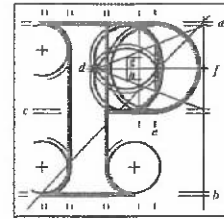


Our Case Number: ABP-314724-22

Planning Authority Reference Number:



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Michael McDowell
Leinster House
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 (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

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
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D01 V902	D01 V902

2023 Metrolink Railway Order Planning Observation

Senator Michael McDowell, Leinster House, Dublin 2

16th of January 2022

Introduction

Metrolink risks damaging a lot of Dublin's transport resources. This submission focuses primarily on the problems of locating the terminus in Charlemont for both residents and commuters. As an advocate for preserving historical structures, I am particularly concerned about how many buildings will be destroyed due to Metrolink's construction.

Problems for Commuters and Local Residents Near Metrolink Stations

- The roads in the Charlemont area are very narrow. If drivers want to drop off or collect commuters from the terminus, it will cause congestion and other traffic-related issues.
- The construction of the interchange at Charlemont will involve tunnelling deep enough to avoid the Grand Canal and the main sewerage line serving Tallaght that runs alongside it. This will continue southwards for 360 metres in order to create a "turnback facility" for an underground station located beside Dartmouth Square.
- Most of the bus routes nearby run through Rathmines, Ranelagh and Terenure. Many commuters will have to walk for at least 10 minutes. This causes significant difficulties for people with disabilities and others with mobility issues. For this reason, transport routes must overlap. The Metrolink Station for St Stephen's Green also presents similar problems.
- The Green Line of the Luas will have to be closed for two years as the Charlemont Station is being constructed. This will no doubt put a strain on Dublin's transport infrastructure. Metrolink will also cause other problems for commuters living on the Green Line in the Ranelagh area.
- College Gate apartments, Townsend Street, Markievicz Leisure Centre, and Ashford House on Tara Street will all have to be knocked down to build Metrolink. Local residents have been left in a state of limbo as a result of these decisions.

Demolition of Historical and Protected Structures

- Building the Metrolink terminus in Charlemont will cause damage to the historic Dartmouth Square residential quarter by the imposition of a deep interchange.
- Under the current plans, the Carlton Cinema dating from 1938, will be demolished. This was a landmark in O'Connell Street for decades until its closure in 1994. Other neoclassical and art deco buildings will also be destroyed.

Suggestions

- South Dublin County, in their Tallaght Town Centre LAP (2020-2026) proposed running a light rail transport facility through the area. Although some feasibility studies have said relying on Bus Connects is the best for Dublin South West, many have noted that the existing public transport infrastructure underserves the area.
- At an Oireachtas Committee earlier this year, Mr Hugh Creegan said one of the reasons for choosing Charlemont as a terminus is that it would allow the Metrolink to be expanded to Dublin South West at a later point. If there were a plan to have a Metrolink Station in Dublin South West now, this would likely cause fewer transport disruptions after Metrolink is built.
- It's not plausible that there is no space to build a Metrolink terminus in either Terenure, Rathfarnham, Templeogue, Knocklyon or Firhouse. There are also no plans to run the metro through Portobello, Rathmines, Harold's Cross or the Cathal Brugha Barracks site, which will be a large residential area in years to come.
- Rethink Metrolink drafted a transport strategy consultation submission. This should be reviewed so adequate changes can be made. Peter Twamley Railway Order application for the MetroLink Project submitted 30 September 2022 also makes important points that should be considered.
- Metrolink will not be built until 2032 at the earliest. However, it's development is likely to be delayed. It won't be operational until 2042, in all likelihood. The budget for Metrolink initially was €4 billion; it has grown to approximately €20 billion within the last five years. The money being spent on Metrolink could be invested in other areas of our transport infrastructure such as light-rail, which would not be as disruptive.

Conclusion

Significant changes are required to the plans for Metrolink. Situating the terminus for the Metrolink in Charlemont will cause significant problems for both commuters and residents. The city's southwest will continue to be underserved even after its construction. Given the cost, disruptions, and time it will take to build, it would be better for the government to focus on developing surface Luas-like tram lines in the medium to long term. This could be developed quicker and will cause minimal disruptions by comparison.