



An
Coimisiún
Pleanála

Direction
CD-020738-25
ABP-314724-22

The submissions on this file and the Inspector's report were considered at meetings held on 18/08/2025, 19/08/2025, 03/09/2025 and 05/09/2025.

The Commission decided to grant permission generally in accordance with the Inspector's recommendation, for the following reasons and considerations, and subject to the following conditions. The Commission also decided that the acquisition of the land and substratum of land as proposed, and the acquisition of the easements and other rights over land as proposed, are necessary for the proposed development.

**Planning
Commissioner:**

Date: 22/09/2025

Tom Rabbette

Reasons and Considerations

The Commission in exercise of the powers conferred on it by Section 43 of the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 as amended and substituted (including by *inter alia* the European Union (Railway Orders) (Environmental Impact Assessment) (Amendment) Regulations 2021 (Statutory Instrument No. 743/2021) (hereafter also referred to as the "Act of 2001" or "Principal Act") in coming to its decision, performed its functions in a manner consistent with:

- (a) section 15(1) of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Act 2015, as amended

by section 17 of the Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021, and the requirement to, in so far as practicable perform its functions in a manner consistent with the Climate Action Plan 2024, Climate Action Plan 2025, national long term climate action strategy, national adaptation framework and approved sectoral adaptation plans, the furtherance of the national climate objective, and the objective of mitigating greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to the effects of climate change in the State.

In coming to its decision, the Commission also had regard to the following:

- (a) European, national, regional, and local planning, climate, transport and other policy of relevance including, in particular, the following:
 - European Policy/Legislation including:
 - o The relevant provisions of Directive 2014/52/EU amending Directive 2011/92/EU (Environmental Impact Assessment Directive) on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment;
 - o Directive 92/43/EEC (Habitats Directive) and Directive 79/409/EEC as amended by 2009/147/EC (Birds Directive);
 - o Directive 2000/60/EC (Water Framework Directive);
 - o Ten-T Regulation (European Union) 2024/1679;
 - National policy and guidance, including:
 - o Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework, First Revision April 2025;
 - o National Development Plan Review 2025;
 - o Ireland's 4th National Biodiversity Action Plan 2023-2030;
 - o Water Action Plan 2024: A River Basin Management Plan for Ireland;
 - o Ireland's Long-term Strategy on Greenhouse Gas Emissions Reduction 2024;

- National Adaptation Framework: Planning for a Climate Resilient Ireland 2024 and Transport: Climate Change Sectoral Adaptation Plan, 2019;
- National Investment Framework for Transport in Ireland, 2021;
- National Sustainable Mobility Policy, 2022;
- Architectural Heritage Protection Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2011;
- Places for People - National Policy on Architecture 2022;
- Regional and local policy, including:
 - the Eastern and Midland Regional Assembly Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy 2019-2031;
 - Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2022-2042;
 - Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028;
 - Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029;
 - Local Area Plans, Masterplans and other plans, including the Dublin City Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, Fingal Climate Action Plan 2024-2029, Ballymun Local Area Plan 2017, Scheme of Special Planning Control O'Connell Street and Environs 2022, Dublin City Centre Transport Plan 2023, Lissenhall East Local Area Plan 2023, Sustainable Swords Strategy 2022, Dublin Airport Local Area Plan 2020, Swords Masterplans 2019, South Fingal Transport Study 2019, Dublin Airport Central Masterplan 2016, Your Swords: An Emerging City, Strategic Vision 2035:
- (b) the nature, scale and extent of the proposed development;
- (c) the characteristics of the receiving environment for the alignment corridor, associated works sites and of the general vicinity;
- (d) the Draft Railway Order and supporting documents and drawings submitted with the application, including the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, the Natura Impact Statement, the documentation submitted at and subsequent

to the oral hearing, the responses to the submissions made, and the range of mitigation measures and environmental commitments contained therein;

- (e) the submissions on file including those from prescribed bodies, the relevant local authorities, the observers and persons affected by the proposed land acquisition, and the submissions made at and subsequent to the oral hearing;
- (f) the likely consequences for the environment and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which it is proposed to carry out the proposed scheme and the likely significant effects of the proposed development on European Sites; and
- (g) the report and recommendation of the Inspector, (informed by 'Metrolink Technical Review' prepared by Tyrens Group AB), including the examination, analysis and evaluation undertaken in relation to planning and sustainable development, environmental impact assessment, appropriate assessment, water framework directive assessment and the compulsory acquisition.

Proper Planning and Sustainable Development

The Commission considers that the proposed MetroLink development enjoys very strong policy support at national, regional and local levels in terms of planning, transport and climate policy. This includes both explicit support of the MetroLink project itself, and implicit support with regard to climate action, sustainable transport, facilitating compact growth, improving accessibility and connectivity of Swords and Dublin Airport with the city centre, and other matters. There is strong specific and overarching policy support in Dublin City Development Plan 2022-2028 and the Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029, and in a number of applicable Local Area Plans. The Commission notes, inter alia, the submissions made by Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council in support of the proposed development.

Furthermore, the Commission notes and concurs with the reporting Inspector's conclusion that the issue of a 'material contravention' of a development plan or Local Area Plan is not one that arises in the consideration of a Railway Order application.

In view of the very large scale of the project, the proposed alignment and the nature of the urban environments through which it passes, the Commission considers the likelihood of construction stage adverse impacts on residential amenities and

retail/commercial premises are unavoidable in some locations. However, the Commission considers that such impacts must be balanced against the very significant wider societal benefits and common good that will accrue from the provision of a high-quality underground rail system. The Commission is of the opinion that the long-term benefits of the development outweigh the identified construction stage impacts and that none would give rise to an unacceptable impact on a sensitive receptor that would justify or warrant a refusal of the Railway Order.

