

An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1,
D01 V902.

12 October 2022

RE: DART+ WEST ELECTRIFIED RAILWAY ORDER
FORMAL SUBMISSION

Dear Sir/Madam,

We, Stephen Little & Associates, Chartered Town Planners and Development Consultants, 26/27 Upper Pembroke Street, Dublin 2 D02 X361 have been instructed by our client, AZRA Property Company Limited, Palmerstown House Estate, Johnstown, Kill, County Kildare, to respond to An Bord Pleanála's invitation for public submissions on The Railway Order for the DART+ West project lodged by Coras Iompair Éireann (CIÉ), holding company for Iarnród Éireann (Maynooth Rail Line) Infrastructural project. A payment of €50.00 has been made to An Bord Pleanála to cover the statutory fee of this observation.

This Observation is being made within the appropriate period, which ends on 28 October 2022. We note that the period for making a submission to An Bord Pleanála in relation to the DART + West Railway Order was extended by An Bord Pleanála from the 30th of September to the 28th of October, as published in the Irish Independent on Monday 19th September 2022.

The DART+ West project is seeking to significantly increase rail capacity on the Maynooth & M3 Parkway rail lines. AZRA Property Company Limited is fully supportive of this strategically significant investment in public transport infrastructure for this area. From a review of the material forming the application, this will be achieved by changing from diesel powered trains to electrified, high-capacity DART trains and increasing the frequency of trains from 6 to 12 trains per hour per direction. The hourly passenger capacity will increase from 5,000 to 13,200. The project will involve the electrification of approximately 40 km of railway line (or the permanent way) from the Dublin City Centre to west of Maynooth, and to M3 Parkway Station and all associated supporting infrastructure. The electrification of the rail line is located predominantly within the existing railway corridor within Iarnród Éireann/CIÉ owned lands however some works will involve the acquisition of private lands to facilitate the project. Of particular note in this instance is the requirement to erect columns/poles and overhead wires either side of the rail alignment which transmit the electricity to the trains.

Subject Lands

AZRA Property Company Limited control approximately 15.5ha of lands in Dunboyne, located predominantly in the town land of Castle Farm. These lands share their western boundary with the rail line. For clarity and assistance, we attach herewith Drawing. No. 494_01_01 'Land Ownership' prepared by PLUS Architecture identifying lands controlled by AZRA Property Company Limited is enclosed with this submission. For ease a copy of this is included in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1: Land Ownership Map, extract from Drawing No. 494_01_01 'Land Ownership' prepared by PLUS Architecture

Our clients are progressing with proposals for development on lands adjoining the rail line in Dunboyne and wished that fact to be clear to the Board as part of their consideration of the DART+ West proposals.

Planning Context

The majority of the subject lands pertaining to the proposed development by our clients are zoned 'A2' for residential development with a small portion of the land zoned 'F1', Open Space in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, being the statutory Development Plan for the area.

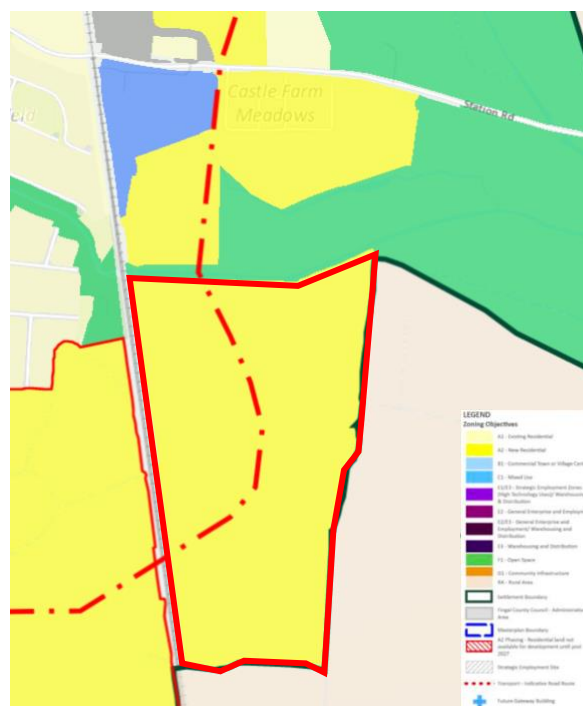


Figure 2: Zoning Map, extract from Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027, with lands identified in red (SLA overlay)

All of these lands are identified in the County Development Plan as falling within the Core Strategy for Dunboyne during the lifetime of the Development Plan.

Development Proposed by AZRA Property Company Limited

AZRA Property Company Limited are proposing the construction of a large scale residential development, plus creche and required road infrastructure on the subject lands which in part adjoin the existing rail line just east of Dunboyne, Co. Meath.

