



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of Meeting ABP-302010-18 4th meeting

Case Reference / Description	ABP-302010-18 Proposed Metrolink for Swords-Airport-City Centre corridor which includes connection to the existing Luas Green Line.		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	4 th		
Date	28 th October, 2020	Start Time	11 a.m.
Location	N/A	End Time	1.25 p.m.
Chairperson	Brendan Wyse	Executive Officer	Kieran Somers

Attendees		
Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Staff Member	Email Address	Phone
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning		
Kevin Moore, Senior Planning Inspector		
Kieran Somers, Executive Officer	k.somers@pleanala.ie	01-8737107

Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Peter Walsh, TII		
Ronan Hallissey, Jacobs		
John Keogh, Jacobs		
Aidan Foley, TII		
Nigel O'Neil, TII		
Neil Cowie, Jacobs		
Neill McClements, Grimshaw		

The meeting commenced at 11 a.m.

Introduction:

The Board referred to its previous meeting with the prospective applicant of the 8th November 2019. The Board enquired if the prospective applicant had any comments it wished to make on the record of this meeting. The prospective applicant replied that it had no comments to make on the record.

The Board's representatives did a brief overview of key matters which had been raised with the prospective applicant at the previous meeting; it also noted that the prospective applicant had provided it with legal advice on the issue of power supply/grid connection in relation to the proposed development.

Presentation by prospective applicant:

With respect to the power supply/grid connection, the prospective applicant's current intention is to apply for a temporary connection (for the purposes of the construction phase of the project) as part of the Railway Order Application with the permanent connection (for the operational phase of the project) being lodged by way of a separate application pursuant to section 182A of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. The Board's representatives noted this position (as per the legal advice provided) and indicated that such an approach would appear to be the most appropriate. With regard to the proposed substations, the Board queried if these

should form part of the section 182A application as opposed to the Railway Order Application; the prospective applicant is to consider the matter further.

With respect to the intended timeline, the prospective applicant signalled its intention to lodge the Railway Order Application circa June 2021 and to then lodge the section 182A application thereafter. The prospective applicant said that it would be very difficult to have a section 182A application prepared any sooner than this. The Board indicated a preference for dealing with both applications concurrently.

The prospective applicant outlined the nature and extent of stakeholder engagement since the time of the previous meeting. It reported that significant engagement has taken place with bodies such as Fingal County Council, Dublin City Council, the DAA, Irish Rail and members of the public. Based on consultation responses, the prospective applicant said that a number of significant design changes have been made to the proposed development.

The prospective applicant referred to the proposed route along the R132 which has been identified as the preferred location for the MetroLink Project in Swords. It noted that there has been major growth in the area and it has the threshold population to support the development of the project. The proposed route is more accessible from locations such as Swords Central and Seatown Station. The route would enable the R132 to become an urban boulevard with higher permeability.

The prospective applicant said that it has sought to address concerns raised by Fingal County Council and that it has had regard to the Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023. The prospective applicant outlined the nature and extent of urban integration which it expects will take place at this location with regard to the proposed development. It said that the proposed route would maximise station accessibility, would maximise the potential to successfully integrate the MetroLink Project with future and existing development and would minimise the level of community severance. At the Swords Central location, the prospective applicant said that the proposed development would serve to promote strong and attractive urban elevations along the R132 and would also ensure good and convenient permeability for pedestrians and cyclists; it added that the proposed station at this location would serve as a catalyst for joined-up development. The prospective applicant said that the emerging MetroLink Frameworks sets out the conditions that

are central to delivering quality urban locations around the four proposed stations in the Swords area generally.

In relation to Swords Central specifically, and connectivity between east and west, the Board's representatives enquired as to whether any consideration had been given to extending the station under the R132. The prospective applicant replied that integrated pedestrian crossings are the intention here as they would provide more pedestrian-friendly facilities as opposed to underpasses. The Board clarified that it was not suggesting underpasses but rather the extension of the proposed station at this location in order to facilitate safer passenger movement. The Board also noted that, notwithstanding proposals for the R132 vis-à-vis traffic calming measures, the road in question would still remain a significant thoroughfare for traffic. The prospective applicant replied that it is not considering such an alternative arrangement at the current time but will give further consideration to the matter.