The Commission also considers that the likelihood of significant adverse impacts on heritage is unavoidable at a number of locations. Again, the Commission considers such impacts must be balanced against the very significant wider societal benefits that will accrue from the provision of the proposed development.

In relation to the potential of settlement or property damage, the Commission considers that the applicant has carried out a thorough assessment of the impact from the construction of the MetroLink in line with current best practice for major infrastructure projects. Given that underground metro lines have been built in historic and modern cities throughout the world, there is no fundamental reason why unacceptable levels of settlement or building damage would occur in this instance, particularly given advances in Tunnel Boring Machine design and greater industry understanding of settlement mechanisms and geological/hydrogeological issues. The Commission considers that, subject to compliance with the conditions as contained within Schedule 14 of this Order, unacceptable levels of settlement or property damage are unlikely to occur.

While the demolition works and construction of the proposed development will result in large carbon emissions due to its extent and scale and the embodied carbon associated with concrete, steel and other construction material, the Commission considers that the proposed development would not have a significant adverse impact on climate when considered on a whole-life basis (80+ years operational life), due to its positive impacts in the operational phase as a result of encouraging a modal shift to sustainable transport modes and having regard to the applicant's commitments to use renewable energy, low carbon concrete and other mitigating factors. Notwithstanding the construction phase carbon, the Commission is satisfied that the proposed development will assist Ireland's trajectory towards net zero. Therefore, having considered the matters set out in section 15 of the Climate Action

and Low Carbon Act 2015 (as amended), the Commission considered that a decision to grant the Railway Order would be consistent with its duties under the said Act and would assist the State in meeting its national climate objective.

The Commission considers that the proposed development would accord with European, national, regional and local planning, climate and transport policy and is acceptable in respect of its likely effects on the environment and its likely consequences for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Environmental Impact Assessment

The Commission completed an Environmental Impact Assessment of the proposed development taking into account:

- (i) the nature, scale and extent of the proposed development;
- (ii) the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and associated documentation submitted in support of the application;
- (iii) the submissions made during the course of the application and at the oral hearing; and
- (iv) the Inspector's report.

The Commission considered that the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, supported by the documentation submitted by the applicant at and subsequent to the oral hearing, adequately considers alternatives to the proposed development and identifies and describes adequately the direct, indirect, secondary and cumulative effects of the proposed development on the environment.

The Commission agreed with the examination, set out in the Inspector's report, of the information contained in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report and associated documentation submitted by the applicant and submissions made during the course of the application.

The Commission considered, and agreed with the Inspector's reasoned conclusions, that the main significant direct and indirect effects of the proposed development on the environment with the implementation of the proposed mitigation measures are as follows:

Population and Human Health:

- The construction and operation of MetroLink will provide a high-frequency, high-capacity metro railway between Estuary and Charlemont that will have a long-term positive impact on population and human health in that it will aid in improving sustainable connectivity; support compact growth, reduce transport congestion and emissions, and reduce reliance on private vehicle trips, with consequent reductions in vehicle emissions, thus assisting in the delivery of climate change goals.
- Significant, permanent adverse impacts in respect of the compulsory acquisition of occupied housing at a number of locations and demolition of the Markiewicz Leisure Centre at Townsend Street, Dublin 2.
- Significant, temporary adverse impacts on population during construction, arising from airborne and groundborne noise and vibration, dust and traffic disruption. These will be mitigated through compliance with a Construction Environmental Management Plan, a Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plan, and best practice construction methods. Noise mitigation, including temporary rehousing as necessary, will be offered to eligible owners/occupiers where the construction is predicted to give rise to airborne construction noise level that exceeds specified parameters.
- Significant, temporary and permanent adverse impacts arising from loss of playing pitches.
- Significant, temporary adverse impact on population during construction, arising from closure of the southwestern commuter rail line for a period of 5 months.

Biodiversity:

- Significant, permanent adverse impacts on biodiversity during construction, arising from loss of Local Importance (Higher Value) habitat, including cumulative impacts arising from the loss of similar habitat as part of other developments, and the permanent loss of suitable Yellowhammer breeding habitat.

Land, Soils, Water, Air and Climate:

- Land Take and Agronomy: Significant, very significant and profound adverse impacts on a number of property owners affected by compulsory acquisition, which will not be mitigated other than through the payment of compensation and a commitment from the applicant in respect of engagement and assistance.
- Soils and Geology: The potential for significant adverse impacts on soils and geology can be avoided, managed and/or mitigated by measures that form part of the proposed scheme, the proposed mitigation measures and through suitable conditions. The Commission is therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on soils and geology.
- Water: The potential for significant adverse impacts on water can be avoided, managed and/or mitigated by measures that form part of the proposed scheme, the proposed mitigation measures and through suitable conditions. The Commission is therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on water and can be constructed and operated without negatively affecting the Water Framework Directive (WFD) status of any groundwater or surface water body and would not prejudice or undermine any ongoing or future efforts to improve the WFD status of the relevant waterbodies.
- Air and Climate: The potential for significant adverse impacts on air and climate can be avoided, managed and/or mitigated by measures that form part of the proposed scheme, the proposed mitigation measures and through suitable conditions. The Commission is therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on air and climate.
- Airborne Noise and Vibration: In view of the nature and scale of construction works required to build MetroLink and, taken together with the urban and developed neighbourhoods through which it routes, there is a high level of noise that is unavoidable, at certain locations and at points of the construction programme. There is a likelihood of significant residual adverse noise impacts in each of Area AZ1, AZ2, AZ3 and AZ4 at various stages of construction. The applicant proposes the erection of enhanced site hoardings at multiple

construction site locations, which will attenuate noise to a certain degree, and in locations where noise levels remain above specified thresholds for extended periods, there will be access to additional mitigation under a Noise Mitigation Policy.

