

An Bord Pleanála,
Marlboro Street,
Dublin 1

26th October 2022.

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
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Railway Order Ref NC29N.306587 Maynooth – Dublin City

In the first instance I want to state my support for the project in general and an appreciation that a project of this nature will have major long-term benefits that I believe has the support of most people in the North Kildare Area.

There are three locations I wish to make observations as follows:

Kilcock Services.

The Railway Order proposal extends a considerable distance west of Maynooth, while it extends all the way to Kilcock it is currently not proposed to provide access to commuters here. Several Railway Sheds are to be constructed here. The NTA have advised that a separate process would be required to extend the Railway Order to the existing station at Kilcock. There is a strong demand for rail services in Kilcock, which is a growing community. Currently many commuters drive to either Maynooth or Leixlip to access services. It is a significant frustration that Dart services will come all the way to Kilcock, but no service will be provided as part of this phase of development. At the very least car parking and platform services should be provided in proximity to the Railway Sheds.

In relation to the Depot as proposed, issues identified that should be considered are the potential for flooding in areas with historical instances of same at Jacksons Bridge / Ballycurraghan. A review of flood projections should be undertaken in these areas and their surrounds.

In the context of the environmental issues, that is, ground, water, noise, light and habitat – every measure reasonable should be made during the construction and operational phases of the depot at Kilcock to mitigate the potential of these aspects.



Blakestown Level Crossing

This level crossing is directly opposite Intel and links with Kilmacradock where there is an established community. Access to the Royal Canal together with permeability of the area will be lost if the level crossing is closed and no alternative pedestrian option is provided. In several submissions in the lead up to the application for a Railway Order a pedestrian bridge for both cyclists and pedestrians to allow access to the Royal Canal Greenway in line with common cycling and pedestrian amenity routes in the town. Residents opposing the closure of the level crossing point out that it will increase trips taken by car both in duration and distance and will lead to less sustainable travel patterns.

Glendale – Cope Bridge

Glendale is a mature housing estate beside Cope Bridge, Leixlip. It is proposed to locate a substation and access road in the green area of the housing estate parallel to the railway line. It is also proposed to locate a construction compound on another section of the green space to facilitate the construction of the bridge.

The green space in question is part of the original amenity space associated with the planning permission for Glendale. When the estate was taken in charge by Kildare County Council it was customary for the Council not to take the green spaces in charge, these remained in the technical ownership of the original developer who is listed on land registry today. The development plan does however restrict the use to those lands for amenity purposes.

Glendale Residents Association have collected fees and maintained this space for decades, it is used daily mainly by children. It is understandable therefore that while there is a lot of support for the Dart + upgrade there is a lot of upset about the impact this aspect of the proposal will have.

There are open fields on the far side of the bridge opposite the station that could easily accommodate a compound. There is also sufficient space to locate the sub-station directly opposite the station which is separated by the Royal canal. If this is technically feasible it would be the preferable option. Irish Rail should be asked to consider this with a view to an amendment.

The new bridge will be a complex construction with cycle lanes and footpaths on both sides. There are currently about 2000 homes in the Confey area all which access Captains Hill. The traffic on Captains Hill is considerably greater than that generated by those living in the immediate area. Intel for example draw their workforce from a wide catchment, at shift change over times it is evident many use this route. Access to areas like Blanchardstown including the number 139 bus services which operates between Naas to Blanchardstown via Confey. On the far side of Cope Bridge Confey GAA is a busy club directly opposite Confey Cemetery which is visited daily by some and in use when required for funerals. Confey College and the primary Scoil San Carlo will have students from locations on the far side of the bridge.

While it is appreciated that rebuilding the bridge will necessitate the removal of the existing bridge, it had been anticipated that pedestrian facilities would be always available through the phasing of the works. I understand the current proposal will mean there will be no access at all for more than 6 months. The complete loss of access for this timeframe is not acceptable and requires to be re-considered.

A Cycle Lane/Pathway is proposed on either side of the new road bridge. There will be some amenity space permanently lost because of this on the Glendale side. There is also a concern that some mature trees will be felled to make way for this structure. While there is a desire and an acceptance that both a cycle path and a footpath are required perhaps constructing these on the existing green space might have a lesser impact.

Construction Phase

During the construction phase a detailed traffic management plan needs to be put in place. In addition, managing a compound especially if it is ultimately located in a housing estate requires detailed consideration. It is anticipated much of the work will be done at night when activity around the compound might generate both a lot of noise and light pollution, this is a real concern. Safety is also an issue of concern given the type of vehicles that will be in use.

The existing entrance to Glendale is often congested. Glendale and Glendale Meadows are two separate housing estates that were built at different times. Non-resident parking, some of which originates from Glendale Meadows has been a feature particularly since the train station opened, it should be noted that there are very limited car parking spaces at the station. The compound only adds to the daily challenge for residents accessing their homes.

Should the compound be constructed in Glendale it is essential that following the completion of the works the area is restored to a high standard and to the satisfaction of the residents.

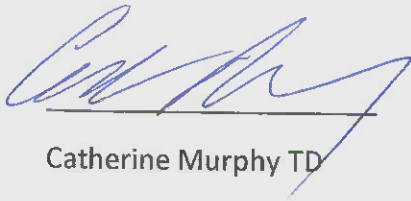
Pedestrian Crossing

It is not clear what provision for pedestrians crossing from Glendale will be provided. Currently the traffic signals on the bridge offer gaps in traffic that allow for safe crossing. The Railway Station; Library; Youth and Community Centre all require safe access. If this has not been included, it needs to be.

Car and Bus Parking

Currently there is insufficient car parking at the station, and this results in car parking within the neighbouring housing estates. There are times when bin trucks and even emergency vehicles are restricted. The expectation is that car parking will be provided in conjunction

with the project. In addition, a bus terminus needs to be provided together with a turning circle.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'C. Murphy', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Catherine Murphy TD