The prospective applicant also set out the future development framework with respect to the proposed Seatown and Fosterstown Stations. It said that the proposed design of the stations in question would serve to enhance public realm spaces and would provide an opportunity to improve the surrounding urban landscape. The architecture which is emerging for the proposed stations was aimed at giving them a strong identity and making them easily visible to road users and pedestrians. It added that such design will also assist in the regeneration of the areas in question and further enhance the passenger experience.

With regard to the proposed Seatown station, the Board's representatives commented that robust justification will have to be provided for its inclusion particularly in the context of four stations being proposed for the Swords area. The Board noted the fact that the proposed Seatown station was previously omitted from its decision on the Metro North project and emphasised that the merits for its inclusion with regard to footfall and patronage would have to be clearly set out in any planning application. The Board added that the prospective applicant might wish to consider demonstrating how the Seatown station is required in light of development in the area since the time of the Metro North decision and in the context of future planned development in the area.

The prospective applicant provided the Board's representatives with an update on the location of the proposed depot following consultations with Fingal County Council. It reported that 10 location options had been explored at the Dardistown location and added that the location for the proposed depot (adjacent to Dardistown Station) would minimise the impact on High Technology Zoned Lands as well as utilising the General Employment Lands further north within the Dublin Airport Public Safety Zones.

With respect to the Estuary Station and Park & Ride, the prospective applicant said that a baseline study has led to changes to this since the preliminary design phase. There are on-going consultations with Fingal County Council with regard to this and the prospective applicant advised that it is also seeking to locate a substation here if at all possible. It also noted that attenuation ponds will be included with respect to the proposed Park & Ride facility.

The prospective applicant referred to the proposed station at Dublin Airport. Consultations are on-going with the DAA. The prospective applicant added that the proposed station here will be fully compatible with future plans for Dublin Airport.

With respect to Dublin City Centre, the prospective applicant said that there are regular consultations with Dublin City Council to ensure that proposed stations will be consistent with the existing public realm. The prospective applicant said that it has been trying to keep the station boxes as small as possible without affecting the overall passenger experience. It said that its intention is to provide an intuitive environment for passengers with consideration of matters such as natural light in the proposed stations. The prospective applicant set out the intended design for stations (Singular Inclined Volume) which it said would deliver an integrated station environment, would provide clear wayfinding and would reduce the station box length. The internal design of proposed stations was also set out by the prospective applicant.

The prospective applicant referred to the proposed station at Tara Street which it identified as a key station location given the interchange at this location between Dart and MetroLink. The prospective applicant said that a multi-criteria analysis of options for station location was employed here having regard to the road network and transportation network. The prospective applicant said that the key principles

and drivers for the proposed station at Tara Street included the creation of new jobs in the vicinity, the delivery of a vibrant, sustainable, permeable and pedestrian-friendly development and improved opportunities for intermodal travel and interchange. It reported that consultations with Dublin City Council are on-going and that it is having regard to matters such as the density of development in the surrounding area as well as regard to existing and future development. The Board's representatives enquired as to whether passengers changing from the Metro to Dart would do so internally as opposed to in an external setting. The prospective applicant confirmed that such would be the case and that a seamless connection is the overall intention.

The prospective applicant referred to the proposed station at Collins Avenue. It said that the choice of location here is chiefly premised on the accessibility from DCU and the surrounding residential area. The prospective applicant said that the proposed location at Collins Avenue would minimise traffic disruption during the construction phase and also added that the proposed Bus Connects route has informed the location of the station here. The prospective applicant noted the previous issues raised by the Board with respect to the station location and said that a substantial amount of analysis and assessment has informed its decision in this regard.