- Groundborne Noise and Vibration: Due to the nature of tunnelling with a Tunnel Boring Machine, unavoidable temporary adverse significant groundborne noise impacts are likely on all receptors within 65-75 metres of the tunnel centreline in areas where Tunnel Boring Machine tunnelling will take place (i.e. areas AZ2 and AZ4). The Commission notes that any one receptor is likely to experience these impacts for circa 2 weeks. Temporary adverse significant residual groundborne noise impacts are also likely for some receptors during mechanical excavation of station boxes at Glasnevin, Mater, Tara and Charlemont Stations and the Commission is satisfied that these impacts cannot be avoided or mitigated due to the nature of groundborne noise, the extent and depth of the required excavations and the proximity to receptors, all of which are necessary to deliver a metro system within an urban environment.
- Electromagnetism and Stray Current: The potential for significant adverse impacts can be avoided, managed and/or mitigated by measures that form part of the proposed scheme, the proposed mitigation measures and through suitable conditions. The Commission is therefore satisfied that the proposed development would not have any unacceptable direct, indirect or cumulative impacts on sensitive receptors.

Material Assets, Cultural Heritage and the Landscape

- Material Assets: In view of the primarily subterranean nature of the project, that requires very substantial excavation as part of tunnelling and station construction, the generation of large amounts of spoil that requires disposal is unavoidable. The applicant's approach to mitigating impacts on landfill capacity accords with the circular economy model, by seeking to minimise the amount of material requiring disposal in this manner by seeking to have classified as a by-product (which can be reused) or by recovering the material at a soil recovery facility. Notwithstanding this, there is a likelihood of a significant adverse impact on national landfill capacity during construction, where the amount of excavated

material requiring disposal to landfill is predicted to reduce overall national landfill capacity by 1-5 percent.

○ Traffic and Transportation:

- During the construction phase, the Commission considers that there will be a range of short-term significant residual negative impacts in assessment zone areas AZ1, AZ2 and AZ3 due primarily to the very substantial number of Heavy Goods Vehicle movements associated with the proposed development and the temporary traffic management measures associated with the construction of the alignment and stations and movement of construction vehicles. There will also be short-term significant negative impacts on the western and southwestern commuter rail lines, due to the need for temporary closure to facilitate track lowering at Glasnevin Station.
- In the operational phase, The Commission considers that there will be a range of long-term positive impacts, including significant and profound impacts, due to improvements to public transport and the potential for greater interchange opportunities. This will include significant positive cumulative impacts with other transport projects such as BusConnects and DART+. The Commission considers that there is potential for residual negative impacts on pedestrian comfort levels at certain stations, which will require monitoring in the operational phase and engagement with local authorities to determine if street furniture placement and pavement width can be maximised.

○ Heritage:

- Profound adverse impacts on Four Masters Park, its enclosing railings, gates and plinth walls and the Four Masters Cross and Healing Hands Sculpture that lie within the park during the construction phase, arising from the scale of clearance and excavation works proposed and the required presence of construction elements within the park for prolonged periods. Following the completion of construction, the park will be restored to a slightly different alignment and with a reduced area and with enclosing items reinstated (following restoration) and with the Four

Masters Cross and Healing Hands sculpture relocated toward the centre of the park.

- Profound adverse impact on the setting and character of the Protected Structure Santry Lodge's gate lodges, gateway and front boundary wall, which are part of the Protected Structure listing, and which are to be demolished during construction. There will also be a very significant impact on Santry Lodge itself, arising from demolition of its gate lodges, gateway and front boundary wall. The applicant proposes to relocate the entrance arrangement, including stone walls, on a new alignment and further proposes to agree details of this relocation, together with wider landscaping, with Fingal County Council prior to the commencement of works in the vicinity of Santry Lodge.
- Very significant adverse impact on the setting and character of the Protected Structure and National Monument at St. Stephen's Green, including enclosing items and surrounding bollards and traditional street lamp-posts, during construction, arising from the scale of clearance and excavation works proposed and the required presence of construction elements within the park for prolonged periods. Following the completion of construction, TII proposes to restore the Green, including restoration of enclosing itself and relocation of the Wolfe Tone Sculpture and Famine Memorial. The restored Green will contain station elements, and the restoration landscaping strategy will have a limited effect in addressing the overall impact of construction for a period of at least a number of years. The impact for the operational phase will therefore remain at the level of very significant.
- Very significant adverse impact on architectural heritage at O'Connell Street Upper, arising from proposed demolition works between Numbers 43-58 O'Connell Street Upper that includes demolition within the curtilage of a Protected Structure. Construction of O'Connell Street Station may take place in one of two scenarios (in tandem with or without oversite development) and in circumstances where station construction takes place ahead of oversite development, the applicant proposes to prop and retain all of the O'Connell Street facades.

- Very significant adverse impact on the setting and character of the Protected Structure Carroll's Building at 2 Grand Parade, Dublin 6 during the operational phase, arising from the construction of a stairwell and passenger lift to the front of the building. The Commission accepts that these structures are required in their proposed locations, in order to provide for connectivity between the Luas Green Line and MetroLink at Charlemont.
 - Significant adverse impact on Lissenhall Bridge, a Protected Structure and National Monument, during operation, arising from the construction of an elevated viaduct over the Broadmeadow River.
 - Significant adverse impacts on Hedigans Public House (also known as the Brian Boru pub) at Prospect Road, Glasnevin, Dublin 9, and the Cross Guns Railway Tunnel, both of which will be demolished during construction. Regarding the Brian Boru pub, following multiple submissions on the loss of this community asset, the applicant proposes to engage with the pub owners to integrate or reference an element of the pub into the design of the proposed Glasnevin Station.
 - Significant adverse impact on Our Lady of Victories Church, Ballymun Road, Dublin 9 during construction, arising from the scale of excavation works proposed and the required presence of construction elements within the church forecourt for prolonged periods. Following the completion of construction, the applicant proposes to reinstate and landscape the church forecourt.
- Landscape:
- Significant adverse landscape and visual impacts at various locations in alignment areas AZ1, AZ3 and in AZ4 at Collins Avenue Station, Albert College Park Intervention Shaft, Mater Station, O'Connell Street Station, and St. Stephen's Green Station for both construction and operational phases. Griffith Park Station and Glasnevin Station during the construction phase, related to the extent of clearance, demolition and (in some cases) demolition works required and the presence of large items of plant and machinery on construction sites for prolonged periods.

