital Limerick. A number of comments raised concerns that the proposed network would not provide for these journeys as well as the current network.

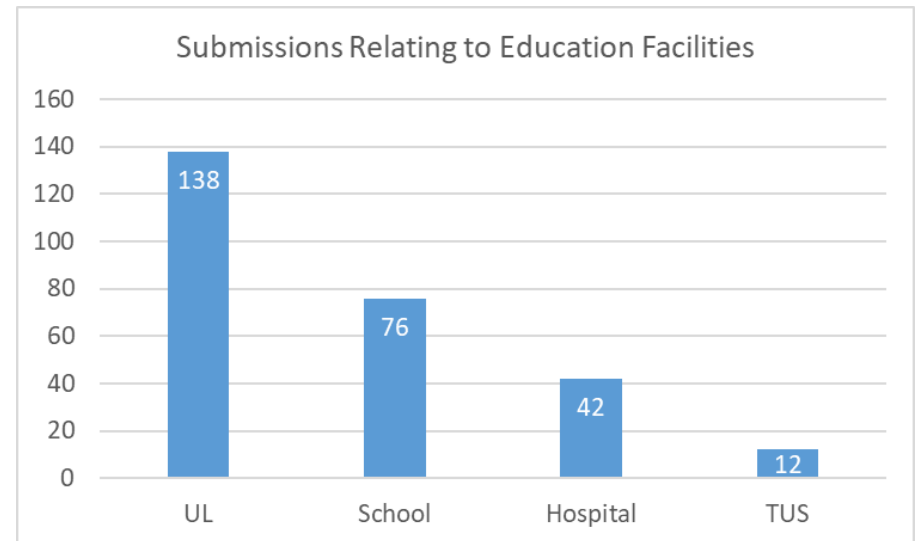


Figure 3.1 Number of responses received in relation to access to education

#### Response

Some of the submissions welcomed the changes to the network but highlighted concerns over the frequency of services or the location of future bus stops and walk links between bus stops and key destinations. Many submissions made suggestion for additional direct services to key destinations, particularly UL. These submissions related to trips from all over the city to key destinations and highlighted the challenge to meet dispersed demand through fixed route bus services.

The team reviewed the network in detail in relation to the issues raised and more detailed responses are included in the area based analysis included in Section 4. In general, the new network is planned as an integrated set of routes which supports the potential for interchange that would result in an increase in accessibility to key destinations by bus throughout the day and from a wider range of origins.

### 3.3 Milford Care Centre

The Draft New Network included a proposal to improve bus access to UL by way of a new two-way link from Plassey Park Road. The indicative alignment of this route as shown in the public consultation documentation was in the vicinity of Milford Care Centre. A large number of submissions from both individuals and organisations raised concerns over the impact of a new bus link related to a number of issues including:

- Negative impacts on those receiving care at Milford due to disrupting the peace and tranquility
- Loss of amenity for those who use the paths through the grounds and particularly the Infinity Woodland Walk
- Impact on the environment, specifically the native trees planted as part of the Infinity Garden, noting that this is a protected Native Irish Woodland

“The loss of this oasis of peace and respite for so many people would be tragic, not to mention the loss of habitat and destruction of a protected woodland”

“This will destroy native tress, habitats for animals and remove a very important amenity for Nursing Home and Hospice residents and patients along with their families and staff members, as well as the local population”

“No bus route should go through Milford Care Centre grounds, that would be disgraceful”

#### Response

The concerns raised during the public consultation have highlighted a need to avoid impact on the Milford Care Centre and the woodland area.

UL is for many the most important destination in Limerick to be served by bus and this is reflected in the many submissions seeking improved links to the university. A number of routes are planned to serve UL and it will be important to provide for efficient and reliable operation.

A number of alternatives for UL access, whilst avoiding impact on the Milford Care Centre, were suggested in submissions. The NTA will seek to provide new arrangements to serve UL which will avoid directly impacting the grounds of Milford Care Centre. The development of a new link access, should it proceed, will be subject to detailed design and planning.

### 3.4 Service to areas outside the extent of BusConnects Limerick

6% of submissions made reference to locations that are not within the study area of BusConnects Limerick. This included reference to villages and settlements in County Limerick and County Clare that are planned to be served by enhanced public transport under Connecting Ireland proposals. Also, some are served by existing commercial and/or public service obligation regional and inter urban coach services. The areas most frequently mentioned were: Mungret Village, Castleconnell, Meelick and Shannon Airport.

