

From: G.Max OBrien [REDACTED]
Sent: 09 June 2006 15:17
To: Sub Regional Transport Plan
Subject: Draft Sub Regional Transport Plan

Dear DRD

Unfortunately I did not receive your comprehensive documentation until the end of May which gave me insufficient time to collate all the NIC-ICTU Disability Committee agreed views and to submit them before I leave on holidays. Your consultation period is difficult for those voluntary groups that meet quarterly. Our Disability Committee will not meet again until September 2006.

Nevertheless I am sending the following points for your consideration:

The Committee has made a number of points in previous consultations on behalf of people with a disability and we would like the DRD to consider these along with the points under.

Our comments are for the whole region and not just Belfast or the provincial towns.

In a recent reply from the Roads Service (DRD) it is clear that there is little local information on the travel patterns of people with a disability.

Following this point it is therefore almost impossible for policy makers to make suggestions impacting on disabled people without proper research and more detailed consultation.

Any proposals contained in the Draft Sub Regional Transport Plan which impact on people with a disability are therefore suspect. In general we do not agree with all the EQIA points relating to disability because of the lack of mainstreaming in Civil Service Departments.

There is need for transport policy makers to consider the "whole journey" of people with a disability.

Provision should be made for "Shopmobility" at each and every bus, train, airport and harbour to aid the "whole journey" approach.

Planners should ensure that each and every major shopping development makes integral provision for "Shopmobility".

Steps need to be taken to remove all street furniture from streets footpaths and town centres so that blind or partially sighted people can use them with freedom. Make contact with "Streetwise" and the local

voluntary groups representing these groups of disabled people.

There has been poor planning for some of the recent construction of adjacent footpaths/cycle paths and an improvement in construction is necessary to ensure the freedom and access for blind or partially sighted people.

The DRD needs to distribute information on the use of tac-tiles on cyclepaths/footpaths so that all the groups know why they are constructed and how to use them.

The European Blue Badge must be the only permit used by disabled people on street/roads, towns and pedestrian areas for accessible parking.

In any review or new pedestrianisation more than adequate parking spaces must be provided in the pedestrian area and not just on the adjoining streets which benefits only those who have a certain amount of mobility.

There must be a change in priority of the DRD to ensure that all forms of transport and fully accessible to people with a disability across Northern Ireland.

There needs to be a re-examination of the provisions in town and villages that have disabled people but will unfortunately be excluded either by access or cost to enjoy all their community facilities.

G. Max

G. Max O'Brien

Every day is a gift - that's why they call it ... 'the present'