



An  
Bord  
Pleanála

## Record of Meeting ABP-302010-18

<b>Case Reference / Description</b>	ABP-302010-18 Proposed MetroLink for Swords-Airport-City Centre Corridor.		
<b>Case Type</b>	Pre-application consultation		
<b>Meeting</b>	Meeting with Fingal County Council		
<b>Date</b>	16/09/19	<b>Start Time</b>	11 a.m.
<b>Location</b>	Offices of Fingal County Council	<b>End Time</b>	12.50 p.m.
<b>Chairperson</b>	Brendan Wyse	<b>Executive Officer</b>	Rob Mac Giollarnáth

### Attendees on behalf of An Bord Pleanála

Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning

Kevin Moore, Senior Planning Inspector

Rob Mac Giollarnáth, Executive Officer [r.macgiollarnath@pleanala.ie](mailto:r.macgiollarnath@pleanala.ie) 01-8737247

### Attendees on behalf of Fingal County Council

Peter Byrne - Senior Planner

David Murray – Acting Senior Planner

Paul Carroll - Senior Engineer

Linda Lally - Senior Executive Engineer

Larry Loughnane - Senior Executive Engineer

Colm Campbell - Assistant Engineer

## **Introduction**

The Board outlined the scope and purpose of the meeting.

It indicated that the meeting was essentially an information-gathering exercise. A record of the meeting would be made and a copy forwarded to the local authority for their comments in due course. The record would be placed on the public file at the closure of the pre-application consultation process.

The Board noted that the function of pre-application consultations with respect to railway order applications is to advise the prospective applicants [Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII)] on procedural issues and on considerations related to proper planning and sustainable development or the environment which, in the opinion of the Board, might have a bearing on the decision on any subsequent application.

The Board outlined details of pre-application consultations held to date. It advised that two meetings have been held with the prospective applicant. The Board have also met with representatives of Dublin City Council and a meeting has been arranged with the Office of Public Works (in relation to St. Stephens Green).

With regard to the project generally, the Board said its current understanding is that an application is intended to be lodged some time in 2020. It noted that the development as originally proposed had been intended to extend from Estuary to Sandyford (along the route of the Luas Green Line). More recently, the proposed development has been amended to omit the route of the Luas Green Line. The preferred route document was published in March 2019. The Board said that it

expects a third meeting to take place with the prospective applicant prior to the end of October 2019.

### **Operational Phase – Key Issues**

Fingal County Council indicated that it is generally supportive of the project. It favoured the open cut approach in Swords along the R132 road, as opposed to the elevated line previously proposed for Metro North. It would look to achieve a 'best fit' solution regarding the R132 to aid the movement of pedestrians/cyclists and to avoid any severance issues that the new line could create.

As part of the draft design it was generally suggesting at-grade crossings at station locations. The Council had engaged urban design consultants to consider the crossing points at the proposed stations – sketch drawings provided. A plus 1 crossing was also being considered at the proposed Swords Central Station linking to the Pavillions Shopping Centre on the other side of the R132. The Board queried if underground/tunnel entrances to stations (under the R132) had been considered. Fingal County Council indicated that TII were looking at likely pedestrian flows at stations. It also suggested that tunnel access would remove a degree of interaction between passengers and the streetscape. In relation to the possibility that the open cut might be covered, and constructed in such a way as to support overhead construction in due course, the Council agreed that this might be an attractive option but referred to cost implications. It was concentrating on the station crossing points for now.

Fingal County Council referred to the planned future growth of Swords to a population of c.100,000. Currently the population of the town is around 43,000. As part of the proposed development of the town it would seek to urbanise the R132

through built form and various traffic measures while at the same time maintaining a high capacity for traffic. There would be a need to redesign certain junctions in order to give pedestrians greater priority. There would be an emphasis generally on creating new links for pedestrians and cyclists to enable ease of access to both the town centre and the metro.

The Council referenced a number of masterplans that have been completed, including; Swords; Barrysparks and Crowcastle; Fosterstown; and Estuary West. It also referred to the Local Area Plan for Lissenhall, the largest future development area in Swords, which is currently in preparation.

It is not clear as yet as to what the proposed operational hours of the Metro service would be. The Council would prefer that a service would begin early in the mornings to enable employees of Dublin Airport to utilise the Metro from Swords.

The Board raised the issue of whether or not a fully robust case could be made to justify the proposed Metro Link to Swords. In reply Fingal County Council referred to the projected population growth, the 100,000 target figure likely to be reached by about 2040, and the likely project completion around 2026-2028. It also referred to the substantial employment growth planned for Swords. It was stated that there were a number of interventions required to achieve this growth, one of which was the construction of the Metro Link to Swords itself. It was also stated that Swords will be one of the key growth areas in Fingal and likewise Fingal will be a key growth area in the Dublin region. The Council does not consider that the proposed park and ride at Estuary is likely to generate capacity issues at the airport.

Fingal County Council indicated that the development of a metro link to Swords would have a bearing on the future projected growth of traffic at Dublin Airport. The

Council had been factoring in the development of the Metro Link into their Local Area Plans and into the planning permissions that had been granted for a number of years. There was a public interest dividend in the development of the Metro Link to Swords. There was also a dividend to the public in transport terms in association with other public transport projects such as Bus Connects.

It was generally agreed that the maximum effective distance for commuters to walk to a Metro station was about 1 km. For development lands at greater distances the Council is planning cycling corridors to assist with connectivity. Proper cycling lock-up facilities at stations, therefore, would be desirable. Discussions with TII are ongoing in relation to these matters.

Issues were raised concerning the number of stations proposed at Swords (4) and whether they would be fully utilised (noting the Boards omission of the Seatown Station in Metro North) and also whether route changes/alternatives had been proposed. The Council indicated that an underground route along the alignment of Main Street would have been the preferred route. It is also considered that the four stations at Swords are necessary and suggested that Dardistown Station be operational at project completion stage. It was also suggested that the frequency of service Swords-Airport should be similar to Airport-City Centre but not necessarily the same at all times.

There were no details yet as to the ultimate design of the metro station at Dublin Airport. The Council emphasised that the station would, in effect, be the key metro station for the country so the design should reflect this.

Fingal County Council queried the proposed location of the depot at Dardistown and emphasised the importance of achieving the most efficient use of developable land at this location.

### **Construction Phase – Key Issues**

The Council is anticipating that there would be a significant level of traffic disruption during construction. It would be seeking to keep the R132 open during this time and would be relying on a comprehensive Construction Management Plan.

Community liaison would be carried out when more detail is received from TII.

### **Conclusion:**

A copy of the record of the meeting will be forwarded to the Council. The record will be made available to the prospective applicant and will be on the public record when the pre-application consultation case is formally concluded.

The meeting concluded at 12.50 p.m.



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**Brendan Wyse**

**Assistant Director of Planning**

*30 Sept. 2019*