

An Bord Pleanála  
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D01 V902

27 October 2022

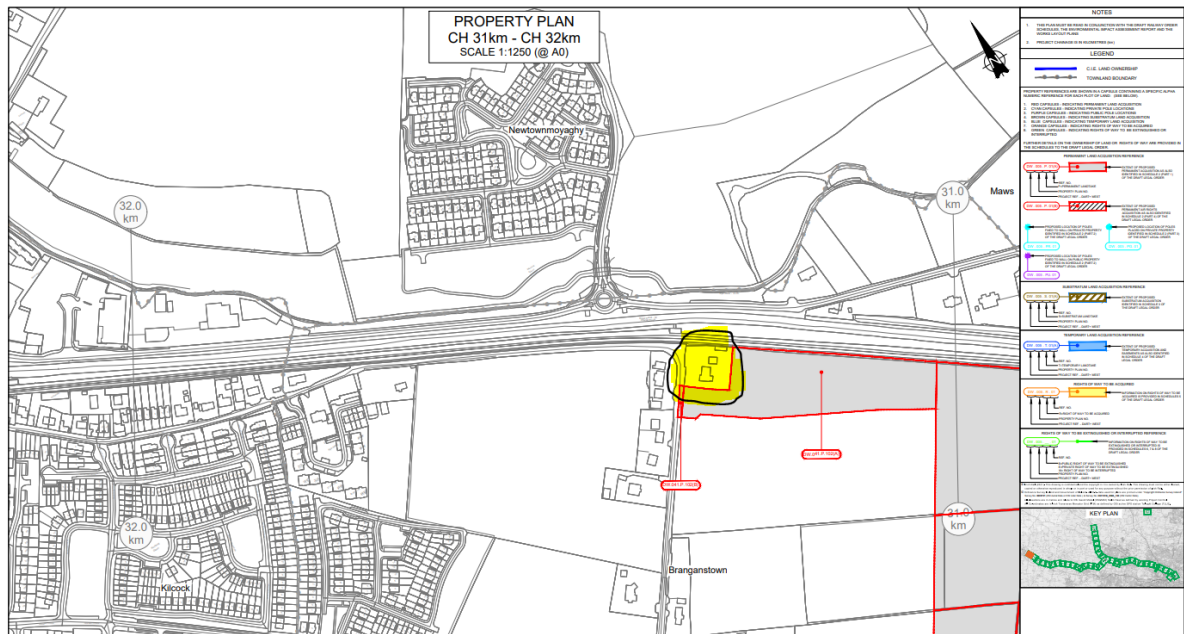
Ref: NA29S.314232 County Dublin, County Meath, County Kildare

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

Dear Secretary

We write to you in relation to the abovementioned Railway Order Application for the development of a dart depot behind our home at Doondara House, Branganstown, Kilcock, Co. Kildare W23P7KF. We recognise the importance of the Dart+ West project to the public transport network, however the current plan would considerably alter the environs of our home to the detriment of our residential amenity. The construction of an industrial site of this nature would completely alter the landscape. This is acknowledged in *EIAR Volume 2 Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual Amenity* at Page 45 which refers to landscape and visual effects on those properties located adjacent the works, which are not included within land acquisition. The fact that Dart+ West would not serve the rapidly expanding town of Kilcock means that we would have all of the inconveniences of having an industrial site on our doorstep without the benefit of additional public transport options it could offer.

Today we look out onto agricultural fields and have scenic views through to the Dublin mountains. The rural setting of our home coupled with its close proximity to the town of Kilcock was reflected in the price we paid for the property. There is no doubt that the location of a dart depot bordering our home has the potential to significantly decrease its value, impacting equity in our property now and into the future. It could also have a significant impact on our long-term health and well-being depending on noise levels at construction and during future use.



For reference our property is the circled property above, directly bordering the Depot site.

We make the following submissions in the interests of mitigating some of the impact of the proposed development on our property:

1. The proposed site is unzoned agricultural land outside of the town boundary of Kilcock which is prone to flooding. The EIAR recognises at section 4.11.13 that the lands between Maynooth and Kilcock *"have a significant history of flooding that effects the existing rail line at Jackson's Bridge (OBG23), the M4 motorway and lands southeast of Kilcock (proposed depot site)."* It is intended to raise the level of the site to the east and south of our property by one meter. Our garden is currently at a split level which does not appear to have been taken into account to date (please see photo of garden below). We submit that measures should be taken to ensure adequate drainage to reduce the risk of flooding into our garden.