- Significant cumulative adverse landscape and visual impacts during construction, associated with the BusConnects Swords to Dublin City Centre and Ballymun/Finglas to Dublin City Centre Bus Corridor Schemes, the R132 Connectivity Project and at Glasnevin, O'Connell Street and Tara, associated with largescale developments in close proximity to the station's sites.
- Significant cumulative positive landscape and visual impacts in the operational phase in Area AZ1 associated with completion of both MetroLink and the R132 Connectivity Project, and in Area AZ4 at O'Connell Street associated with the oversite Dublin Central GP Limited development.

The Commission completed an environmental impact assessment in relation to the proposed development and concluded that, subject to the implementation of the mitigation measures set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, and subject to compliance with the conditions set out below, the effects on the environment of the proposed development, by itself and in combination with other development in the vicinity, would be acceptable. In doing so, the Commission adopted the report and conclusions of the Inspector.

Appropriate Assessment - Stage 1

The Commission considered the Appropriate Assessment Screening Report, Natura Impact Statement, Appropriate Assessment Update Report and Post Oral Hearing Appropriate Assessment Update and all the other relevant submissions and carried out both an appropriate assessment screening exercise and an appropriate assessment in relation to the potential effects of the proposed development on designated European Sites. The Commission agreed with and adopted the screening assessment and conclusion carried out in the Inspector's report that the relevant European Sites in respect of which the proposed development has the potential to have a significant effect are:

- Baldoyle Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000199),
- Baldoyle Bay Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004016),
- Dalkey Islands Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004172),

- Howth Head Coast Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004113),
- Ireland's Eye Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004117),
- Lambay Island Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004069),
- Malahide Estuary Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000205),
- Malahide Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004025),
- North Bull Island Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004006),
- North Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000206),
- Rockabill Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004014),
- Rogerstown Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004015),
- Skerries Islands Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004122),
- South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004024),
- South Dublin Bay Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 000210),
- The Murrough Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004186),
- The North-west Irish Sea Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004236),
- Lambay Island Special Protection Area (Site Code: 004069),
- Codling Fault Zone Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 003015), and
- Rockabill To Dalkey Island Special Area of Conservation (Site Code: 003000).

Appropriate Assessment – Stage 2

The Commission considered the Natura Impact Statement, Appropriate Assessment Update Report and Post Oral Hearing Appropriate Assessment Update, and associated documentation submitted with the application, the mitigation measures contained therein, the information submitted by the applicant at and subsequent to the oral hearing, the submissions on file, including the submission from the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage, and the Inspector's assessment. The Commission completed an appropriate assessment of the implications of the proposed development for each of the abovementioned Sites, in

view of each Site's conservation objectives. The Commission considered that the information before it was adequate to allow the carrying out of an appropriate assessment. In completing the appropriate assessment, the Commission considered, in particular, the following:

- (i) the likely direct and indirect impacts arising from the proposed development both individually or in combination with other plans or projects,
- (ii) the mitigation measures which are included as part of the current proposal, and
- (iii) the conservation objectives for the European Sites.

In completing the appropriate assessment, the Commission accepted and adopted the appropriate assessment carried out in the Inspector's report in respect of the potential effects of the proposed development on the aforementioned European Sites, having regard to the Sites' conservation objectives.

In overall conclusion, the Commission was satisfied that the proposed development, by itself or in combination with other plans or projects, would not adversely affect the integrity of the European Sites, in view of the Sites' conservation objectives.

Conditions

1. The proposed development shall be carried out and completed in accordance with the plans and particulars lodged with the application, as updated and modified by the following:
 - (a) Schedule of Errata, submitted at the oral hearing on the 27th day of March 2024,
 - (b) Schedule of Updates, submitted at the oral hearing on the 27th day of March 2024, and
 - (c) PFAS Management Strategy for Dublin Airport, submitted to the Commission on the 31st day of January 2025,except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

Reason: In the interest of clarity.

2. The following modifications are made to the Railway Order:
- (a) the text of the Railway Order shall be updated to reflect the revised and updated version submitted to the Commission at the oral hearing on the 26th day of March 2024,
 - (b) Schedules 2 - 10 (i.e. the Book of Reference) to the Railway Order shall be updated to reflect the Schedules submitted to the Commission on the 12th day of June 2024,
 - (c) the following agreements reached by the applicant shall be included in the Thirteenth Schedule of the Railway Order:
 - (i) Agreement with Dublin City Council, submitted at the oral hearing on 26th February 2024.
 - (ii) Agreement with Fingal County Council, submitted at the oral hearing on 4th March 2024.
 - (iii) Agreement with the Office of Public Works, submitted at the oral hearing on 26th February 2024,
 - (iv) Agreement with DAA, submitted at the oral hearing on 26th February 2024,
 - (d) the conditions hereby attached to the grant of the Railway Order shall be included in the Fourteenth Schedule of the Railway Order,
 - (e) the Fifteenth Schedule shall be omitted,
 - (f) the Commission's reasoned conclusion on Environmental Impact Assessment, hereby attached to the grant of the Railway Order, shall be included in an amended Fifteenth Schedule of the Railway Order, entitled 'Reasoned Conclusion', and
 - (g) the Sixteenth Schedule of the Railway Order shall be entitled 'Schedule of Costs'.

