



An
Bord
Pleanála

Record of 2nd Meeting

ABP-305149-19

Development	Replacement of seven number manned level crossings on the main Dublin to Cork Railway Line between Limerick Junction and Mallow Station, Co. Limerick and Co. Cork.		
Location	Virtually by Microsoft Teams		
Case Type	Pre-application consultation		
1st / 2nd / 3rd Meeting	2 nd		
Date	09/07/2020	Time	11a.m. – 12p.m.

Attendees		
Representing An Bord Pleanála		
Brendan Wyse, Assistant Director of Planning (Chair)		
Pauline Fitzpatrick, Senior Planning Inspector		
Jennifer Sherry, Executive Officer	j.sherry@pleanala.ie	01-8737266
Representing the Prospective Applicant		
Rory McDonnell, EIA & Planning Project Lead, Jacobs		
Alex Bradly, Project Manager, Jacobs		

Tony Magee, Project Director, Jacobs
James Kenny, Irish Rail
Diarmuid Dunne, Irish Rail

Introduction

The Board referred to the previous meeting held with the prospective applicant on 17th October, 2019 and the record of this meeting. The Board enquired as to whether 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 or corrections to make in relation to this.

Presentation by the prospective applicant

The prospective applicant gave an overview of the project under the following headings:

- **Procedural Issues** - the prospective applicant is now in the process of preparing an EIAR, NIS and Flood Risk Assessment to accompany a Railway Order Application under section 37 of the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act, 2001 as amended.
- **Update on the Project** – following the first pre-application consultation meeting held on 17th October, 2019 the prospective applicant has undertaken consultation with both TII and NPWS. A meeting was also held with the M20 Project Team with no significant issues arising and it was agreed to keep communications open between both projects. Robust public consultations took place in Limerick and Cork over a 14-week period and a Consultation Report has been prepared as part of the Railway Order application suite of documents.
- **Key Changes to the Design** – at Thomastown following feedback from public consultations it is proposed to increase the size of the bridge to accommodate a two-way lane system as opposed to a single lane bridge to allow for ease of traffic movements and improve road safety conditions.

- At Newtown following public consultation it was decided to change from the Green Route to the Blue Route given the level of local support received. The alternative Blue Route is to the east of the Railway line.
- **Railway Order Status** – on the 16th June, 2020 An Bord Pleanála confirmed the Railway Order status of the project.
- **Local Road Network** – both Cork County Council and Limerick County Council have confirmed they will take the proposed roads in charge.

Discussion

The following matters were discussed:

CCTV Controlled Level Crossing - the Board's representatives stressed the importance of showing alternative options for the seven manned level crossings as part of the EIAR. In particular, the Board enquired if due consideration was given to CCTV at all the level crossings such as proposed for Ballyhay. The prospective applicant said a CCTV controlled level crossing presents a greater risk from a health and safety point of view and is used as a last resort rather than the preferred solution. The prospective applicant stated that due to environmental concerns and existing infrastructure at the bridge crossing at Ballyhay a CCTV controlled crossing is justified. The prospective applicant said the EIAR will set out the alternative options with due consideration given to the CCTV option. The Board's representatives stressed the importance of setting out a full justification of the preferred options and justification of the proportionality of the engineering works arising in the context of planning and environmental impacts.

- **Newtown and Ballycoskery** - the Board's representatives referred to the change of design for the proposed development at Newtown and Ballycoskery and requested the prospective applicant to expand on the design and in particular, the headroom of the bridge, retaining walls, access to the housing estate and school in proximity to the proposed development. The prospective applicant stated the proposed headroom is 5.1 meters. The prospective applicant stated at present traffic is in close proximity to the housing estate and school. The preferred option, which will be to the south of the current level crossing, will

take traffic away and improve their amenities.. A car park will be provided to the front of the school. The prospective applicant is aware of the concerns of local residents.

The Board enquired if there was any feedback from local residents at Newtown and Ballycoskery in relation to pedestrian connectivity to the school. The prospective applicant said that it will take longer to walk to the school but it will be safer, as the present need to cross an active railway line will be eliminated.

- **Ballyhay** - the Board's representatives queried the extent of public consultation with Ballyhay local community groups. The prospective applicant stated a number of options were put before the local residents but there was no consensus or a preferred solution. Overall, there is a general concern over noise impact on private dwellings and the school.
- **Thomastown** - the Board noted that at Thomastown, following public consultation, the proposed overbridge will now be a wider two-way bridge. The Board suggested there needs to be justification for increasing the size of the bridge relative to the landtake required.. The prospective applicant stated that the two lanes are limited to the bridge only and are not proposed on the approaches from either side of the bridge.
- **Buttevant** - the Board requested more detail in relation to watercourses at Buttevant. The prospective applicant said the key concern is the proximity of the Blackwater River SAC to the development site. An ecologist is preparing an Natura Impact Statement and the prospective applicant is undertaking a Flood Risk Assessment. The prospective applicant is aware of connectivity and pathways to the site.
- **Shinanagh** – the prospective applicant mentioned potential archeology sites at Shinanagh and have undertaken geo-physical surveys of the land. There is a church with an old graveyard and marked depressions in the field adjacent. The prospective applicant is consulting with the National Monuments Service to

undertake archaeological test trenching and intends to have finished testing prior to submitting the application.

- **Other Archeology Sites** – the Board enquired if there are other sites of archaeological interest. The prospective applicant said in Newtown there is an old ring fort and an old wall designated in that area. The National Monuments Service have provided direction and the prospective applicant has undertaken Geo-physics surveys.
- **Other Matters** – the prospective applicant mentioned difficulty accessing lands near the proposed development site at Ballycoskery. The Board’s representatives advised the prospective applicant to carry out as much survey work as possible.

Conclusion

The record of the meeting will issue to the prospective applicant once it is finalised and it will then be a matter for the prospective applicant to submit any comments on this if it wishes to do so or at the time of a further meeting. It will be a matter for the prospective applicant to revert to the Board when it requires a further meeting. The prospective applicant indicated it would likely request closure of the pre-application consultation process by the end of this month.

Brendan Wyse

Assistant Director of Planning

4 August 2020