2. The proposed height of screening is too high and will block out light in our garden and our views of the Dublin mountains. Some screening is proposed at 10-12 meters at maturity. We would prefer trees of lesser height and submit that a formal agreement with Irish Rail is required to ensure that light to our property is not blocked unnecessarily into the future.

3. The EIAR does not take account of the location of the test track so near to our home. Earlier plans showed the test track nearer to the current railway line. No assurances have been provided to us in respect of potential noise or light pollution from the test track or the potential safety risks in the event of derailment. It seems completely unnecessary that the proposed location of the test track and its platform would be in such close proximity to our home given the size of the site and the fact that ours is the only property directly bordering it. We call upon the engineers to consider locating the test track and platform further east on the site.
4. A number of options were put forward by Irish Rail for consideration at consultation phase. None of those options showed SEB/PSP buildings within the vicinity of our home. Indeed, it appears that this was not considered during the Environmental Impact Assessment phase as neither building is shown at the bottom left hand corner of figure 4-240 below (EIAR Volume 2 Chapter 4 - SEB and PSP buildings). We note that SEB buildings require an external lighting system with motion control, that the PSP building will comply with existing standards for electrical installations (IS: 10101:2020), there will be a diesel generator inside the PSP buildings to provide power in case of power failure and that during normal operation, it will not be a source of noise or emissions. We submit that there is no need for electrical installations of this nature to be located in close proximity to our home on such a large site and we have concerns in respect of the safety aspects of such buildings at the proposed location.

There are seven main facilities shown Figure 4-240 below.

1. Access building.
2. Main depot building.
3. Stabling area.
4. The service slab facility.
5. The automatic washing plant.
6. The electrical substation.
7. The CCE compound area.



5. Having a young family so close to a site of this nature is hugely concerning to us as parents. While we expect the site would be secured, we believe fencing is insufficient to ensure all boundaries remain intact at all times and inaccessible by children. Sites of this nature can also attract anti-social behaviour. We suggest construction of a boundary wall to the south and east of our property running up to the emergency entrance, preferably in the early stages of site development if the railway order application is approved. We would also require adequate space to be left between our hedge and the wall so that we have continued access for hedge maintenance purposes. Responsibility for maintenance and monitoring the perimeter should rest with Irish Rail.
6. The EIAR states that *“the road layout for the depot has been designed to allow HGVs around the site. Consideration has been given to special HGVs required to transport rolling stock around the depot. Road access will be provided to all facilities for servicing and maintenance. Page 4/189”*. It is proposed that an emergency access road would exit the site directly south of our property onto what is a local secondary road L5042. Much of the road cannot accommodate two-way traffic at present. A “give way” system is in operation at the moment where the road narrows from two lanes to one around a 90-degree bend just outside of our property (see photo below. This has already been the scene of a road traffic accident. The junction is in need of an upgrade and is completely unsuitable for the purpose of an emergency access route. Should an emergency actually occur, that road is not suited to servicing the site for any increased volume of traffic, particularly HGV. We object to the location of the emergency exit route so close to our property given the vast amount of space available on the site and the current problems with road layout.

Notwithstanding our objection any entrance in the vicinity should be in keeping with the local landscape and should be secure but minimal in stature.



7. Ours would be the only property bordering the western perimeter of the depot. It is proposed that the depot would operate 24 hours a day throughout the year, yet the EIAR makes no

reference to the potential impact of noise or vibration at the location of our home. We are particularly concerned by the noise levels which would arise from the location of the proposed rail access to the depot, the test track and the emergency access road. We are also concerned about the noise during the construction phase of the project, particularly breaking of ground, piling and excavation. We ask that restrictions are placed on the hours of construction in the immediate vicinity of our home.

8. EIAR Volume 2 Chapter 15 Landscape and Visual Amenity - (Page 15/41) refers to the introduction of night-time lighting. It is unclear if such lighting will border our property and we submit that this should be clarified by Irish Rail and light pollution kept to an absolute minimum.

We hope that the views outlined above will be taken into account in any further consideration of this project.

Yours sincerely

Brian and Anne Marie O'Hara