With respect to the proposed station at Glasnevin, the prospective applicant said that this has been chosen over Drumcondra with regard to matters such as a better opportunity for interchange with the Kildare and Maynooth line, the more viable opportunity for interchange with bus routes and slightly higher patronage figures as regards daily use. The prospective applicant referred to previous queries raised by the Board with respect to the decision to choose Glasnevin over Drumcondra for interchange. It said that Glasnevin affords the opportunity for an enhanced interchange with less environmental interventions required. The Board reiterated its concerns that the proposed alignment might be too close to the Luas Green Line in this area. The prospective applicant replied that this matter can be sufficiently justified in the planning application and that the projected patronage figures are robust.

In relation to the proposed O'Connell Street Station, the prospective applicant reported that the proposed station has now been changed from O'Connell Street to

the adjacent Dublin Central proposed development site (slightly to the west). It said that this modification will result in less impacts on O'Connell Street as a whole. The prospective applicant advised that consultations have been taking place with the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht and with Dublin City Council. Potential impacts on the protected facades of existing buildings in the vicinity are being considered and assessed and the prospective applicant said that it wishes to minimise impacts on protected structures. The prospective applicant added that there will be no direct impact on the Moore Street National Monument.

With respect to the proposed station at St. Stephen's Green, the prospective applicant said that the location of the station at the east of the park was selected to facilitate the interchange at Tara Street and Charlemont. The prospective applicant said that the selected location would reduce the impacts on the National Monument and would also serve to avoid potential construction phase impacts on the operation of the Luas Green Line. The prospective applicant reported that the design of the proposed station is being refined and progressed in consultation with relevant stakeholders.

Following further engagement with the Office of Public Works (OPW), the prospective applicant indicated that the OPW has expressed a fundamental objection to the location of the proposed station at Stephen's Green. It said that the OPW had asked it to explore the possibility of an alternative station location outside of the footprint of the park. With respect to such alternatives, the prospective applicant said that it could provide the Board with details of the options assessed. The prospective applicant also indicated that it intends to have further discussions with the Department of Transport and the NTA on this particular matter.

With regard to Charlemont Station, the prospective applicant said that the design of the station here has been modified to minimise the impact on properties at Dartmouth Square West. The prospective applicant also said that the proposed station design would be consistent with the Hines Group Development at 2 Grand Parade. The proposed intervention tunnel would ensure that no additional intervention shaft would be required south of Charlemont. As part of the forthcoming planning application, the prospective applicant said that it would provide reports

justifying the inclusion of Charlemont for the terminus and interchange point vis-à-vis the Luas Green line.

The prospective applicant referred to the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2016 – 2035 which identifies strategically important projects. The prospective applicant said that it has held consultations with representatives from Irish Rail and Dart+ in order to review matters such as the Glasnevin Interchange Station, the Tara Street Dart Station and the EIAR baseline and assessment. Consultations have also taken place with Bus Connects to review the design and locations of interchanges, the cumulative construction phase impacts and the EIAR baseline and assessment.

With respect to materials and waste management, the prospective applicant said that a review of available licenced capacity was being conducted and that consultations are on-going with representatives of the Eastern-Midlands Region. The prospective applicant said that there would be a preference for the minimisation of waste material and that re-use on site is being considered. The disposal of contaminated material and other material would only be considered as a last resort. The prospective applicant confirmed that the Huntstown facility, and others, are still under consideration for the waste management element of the project.

Conclusion:

The prospective applicant indicated its preference to hold further pre-application consultation meetings with the Board prior to closure of the process. Such meetings would be an opportunity to discuss various development components in more detail. The Board's representatives said they would seek to facilitate the prospective applicant in this regard. Going forward, it was suggested that a meeting could be held every six to eight weeks depending on case work and availability of staff. The onus is on the prospective applicant to request a further meeting with the Board.

In the meantime, it was agreed that the prospective applicant will forward to the Board its Strategic Principles Development document as well as a document setting out details of the options considered for the location of the St. Stephen's Green station.

The meeting concluded at 1.25 p.m.

Brendan Wyse

Assistant Director of Planning