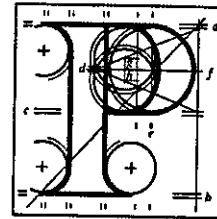


Our Case Number: ABP-314724-22



An
Bord
Pleanála

Jonathan Healy
22 Geraldine Street
Phibsborough
Dublin 7

Date: 05 December 2022

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 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

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

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

AN BORD PLEANÁLA
LDG- 059459-22
ABP- _____
24 NOV 2022
Fee: € 50 Type: cheque
Time: _____ By: post

Dr Jonathan Healy
22 Geraldine St
Phibsborough
Dublin 7
D07 P5F6
jhealy@president.ie

An Bord Pleanála
61-64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

22nd November 2022

**Re: Submission in Relation to Metrolink (Ref: ABP-302010-18)
and Proposed Mater Station**

Dear Sir/Madam,

While supportive of the Metrolink project, I write to express serious concerns about the proposed Mater Station. Specifically I wish to raise a number of issues relating to both construction impacts on local residents as well as design issues that will have adverse architectural, landscape and arboricultural impacts as a consequence of the proposed development at Four Masters' Park, Phibsborough, Dublin 7.

The proposed use of Four Masters' Park for the Mater Station is a highly sensitive and contentious issue for many local residents and indeed those who are familiar with the area. There is a high level of visual amenity attached to this public space and the railed park and garden within it, representing a small green oasis and landmark within the north inner city. In addition to its architectural significance, the park contains soft landscape elements, including mature trees and greenery. The park is an integral part of the setting for the original Mater Hospital building opposite (at Eccles St West) and has historical and architectural importance in the development of the hospital and surrounding area. It is an important landscape ingredient of the Phibsborough neighbourhood, playing a key role in creating the green and tranquil atmosphere that pervades the space, despite the roads and traffic that surround it. It is valued highly by people across the city, including local residents such as myself and my family.

Mater Station is located within an area identified as an 'Architectural Conservation Area' in the current Dublin City Council Development Plan 2016-2022 and the Draft Plan 2022-2028. The Park is zoned Z9: "To preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space and green networks". The railings, gates, some of the statues and plinth walls enclosing the park at the corner of Eccles Street and Berkeley Road, are protected structures which I understand will be stored and reinstated according to the details provided in the Railway Order and accompanying documentation. However, the photomontages illustrating the *ex post* reinstatement of the park show a vastly changed area, with a hard landscaped 'plaza' replacing much of the current soft landscaping, a voluminous (excessively tall and long) station entrance and canopy blocking views of the Mater Hospital from Berkeley Road, and a number of

ancillary buildings which are not in keeping with the architectural surroundings. Such development would be highly deleterious to the visual amenity and architectural heritage of the valuable local streetscape.

I therefore request the following changes to the station design to protect and enhance the visual and recreational amenity of the area:

- Serious consideration should be given to a reduction in the size of the above-ground Mater Station in both height and length, and/or consideration of an alternative location parallel to St Joseph's Church (on the east of Four Masters' Park) with entrances/exits via Eccles St and Berkeley Rd.
- The removal of 50 mature trees from this relatively small area is excessive, unnecessary, at odds with Government climate action and biodiversity policy, and would represent a significant environmental and visual amenity loss to the local area. The Planning Report states that "tree planting will ... be relatively immature and will not enclose the Park or contribute much to the definition of the two adjoining streets for at least a period of approximately 7-10 years". In light of this, proper consideration should be given to protecting existing mature trees where possible, as well as reinstating mature trees that must be felled with mature specimens.
- Local residents, including myself, do not wish to see the Four Masters' Park becoming a hard landscaped 'plaza'. Thus, consideration should be given to the use of more soft landscaping of the reinstated park (including shrubbery, gravel pathways, etc.) to better recreate the feel, design and visual configuration of the current park.
- Ancillary station buildings containing lifts, ventilation shafts, etc., should be redesigned aesthetically, in keeping with the local environment, and with a view to minimising visual intrusion.
- The excessive use of bollards around the station entrance should be avoided, as these detract from the visual amenity and will undoubtedly become damaged. Consideration should be given instead to greener alternatives – such as a row of trees and shrubs – as well as the use of the existing cast-iron railings to form a protective frontage for the station if this is desired.
- All of the historical, protected cast-iron railings and other features of Four Masters' Park should be reinstated.
- Station skylights should be flush with the ground rather than raised, as the current design is visually intrusive.
- There should be ample seating, planting and paths within the reinstated park.