“I am disappointed that Castleconnell was not included in the Daft New Bus Network Plans”

“The new proposal appears to have forgotten about the Mungret Clarina suburb once again”

## Response

The New Network focuses on the urbanised area. Public transport service to and from places beyond the study area are being considered as part of the parallel Connecting Ireland project.

Expanding the geographic coverage for all-day urban bus services is a challenge. Additional coverage beyond the planned routes would add only modestly to the total number of people and jobs within catchment of the bus network, despite adding many new kilometres to the network.

This is a result of lower densities and longer distances between developed areas. Expanding coverage to provide geographic inclusion means spending more to reach smaller numbers of people.

### 3.5 Other BusConnects Issues

Whilst the focus of the consultation was on the BusConnects Limerick Network Redesign some comments were received in relation to other elements of the BusConnects programme such as the Core Bus Corridors and bus stop infrastructure.

## Response

Within the consultation material, efforts were made to differentiate the network redesign from other elements of the BusConnects programme whilst informing the public on these important complementary elements. To capture the valuable feedback, comments on issues that were not directly related to the network redesign have recorded and will be communicated with the BusConnects implementation teams.

### 3.6 Extended Hours of Operation

There was support given in submissions for the proposed introduction of a 24 hour bus service. References were made to shift work patterns, particularly in business parks and a need for early morning and late evening services.

“Really great addition with 24 hour route. Delighted to see this”

“It's great to see a very frequent and regular service through the city and that it will run 24 hours a day”

“There should be more buses before 7am into town”

## Response

The analysis of the submissions confirms the worth in considering the introduction of a 24 hour service in Limerick. Through the BusConnects Programme, the NTA is prioritising improving access to public transport in the late evenings to support the late-night economy.

### 3.7 Orbital Services

Some respondents suggested a need for orbital bus services that would connect areas to the west and east without having to go through the city centre. Many suggested the use of Childers Road.

## Response

Given the wide distribution of demand across Limerick, it would not be possible to connect all east/west origins and destinations with direct orbital bus services. Childers Road itself has heavy vehicle traffic and poor pedestrian connectivity to adjacent residential areas. There is not sufficient demand along Childers Road to warrant a high frequency service other than where the Draft New Network has made provision. A low frequency orbital service is unlikely to be attractive.

In the medium term, the BusConnects Sustainable Transport Corridors programme will result in faster and more reliable journey times through the City Centre, where there will also be the possibility to interchange to other services.

### 3.8 Connectivity to Colbert Station

Comments were received on the integration of bus and rail services and the need to provide for access by bus to Colbert Station. Some comments expressed a desire for all bus routes to serve Colbert Station directly.

#### **Response**

Due to the location of the station in relation to the City Centre and the road network it is not practical for many routes to serve both the City Centre and Colbert Station. Because this network is primarily geared toward trips within the urbanised area, the New Network focuses most on the City Centre, which generates the higher volume of trips.

Nevertheless, high frequency Routes 1 and 3 will pass by Colbert Station and provide an opportunity for interchange with other routes. Routes 11, 12, 13 and 14 will also directly serve Colbert Station. Furthermore, Colbert Station is a distance of 400m from O'Connell Street which is a reasonable walk for many people.

## 4 Feedback on Issues by Area

The analysis presented below includes:

- Quantitative analysis of responses to questions in the online survey.
- Qualitative discussion of comments and submissions received from individuals received through all portals, including the online survey, e-mail, in-person comment and by post.
- Qualitative discussion of submissions received from organisations submissions were individually reviewed.

### 4.1 Limerick City East

As illustrated in Figure 4.1, over a third (37%) of the online survey responses from residents in the Limerick City East Area viewed the Draft New Network as 'worse' from their own perspective.

