

Submission No.			320	
Organisation Name or Name of Submitter			Cllr. Yvonne Collins	
Item No.	Section Ref.	Page No.	Observation Statement	TII Response
Our Ref. YC/LT. Letter Re: MetroLink - Estuary through Swords, Dublin Airport, Ballymun, Glasnevin and City Centre to Charlemont, County Dublin. 24/11/2022				
1	Letter	1	I fully support the project from the Estuary to St. Stephen’s Green. I believe it is badly needed and long overdue. I do not, however, support extending Metrolink to Charlemont and believe that the terminus should be at St. Stephen’s Green instead.	<p>Thank you for taking the time to make this submission and endorsing the need for the MetroLink Project. Regards your observation that the terminus should be at St Stephen’s Green, TII have undertaken considerable analysis, as set out by EIAR Chapter 7, Consideration of Alternatives, section 7.7.8 and Appendix A7.9 that concluded that Charlemont was a better interchange location than St. Stephen’s Green for the following reasons.</p> <p>The connection from St Stephens Green to Charlemont / Ranelagh is supported by the previous Transport Strategy for Greater Dublin Area (2016-2035) and the current Transport Strategy for Greater Dublin Area (2022-2042). The latter considers a range of options for the onward extension of MetroLink to meet the demand for travel over the period of the strategy. This includes consideration of the need for the upgrade of the Luas Green Line to metro with a metro extension to Dublin south west, south or south east. Whilst the strategy envisages that further extensions will be delivered after 2042, MetroLink which terminates at Charlemont allows for the possible extension of the metro in all the above directions.</p> <p>The proximity of the metro to the Luas line at Charlemont provides for a positive customer experience for all users with short interchange distance and due to the proximity, clear wayfinding and high visibility of the interchange. The interchange arrangements at Charlemont provide for significantly better interchange arrangements compared to an alternative interchange at St Stephen’s Green Station. Passengers wishing to interchange between Luas and metro at an alternative St Stephen’s Green terminus would face a 500m-walk along a route either through St Stephen’s Green park or along the footpath north of the park, which adds significantly to the time for interchange and therefore the overall journey time for passengers and a less positive customer experience for all interchange users. This passenger experience would be reduced further for those with mobility or visual impairments as well as those travelling to/from the airport with luggage. Please also refer to Chapter 7: Consideration of the Alternatives, section 7.7.8 MetroLink Southern Terminus, table 7-16.</p> <p>The section of MetroLink route between St Stephen’s Green and Charlemont Stations serves a significant area of the south city of Dublin and offers enhanced access from the local area to the city centre and a direct connection to Dublin Airport. It serves key trip attractors including residential areas and offices / workplace locations, with high passenger boarding and alighting figures in the peak hours. During the morning peak, at Charlemont station the flows include 1,800 passengers alighting, 2,300 boarding and 1,229 passengers alighting, 2,276 boarding during the evening peak. The passenger numbers contribute significantly to the overall benefits of the scheme and the effect of these benefits outweigh the additional costs that are associated with the delivery and operation of the section from St Stephen’s Green to Charlemont station. Please refer to Table 7-16 in Chapter 7 section 7.7.8 which looks at the southern terminus location and passenger interchange data.</p> <p>The location of the interchange at Charlemont does not preclude onward extension south. An interchange at Charlemont is supported by policy including the Dublin City Development Plan 2022 - 2028 and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. As noted by the GDA Transport Strategy 2022-2042, section 12.3.2, "Charlemont offers the optimal location for the primary interchange with the Green Line in response to growing demand in the longer term and is an appropriate location to facilitate any potential future metro extensions to serve the south west, south or south east of the city region should sufficient demand arise."</p> <p>By extending MetroLink to Charlemont it provides for future proofing of the Green Line, bypassing the capacity constrained Luas on-street running section, and ensures potential future connectivity options are enabled, either to the Green Line or for extensions of the metro.</p> <p>The Charlemont Station interchange provides for increased passenger utilisation of the MetroLink system, thereby increasing the benefits delivered by the Project, reflected by an improved Project Benefit Cost Ratio (BCR).</p>

