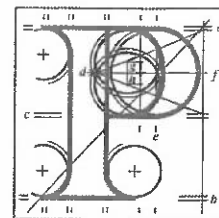


**Our Case Number:** ABP-314724-22

**Planning Authority Reference Number:**



**An  
Bord  
Pleanála**

Dublin Chamber  
C/O Stephen Browne  
4 Clare Street  
Dublin 2

**Date:** 18 January 2023

**Re:** Railway (Metrolink - Estuary to Charlemont via Dublin Airport) Order [2022]  
Metrolink. Estuary through Swords, Dublin Airport, Ballymun, Glasnevin and City Centre to  
Charlemont, Co. Dublin

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent submission and oral hearing request (including your fee of €50) in relation to the above-mentioned proposed Railway Order and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter.

The Board will revert to you in due course with regard to the matter.

The Board has absolute discretion to hold an oral hearing in respect of any application before it, in accordance with section 218 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended. Accordingly, the Board will inform you on this matter in due course.

Please be advised that copies of all submissions/observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the relevant County Council(s) and at the offices of An Bord Pleanála when they have been processed by the Board.

More detailed information in relation to strategic infrastructure development can be viewed on the Board's website: [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie).

If you have any queries in the meantime, please contact the undersigned. Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

<b>Tel</b>	<b>Tel</b>	(01) 858 8100
<b>Glaó Áitiúil</b>	<b>LoCall</b>	1890 275 175
<b>Facs</b>	<b>Fax</b>	(01) 872 2684
<b>Láithreán Gréasáin</b>	<b>Website</b>	<a href="http://www.pleanala.ie">www.pleanala.ie</a>
<b>Ríomhphost</b>	<b>Email</b>	<a href="mailto:bord@pleanala.ie">bord@pleanala.ie</a>

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

Yours faithfully,



Niamh Thornton  
Executive Officer  
Direct Line: 01-8737247

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Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

**Dublin Chamber of Commerce Submission to An Bord Pleanála.  
Railway Order Application for Metrolink Estuary to Charlemont.  
January 2023.**

**Introduction.**

Dublin Chamber is the representative body for businesses in the Greater Dublin Area, with a diverse membership base spanning the spectrum from start-ups and SMEs to major multinational companies and across all sectors of the economy. Dublin Chamber's vision for Dublin, is to be a city region that offers a high quality of life with a world class transport system. In order for that vision to become a reality, it is vital that Dublin becomes an easy city to move around and where short, consistent commute times are the norm. Dublin is significantly behind where it needs to be in this regard, as a result of severe under-investment in our public transport infrastructure over recent years. This is a major frustration for businesses and for citizens. The delivery of projects such as MetroLink is key to that ambition being realised.

Dublin Chamber supports the granting of a Railway Order for this project at the earliest possible opportunity to allow for the following stages of the process to get underway in a timely manner. Dublin Chamber has long advocated the construction of an underground rail link between North County Dublin and the city centre, including a stop at Dublin Airport. Following many false dawns over the past two decades, Dublin Chamber are pleased to see that progress is being made on the project, but this sense of urgency must be maintained.

**The Case for MetroLink**

A core aim of this Government has been, to encourage a modal shift from commuting by car to a more sustainable model. These policy priorities have included active travel and public transport. We have seen, since the Covid Pandemic, a number of cycle lanes built and installed around the city to encourage this. Bus Connects is being rolled out across the city in the past number of years - and not without some difficulty. Government has committed a significant sum of public monies to achieving these ambitious transport goals, but projects such as Metrolink will need political support and vision to ensure that commencement and openings are achieved on time.

Dublin Chamber believes that the environmental, social, amenity and convenience benefits of Metrolink are substantial and outweigh the financial cost of the project to the Exchequer. Getting from Stephens Green to the Airport in 17 minutes is a real prospect; so too is the likelihood of some 50 million passengers transiting through, or using, the St. Stephen's Green stations annually. Indeed, when the full LUAS, rail and bus programmes are fully operational it will transform the travelling experience in the city and will hopefully match - for the first time ever – the City Region's requirements.

## **Conditional Support**

One of Dublin Chambers key policy asks has been the construction of a quick and integrated public transport link from Dublin Airport to the city. Metrolink will allow this to happen, which is vital for the continued growth of the Dublin region not only demographically but also in a business context.

The whole project is of keen interest to the members of Dublin Chamber, but the areas of key significance and of possible major disruption to business activity will be the boring of the City Tunnel along with the Dardistown section and the construction of stations along that alignment. It is not acceptable that key infrastructure routes through the city centre core be disrupted for a protracted period of time during the construction phase, we would like to see increased public transport options and a development of the public realm around the city centre stops to foster pedestrian access during this phase. We are glad to see that tunnel boring will be stored at the construction site in Northwood, but we would stress that construction sites need to be as unobtrusive as possible to ensure ease of access to streets for deliveries, employee and customer access.

The alignment of the St. Stephens Green, O'Connell St and Mater stops brings construction right through a central, congested corridor with high traffic flows of business vehicles, private vehicles, taxis and public transport. In the shorter term, road space will be lost and traffic disruption is inevitable as roads are closed. The business community wants to know: How are the agencies involved going to respond to the closure of certain routes and roads to private vehicles? Will increased public transport options - that offer high levels of frequency and quality, and are reasonably-priced - be made available? Who will be the body that is ultimately responsible for traffic at the enabling works stage and construction stage?

In addition to the above traffic management issues, post covid the need for people in the city centre is more acute than ever. We have mentioned in the past the need to enhance the public realm to entice people to frequent the city core not only on core working days but also for recreation. We would strongly suggest that free flow of pedestrians is not impeded excessively by works. The city is still recovering post covid especially the hospitality sector. While it is accepted that some disturbance during construction will be inevitable, they justifiably want this to be short lived and properly controlled to ensure it is not at an unacceptable level. Excessive noise dust and vibrations must be kept at a level that ensure the maximum flow of pedestrians that is consistent with the health and safety of the sites under reference.

## **Conclusions.**

Dublin Chamber is supportive of the granting of a Railway Order for the Metrolink project. This piece of infrastructure has been needed for the Dublin Region for many years. We have laid out some of our members concerns and recommendations above and would urge the Board to take these into consideration when determining their decision.



The highest priority for Dublin Chamber and its members is to ensure that projects will transform the city region, and that pillar four, Sustainable Mobility, of Project Ireland 2040 is carried out. This project has had many iterations in the past that have stalled, and we urge that if the Board grants a RO, that the project leaders move swiftly to procurement and construction phase. Dublin cannot wait another decade for infrastructure of this type, with the city region growing year on year.

Metrolink has the potential to transform how people get around Dublin, if done right and on time. There can be no further delays to this project. Dublin Chamber looks forward to being a constructive partner throughout this process, including at an Oral Hearing if the Board deems it necessary.

Contact: Stephen Browne. Head of Public Affairs, 4 Clare St, Dublin 2.