Reason: In the interests of clarity and the proper planning and sustainable of the area.

3. All of the mitigation measures, environmental commitments and monitoring measures identified in the following documents shall be implemented in full as part of the proposed scheme:

- (a) the Environmental Impact Assessment Report,
- (b) the Natura Impact Statement, and
- (c) the Schedule of Additional Environmental Commitments, submitted at the oral hearing on the 27th day of March 2024;

except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the following conditions.

A consolidated Schedule of Mitigation and Monitoring Measures, derived from parts (a) to (c) of this condition, shall be prepared and submitted to Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, the Minister for Transport and made available on a publicly accessible website, prior to the commencement of construction.

Reason: In the interests of clarity and the protection of the environment during the construction and operational phases of the development

4. Station designs shall be amended as follows:

- (a) All stations:
 - (i) Where skylights are proposed, they shall have a maximum height of 1.5 metres above ground level. Prior to the commencement of development, amended plans, sections and elevations indicating compliance with this condition shall be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council, as relevant.
 - (ii) No signage or advertising, other than MetroLink related operational signage, shall be affixed to the glazed facades of the station entrances.
 - (iii) Prior to their installation, details of the final design and positioning of the hostile vehicle management bollards at each station shall be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council and Fingal

County Council, as relevant. The bollards at St. Stephen's Green Station shall be of matching stone material and appearance to existing bollards that surround the perimeter of the park.

(b) Mater Station:

- (i) The design of the station entrance canopy shall be revised to incorporate reduced metal banding and a commensurate increase in glazing. Prior to the commencement of development, amended plans, sections and elevations indicating compliance with this condition shall be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council.
- (ii) The design of the combined passenger/Dublin Fire Brigade lift structure to the south-west of the station entrance and the Dublin Fire Brigade lift structure to the west of St. Joseph's Church shall be revised to comprise glazed lift shafts. Prior to the commencement of development, amended plans, sections and elevations indicating compliance with this condition shall be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council.
- (iii) The proposed skylights shall be omitted.

(c) O'Connell Street Station:

- (i) The O'Connell Street station entrance shall be as shown in the document 'O'Connell Street Station' and the updated drawings submitted at the oral hearing on the 19th day of March 2024 and the 25th day of March 2024, respectively.
- (ii) In the event that the commercial development, known as Dublin Central, which was permitted by the Commission under ABP-318316-23 does not proceed, the Moore Lane station entrance shall be as shown in the document 'O'Connell Street Station' submitted at the oral hearing on the 19th day of March 2024, and shall incorporate a brick treatment to the entrance and planting in front of the site

hoarding along Moore Lane. This shall be maintained by the developer until such time as the surrounding lands are developed.

- (d) Charlemont Station: The pedestrian stairs and lift to the front of the Carroll's Building shall be revised such that it is set away from and does not overhang the entrance canopy to the existing building. Prior to the commencement of development, amended plans, sections and elevations indicating compliance with this condition shall be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the preservation of features of heritage interest.

- 5. Prior to the commencement of development, a finalised Construction Environmental Management Plan (CEMP), including a Scheme Traffic Management Plan, shall be prepared in consultation with Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council. The CEMP shall incorporate all mitigation measures as set out in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report, the Natura Impact Statement and the conditions set out herein and shall include details and schedules of monitoring supervision and reporting to the planning authorities. In finalising the CEMP and the Scheme Traffic Management Plan the developer shall liaise with National Parks and Wildlife Service, Inland Fisheries Ireland, the National Transport Authority, Waterways Ireland, Córas Iompair Éireann and its constituent companies, as appropriate. The CEMP and Scheme Traffic Management Plan shall be updated on a regular basis, to be agreed with Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council as appropriate, during the construction phase in consultation with the abovementioned bodies and the Project Construction Traffic Forum.

Reason: To protect amenities, public health and safety.

- 6. Dust monitoring locations shall be agreed with the local authorities and shall include a dust monitoring location as close to the junction of Moore Street and O'Rahilly Parade as feasible.

Reason: In the interest of the amenity of the area.

7. The measures outlined in the document 'St. Stephen's Green Park Draft Schedule of Railway Order Conditions', submitted by the applicant at the oral hearing on the 26th day of February 2024, shall be implemented in full except as may otherwise be required in order to comply with the conditions attached to this Railway Order.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the preservation of features of heritage interest.

8. A construction method statement shall be submitted to Dublin City Council, which shall include proposals for:
- (a) the protection of street trees on O'Connell Street during station construction,
 - (b) the removal of scaffolding along O'Connell Street following internal propping of retained facades, and
 - (c) the removal of construction hoardings on O'Connell Street following the completion of MetroLink construction.

Reason: In the interests of visual amenity and the preservation of features of heritage interest.

9. The proposed construction site hoardings shall comply with the following requirements:
- (a) Site hoardings at the following locations, where they are 4 metres or greater in height and directly address adjacent housing, shall incorporate a transparent material for the upper 2 metres: Glasnevin, Mater and Charlemont.
 - (b) The developer shall prepare and submit a scheme of painted and/or artwork finishes for construction site hoardings, which shall include the incorporation of locally relevant art, for the written agreement of Fingal

County Council or Dublin City Council, as appropriate. The approved scheme shall thereafter be implemented at each site within 6 months after erection of site hoardings and shall be maintained for the duration of the construction phase to the satisfaction of Fingal County Council or Dublin City Council, as appropriate.

- (c) Where construction site hoardings obstruct visibility of businesses, provision shall be made for temporary signage attached to the hoardings for those businesses.

