

Dart+ West Railway Order – Oral Hearing beginning 28th September 2023

Speaking Notes of Beatrice Vance Ref No.4 Env 22

Good morning members of the Board.

My name is Beatrice Vance, I am a resident and home owner at 7 Northbrook Terrace in North Strand.

I submitted maps and photos with my submission to easily identify my home. If you do not have that to hand I have a number of copies I can provide which will also give you a clearer picture of the points I wish to make.

Map 1 – location of 7 Northbrook Terrace

Photo 1 shows you how close the freight train is to my home which I will reference– a matter of metres from my living room windows. This is on, what I have called the ‘Spencer Dock Line’ which is the short part of the line that goes to the current North Wall Freight Depot. The line splits just after crossing the North Strand Road and one line goes to Connolly, which currently carries passenger trains and the other splits and goes down to the Freight Depot (not the Docklands Station) and carries containers, usually twice per day.

Photo 2 is another photo to try and emphasise the proximity of the train to my house for you to be able to picture if this was instead a dart carriage with faces staring back at you.

Photo 3 shows you where the passenger train on the other side of the split is, heading to Connolly. It currently stops awaiting a signal. This is just where the line splits.

Photo 4 also shows you the passenger train going by, at a distance and currently obstructed by trees.

To begin, I direct you to section 4.4 in the ‘Response to Submissions’ document. The reference to my submission is Ref No.4 Env 22.

It states that my observations are the same as Ref No.4 Env 21, my immediate neighbour, Kenneth Pierce. It refers the reader to the responses as section 4.3.1.

I drafted a 6 page set of observations with 11 photographs, numerous maps, and video clips which I hope you will take the time to read and examine if you have not already done so, as the Response document reduces my (and my neighbours’ concerns) to just a few words.

I refer you now to paragraph 4.3, the response to my neighbour’s observations, as my observations are supposedly responded to therein.

The main point which I would like to make today is that Dart West have responded **incorrectly** to one of the main points of my observations and their response, which is repeated at numerous points throughout the Response Document, is factually wrong.

Before detailing my concerns, I do welcome the following:

One, at 4.3.2, paragraph 1, that the final position of the signals should not result in any train stopping directly alongside 6 and 7 Northbrook Terrace.

Two, I note that at para 8 of section 4.3.2 it states that a pre-condition survey can be carried out on the property prior to construction. This is also stated at section 2.2.12, that prior to construction and subject to written agreement with the property owner, property condition surveys will be undertaken in relation to the property. This is welcomed.

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I note at paragraph 2.2.11 (cross referred to in my response), that subject to the confirmation of the Railway Order by An Bord Pleanála, compensation will be addressed in accordance with statute.

I would note that my concern is not only in relation to damage during the construction phase, if anything, my more pressing concern is the long term effect of the increased use of the current line that goes to North Wall Freight Dock and the effect of the increased weight and vibrations may have on my home as well as the loss of value due to the serious impact on privacy.

Both a survey and valuation will be required.

Issues

My first issue I would like to raise is regarding the lack of consultation. I note that there is an attempt to respond to these concerns at section 2.2.2. I can only speak to my own experience but I would like to make the additional point that in speaking to my neighbours, apart from the one who has made observations, they were entirely unaware that the proposal included the use of the section of the line that carries freight down to the docks. Their understanding was that the dart would be using the existing line into Connolly. In fact, I think my neighbours thought I was mistaken. Therefore that shows that both the information allegedly made directly available, as well as the complicated documents available online, made it completely unclear to those most affected that this is the plan.

My second issue is in regarding the removal of trees.

The way in which the responses were framed included considerable cross referencing both internally within the Response document but also across to the EIAR.

At section 4.3.2, paragraph 2, regarding the retention or removal of trees, we are referred to section 2.2.3 which in turn refers the reader to Volume 3A of the EIAR, Chapter 5, Site Clearance Drawings, MAY-MDC-LMA-SC00-DR-Y-0001 to SC06-DR-Y-0001.

When I went to these drawings they were not relevant to my home or area.

Instead, I found the relevant map at Project General Layout, Site Clearance Zone A&B, City Centre Enhancements, MAY MDC LMA SC00 DR Y 0001 D, page 5/10.

The trees of concern are marked green as existing trees.

I note they are neither marked orange for retention or red for removal so it is unclear what it is intended to be done with them.

Section 2.2.3 further refers the reader to Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual Amenity of Volume 2 of the EIAR. This is not specific so I cannot tell what is being retained.

What is of interest is that at Table 15-6 Summary of Potential Construction Phase Impacts, Zone B: Spencer Dock Station to Glasnevin Junction under the column 'Significance & Quality of Landscape / Townscape / Streetscape Effects / Visual Effects' it is listed as "Moderate, Negative, Temporary / Short-term".

This is a questionable statement as I lay out my **third and most substantial issue**.

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I raised concerns in my observations that the value of my property could be affected significantly by the passing of regular darts by the of my home windows which will affect both privacy, noise, enjoyment of the view and peace and quiet.

As I mentioned already, currently, ZERO passenger trains pass by my home on the stretch of line going to the North Wall Freight Depot. I repeat, zero. Usually between 2-4 freight trains pass with a number of containers, altogether, each day with one person only on board, namely the driver, sometimes waving as he goes by. That is how close he is to me.

I contacted Dart West prior to making my submission to ask about the frequency of trains that would be passing on the 'Spencer Dock' part of this line.

