

Submission No.			178, 179 and 195	
Organisation Name or Name of Submitter			Maria O'Connor, Marie Balfe & Monica Deering	
Item No.	Section Ref.	Page No.	Observation Statement	TII Response
MetroLink Railway Order - Case Reference Number NA29N.314724. Maria O'Connor, 26 Townsend Street, D02 E032				
1	Letter - concerns	1	I wish to object to the unacceptable decision by Transport Infrastructure Ireland to go ahead with the Metrolink plans involving the Tara street station redevelopment at the expense of 78 homes and apartments and the local sports & leisure centre.	<p>Chapter 07 (Consideration of Alternatives) details the decision-making process that has led to the development of the proposed Project, including the route alignment and station locations. A station at Tara Street provides good interchange opportunities, serves important key trip attractors in the study area with high potential passenger trips. This option also takes a direct route through areas of high demand in the centre of the study area.</p> <p>As Dublin’s public transport network grows through the implementation of higher capacity bus routes, more frequent heavy rail services and coverage, and the expansion of the light rail network it is critically important that to achieve the full benefits and capitalise on these investments that they are integrated fully where appropriate to attain “the network effect”. High quality interchanges can significantly broaden the transport offer for their catchment and add to the appeal and attractiveness of sustainable transport by ensuring that people can easily change services to access a wider range of places by these modes, and each scheme should be designed to ensure that these are as seamless as possible.</p> <p>Please refer to response (3) which details the alternative options that were considered for this location, and outlines the reasons why this location (involving demolition) was ultimately identified as the preferred option.</p>
2	Letter - concerns	1	My home is one of those under threat, I am a tenant of DCC (Dublin City Council) and I live at 26 Townsend street and my house is due for demolition according to the Metrolink plans at Tara street (along with the other 77 homes & apartments), My parents moved into this house in Townsend street when it was built back in 1992, I then took up residence in the house in 2004 and have lived very happily here in the area for the last 18 years. It is a very close community, everybody knows one another and look after one another, a lot of the tenants are elderly and they rely on each other so this is a very frightening and worrying time for all involved. Several of these tenants were already forced to move back in 1992 from nearby Moss street area to make way for a large building development.	TII wish to thank you for your submission and acknowledge the concerns you have around the demolition of your home as part of the construction of Tara Street Station. Please refer to response (1) in relation to the strategic need for the MetroLink Tara Street Station. Response (3) details the alternatives that were considered for this location to avoid the demolition, presenting the reasons why this location (involving the demolition) was selected as the preferred option.