Reason: In the interests of residential and visual amenity.

- 10 (a) Proposed tree planting at Albert College Park shall include mature planting, in accordance with a scheme to be submitted for the written agreement of Dublin City Council prior to commencement of construction at Albert College Park.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, no felling of street trees at St. Mobhi Road shall take place.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

- 11. Prior to commencement of construction works at Balheary Park, the developer shall make available an alternative training facility for Fingallians GAA, which shall be maintained in such use until the existing facility at Balheary Park is reinstated.

Reason: In the interest of orderly development.

- 12. Prior to the removal of car parking spaces at The Court apartments, Dalcassian Downs, Glasnevin, the developer shall make available an equal number of alternative parking spaces for affected residents, which shall be maintained until such time as new parking spaces are provided following the completion of construction of Glasnevin Station.

Reason: In the interest of residential amenity.

- 13.(a) Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall submit proposals for the written agreement of Fingal County Council for the reconstruction of removed sections of the Balheary Demesne boundary wall along the newly created demesne boundary.
- (b) Prior to the commencement of any construction in the vicinity of Balheary Bridge, a construction hoarding shall be erected a minimum of 10 metres away from the bridge. All construction plant and machinery shall thereafter be kept outside of this exclusion zone.

Reason: In order to preserve features of heritage importance

14. Operational stage drainage arrangements, including the attenuation and disposal of surface water, shall comply with the requirements of Fingal County and Dublin City Council, as appropriate.

Reason: In the interests of environmental protection and public health.

15. Prior to the commencement of development, the developer shall enter into Connection Agreements with Uisce Éireann to provide for service connections to the public water supply and/or wastewater collection network for both the construction and operational phases.

Reason: In the interest of public health and to ensure adequate water/wastewater facilities.

16. All construction phase water requiring disposal shall be disposed to the public sewer under agreement and not to any surface water body.

Reason: In the interests of clarity and protection of the environment.

- 17.(a) Mitigation measures contained within the Natura Impact Statement that are intended to protect against the potential for discharge of surface waters from construction sites shall accord with advice contained with Inland Fisheries Ireland guidance document 'Guidelines on Protection of

Fisheries During Construction Works in and Adjacent to Waters' (2016). Additional drawings and/or construction method statements outlining compliance with the Inland Fisheries Ireland Guidelines shall be submitted to Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council, as appropriate, for agreement.

- (b) The proposed in-water installation at the Broadmeadow River, required as part of viaduct construction, shall be designed and installed under the supervision of the project Ecological Clerk of Works and shall comply with the abovementioned Inland Fisheries Ireland Guidelines.
- (c) The developer shall undertake water quality monitoring at the Broadmeadow River and at all culvert and watercourse diversion sites before and after completion of works, to confirm that there is no pollutant/contaminant in the water prior to removal of installations that are in place to protect receiving water quality.
- (d) The applicant shall submit a Sediment Erosion and Pollution Control Plan to Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council for their written agreement, prior to the commencement of construction

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and in order to protect water quality within receiving surface waters.

- 18.(a) The Expert Panel described in the document 'Ground Movement Monitoring Information Paper', submitted at the oral hearing on 19th day of February 2024, shall be engaged prior to procurement of the Independent Monitoring Engineer and the main civil works contractor. The Expert Panel shall verify the scope of the work to be undertaken by the Independent Monitoring Engineer and the contract requirements for building damage risk assessments.
- (b) The Expert Panel shall have a verifying and sign off role rather than the advisory role stated by the applicant in the document referenced in part (a) above.
- (c) The developer shall procure the Main Civil Works and implement the work in accordance with the commitments made in the document 'Working

Draft / Process for the oversight and implementation of Phase 3 assessments' submitted at the oral hearing on the 6th day of March 2024 and the Schedule of Additional Environmental Commitments submitted at the oral hearing on the 27th day of March 2024.

- (d) The developer shall ensure that a 'Plan for the Advancement of the Tunnel' (PAT) is developed for each section of tunnel and each PAT shall be reviewed and signed off by the Independent Monitoring Engineer and Expert Panel.
- (e) The Tunnel Boring Machine specifications shall include appropriate software and hardware that shall provide the developer and the Independent Monitoring Engineer with access to real time data from the tunnelling operations. The Tunnel Boring Machine specifications shall also provide for integration with other monitoring, such as settlement and displacement, in real time.
- (f) The developer shall carry out baseline monitoring for at least one year prior to commencement of piling or diaphragm wall construction to establish baseline movement of representative, heritage and 'special' buildings (as defined in section 5.4.11.2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report) and all buildings anticipated to require a Phase 3 Building Damage Assessment.
- (g) The developer shall put in place Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar monitoring of the alignment commencing at the start of the baseline monitoring period, continuing through construction and up to the completion of the close-out monitoring period. The Interferometric Synthetic Aperture Radar data shall cover a zone approximately 100 metres either side of the tunnel centre line.
- (h) The ventilation and evacuation tunnels at Dublin Airport shall be constructed by means of a closed-face Tunnel Boring Machine.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and to safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

19. (a) The developer shall put in place suitable measures to ensure that building damage does not exceed Category 1, as defined in Table 4-4 of the Building Damage Report contained in Appendix A5.17 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.
- (b) The Expert Panel shall review and sign off on Phase 3 assessments and the measures to be undertaken for sensitive locations of the alignment. These shall include:
- (i) the area around Charlemont Station,
 - (ii) sensitive buildings, such as those with deep basements or settlement sensitive facades (including AerCap House, the Cadenza Building and the 2 Grand Parade development at Charlemont Station),
 - (iii) buildings adjacent to tunnel break-in / break-out zones from the station boxes, and
 - (iv) Protected Structures and other 'special' buildings (as defined in section 5.4.11.2 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report).
- (c) Prior to the commencement of construction, the developer shall undertake a further review of both the Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council Records of Protected Structures. Any additional Protected Structures with the potential zone of influence that had not previously been identified as requiring building damage assessment shall be subject to Phase 3 assessment.