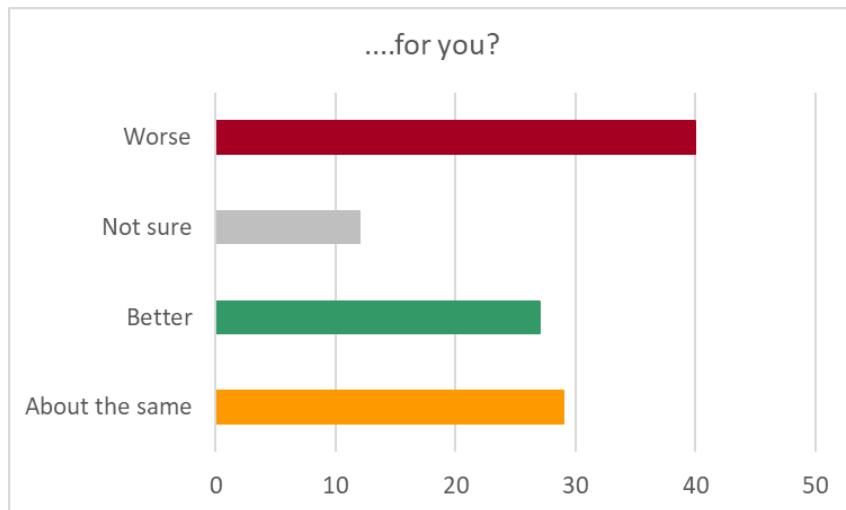


Figure 4.1 Opinion of Respondents from the Limerick City East Area<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Respondents who listed 'Annacotty' 'Ballysimon' 'Bloodmill Road' 'Castletroy' 'Crossagalla' 'Garryowen' 'Groody Park' 'Janesboro' 'Kilmallock Road' 'Monaleen' 'Plassey' 'Roxboro' 'Singland' or 'Southill' as where they live.

The consultation feedback from the Limerick City East Area primarily relates to the following main issues and suggestions:

1. Loss of service on in Garryowen on St Patrick's Road, Lynwood Road, Granville Park, Hilltop and Norwood mainly from users of the existing Route 305.
2. Suggestion that services extend further into Annacotty Village and to the St Vincents Centre.
3. Suggestion that services extend to Annacotty Business Park.
4. Loss of service on outer portions of Ballysimon Road.
5. Proposal to operate bus services on Bloodmill Road welcomed.
6. Request not to split Route 3 after O'Malley Park and instead retain the full frequency levels to better serve the higher population area of Georgian Village / Ros Mor.
7. Service coverage in Southill.

In relation to the feedback, all suggestions and issues were reviewed and assessed against existing proposals, costs and operation implications of any required amendment, and whether the amendment would improve the overall BusConnects Network. The following points outline the responses proposed in relation to the Limerick City East Area, with the issues/suggestions set out above cross referenced by number.

#### NTA Commentary

##### 1. Garryowen

A number of respondents commented on the impact of the removal of bus services to stops currently served by Route 305. Many were concerned that the removal of bus services from Lynwood / Garryowen would have a significant impact on the elderly population in the area such as those living

in Lynwood Park. Taking on board feedback on the impact of the loss of bus network coverage in Garryowen, the network was reexamined by the team.

Simply replicating Route 305 in the New Network would not be efficient. However, there is an opportunity to redesign the proposed Route 6 to improve coverage in the Garryowen. In the Draft New Network Route 6 overlaps with the high frequency Route 4 along a section of the Dublin Road. To make the modifications to Route 6 and achieve greater bus network coverage in Garryowen, a new bus connection will be required to connect with Childers' Road and continue towards UL and Castletroy.

Route 305 "People depend on the bus in Lynwood Park and it should be maintained"

"I don't think the 305 should be taken away a lot of elderly people depend on this bus"

**Action: Route 6 adjusted to provide coverage similar to the existing route 305 through Lynwood and Garryowen. This will require a bus gate from Bloodmill Road to Childers Road.**

### 2/3. Annacotty

The changes to the network in the Annacotty area were broadly welcomed. The increase in frequency was remarked on as well as the improved directness in services between Annacotty and Limerick City Centre. The service improvements to Plassey Park Industrial / Commercial Area were appreciated.

"It's great to see a frequent bus being added to the east Castletroy/ Annacotty area"

"Getting rid of the loop through UL makes a more direct & predicable route for me to the city centre"

Some respondents suggested that the network should extend more into Annacotty village. Others would like to see service extended to better serve the St Vincents Centre and the Annacotty Business Park. Submissions were received from employers and employees in Annacotty Business Park highlighting the number of jobs in the area.

The team was challenged to see if the network could be extended further east. The Annacotty Business Park is some distance away from Annacotty Village and a bus route would have to extend through an area of very little demand which would negatively impact the efficiency of the network.

The road network near the St Vincent Centre was examined by the team to see if services could be brought closer. However, a suitable place to turnaround buses could not be identified that would facilitate a route terminating in this area. It was considered feasible to extend services towards Annacotty Village which will bring services a little closer to the St Vincents Centre and other destinations.

Connecting Ireland offers the potential to serve areas that are beyond the reach of the BusConnects New Network.