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3	Letter - concerns	1	It is like this close inner city community is being pushed out of their area as Dublin City Council is now prioritising selling land to make money, rather than housing people and keeping communities intact. There is a sense of shock, anger and bewilderment in the area at the moment due to this unnecessary decision to demolish 78 homes (right in the middle of the biggest housing crisis in Ireland's history). What makes this decision even more ludicrous is the fact that there are other options out there for the Tara Street stage of Metrolink which would not involve destroying people's homes, but these options have not been even been considered by Transport Infrastructure Ireland.	<p>Chapter 07 (Consideration of Alternatives) details the decision-making process that has led to the development of the proposed Project, including the route alignment and station locations. Appendix A7.2 Tara Street Station Report presents in detail the various options that were considered by TII for this location.</p> <p>Concerns had been raised during the public consultation on the Emerging Preferred Route (EPR) regarding the demolition required for the station in the location proposed, and concerns were again raised during the consultation on the Preferred Route. A number of alternative station locations were considered to try and address these concerns. Option 0 is the proposed station location, with a further 11 options assessed. Three options as submitted by College Gate residents, with the station relocated either to the north or south of the EPR proposed location, have been reviewed in detail. In addition, other options developed through the Preferred Route design process including a mined option and realignment of the route to the east of Tara Street Station have also been reviewed. All were assessed against the EPR proposed station location (Option 0) as a base case, adjusted to suit the single bore and reduced station box length.</p> <p>The various options were taken through a Mutli Criteria Analysis to compare aspects of each different option. Assessment of options considered the viability of the rail alignment, the quality/ease of interchange with Tara DART Station (a key requirement given that this will be one of the busiest stations on MetroLink with high passenger interchange with the DART), demolition/construction impacts (including minimising impacts on the existing DART infrastructure/operations), other environmental and planning issues, including traffic and utility impacts, and urban integration, health and safety issues, and potential construction costs. This has identified that for a number of reasons including constructability, cost, and retention of a good interchange facility, that Option 0, including demolition of College Gate and Markiewicz Centre, remains the preferred station location.</p> <p>Following assessment of the 11 alternative options, Option 0 has been retained as the preliminary design. The main reasons are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>* This location retains a good interchange facility with Tara DART Station;</li><li>* It reduces risk to the overall construction programme;</li><li>* It offers cheaper overall construction cost;</li><li>* It retains opportunity for future adjacent development by others;</li><li>* Mitigation for the loss of the College Gate apartments and other properties is being addressed as part of the Project with the support of DCC. In particular, TII, in consultation with DCC, will support rehousing and provide compensation for the loss of the residential units;</li><li>* TII will continue to work with DCC in relation to the development of an alternative sports and recreational facility to replace the Markiewicz leisure centre and intends to fund the alternative. However, TII does not have control over that development, which is part of DCC's function to provide public sport and recreational facilities in its function area. DCC may or may not be in a position to deliver it in parallel with the MetroLink project. Accordingly, the Board should assess the MetroLink project on the basis that the alternative may not be available. The impact would then be significant, but nonetheless one that would not outweigh the strategic scale long term benefits that MetroLink will deliver.</li></ul>
4	Letter - concerns	1	We are also disappointed with DCC's role in this, despite being long and loyal tenants we have been given no support or back up. DCC appear to be working closely with Transport Infrastructure Ireland, the National Transport Authority and the MetroLink project, pursuing the demolition of our homes and the Sports Centre, rather than in any way opposing the demolition or seeking alternatives which would preserve this community.	<p>As noted in response (3) above, TII will continue to work with DCC in relation to the development of an alternative sports and recreational facility to replace the Markiewicz leisure centre and intends to fund the alternative. However, TII does not have control over that development, which is part of DCC's function to provide public sport and recreational facilities in its function area. DCC may or may not be in a position to deliver it in parallel with the MetroLink project. Accordingly, the Board should assess the MetroLink project on the basis that the alternative may not be available. The impact would then be significant, but nonetheless one that would not outweigh the strategic scale long term benefits that MetroLink will deliver.</p> <p>Please refer to response (3) in relation to the alternative options considered for this location, and the reasons for selecting this location as the preferred option.</p>

