

Ashtown Stables, Pelletstown House, Ashtown Road, Ashtown, Dublin 15, D15 HFX5

An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough St,
Rotunda,
Dublin 1, D01 V902

02 OCT 2023

LTR DATED _____ FROM _____

LDG- _____

ABP- **314232-22**

12 September 2023

**Re: DART+ West Railway Order - Dublin City to Maynooth and M3 Parkway -
ASHTOWN**

Dear An Bord Pleanála,

I refer to your letter dated 24 August 2023 regarding the details for the oral hearing in relation to the abovementioned proposed development.

I am expecting a baby this month and so unfortunately will not be in a position to attend the oral hearing. In the circumstances, I would be grateful if you could please consider this short written submission.

While Irish Rail failed to adequately address my concerns previously raised, *for example:*

- a. *the incompatibility of its disproportionate and excessive proposals with European law for the prevention of unnecessary destruction of natural habitats, flora and fauna;*
- b. *refusal to provide costings;*
- c. *Irish Rail ignoring over 6,500 submissions that made it clear they do not want Ashtown Stables to be affected and do not want a tunnel at Ashtown;*
- d. *the extreme and ongoing stress, expense and time Irish Rail's bullying and intimidation is causing us;*
- e. *Irish Rail and its representatives have been conducting extremely disturbing and unlawful surveillance of the stables, including **watching** staff, customers and our animals, **note-taking** and **taking and storing hundreds of photos** of us, our customers and our horses, going far beyond what could reasonably be considered normal or lawful project due diligence;*
- f. *Irish Rail's plans will wipe out a sporting amenity predominantly undertaken by teenage girls; and*
- g. *our community deserves better than ugly and unsafe tunnels. The proposed CCTV to capture an attack on film is just not good enough...*

→ **the KEY issue that I would really like for Irish Rail to explain clearly for all is how they honestly and genuinely consider it viable for Ashtown Stables to continue to operate given the risk to human and horse life, health and well-being posed by the colossal level of construction work? Irish Rail's written**

responses cross into the realms of fabrication, fiction and wishful thinking - for example, Irish Rail writes in its May 2023 responses:

"The horses and ponies resident in Ashtown stables have shown remarkable adaptability to date and would be expected to continue to adapt. These horses and ponies live and work in an urban landscape with continually changing visual and auditory stimuli. They have been bred over many generations to deal with the hustle and bustle of urban living. They have been excellently brought along by the experienced horsemen and women in Ashtown Stables and with the continuation of the skilled management of horses and ponies in a continually challenging environment, the current horses and ponies in Ashtown Stables will adjust to the new stimuli associated with the construction activity as they have done so many times before." **This is just one example of how Irish Rail and its representatives speak and write at length and seemingly fluently on topics about which they have absolutely no knowledge or authority. Irish Rail is delusional or disingenuous if it thinks the risks posed by this monstrous level of disruption can be readily mitigated.**

Separately, I would like to note that Irish Rail has published my full name, (location) and their response to my concerns online in their response publication "*Submission on Observations to the Draft Railway Order Application, May 2023*", but did not have the courtesy to inform me of their response. Does Irish Rail suggest that I should simply have kept checking their website on a daily basis for the past year until I stumbled upon their response? Thankfully someone else brought this document to my attention, albeit only recently. Regrettably, I have therefore had limited time to consider Irish Rail's latest responses to the submissions made to An Bord Pleanála in relation to the DART+ West project.

I also wish to note that Irish Rail separately wrote to me on 21 June 2023 to request a meeting. I replied to Irish Rail by letter dated 7 July 2023 requesting that they set out their position in writing if there is anything specific they wish to discuss. Over two months later, I have not received a response from Irish Rail.

Thank you for your time. I would be grateful if you could please acknowledge receipt by email to grainnebreid90@gmail.com. Do not hesitate to contact me should you wish to discuss.

Yours faithfully,

Gráinne Reid

Daughter of Owners, Sister of Managing Director, and Lifelong Volunteer of Ashtown Stables