**Action: Routes 4A / 4B extended to get as close as possible to Annacotty Village, subject to a suitable terminating location and driver facilities being provided. Service beyond Annacotty to be considered within Connecting Ireland.**

### 4/5. Ballysimon Road and Bloodmill Road

Concerns were raised over the removal of bus services on Ballysimon Road east of Childers Road where the existing Route 310 operates. In the Draft New Network Route 2 extends along Bloodmill Road. The introduction of services on Bloodmill Road was welcomed by respondents to the consultation with some remarking that the change would facilitate improved access to many people and a large school.

"It's great to see a frequent bus on the Groody and Blood Mill Roads"

"I would like the route to stick to the Ballysimon route, similar to the current 310"

The team closely examined the network in this area. Much of the demand on Ballysimon Road would be within 400m of Route 2. It was noted in submissions that the road network in this area is a barrier to pedestrian movements and hence access to bus stops. Improvements to pedestrian connectivity would better retain some coverage of Ballysimon Road. In addition, Ballysimon Road could be served by Connecting Ireland bus services that use this route to access Limerick City Centre.

**Action: No changes to the network proposed.**

## 6. Georgian Village / Ros Mor

In the Draft New Network Route 3 branches into the 3A and 3B resulting in a bus every half hour on each branch. It was noted by respondents that there is significantly more development along the Kilmallock Road (Route 3B) compared to Bawnmore Road (Route 3A). Some respondents requested that all Route 3 services operate to Kilmallock Road to serve Ros Mor. This would increase the frequency to every 15 minutes for a larger population.

**Action: Remove section of Route 3B on Bawnmore Road due to low anticipated demand. Operate all Route 3 buses to Kilmallock Road at a general frequency of every 15 minutes.**

## 7. Southill

The existing Route 303 follows a complex routing on its southern end with one-way sections and coverage loops. Some submissions raised concerns over changes in access to bus services, particularly for elderly residents, requiring longer walks in some cases, and eliminating the deviation to the Childers Road Aldi stop.

In O'Malley Park specifically, the proposed changes are in part due to the planned closure of Castle Oaks View to vehicle traffic.

Generally, deviations and one-way route splits increase journey time. Public transport needs to be useful in both directions. When the two directions of

a route are split, people take different walking routes for their two journeys, which adds time and complexity to their day.

This area of the city has sufficient pedestrian permeability to enable a short walk for many to access Route 3. Consideration of the more appropriate location for bus stops will be required at the implementation stage to ensure the best accessibility is provided. The availability and design of pedestrian crossings will further extend access. For example, access to the Roxboro Shopping Centre will rely on pedestrian crossings on Childers Road.

**Action: Bus stops and pedestrian crossing locations to be reviewed during implementation.**

## BusConnects Network Changes for Limerick City East Area

The following BusConnects Network changes have been agreed as an outcome of the 2023 Consultation Process:

- Route 6: Route alteration to serve Lynwood
- Route 4A / 4B: Extension to Annacotty Village
- Route 3: Operate all Route 3 services to Kilmallock Road

## 4.2 Limerick City West

As illustrated in Figure 4.2, over a third (39%) of the responses from residents in the Limerick City West Area viewed the Draft New Network as 'better' from their own perspective.

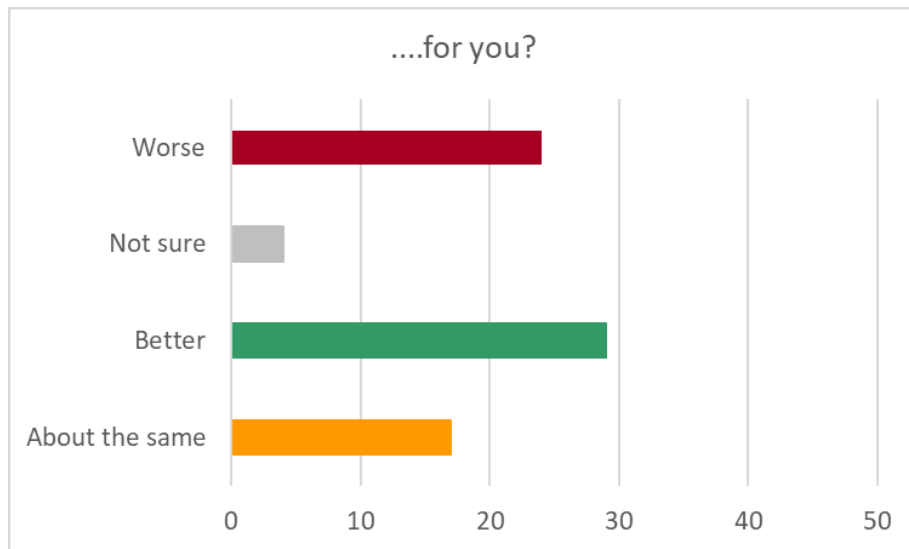


Figure 4.2 Opinion of Respondents from the Limerick City West Area<sup>2</sup>

The consultation feedback from the Limerick City West Area primarily relates to the following main issues and suggestions:

1. Removal of service on Mulcair Road and limited number of stops on Avonmore Road.
2. Suggestion that improved bus services are needed between Dooradoyle and the schools in Mungret.
3. Removal of direct link between parts of Dooradoyle and UL.
4. Suggestion that orbital services should link Raheen/Dooradoyle and UL.

<sup>2</sup> Respondents who listed 'Ballinacurra' 'Dock Road' 'Dooradoyle' 'Gouldavoher' 'Hyde Road' 'Limerick City Centre' 'Mungret' 'O'Connell Avenue' 'Prospect Hill' 'Raheen' or 'South Circular Road' as where they live.

5. Volume of buses on O'Connell Street and O'Connell Avenue.
6. Loss of bus service on Prospect Hill / Lord Edward Street.
7. Remarks on poor reliability in the existing network.
8. Suggestion that better connectivity is required to the Raheen Industrial Estate.
9. Proposal to introduced new services on Dock Road was welcomed.

In relation to the feedback, all suggestions and issues were reviewed and assessed against existing proposals, costs and operation implications of any required amendment, and whether the amendment would improve the overall BusConnects Network. The following points outline the responses proposed in relation to the Limerick City West Area, with the issues/suggestions set out above cross referenced by number.

### NTA Commentary

#### 1. Mulcair Road

The Draft New Network increases coverage in the Dooradoyle area. To achieve this, it is proposed to move services from Mulcair Road to Dooradoyle Road, and to route service on the Dooradoyle Road into the City Centre via Hyde Road (planned Route 1), instead of O'Connell Avenue (existing Route 304). Some respondents raised concerns over the removal of service on Mulcair Road, often with reference to limited bus stop coverage on Avonmore Road. Bus users along Mulcair Road will have a choice of accessing services on the Dooradoyle Road or Avonmore Road. In this way bus services will be retained within a reasonable walk of Mulcair Road. The location of bus stops along Route 1 will need to be reviewed as part of its implementation.

**Action: The location of bus stops will be reviewed as part of implementation.**



## 2. Dooradoyle / Mungret schools' connection

Some submissions mentioned that children living in the Dooradoyle area would benefit from bus connections to schools in Mungret. The team reviewed the Mungret, Dooradoyle and Raheen area in detail taking the consultation feedback into account. As a result, the branches of the 4A and 4B have been redesigned in the New Network to provide more direct access.

**Action: Route 4B is redesigned to provide more direct bus links to the schools in Mungret, from the most central path in the area on St. Nessan's Road. Route 5 is redesigned to serve Father Russell Road and terminate at UHL instead of Mungret. At time of implementation, peak-only variations to Mungret on Route 1 may be added.**

## 4. Orbital link between Raheen/Dooradoyle and UL

Some parts of Dooradoyle are directly linked to UL at present by Route 304. This direct connection would no longer be available in areas served by planned Route 1 in the Draft New Network. This change is intended to allow the primary route connecting UL, City Centre and UHL (Route 4) to have the most efficient route and highest frequency possible, maximizing interchange possibilities.

It is not possible to reconfigure the network for greater efficiency without breaking some direct links. Increases in frequency to services connecting the western part of the city to the City Centre and the City Centre to UL will support more reliable journeys to UL and nearby destinations.

**Action: No changes to the network proposed.**

"I think a trick is being missed here whereby the busses connecting University of Limerick/Caslteltroy/Monaleen and Raheen/Dooradoyle/Ballycummin are all going via the City Centre"

"Route 1/A etc is a change on current 304 route. It takes away Dooradoyle direct link to UL/Plassey"

## 5/7. O'Connell Street / O'Connell Avenue / Service reliability

Some respondents raised concerns over the volume of buses that will operate on O'Connell Street and O'Connell Avenue in the Draft New Network. The City Centre represents a key destination for many trips and it is important that bus services provide direct access for as many as possible within an efficient, affordable bus network. O'Connell Street and O'Connell Avenue are the most direct path from much of the south of Limerick City to the City Centre, including the critical connection with UHL.