The entire development by our client, as proposed, will be served by direct access from the existing external road network. The under-construction Merville Homes Ltd. development (Reg. Ref. RA180561) immediately north of the subject site provides access to the subject site southwards from the Clonee Road (L2228) via a distributor road which is proposed to be extended as part of this application to become the main access for the scheme.

AZRA Property Company Limited has met with Meath County Council a number of times in the past 12 months for an LRD pre-application consultation (LRD0003) under Section 247 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and are currently in the process of applying for a Section 32B LRD pre-planning meeting with Meath County Council. In preparation for these meetings, our client has met with Meath County Council and representatives of Irish Rail to ensure that the proposals for a future bridge crossing of the rail line as part of the Dunboyne Distributor Road adequately takes account of Irish Rail's proposals under the DART+ programme.

Due consideration has been given to the relationship of the development to the operational rail line.

This proposed distributor road extension southwards and then eastwards over the railway line shall, in the future, form part of the overall Dunboyne Distributor Road; an objective of the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027. The development proposed by our clients on the subject lands whilst including the extension southwards of the existing distributor road, does not include the bridge over the railway. That will only be provided in the future by Meath County Council as that need arises.

The design of this road and bridge has been the subject of discussion with the Planning Authority, including Roads Department and also Irish Rail to ensure that their respective requirements are factored into the design. In the case of Irish Rail, the road design, including the bridge that will ultimately span the rail line to Dunboyne has taken in to account the planned electrification of this rail line as now proposed under the DART+ West

project, including the columns required to hold the overhead power lines along the rail line. See typical bridge elevation below for further detail.

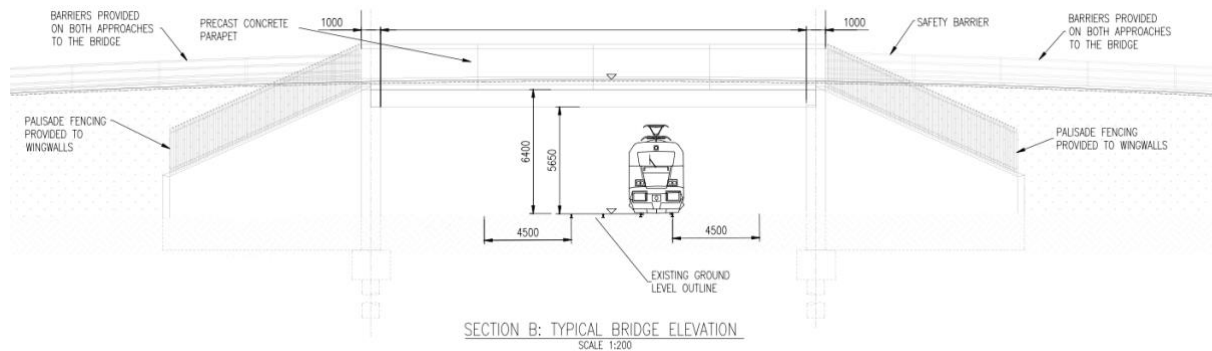


Figure 3: Typical Bridge Elevation (extract from Drawing No. P152 'Dunboyne Southern Distributor Road Longitudinal Section'), prepared by Waterman Moylan Consulting Engineers

In order to demonstrate that the distributor road that is being proposed could accommodate a suitable bridge crossing over the rail line, Waterman Moylan Consulting Engineers engaged with both Meath County Council and Irish Rail to ensure that the necessary design parameters were understood.

Adequate working space during the construction phase of this future length of road and bridge have also been provided. It is envisaged that the lands required for this future road in the control of our clients will be made available to Meath County Council, thereby facilitating the delivery of the bridge in due course.

Conclusion

We re-iterate our clients support for the DART+ West proposals brought forward by Irish Rail and commend these to the Board for approval. In that regard, given the strategic nature of this particular development the Board is invited to ensure that the case is dealt with in an efficient and timely manner.

The proposed development by our client adjoining the DART+ West project in Dunboyne is cognisant of the proposed infrastructural changes included in the Dart+ West application. This is evident within the area reserved for a future distribution road extension to the south-east of the development which takes into account the position, scale and mass of the overhead lines and the suspension poles included as part of the Dart+West project.

We would be grateful for a written acknowledgement of this Formal Observation for our files in due course.

We confirm that all future correspondence should be issued to this office.

Yours faithfully,

Stephen Little
Managing Director
STEPHEN LITTLE & ASSOCIATES

ENCLOSURES

1. Drawing. No. 494_01_01 'Land Ownership', prepared by PLUS Architecture
2. Drawing No. P152 'Dunboyne Southern Distributor Road Longitudinal Section), prepared by Waterman Moylan Consulting Engineers

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