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2	Letter	1	<p>I believe that the terminus should be at a city centre location to maximise the possibility, in the future, of creating an integrated hub to allow for interchanges between the Metro, buses and the Luas, and to cater for a possible underground system. Charlemont, by contrast, is a residential area with relatively limited potential to extend public transport links throughout the city and particularly to areas like Dublin Southwest.</p> <p>I would like the Railway Order to be amended to authorise building the Metro to St. Stephen’s Green only and then, whilst these works are being carried out, to direct that an independent monitoring group including independent Consultants, the NTA, Community representatives, and elected representatives, be constituted to carry out feasibility studies to determine the optimum onward route for the Metro.</p>	<p>The rationale for locating the southern MetroLink interchange at Charlemont rather than St Stephen’s Green is covered by response (1) above, including the future potential to extend public transport beyond Charlemont, noting that TII have assessed that Charlemont Station better provides for this than St Stephen’s Green.</p> <p>As outlined by EIAR Chapter 3, Background to the MetroLink Project, one of the key objectives of the Project is the integration of it with the wider transport network that also includes for BusConnects and DART+ which are all included under Project Ireland 2040. Together, these projects will result in a reliable, sustainable, affordable, integrated public transport network that will support the economy, help Ireland meet its climate change targets in line with Climate Action Plan 2021 and make Dublin a more livable and sustainable city.</p> <p>Arising from the decision to postpone the future upgrade of the Green Line to metro services, it is being argued that Charlemont station effectively becomes a terminus station in the short to medium term. In this regard, it is true to say that the Metrolink trains will terminate and turn back at Charlemont station, however the public transport service offering for passengers does not terminate, it transfers from Metrolink to LUAS as part of the integrated transport network.</p> <p>The terminus station for MetroLink is located at Estuary where all of the activities normally associated with a terminus (train sideways, car parking etc.) take place. At this location the high capacity public transport offering terminates and the public transport offering transfers to a completely different mode, i.e. Bus and car. The environmental effects of the MetroLink terminus are accordingly assessed in the EIAR. Charlemont Station does not have the associated infrastructure and services associated with a terminus location and in fact has more in common with a “system turn back location”. Charlemont Station is located within an area of high public transport accessibility, linking with the Luas Green Line which offers reasonably similar levels of services and frequency for journeys to and from the south of Dublin. As such, public transport service offering is not considered to terminate, but transfers onto the similar service offered by the Luas Green Line, forming part of a transport corridor running from Cherrywood to Estuary. The associated environmental impacts for the turnback tunnel and station at Charlemont have been fully assessed in the EIAR, each respectively referenced section 5.5.3 Tunnel and 5.10.13 Charlemont Station in EIAR Chapter 5: MetroLink Construction Phase.</p> <p>Charlemont station itself was chosen on the basis of its interchange potential with Luas, as well as local bus services, as outlined above. The section of the line between St Stephen's Green and Charlemont generates considerable benefits for the scheme in terms of increased patronage. Whether acting as a terminus station for some passengers or as an interchange station with Luas or bus services for others, the environmental impacts the station has on its local environment, in terms of passenger demand, airborne noise. vibration and other environmental effects do not increase.</p> <p>The proposed route alignment from Estuary to Charlemont is consistent and compliant with the GDA Transport Strategy 2022-2042 (published in January 2023) in which states that the south city terminus at Charlemont offers the optimal location for interchange with the Green Line in response to growing demand in the longer term and is an appropriate location to facilitate any potential future metro extensions to serve the south west, south or south east of the city region should sufficient demand arise.</p>

