

Jennifer Sherry

LDG-030749-20

From: McDonnell, Rory <Rory.McDonnell@jacobs.com>
Sent: Monday 14 September 2020 19:59
To: Shaun McGee; Jennifer Sherry
Cc: Pauline Fitzpatrick; Kenny James; Dunne Diarmuid; Curran, Heidi; Magee, Tony; Bradley, Alex
Subject: RE: ABP-305149-19 - Replacement of seven number manned level crossings on the Main Dublin to Cork Railway Line
Attachments: Cork Line - ABP Letter 14.09.2020.pdf

Dear Shaun/Jennifer,

Please find attached a letter on behalf of the applicant in regard to the above proposed Project.

The attached letter seeks to provide clarification in regard to some points raised within the Meeting Minute of the 9th July.

If there are any issues or if you would like to discuss any aspect further please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Best Regards,

Rory

Rory McDonnell BSc (HONS) MRUP MRTPI MIPI | **Jacobs** | Associate Director of Planning | Water and Environment | Rochester Building, 28 Adelaide Street, Belfast | rory.mcdonnell@jacobs.com | www.jacobs.com

With the ongoing COVID-19 situation, I may occasionally need to move my working hours. Please respond to my email during your normal working hours. Be well and be safe.

From: Shaun McGee <S.McGee@pleanala.ie>
Sent: 05 August 2020 13:26
To: McDonnell, Rory <Rory.McDonnell@jacobs.com>
Cc: Jennifer Sherry <J.Sherry@pleanala.ie>; Pauline Fitzpatrick <P.Fitzpatrick@pleanala.ie>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] ABP-305149-19 - Replacement of seven number manned level crossings on the Main Dublin to Cork Railway Line

Hi Rory,

Please find enclosed a copy of the written record of the second meeting of the 9th July, 2020, in relation to the above-mentioned pre-application request.

A hard copy version of this enclose, will issue by post later today.

Regards

Shaun

Shaun McGee
Administrative Assistant
Laps-Sids Section
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1



14th September 2020

Attention: Ms. Jennifer Sherry
An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
Ireland

Project Name: Cork Line Level Crossings – Railway Order Application
Project Number: 32111000

Subject: Replacement of 7No. manned level crossings on the main Dublin to Cork Railway Line
ABP Reference: ABP-305149-19

Dear Ms. Sherry

I refer to the above proposed Project and to your letter dated 5th August 2020 which provides a written record of the second pre application consultation meeting of the 9th July 2020.

Under the heading "Discussion" it sets out "CCTV Controlled Level Crossing – the Boards 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 by 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 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 the planning and environmental impacts." (underlining is my emphasis).

We wish to clarify the underlined text as set out above. Where there is a direct overlap between road and rail, the traditional function of a level crossing has been to facilitate continued access to both. However, there are safety risks with any interface between a railway line and a public road and at level crossings there is a heightened risk of an accident occurring. The 2030 Rail Network Strategy Review (October 2011) notes that "Level Crossings represent the single biggest rail safety risk".

Iarnród Éireann (IÉ) uses the Level Crossing Risk Model (LCRM) to assist in the identification and management of risk at level crossings. Risk measurements included in the LCRM are:

- From crossings on running lines with train movements, i.e. active running lines, not closed lines;
- From active crossings, i.e. not those that have been closed;
- From the following types of accident:

- Collision between a train and a road vehicle;
- Collision between a train and a pedestrian;
- Collision between a train and an animal where the animal gained access to the line at a level crossing;
- Collision between a train or road vehicle and a crossing keeper;
- To crossing users, crossing keepers, passengers and staff on board trains; and
- From causes related to user errors or acts, railway equipment failures, vandalism and railway staff errors.

It is the duty of Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) to maintain the operational safety of the railway network and it is the policy of both CIÉ and IÉ to remove all level crossings in Ireland where practicable. Moreover, in constructing new or modifying existing railways, the Commission for Railway Regulation's Guidelines for the Design of Railway Infrastructure & Rolling Stock (RSC-G-006 B), which deals with level crossings, states that "*The decision to introduce a level crossing or upgrade an existing level crossing should follow a suitable risk assessment and after all possibilities for a grade separated crossing have been evaluated and discounted as not reasonably practicable.*"

CIÉ and IÉ acknowledge the severance issues that elimination of all level crossings would cause to communities separated by a railway line and considered alternative solutions to eliminate or minimise the risks at level crossings proposed for closure.

For the proposed Project, a Feasibility Study was prepared by IÉ which reviewed four options for each of the subject sites, as follows:

- Do Nothing;
- Straight Closure;
- Alternative access/Overbridge; and
- Upgrade to 4 Barrier CCTV.

At XC209 Ballyhay, traffic and non-vehicular use surveys indicated that a straight closure was not feasible; doing nothing would not reduce the safety risks.

For the remaining two options, the alternative access/overbridge solution and the CCTV solution, the Feasibility Study gave XC209 Ballyhay joint highest scores for both. Subsequent assessments of route alignments at this location led to CCTV being preferred over the alternative access/overbridge solution. This was because of significant disadvantages associated with the alternative access/overbridge solution in terms of potential impacts upon the environment, land severance and the cost of building the diversionary infrastructure (estimated in 2019) at €3.4m. CCTV does not remove the railway line/road network interface; however, CCTV does provide a safer means of level crossing access than the current manned level crossing situation, as well as operational benefits. A risk assessment for this site with CCTV using the LCRM, compared to the existing situation, demonstrates this; the ranking of this site according to its risk rating changes from 78 out of 970, to 201 out of 970. In addition from an operational perspective currently there is no access across the railway at this location from 23.30hrs to 07.30hrs; installation of CCTV here will allow 24hr unfettered access.

The EIAR that will accompany the Railway Order application will provide more information in regard to the options considered for each site as well as the enhanced safety associated with the proposed CCTV at XC209 Ballyhay.



14th September 2020

Subject: Replacement of 7No. manned level crossings on the main Dublin to Cork Railway Line ABP Reference: ABP-305149-19

In addition to the above, the Project Team wish to keep pre planning consultation with the Board open until the issues in regard to archaeology have been agreed with National Monuments Service (NMS).

CIÉ and IÉ wish this letter to be appended to the minute of the meeting dated 5th August 2020 to help provide clarification on the points raised above.

I trust the above is in order, if you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Rory McDonnell". The signature is written in a cursive style with a clear first name and a last name that includes a double 'n'.

Rory McDonnell
Associate Director
Jacobs
rory.mcdonnell@jacobs.com

Cc

James Kenny (Iarnród Éireann)
Diarmuid Dunne (Iarnród Éireann)
Alex Bradley (Jacobs)
Tony Magee (Jacobs)
Heidi Curran (Jacobs)

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