The City Centre is an area where routes come together in the existing and the New Network, offering an opportunity for interchange to link more places. As stated in the Draft Network Report: *Reliably operating services on O'Connell Street, Patrick Street, Roches Street and William Street will require a review of car circulation and bus priority. The NTA and Limerick City and County Council will collaborate on this review as part of the Limerick City Centre Transport Plan to commence in 2023 and be finalised in advance of BusConnects being implemented.*

**Action: Planning for Sustainable Transport Corridors will follow the finalization of the New Network. Options will be identified to help support bus operations while allowing for other traffic.**

## 6. Prospect Hill

A number of submissions expressed concern on the removal of service on Prospect Hill and Lord Edward Street which is currently serviced by Route 306. Reference was made to the elderly population in the area and the challenging walking environment given how steep the road is. The team reviewed the network and identified the potential to extend Route 11 to maintain service on Prospect Hill and Lord Edward Street.

**Action: Extend planned Route 11 to Prospect Hill, on a similar path to existing Route 306.**

## 8. Raheen Industrial Estate

The provision of bus services in Raheen Industrial Estate proposed in the Draft New Network was welcomed by some respondents. It was noted that no service was provided on Ballycummin Avenue and that the traffic management arrangements within the Raheen Business Park do not support the route as it was drafted.

“Great to see improvement in accessibility to the Raheen industrial estate. Thousands of people work here so it's great the service is finally improving.”

**Action: Minor changes to Route 4A within Raheen Industrial Estate to ensure operability and serve as many destinations as possible.**

## 9. Dock Road

The introduction of bus services on Dock Road as proposed in the Draft New Network was welcomed by a number of respondents.

“I like this route Very much appreciated. Dock road has been neglected from the public transport perspective.”

**Action: No changes on Dock Road proposed. Changes to Route 5 south of the N18, facilitating connectivity between schools in Mungret and Dooradoyle (see above).**

## BusConnects Network Changes for Limerick City West Area

The following BusConnects Network changes have been agreed as an outcome of the 2023 Consultation Process:

- Route 4A: Minor route change in Raheen Industrial Estate
- Route 4B: Route alteration to serve Mungret

- Route 5: Route alteration to serve Father Russell Road and improve directness to UHL
- Route 11: Extend to Prospect Hill

### 4.3 Limerick City North

As illustrated in Figure 4.3 just under a third (30%) of the responses from residents in the Limerick City North Area viewed the Draft New Network as 'worse' from their own perspective.

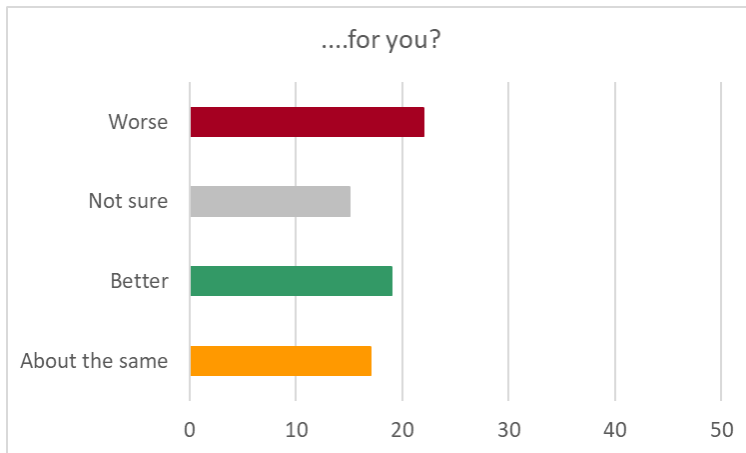


Figure 4.3 *Opinion of Respondents from the Limerick City North Area<sup>3</sup>*

The consultation feedback from the Limerick City North Area primarily relates to the following main issues and suggestions:

1. Lack of service on Mill Road and Lower Park (Corbally).
2. Bus service coverage in Rhebogue.
3. Loss of bus services on Brookville Avenue.
4. Suggestion that buses should be routed on North Circular Road.
5. Suggestion for an orbital route linking Moyross, King's Island, Corbally with UL North Campus.
6. Local connectivity from Moyross.

<sup>3</sup> Respondents who listed 'Caherdavin' 'Corbally' 'Ennis Road' 'King's Island' 'Mill Road' 'Moylish' 'Moyross' 'North Circular Road' 'Rhebogue' 'St Mary's Park' or 'Thomondgate' as where they live.

