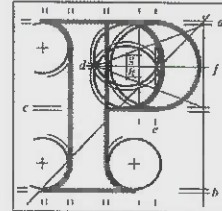
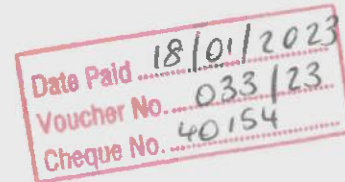


Our Case Number: ABP-314724-22



An
Bord
Pleanála

Father Paul Churchill and others
Saint Joseph's Church
Berkeley Road
Dublin 7



Date: **18 JAN 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 (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.

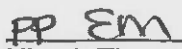
Please be advised, there is no fee for an affected landowner, listed on the schedule, to make an observation on this case, therefore, a cheque refund of €50 is enclosed.

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.

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.

Yours faithfully,


Niamh Thornton
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737247

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1890 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	www.pleanala.ie
Ríomhphost	Email	bord@pleanala.ie

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

St Joseph's Church, Berkeley Rd, Dublin 7.

087-2224861



www.berkeleyroadparish.com



An Bórd Pleanála
64 Marlborough St.,
Dublin D01 V902

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	059467-22
ABP-	
24 NOV 2022	
Fee: €	50.00
Type:	cash
Time:	11.49
By:	hand

24th November 2022

Railway (Metrolink-Estuary to Charlemont via Dublin Airport) Order 2022

Dear Sirs,

I refer to the letter dated 20th September last (Ref. N. CAP_ML_0557_23) in respect of the proposed Metrolink works that was served on me as the Parish Priest of St. Joseph's parish, Berkeley Road, Dublin 7. We are writing with our concerns, having consulted many parishioners who have attended this parish over many years and also on behalf of the members of the St. Laurence O'Toole trust so as to ask for certain guarantees during the construction of and for an appropriate time after the construction of the metro-link to which we have been alerted by the afore-mentioned letter.

The proposed alignment of the metro tunnel, according to the plans which have significantly altered from previous communications with parishioners before I became parish priest, would bring it under St. Joseph's Church and directly under the Parochial House and also under the Offices of the Dublin Interdiocesan Marriage Tribunal. According to the plans we have been given, the normal access of parishioners and others to the aforementioned Church Building and offices would be greatly restricted if not blocked completely.

St. Joseph's Church was built in post-famine Ireland by a population who were the fore-fathers of *Strumpet City*. The Church is a credit to them. It is a listed building. The stone work and the décor is a witness to great craftsmanship of the period. All who visit it speak of its beauty and indeed we often see tourists

coming to visit it. It is incumbent on me to state the serious footfall we get from people who have to attend the Mater Hospital or their family members, who all find it a place of solace when faced with life-threatening conditions. It is imperative for us as a faith community to protect, preserve and keep it open to the community.

But as well as that it is the Parish Church and significant numbers of people attend Mass here including a Syro-Malabar group as well as a community from the Philippines. Indeed people who live a bit further afield also attend Mass here be it when passing on business, often to the local hospitals, out-patients and consultancies. Many people ask to have their children baptised here, it is the Church for the local School and it also is a place where many celebrate the funeral rites of their deceased.

Besides, both the premises of my own accommodation, the Parish Office and the offices of the Dublin Interdiocesan Marriage Tribunal, according to the plans shown to us, lie directly above the proposed route of the metro-tunnel. Both of these offices provide a major service to parishioners and those who seek help and relief due to marriage failure. In fact in worldly terms it is a necessary community service.

Indeed with all the work that will have to take place around the area we are concerned that an appropriate access be allowed during the whole period of the construction process so that the Church can remain both safe and available for worship and private prayer and that the offices mentioned can continue to function normally.

Our concerns however—and we have consulted not just locals but also the diocesan architect—arise from a close inspection of the documentation sent to us.

For instance if we take the location plans ML5B-U38 and ML5B-U39 with corresponding Second Schedule reference numbers, a potential reading of these is that the Church and presbyteries with offices would simply be taken out of use. It is imperative that we receive the necessary guarantee that the subterranean work area would not cause closure of the parish and its functioning.

Obviously we have a concern about the buildings above this work, especially the Church which needs protection. It is important to point out that while the

top of the tunnel is said to be 17.4 meters below street level, the fact is that the foundations of the Church may begin quite below street level. This is clear by even a brief look at the vaults under the sanctuary to be seen at the rear of the Church. So it raises a question as to what would be *for this specific case* an appropriate depth for the tunnel? Might another route be possible?

We are also concerned about location plan ML5B-A5 with corresponding Second Schedule and ML5B-T1 with corresponding Fourth Schedule. The area of land they refer to is our area of access for funeral corteges and wedding cars as well car-parking for those who need mobile assistance as well as delivery vans to the Church. Pedestrian access is also provided from the Mater Hospital and various consultancies by this route.

We request that for all these reasons this stretch remain open to all who normally use it. Our concern here is added to by the fact that we have been told that a significant part of Berkeley Road to the front of the Church will be taken over so as to facilitate site access in the building of the Mater station only adding to the difficulties of access to and exit from the aforementioned premises.

We are also concerned that this use of Berkeley Road and possibly Berkeley Street would prevent access to the Presbyteries which contain the offices mentioned above. Health and safety considerations have also to be taken into account so that, should emergency services have to access any of these premises, they can easily do so.

We wish also to alert you to a concern had by some about certain channels for water in the ground below us that may or may not be a cause for concern in the construction process.

These are our immediate and direct concerns but we can also understand the concerns expressed by other local residents who will have their environment greatly diminished by the works.

And this leads me to another question we have. We ask if this very costly project should be undertaken at all? It will be costly and in view of the problems in the world, politically and economically, can we be sure the costs will not escalate? Might this project be started and then left off half way through leaving a mess. Is it a good enough reason to simply have a metro

because other capitals have one? A terrorist attack on a metro would cause great fatalities as London and Madrid have shown.

We just wonder whether the solution for Dublin Airport is not to extend the proposed LUAS line to Charlestown onto the airport thus providing a rail link to that facility in that way? Would not this latter way of providing for the airport be far less costly on the public purse and also less disruptive for many communities?

If the final decision is that the project on the metro should proceed then we simply ask that this jewel (St. Joseph's Church) in the heart of Dublin be protected. Thus we make the following requests in respect of the work of construction and its aftermath:

- A. That every effort be made to protect St. Joseph's Church from damage (immediate or consequential) resulting from these works. Specifically we ask that the depth of the bore take account of the foundations of the Church and its age.
- B. That any damage resulting from the work will be repaired in full with no cost to the parish or Marriage Tribunal.
- C. That necessary and appropriate access for parishioners and visitors will be maintained throughout the period of the construction so that the normal services provided by the parish and the marriage tribunal will be capable of continuing.

We communicate this in a spirit of cooperation. A healthy respectful dialogue can work to everyone's good.



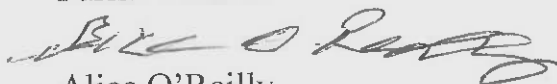
Fr. Paul Churchill

Parish Priest St. Joseph's and Judicial Vicar of the Marriage Tribunal



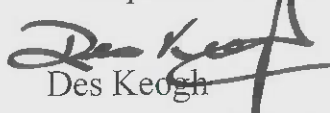
Rev. Declan Barry

Parish Deacon



Alice O'Reilly

Chairperson of the Parish Council



Des Keogh

Sacristan and chair of Parish Financial Committee.

Correspondence please to:

Fr. Paul Churchill & others.