Reason: In the interest of the protection of architectural heritage and to mitigate the risk of building damage during construction.

20. (a) Blasting shall not be carried out for the Sprayed Concrete Lining works, including Albert College Park Intervention Shaft and tunnels, Sprayed Concrete Lined pumping sumps, and Sprayed Concrete Lined works at Dublin Airport, in addition to the commitment to not use blasting for the Charlemont Intervention Tunnel.

- (b) Blasting shall not be carried out for the construction of the following deep stations: Charlemont Station, St. Stephens Green Station, Tara Station, O'Connell Street Station and Mater Station.
- (c) At other locations, the developer shall ensure that the effects from blasting do not extend beyond the zone covered by the Property Owners Protection Scheme.
- (d) The Expert Panel shall review and sign off on the scope of the additional detailed design geotechnical investigations and the adequacy of the interpretation of them at sensitive locations. This shall include the locations where Sprayed Concrete Lining works are to be carried out and where buildings that require a Phase 3 Building Damage Assessment are located.

Reason: In the interest of the protection of architectural heritage and to mitigate the risk of building damage during construction.

21. (a) The developer shall take such measures for controlling groundwater dewatering from the deep station construction as are necessary to ensure that no groundwater lowering shall occur outside the station boxes as stated in the document 'Dewatering Assessment in Station Boxes and SCL Tunnels (Version 2)' submitted at the oral hearing on 6th day of March 2024. This requirement shall be applied to all deep stations.
- (b) The developer shall take such measures for controlling the groundwater dewatering from the Sprayed Concrete Lining works (e.g. Charlemont Intervention Tunnel, Albert College Park Intervention Shaft and tunnels and area AZ4 pumping sumps) as are necessary to ensure that no groundwater lowering occurs, as stated in the document referenced in part (a) of this condition.
 - (c) The definition of "no groundwater lowering" shall be that no groundwater lowering occurs outside the normal seasonal variation of groundwater levels as determined by at least 1 year of pre-excavation monitoring.

- (d) The Expert Panel shall review and, once satisfied, shall sign off on the groundwater control measures to be adopted by the contractor prior to implementation.
- (e) The Expert Panel shall follow the execution and monitoring of the groundwater control works and shall have the power to instruct the developer to carry out any additional measures that the Expert Panel consider necessary to ensure that no groundwater lowering occurs outside the station boxes and Sprayed Concrete Lining works.
- (f) The developer shall implement groundwater control measures to limit the abstraction at Dublin Airport Station and associated tunnels, caverns and shafts to a maximum of 32 cubic metres per day and shall implement the measures set out in the PFAS Management Strategy for Dublin Airport, submitted to the Commission on the 31st day of January 2025.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and to safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

22. (a) The document 'Outline Guidance Note for Developers' submitted at the oral hearing on the 27th day of March 2024 shall be updated to clearly identify the level at which the allowable 75 kN/sq.m. load is applied and it shall be signed off by the Expert Panel, included in the design and build tender, submitted to Dublin City Council and Fingal County Council and made available on a publicly accessible website. In the interests of clarity, the MetroLink shall not limit future developments to a maximum surcharge load of 75 kN/sq.m. at the base of their foundations, as stated at section 4.2.3.1 'Construction Stage' of 'MetroLink Railway Order 2nd Statutory Consultation – Response to Submissions Received' as received by An Coimisiun Pleanála on the 9th day of December 2024.
- (b) Suitable provisions shall be included in the design to ensure that the tunnel has suitable robustness to cope with the anticipated loading from adjacent developments and not unduly constrain future development.
 - (c) Prior to the coming into operation of the MetroLink, the developer shall publish on the project website and submit to Dublin City Council and

Fingal County Council, an updated Guidance Note for Developers which will identify exclusion and protection zones around stations and tunnels in accordance with the document referenced in part (a) of this condition, but which shall omit the Limits of Deviation.

- (d) The updated Guidance Note for Developers shall incorporate pre-approved guidance criteria for minor works that have no reasonable likelihood of impacting on MetroLink infrastructure (e.g. domestic extensions, boundary walls, shallow excavations).

Reason: In the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.

- 23. The construction working hours shall be as set out in the document 'Update to Chapter 5 MetroLink Construction Phase: Working Hours', submitted at the oral hearing on 29th day of February 2024, with the following exception:

- (a) The Sprayed Concrete Lining works for the Intervention Tunnels at Charlemont, Albert College Park and the pumping sumps in area AZ4 shall be undertaken on a 24 hours per day, 5.5 day per week basis, with no weekend working later than 13:00 on Saturdays with no work on Sundays and public holidays.

The Stakeholder Communication Plan shall include measures for the advance communication of working hours, including the need for night-time working activities as and when they arise, to residents and businesses in the vicinity of each works site.

Reason: To safeguard the amenity of property in the vicinity.

- 24. (a) The 'Airborne Noise & Groundborne Noise Mitigation Policy' contained in Appendix A14.6 of the Environmental Impact Assessment Report shall be amended to remove reference to a maximum 4-week period for temporary rehousing. The duration of rehousing shall be tied to the duration of the activity or activities that are the cause of the relevant noise trigger values for rehousing being exceeded.