In relation to the feedback, all suggestions and issues were reviewed and assessed against existing proposals, costs and operation implications of any required amendment, and whether the amendment would improve the overall BusConnects Network. The following points outline the responses proposed in relation to the Limerick City North Area, with the issues/suggestions set out above cross referenced by number.

#### NTA Commentary

##### 1. Mill Road / Lower Park

A number of respondents expressed disappointment that bus services were not proposed on Mill Road or in Lower Park in the Draft New Network. Some submissions recognised that Mill Road is narrow in parts. Reference was made to large vehicles using Mill Road from time to time.

A number of physical constraints make operation of regular bus service in these areas challenging, including:

- Narrow roads that would be difficult to operate. Main roads through both areas are only marginally operable by buses. For example, although it may be physically possible for a single bus to drive up the Mill Road, running a regular all-day service in both directions in a variety of operating conditions (weather, opposing traffic, school hours etc.) is extremely challenging and may pose safety hazards.
- Lack of through-paths for buses. Both areas are built as vehicle cul-de-sacs, severely limiting the number of people served by any bus route in these areas. There is no viable path from the end of Mill Road to areas further north, nor is there a viable path from Lower Park to Rhebogue and the Dublin Road.

As a result, these areas are considered to be potential candidate areas for demand-responsive transport (DRT) service, but not areas for investment in regular bus service at this time.

**Action: NTA to examine feasibility of operating Demand Responsive Transport services (DRT).**

## **2. Rhebogue**

There was some mention of the lack of bus services in the Rhebogue area. The challenges in this area are similar to the ones in Lower Park. The road network between the Dublin Road and the Shannon is not suited to the operation of full-size city buses. The area is characterised by cul de sacs which are not easily adapted to create a through route for buses. There are low railway bridges in this area and narrow roads which further restrict potential bus movements.

Separate to BusConnects, the NTA is planning to explore the possibility of operating Demand Responsive Transport services to provide additional public transport coverage in urban areas not served by BusConnects. DRT services could be operated by small vehicles that may be able to overcome the barriers to bus services in Rhebogue and on Mill Road.

**Action: NTA to examine feasibility of operating Demand Responsive Transport services (DRT) in the Rhebogue area to complement the BusConnects New Network.**

## **3. Brookville Avenue**

A number of submissions were received highlighting concerns of the removal of bus services on Brookville Avenue which is currently served on a one-way loop on Route 302. Concern was raised that the removal of service would negatively impact the elderly population in the area. Route 12 in the Draft New network terminated adjacent to Brookville Avenue and the team identified that Route 12 could be extended a small distance to serve Brookville Avenue.

**Action: Extend Route 12 to serve Brookville Avenue.**

## **4. North Circular Road**

Some respondents suggested that bus services should operate on North Circular Road. Whilst the existing network does not operate on North Circular Road, reference was made to bus services operating in the past. The need to provide for access to schools on North Circular Road was also suggested.

The team reviewed North Circular Road in the context of the New Network, taking into account the comments received. It is very challenging to operate a service through this area given the road network. It was noted in submissions that with good pedestrian links, North Circular Road will be served by Route 12 on Condell Road.

**Action: No further changes to the network proposed.**

## **5. Moyross/Corbally orbital**

There was suggestion that consideration should be given to an orbital route that connects Moyross and the wider Limerick City North area to UL North Campus. In addition to the challenges of providing orbital services as discussed in Section 3.7, the existing narrow road network restricts the potential for scheduled bus services to access the UL campus from the north.

**Action: No further changes to the network proposed.**

## **6. Moyross local connectivity**

Within the New Network there are some small but potentially impactful route changes to services in the Moyross area. The importance of links to Thomondgate to access shops and services was mentioned in submissions. In the Draft New Network Route 3 enters the city via Kileely Road and Shelbourne Road.

Connectivity to Thomondgate is retained through Route 11 and Route 2. Bus users will have the option of walking from Route 3, using Route 11 or interchanging with Route 2.

**Action: No further changes to the network proposed.**

### BusConnects Network Changes for Limerick City North Area

The following BusConnects Network changes have been agreed as an outcome of the 2023 Consultation Process:

- NTA to examine feasibility of operating Demand Responsive Transport services (DRT) in Mill Road, Rhebogue, Lower Park, Corbally.
- Route 12: Extended to serve Brookville Avenue

## 4.4 County Clare Area

As illustrated in Figure 4.3 half (52%) of the responses from residents in the County Clare Area viewed the Draft New Network as 'better' from their own perspective.

