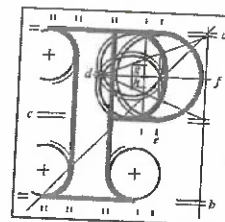


Our Case Number: ABP-314724-22



An
Bord
Pleanála

Iarnrod Eireann
Irish Rail
Connolly Station
Dublin 1
D01 V6V6

Date: 16 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 (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 a prescribed body to make an observation on this case, therefore, a refund of €50 will be made to the credit/debit card used to make the online observation.

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

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An Bord Pleanála
64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

11th January 2023

IE Observations (for submission to ABP) relating to Metrolink Railway Order application:

The National Transport Authority (NTA) / Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII), as part of the Application to An Bord Pleanála for a Railway Order for the Metrolink project, has consulted with Iarnród Éireann as owner of land or premises for the purpose of providing and operating transport services.

Iarnród Éireann is supportive of TII's Metrolink (Estuary to Charlemont via Dublin Airport) Scheme. It is one of a suite of projects under Project Ireland 2040, the National Development Plan and the NTA's Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy which will transform sustainable mobility in the Greater Dublin region. In these policies and strategies, it sits alongside Iarnród Éireann's DART+ Programme, and the BusConnects Programme as the three key public transport elements of the strategies to ensure sustainable transport is central to the future of the region. The three projects are complementary, and service delivery within each are mutually beneficial.

While land required for the purposes of transport services may be included in a Compulsory Purchase Order application, Section 130 of the Transport Act 1944 precludes the compulsory acquisition of such land without the previous consent of the Minister for Transport.

Current indications are that Metrolink will commence construction after DART+ West works are completed, and DART+ Southwest is started and/or completed, and it is on this basis that Iarnród Éireann identified the following issues and observations that will require further resolution and agreement between TII and Iarnród Éireann prior to the commencement of the construction process. Other issues may arise should the sequencing of the projects change.

A number of issues have been raised during ongoing consultations between NTA / TII and Iarnród Éireann. It is expected that these should be fully resolved and mutually agreed prior to the commencement of the construction process. These include:

Glasnevin Station

1. While it is understood that Metrolink construction will be impactful on Iarnród Éireann services and our customers, every effort must be made to minimise those impacts. The prolonged closures of the MGWR and GSWR lines proposed by TII at Glasnevin, of 21 and 5 months respectively, to allow the construction of the Glasnevin Station for Metrolink will cause significant disruption to Iarnród Éireann passenger, freight and maintenance services.

2. Iarnród Éireann is firmly of the view that the prolonged closures proposed are excessive and that, coupled with an appropriate short term track possessions regime, significantly shorter closure periods should be feasible. The disruptive impacts to train operations must be minimised and timed for periods of lower passenger and freight usage on Iarnród Éireann services e.g. summer months.
3. It is currently anticipated that Metrolink construction will commence after DART+ works are completed at Glasnevin. As such, the DART+ network will be electrified at Glasnevin and electric and diesel trains will need to be accommodated through Glasnevin, as will access to the Maynooth Depot to stable and maintain trains during the Metrolink construction process.
4. Station design and access principles will need to be mutually agreed and validated through an appropriate Safety Assurance Process. In addition, Safety Assurance Process requirements must be adhered to and agreed with stakeholders including the Commission for Railway Regulation (CRR).
5. Operations and management of interface areas between Iarnród Éireann and Metrolink post-construction of Metrolink will need to be mutually agreed, along with day-to-day Operations and Maintenance issues (including commercial / expenditure related matters), so that Iarnród Éireann and the Metrolink Operator are clear on their respective interfaces, responsibilities, rights and obligations.
6. Property ownership and access will need to be agreed, understanding what current Iarnród Éireann property Metrolink may subsequently be responsible for.
7. All the above should be clearly captured, agreed and executed in an appropriate Agreement between TII and Iarnród Éireann as a pre-condition to the commencement of any Metrolink construction works.

Tara Street Station

1. Iarnród Éireann requires TII to minimise impacts on Iarnród Éireann's existing services and infrastructure in the vicinity of the Metrolink works at Tara Street.
2. Detailed construction proposals that address the impacts of construction on the operational viaduct and other railway support structures, as well as customer access and egress arrangements to Tara Street Station during construction need to be approved by Iarnród Éireann in advance of construction commencement.
3. Should any interchange connection be proposed between Metrolink and Iarnród Éireann's Dart / commuter rail services, the impacts of such design, construction and / or operations on Iarnród Éireann operations at Tara Street Station will require further discussion and agreement with Iarnród Éireann.
4. Operations and management of interface areas between Iarnród Éireann and Metrolink post-construction of Metrolink will need to be mutually agreed, along with day-to-day Operations and Maintenance issues (including commercial / expenditure related matters), so that Iarnród Éireann and the Metrolink Operator are clear on their respective interfaces, responsibilities, rights and obligations.
5. Property ownership and access will need to be agreed, understanding what Iarnród Éireann property Metrolink may subsequently be responsible for.
6. All the above should be clearly captured, agreed and executed in an appropriate Agreement between TII and Iarnród Éireann as a pre-condition to the commencement of any Metrolink construction works.

Yours sincerely,



Jim Meade

Chief Executive