- (b) For noise control from fixed installations, in addition to the measures proposed by the applicant in the document 'Noise Control from Fixed Installations for MetroLink', submitted at the oral hearing on the 5th day of March 2024, specific thresholds for the frequencies between 10 and 160 hertz shall be set in accordance with the NANR34 assessment referred to in the British Standard BS4142.
- (c) The baseline noise surveys shall be re-run prior to the commencement of construction and the results shall be used in updated noise assessments and in the updating and further development of the CEMP and the Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plans.
- (d) Noise modelling shall be carried out in to provide three dimensional (3D) 'Predicted Noise Maps' which shall be used for the preparation of the Construction Noise and Vibration Management Plans and as a basis shall use the specific noise emissions for the plant to be used and their location on site.
- (e) The three dimensional noise modelling shall be used to communicate the noise impact from upcoming activities to affected receptors and shall be published by the developer through a suitable web portal.
- (f) The results of airborne and groundborne noise and vibration monitoring shall be published on a daily basis by the developer on a suitable web portal.
- (g) The actual groundborne vibration propagation and the coupling between the tunnel and ground and ground/buildings shall be determined by placing a seismic vibrator in the completed tunnel prior to trackbed construction. This shall be carried out at a number of representative locations along the alignment, such as in the vicinity of Trinity College Dublin, Mater Hospital and representative heritage buildings in area AZ4. The measurements shall use a range of relevant frequencies and the response at ground surface and selected buildings measured. This approach shall be used to calibrate the models used for the predictions of groundborne noise and vibrations and shall be used to confirm that the

selected trackbed solution will provide the required result in terms of groundborne vibrations during the operational phase.

- (h) The reduction of the operational phase groundborne noise limit, as proposed by the applicant in the document 'Additional Groundborne Noise Commitment' submitted at the oral hearing on the 5th day of March 2024, which commits to a maximum groundborne noise levels in any lawfully occupied residential dwellings, measured near the centre of any noise-sensitive room, of 35 dBL_{Amax,S} shall also apply to selected heritage buildings and commercial office buildings and the developer shall agree with the Expert Panel which buildings this will be applicable to.
- (i) Noise and vibrations monitoring shall be carried out by the Independent Monitoring Engineer and overseen by the Expert Panel.
- (j) Trigger Action Plans shall be developed for those buildings that are sensitive to noise and vibration during passage of the Tunnel Boring Machine that do not currently have a commitment for a Trigger Action Plans to be produced or for noise and vibration monitoring to be carried out during the passage of the Tunnel Boring Machine. The developer shall agree with the Expert Panel which buildings this is applicable to, but it shall include the Cadenza Building and AerCap House.
- (k) The bentonite recycling plants at the Northwood Portal site, Collins Avenue, Mater, St. Stephen's Green and Charlemont Station sites shall be contained within acoustic structures, details of which shall be submitted to Dublin City Council for agreement prior to the commencement of development.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of property in the vicinity.

25. The developer shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist to monitor (licensed under the National Monuments Acts) all site clearance works, topsoil stripping, groundworks, dredging and/or the implementation of agreed preservation in-situ measures associated with the development. The use of appropriate machinery to ensure the preservation and recording of any surviving archaeological remains shall be necessary. Should archaeological

remains be identified during the course of archaeological monitoring, all works shall cease in the area of archaeological interest pending a decision of the planning authority, in consultation with the National Monuments Service, regarding appropriate mitigation. The developer shall facilitate the archaeologist in recording any remains identified. Any further archaeological mitigation requirements specified by the planning authority, following consultation with the National Monuments Service, shall be complied with by the developer. Following the completion of all archaeological work on site and any necessary post-excavation specialist analysis, the planning authority and the National Monuments Service shall be furnished with a final archaeological report describing the results of the monitoring and any subsequent required archaeological investigative work/excavation required. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest.

26. The developer shall ensure that Conservation Architects with demonstrable expertise and experience in urban design in historic contexts, are engaged as part of the proposed development to identify, confirm and develop the record of historic fabric and inform appropriate levels of intervention and protection to protected structures and works within Architectural Conservation Areas.

Reason: In the interests of architectural heritage protection.

27. The existing elevated footbridges over the R132 regional road shall not be demolished until such time as the permitted R132 Connectivity Project (ABP-310145-21) is complete and alternative at-grade signalised pedestrian crossing points have been provided.

Reason: In the interest of road and pedestrian safety.

28. Prior to the installation of the temporary bridge over the Royal Canal, the developer shall undertake a road safety audit. All recommendations from the road safety audit shall be incorporated into the final design prior to installation.

Reason: In the interest of road and pedestrian safety.

29. The developer shall undertake the construction of Charlemont Station in a manner that ensures that Dartmouth Road shall be re-opened to local access traffic as soon as is feasible and the duration of the full closure of Dartmouth Road to local access traffic shall not exceed 30 months.

Reason: In order to protect the amenities of property in the vicinity.

30. (a) Demand management measures shall be put in place for the operation of the Estuary Park and Ride Facility to ensure its strategic function is protected and to discourage or prohibit long-term car parking. Details of the demand management measures shall be submitted to Fingal County Council for agreement prior to the coming into operation of the car park.
- (b) A survey of cycle parking usage and demand in the opening year and 5 years after the opening year shall be undertaken and submitted to Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council and the National Transport Authority. As part of this study, a review of bicycle theft at MetroLink stations shall be undertaken to determine if further secure cycle parking or other security measures are required.
- (c) The applicant shall carry out a review of footpath capacity within 12 months of coming into operation of the MetroLink stations and a further review shall be carried out between year 5 and year 6. The areas of footpath to be subject of the reviews shall be agreed in writing with Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council, as appropriate and the findings of the reviews shall be furnished to Fingal County Council and Dublin City Council, as appropriate.

Reason: In the interest of sustainable transport.

31. The green roofs proposed to a number of the stations shall be adequately protected from damage until established. Any areas of damaged grass to the roofs shall be replaced within the next planting season.

Reason: In the interest of visual amenity.