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5	Letter - concerns	1	I have done my own research into this matter and found that there was a lack of proper investigation by Transport Infrastructure Ireland and MetroLink into the alternative routes that could have been used instead of this one that requires demolishing all these homes, there was also a lack of proper investigation of alternative construction methods (underground construction, rather thanwhat they call cut and cover, for the Tara metro station) that would mean that our homes could be preserved.	<p>Please refer to response (3) above in relation to the options considered for Tara Street, and the reasons for the selection of the proposed station location.</p> <p>As part of the options assessed, a mined option (Option 4) was considered. This option would reduce the demolition involved, retaining the College Gate apartment block and the leisure centre, compared to Option 0 (the proposed location). Additionally, the option retains similar benefits to Option 0 in terms of interchange opportunity, traffic impacts, utility impacts, rail alignment and future development opportunities.</p> <p>The mined option comprises the construction of two deep shafts either side and immediately adjacent to the College Gate apartments to provide construction access for mining the tunnel under College Gate apartments and to subsequently provide permanent access, ventilation and back of house facilities for the operation of the station.</p> <p>The mining operation would need to progress 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. This would be necessary to ensure the safety and security of the works. As the tunnelling would be by "open faced " non pressurised tunnelling techniques (i.e. excavation in advance of the installation of the subsequent sprayed concrete tunnel lining) it would be critical to advance and support the excavated face continuously - particularly as the excavation would be below the water table. If a face was left unsupported for a period, ground movements become more challenging to manage and hence increase the likelihood of tunnel instability and surface settlement. This would add increased risk of damage to third party property, noting that the DART is also in close proximity and movements to the rails risk impacting the running of DART services. To not mine the tunnel 24 hours day would mean that the face would need to be secured at the end of every day shift, and the timing of blasting would need to adhere to a strict predetermined schedule so that the tunnel face is always secured at the end of each shift. In simple terms if such an approach was adopted, the impact on the programme would more than double the duration of cavern construction as a result of the constraint of day time working together with the inefficiencies in working this way. The sequence of working would also import risk and cost escalation. Therefore 24-hour working is essential for constructing the mined cavern.</p> <p>The nature of the work, drill and blast with mechanical excavation, would generate a level of groundborne noise and vibration that would mean it would not be possible to inhabit the College Gate apartment block due to the disturbance caused, leading to the need to relocate residents for a minimum of two years. There are also risks that could extend this duration further. This option therefore has a similar impact to the cut and cover station on College Gate residents. TII consider that when balanced against the risks and direct construction cost increase compared to the preferred cut and cover option, that demolition and redevelopment of the area around the site of the proposed Tara Station as part of the wider integrated development and regeneration of the site provides a better option. Additionally, the preferred proposed cut and cover station provides a higher quality operational station that is consistent with the MetroLink architectural vision and operational and maintenance strategy which the mined option compromises.</p>
6	Letter - concerns	1	Another factor to consider is that the land on which our houses sit is extremely valuable and the MetroLink group has a remit, once the new underground station has been built -- to sell this land which would at that stage be empty above ground -- in order to raise funds for the project, this is a blatant and obvious conflict of interest on the part of the state bodies involved. Myself, my neighbours and the local community are all affected by this and we are determined to make a stand against it.	<p>As noted in Appendix A7.2 Tara Street Report (appendix to Chapter 07 Consideration of Alternatives), one of the reasons, among others, for the selection of the preferred location is that it provides opportunity for future oversight development by others as part of an urban integration plan.</p> <p>TII does not have a remit to sell lands once the new station is completed in order to raise funds for the project. The preliminary Business Case for the project approved in July 2021 does not include funding arising from the sale of lands.</p>
7	Letter - concerns	2	Since Transport Infrastructure Ireland made this announcement, my own health has suffered and I feel under constant stress along with so many others whose houses and homes are in danger, 78 houses and apartments, the local sports centre and swimming pool which is used by adults and children alike are all to be demolished, this cannot be allowed to happen,	Please refer to response (4) in relation to re-housing and the position in relation to the Markiewicz Centre.

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8	Letter - concerns	2	I would like to finish by saying that I am not against Metrolink, I think a lot of the ideas and plans are excellent and Dublin city centre does need a rail link to the airport, and north county Dublin needs connection to the city. However the plans regarding the Tara street development of the Metrolink project must be stopped or changed, the country is in the middle of a housing crisis and there are other options for them to use which will not involve demolishing 78 homes and a sports centre.	TII wish to thank you for your submission and statement of support for the delivery of MetroLink. Response (1) outlines the strategic need for a station at Tara Street. Please refer to response (3) above in relation to the options considered for Tara Street, and the reasons for the selection of the proposed station location. Please refer to response (5) in relation to the mined option that was considered, and the reasons why this option was not progressed.
9	Letter - concerns	2	I love my house and I am very happy in this area in Townsend street and I appeal to An Bord Pleanála to please not let them destroy my home and so many other residents homes in the area, especially when it is not necessary as there are other alternatives out there, I thank you for your help.	TII have fully assessed the impacts of the construction of Tara Street Station and presented the assessment in the EIAR, including the obvious negative impacts on the local community. As noted above, TII have and will continue to work with DCC to mitigate these impacts. Response (1) outlines the strategic need for a station at Tara Street. Please refer to response (3) above in relation to the options considered for Tara Street, and the reasons for the selection of the proposed station location. Please refer to response (5) in relation to the mined option that was considered, and the reasons why this option was not progressed.

<b>Other Submissions relating to these reposnes:</b>	
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179	Marie Balfe (31 Townsend Street)
195	Monica Deering (32 Townsend Street)