I was directed to Table 14.40 on Page 14/50 of Chapter 14 Noise & Vibration of the **Environmental Impact Assessment Report** which provides the 'Do Something' scenario train numbers during the Daytime (7:00-19:00), Evening (19:00- 23:00) and Night time hours (23:00- 7:00) for the new scheme. The Section/direction of the trains is also provided. I was directed to note that the table provides figures for both DMU's - Diesel Multiple Units and EMU's - Electric Multiple Units.

I was further directed to Table 14.39 on Page 14/48 which provides the existing train levels on the line.

It appears from this Table that between 07.00 am and 9.00 pm **71** passenger trains will travel from Spencer Dock to Glasnevin, presumably busier at commuting times with same number travelling from Glasnevin to Spencer Dock (**71**).

On average, this will be 5 trains per hour, in each direction. Meaning a train every 12 minutes in each direction during these hours on average. 1 train every 6 minutes on average.

There is also a figure from Spencer Dock to North Strand Junction being 43 over the same time period. This equates to 3 trains per hour in each direction. Which is **1 train every 20 minutes**. This is addition to the figure above. I am not sure whether these trains may be then going on the Connolly Line and continuing to Drumcondra and if these are in addition to the Spencer Dock to Glasnevin Trains.

Therefore I could be going from having **zero passenger trains** passing by my kitchen and living rooms windows to having the faces of **dart passengers passing every 5 or 6 minutes**.

At Table 1.2 it states that with regard to Zone A and B, including the Spencer Dock to Glasnevin Junction, the main three concerns raised in the submissions were property impacts, privacy and construction impacts.

At section 2.2.12 of the Response, it is stated, confidently, that "increased frequency of trains are offset by the quieter operation of electric DART".

At 2.3.3 it states that the summary of the issues raised is that there is concern that once the works are complete, the increased frequency of passenger trains passing alongside their property will negatively impact their privacy. In response it states that **the locations adjacent to the existing railway viaduct within the city centre currently experience significant passenger train movements. These movements although more frequency will not have any greater height or increased visual access to the property.**

This, members of the Board is **completely incorrect** and misleading and minimising the effect on both myself and my neighbours and cannot be dismissed as being no change to my privacy and enjoyment of my home.

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I note that in respect of the comment I referred to above, that there will be no increased visual access, is incorrect not only in relation to my home but there are approximately **48 other houses** either side of this short split off line to the North Wall Freight Depot which heretofore were only overlooked by the freight train, but going forward will have the company of dart commuters in their kitchens and living rooms.

In conclusion, I am disappointed and surprised that Dart West has not taken these concerns seriously, failed to understand my and my neighbours' detailed submissions and have dismissed them so briefly.

I welcome increased public transport and increased environmentally conscious energy sources for such transport but I did not buy my home with passenger trains passing by and it will considerably affect my ability to enjoy and sell my home in the future.

Therefore I ask you to ensure that all of the submissions are studied and examined **accurately** and ultimately my main hope is that the enjoyment of my property is not forever disturbed.

End.

7 day



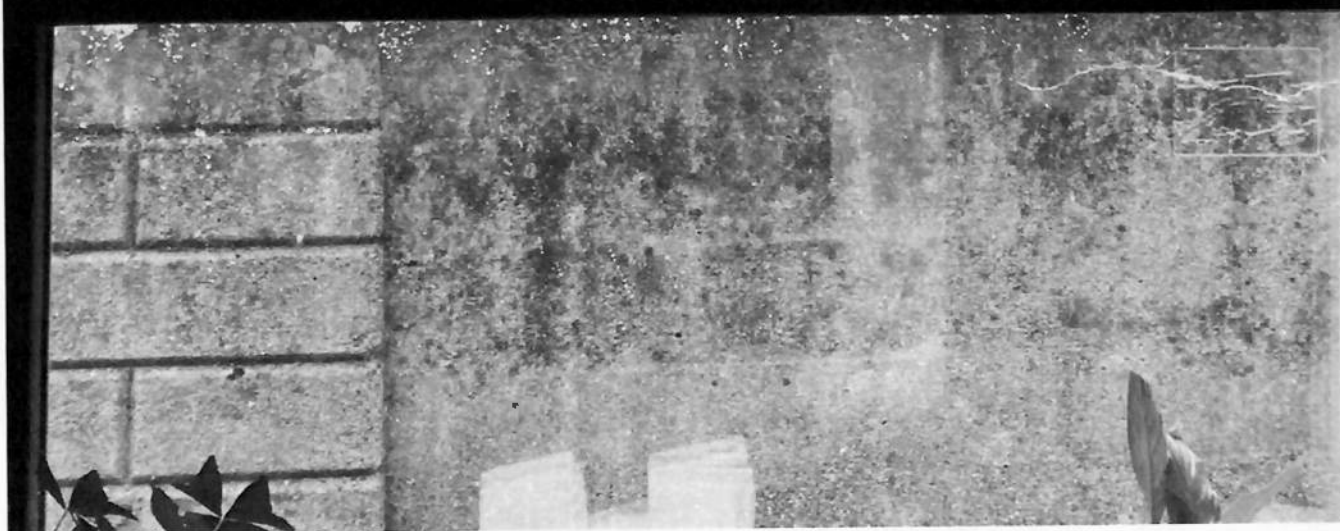
MAP 1A

Google Maps 7 Northbrook Terrace



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AN BORD PLEANÁLA

28 SEP 2023

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