With regard to issues that may arise during the construction phase, a number of matters have not been adequately addressed in the Railway Order, Environmental Impact Assessment, Appropriate Assessment, Planning Report or related documents:

- Parking for local residents is limited on the streets adjacent to the Mater site running off Berkeley Road (DCC Zone 2: "To protect and/or improve the amenities of residential conservation areas"). As residents of Victorian housing without the facility of driveways or garages and therefore reliant on zoned residential disc parking, for which residents pay an annual charge, it would be an egregious impact on the local community should construction workers and Metrolink contractors use these limited parking spaces, especially given the lengthy duration of the project. Consideration should be given to a 'park and ride service' for construction workers, or some alternative to the use of private vehicles to commute to the Mater site.

- Residents like myself are very concerned about access to their homes during the construction phase. It is not clear from the project documentation how residents will be able to continue to access their homes, how traffic from Berkeley Road will be re-directed, the impacts of any redirections, including traffic, noise, pollution, etc. A detailed traffic management system, in consultation with local residents, should be put in place as a condition of proper planning.
- It is not clear from the documentation how construction-related noise and airborne pollution and dirt will be minimised. Air pollution levels are widely documented to be already high in the area. A pollution mitigation plan must be produced and conveyed to residents.
- Hours of operation on this site need to be clearly defined and communicated to residents. To minimise disruption to residents, there should be no work performed at weekends, and on weekdays before 8am or after 6pm in the interests of planning and residential amenity.
- Regarding day-to-day construction-related impacts, including noise, vibration and other impacts from tunnelling, construction, debris removal, etc., it is important that a Metrolionk project liaison officer be appointed who can offer to meet with each resident and business-owner in the Berkeley Road area including the residential streets adjacent to the Mater site, namely Geraldine St, O'Connell Ave, Sarsfield St, Saint Vincent St North and Goldsmith St.

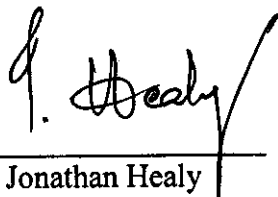
Finally, in terms of **community engagement**, it is vital that greater clarity and local community consultation be prioritised as a project objective. There is a general lack of clarity around the responsibilities of the scheme contractor in terms of communication and consultation with the local community over the course of the project. This also includes the proper demarcation of responsibilities between the Scheme Contractor, TII and Dublin City Council. I also observe a lack of specificity with regard to the scheme contractor's formal obligations to the local community (e.g. monitoring air emissions, dirt, noise and vibration, cleaning, traffic management, reinstatement of the Four Masters' Park, etc.). The restoration and rejuvenation of the area after the development of the Mater Station is vital to the proposal being acceptable to the local community.

- It is recommended that in order to ensure that the local community impacted by the Mater Station remain 'on board' and supportive of the project, a Mater Station Liaison Group be established which would comprise of TII officials, local representatives (Councillors) and representatives of the local Residents' Associations (Berkeley Road and District 7). This Group should be responsible for dealing with day-to-day construction-related issues such as those referred to in this submission, working with the local community to minimise adverse impacts and agreeing solutions to same, as well as provision of additional information to the local community.
- Given the scale of upheaval in the area, and duration of the project, I believe that it should be a condition of planning that TII make provision for a Community Fund for the benefit of the local area (i.e. funding for improvements to the visual amenity and liveability of the local area, traffic calming, greening, etc.). This will be particularly critical in the context of the reinstatement of the Four Masters' Park and the substantial impact to Berkeley Road residents and businesses.

I have a sincere hope that these concerns will be considered by An Bord Pleanála, with appropriate steps taken in terms of conditions imposed as part of the planning permission

process. A cheque is enclosed to cover the €50 fee for making a submission to An Bord Pleanála.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Healy', written over a horizontal line.

Dr Jonathan Healy