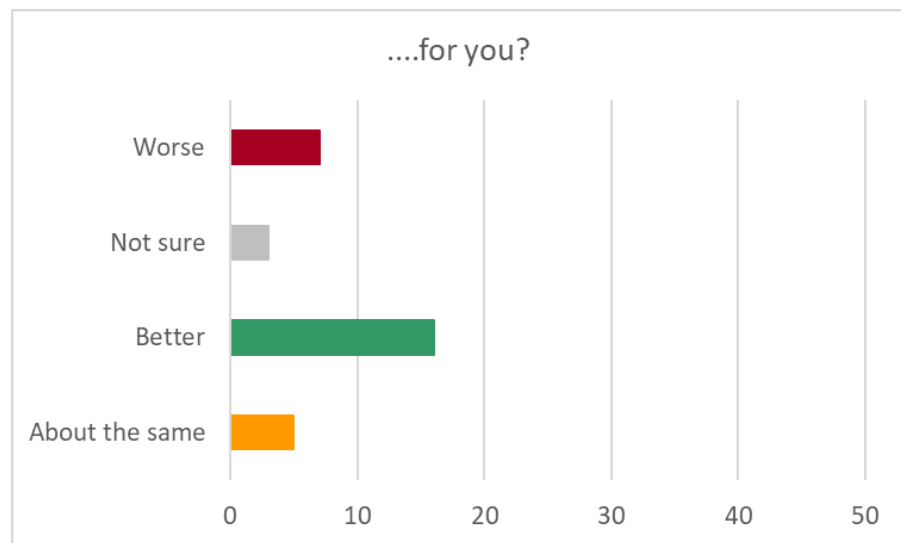


Figure 4.4 Opinion of Respondents from the County Clare Area<sup>4</sup>

The consultation feedback from the County Clare Area primarily relates to the following main issues and suggestions:

1. Suggestions for route changes in Ardnacrusha.
2. Service changes in Westbury.
3. Requests for bus service to Gillogue Business Park.
4. Requests for connectivity to UL north campus.

<sup>4</sup> Respondents who listed 'Ardnacrusha' 'Athlunkard' 'Parteen' or 'Elsewhere in County Clare' as where they live.

In relation to the feedback, all suggestions and issues were reviewed and assessed against existing proposals, costs and operation implications of any required amendment, and whether the amendment would improve the overall BusConnects Network. The following points outline the responses proposed in relation to the County Clare Area, with the issues/suggestions set out above cross referenced by number.

### NTA Commentary

#### 1. Ardnacrusha

Suggestions were made to extend the coverage of bus services in Ardnacrusha. A route suggestion to extend services northwards on the L3052 and returning southwards on the Lakyle/Ardnacrusha Road. The team reviewed the suggested changes.

The road network in the area is challenging for the operation of city buses. Blackwater is not a suitable route for regular bus operations. In addition, there is a lack of footpaths along the proposed route and it would be difficult to locate bus stops that would be accessible to the surrounding population. Finally, the proposed change would add a number of kilometres to the route to benefit a relatively small number of households.

**Action: No further changes to the network proposed at this time. NTA to consider whether extensions become warranted based on additional development in future.**

#### 2. Westbury

A number of respondents raised concerns over the proposed changes to the bus routing in Westbury. The feedback indicates that residents in the area would prefer to retain the existing one-way operation in the area with a half hourly service rather than split into 2 two-way routes with each operating hourly (Routes 1B and 1C proposed in the Draft New Network).

**Action: Route 1B revised to replicate existing one-way routing in Westbury, while maintaining extension to southern end of estate, and frequency increased to every 30 minutes. Route 1C deleted.**

#### **3/4. Gillogue Business Park / UL North access**

A number of submissions were received in relation to Gillogue Business Park from individuals and organisations / businesses located in the park. Gillogue Business Park is situated on a narrow road in a location that is remote from other significant development except UL north campus. In related submissions, there were suggestions that bus services should access UL from the north and offer connectivity to northern areas without the need to go through the city centre.

At present the road network does not support the operation of city buses. Without being linked to other generators of demand, it would also be inefficient to provide bus services to Gillogue within the city network.

**Action: No further changes to the network proposed.**

#### **BusConnects Network Changes for Limerick City North Area**

The following BusConnects Network changes have been agreed as an outcome of the 2023 Consultation Process:

- Routes 1B/1C: Revise route to operate as a combined half hourly service with one-way operation on Westbury, Riverdale and Crofton Drive similar to existing Route 301.