



A small green
lung on
Berkeley Road
in the heart of
the North
inner-city.

Submission 025 AZ4(e) Mater Station

Good afternoon, my name is Breda Scully.

I have lived all my life in the parish of St. Joseph's, Berkeley Road.

The area has undergone huge changes in recent years. The demographic shift is particularly noticeable, and it is to the credit of the local community that they have accepted and welcomed the large numbers of people from many countries and cultures now living among us. For example, the Filipino Feast day of Santo Niño, celebrated in January each year, is a wonderful expression of intercultural harmony, as colourful dancers and musicians lead a procession through grey streets, cheered on by locals of every nationality. So the people of Berkeley Road are not averse to change, but even embrace it.

However, the area has its difficulties too. It is very built-up and very noisy. Many people live close together in rental accommodation or in small houses, often without any access to a garden. Also, during the Covid outbreak, Dr. Jack Lambert of the Mater Hospital declared that

"The big cluster in Dublin is right around the Mater" -
(Tonight Show, 20th April 2020)

Then, there is the noise. Ambulance and police sirens wail continuously. There is already constant background noise.

For these, and other reasons, I believe that the siting of a metro station in the Four Masters Park would incur a grievous loss to our community.

When the hospital was built in the 1860's, it was the intention of the Mercy Sisters that the field in front of the hospital should always remain an open space, supplying fresh air and sunshine to patients and to nearby residents. I was told this, a few years ago, by an elderly Sister. Their foresight is to be admired.

The park continues to share its bounty - the changing seasons, as the daffodils spring up, followed by the glorious magnolia trees. We hear the birds sing. We smell the mown grass. It is fitting that the Healing Hands sculpture by Tony O'Malley, is situated in the park, for the park itself is a source of healing, as are the neighbouring church and hospital. That is why The Four Masters Park is such an essential part of our neighbourhood. It is a green oasis in a desert of greyness. It may not bear our footprints, but its pristine beauty raises our spirits and calms our minds.

It is heartbreaking to think that this tranquillity could be shattered, the park dug up and turned into a noisy, muddy, building site. A place which has given such joy could be turned into one causing torment and distress to those in its vicinity..

In TII's response to my Submission (25) regarding Airborne Noise & Vibration and Groundborne Noise & Vibration, the word "mitigation" is used six times (Item 2). Does this mean that "it's going to be bad, but it could have been worse"? There is also the statement that if these mitigations don't work, "TII will consider whether the provision of further mitigation would be appropriate." This does not inspire confidence.

Major works are currently being undertaken along the Royal Canal Bank and also in the Mountjoy Prison complex. I can personally vouch that **their** "mitigation" efforts have failed spectacularly! It is no fun being woken in the early hours by heavy machinery throbbing outside your bedroom window, and wondering if your 130 year old house will stand the strain!

St. Joseph's Church is a haven of peace and tranquillity, which has served generations of parishioners. Often, people attending the Mater Hospital as outpatients, or visiting sick relatives, come to the church seeking comfort and solace.

The last thing they need is the noise of machinery, above or underground!

Also, the following sentence does not sound hopeful – TII's response to Submission 25 re. Groundborne Noise and Vibration (Item 2): "Advance public consultation and stakeholder engagement can greatly reduce the significance of groundborne noise effects during construction, as building occupants would be prepared for the passage of the TBM and resultant elevated noise and vibration levels". I don't think so!

The church grounds are important too. People gather there to chat after Masses and, especially after funerals and weddings. It has often been remarked that the grounds are more like those of a country rather than a city church, because of their peacefulness and greenery. Are we to lose all this for high hoardings and the loud roar of machines?

Also, there are two cafes on Berkeley Road and, on a fine day, it is a real pleasure to sit outside, having refreshments, while enjoying the natural beauty of the park across the road. It is so sad to think that this lovely park could be sacrificed for a metro station. Who would want to sit facing a building site, and who would wish to exchange sweet birdsong for the din and roar of machinery? There is a real danger that the businesses on Berkeley Road may have to close, if people feel it is just too much trouble to go there.

In TII's response to Submission 25 (Item 4), we read that "Following completion of the Mater Station, the park will be re-instated, allowing for the re-establishment and re-use of wildlife." But how can this be, when the space simply won't be there? The park is small enough as it is, but it is obvious from the plans, and from just looking at the area itself, that the proposed station

entrance and ancillary structures will leave room for only a narrow strip of grass and very curtailed planting. There will be no park, if these plans are carried through.

There must be somewhere else where this station can be located. Mountjoy Prison covers a large expanse of land. Could some of that be used? Also, there is a station already built, or partially built underneath the Mater Hospital. Could that not be used?

There is a lot written and spoken about “greening” the city (e.g. DCC Greening Strategy). This is an opportunity to put words into action.

The Four Masters Park is a gift received from those who went before us. Let us pass it on intact to future generations, so that they too can know the joy and peace that such a green space brings.