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3	Letter	1	In this regard, we badly need an upgraded public transport infrastructure in Dublin Southwest. The area has had a substantial increase in population over the last few years and, given both the amount of ongoing building works and planning permissions granted recently both under the Strategic Housing Development (SHD) process and otherwise, this increase in population is set to continue. We don't have the benefit of a nearby Dart or of either of the Luas lines and I believe the demand for public transport is far more than a bus system alone can cope with. I would like to see Metrolink extended to Dublin Southwest to serve areas including Rathfarnham, Templeogue, Knocklyon, Ballycullen and Firhouse, with the best route to be decided on completion of the appropriate studies, before planning is submitted.	<p>The proposed MetroLink alignment has not been extended south of Charlemont for the reasons set out by the GDA strategy, section 12.3.10, "The challenges associated with the upgrading of the Luas Green Line to a metro standard of service have led to the emergence of an alternative proposal which seeks to meet travel demand from south of Sandyford along a new light rail corridor which serves UCD post-2042. As such, the upgrading of the Green Line to metro standard is not being pursued as part of this strategy. Instead, for this strategy period, the capacity and frequency on the current Green Line from Sandyford northwards to the city centre will be incrementally increased through the provision of additional tram fleet and services and associated turnback arrangements to meet forecast passenger demand."</p> <p>Further information on the challenges associated with connecting to the existing Luas Green Line can be found in the TII published report: "Constructability Report - Green Line Closure, April 2019, ref <a href="https://www.metrolink.ie/media/ox0p3cjb/constructabilityreportgreenlineclosure.pdf">https://www.metrolink.ie/media/ox0p3cjb/constructabilityreportgreenlineclosure.pdf</a>". This showed that construction works to connect the metro from Charlemont to the Green Line would incur line closures over a period of up to 3-4 years, depending on construction methodology.</p> <p>For this reason it has been necessary to determine the most appropriate interchange and termination location for MetroLink. As noted above and by the GDA Transport Strategy 2022-2042, section 12.3.2, "Charlemont offers the optimal location for the primary interchange with the Green Line in response to growing demand in the longer term and is an appropriate location to facilitate any potential future metro extensions to serve the south west, south or south east of the city region should sufficient demand arise.' This is also reflected by EIAR Chapter 7, section 7.7.8 MetroLink Southern Terminus Location that explains the rationale for selecting Charlemont as the optimum location for interchange with the Green Line.</p> <p>As noted by the GDA Strategy the selection of Charlemont does not preclude any future connections to the west or south of the city.</p>	
4	Letter	1	I would like to support the very thorough and detailed submission made by the Metro Southwest Group (MSWG) and urge you to please carry out further and more extensive research before committing to the current proposed course of action. It is essential to have a proper public transport infrastructure if we want people to leave their cars at home and thereby reduce traffic congestion and pollution. There is an opportunity here to vastly improve this area of the city by facilitating a proper public transport infrastructure which will improve the lives of our residents, and the environment, for many years to come.	<p>TII consider the MetroLink Railway Order application and the accompanying EIAR presents a comprehensive and detailed assessment of all possible impacts that may arise from the construction and operation of Metrolink, including the proposed preferred location for a southern interchange at Charlemont. The assessments include for predictive modelling in order to identify the potential impacts on all sensitive receptors during both the construction phase and the operational phase. Where necessary, mitigation measures are proposed to reduce any identified effects.</p> <p>TII agree that it is essential to have a “a proper public transport infrastructure if we want people to leave their cars at home and thereby reduce traffic congestion and pollution”. EIAR Chapter 3, Background to the MetroLink Project, explains how the proposed Project will provide significant benefits not only to those who choose to use it, but also to other transport network users, by generating a modal shift from private car use, thereby reducing the demand for road space and creating the opportunity for the road transport system to achieve optimum levels of efficiency and effectiveness. Also as outlined in Chapter 3, the proposed Project is part of an integrated transport network that also includes for BusConnects and DART+ which are all included under Project Ireland 2040. Together, these projects will result in a reliable, sustainable, affordable, integrated public transport network that will support the economy, help Ireland meet its climate change targets in line with Climate Action Plan 2021 and make Dublin a more livable and sustainable city. Whilst Metrolink is a standalone project that is not dependent on any other projects for its delivery or effective operation, it is nonetheless a critical part of the proposed integrated transport network for the Greater Dublin Area.</p>	