

Sarah Meredith
35 The Court
Dalcassian Downs
Glasnevin
Dublin 11
D11V402

Date: 04 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 an affected landowner, listed on the schedule, 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

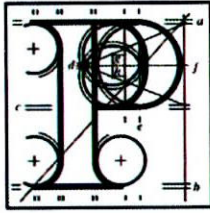
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An
Bord
Pleanála

Observation on a Strategic Infrastructure Development Application

Observer's details

1. Observer's details (person making the observation)

If you are making the observation, write your full name and address.

If you are an agent completing the observation for someone else, write the observer's details:

(a) Observer's name

Sarah Meredith

(b) Observer's postal address

35 The Court, Dalcassian Downs, Glasnevin, Dublin
11, D11V402

Agent's details

2. Agent's details (if applicable)

If you are an agent and are acting for someone else **on this observation**, please **also** write your details below.

If you are not using an agent, please write "Not applicable" below.

(a) Agent's name

Click or tap here to enter text.

(b) Agent's postal address

Click or tap here to enter text.

Postal address for letters

3. During the process to decide the application, we will post information and items to you or to your agent. For this **current application**, who should we write to? (Please tick ✓ one box only)

You (the observer) at the postal address in Part 1

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The agent at the postal address in Part 2

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Details about the proposed development

4. Please provide details about the **current application** you wish to make an observation.

- (a) **An Bord Pleanála case number for the current application (if available)**
(for example: 300000)

314724-22

- (b) **Name or description of proposed development**

Metrolink

- (c) **Location of proposed development**

(for example: 1 Main Street, Baile Fearainn, Co Abhaile)

Prospect Road (Harts Corner), Glasnevin, Dublin 11

Observation details

5. Grounds

Please describe the grounds of your observation (planning reasons and arguments). You can type or write them in the space below. There is **no word limit** as the box expands to fit what you write.

You can also insert photographs or images in this box. (See part 6 – Supporting materials for more information).

OBJECTION TO METROLINK

I am an owner occupier of an apartment at The Court, Dalcassian Downs, Glasnevin. I bought my apartment in 2013 at the age of 38 which was not an easy feat. It took four years of house hunting (beginning in 2009), many disappointments where properties weren't within my budget and of course - the common issues that many house hunters face – worry about securing a mortgage and being able to support myself and on top of that the country was also in a recession. When I 'struck gold' with my apartment in Dalcassian Downs it was a dream come true and I've often thought that had I not been successful at that time, the opportunity to buy my own place may not have come around again. Over the years since buying my place I have had many pinch-me moments in disbelief that I am lucky enough to live here.

The initial plans published by TII for Metrolink in 2018 was for the compulsory purchase and demolition of the apartment block I live in so to make space for a metro station and tunnel. This notification caused enormous shock to me and has had a huge and lasting effect on my mental health as it still feels like I am losing my home where I thought I was safe, secure and solid in the future I had there. Following significant objections to these plans, TII made changes to the design plan and the new proposal put forward was to build a metro station *underneath* my block which supposedly is a reprieve from demolition of the block. But I want to be clear on my opinion of this – it is in some ways worse than demolition – because it brings a new set of issues and together these issues form the basis of my objection.

In the event of a train station being built underneath my apartment block it would mean I would potentially remain living here on a building site watching as the beautiful, peaceful and secure locality and surrounds and apartment I love are ripped up and swapped for radical noise issues, air pollution, massive increases in footfall, and permanent - but as yet unknown - impacts to the foundations of my building. I could also face the heartbreak of having to move out of the block during works – a scenario that has been mentioned by TII. Ultimately, I believe that the area would never be restored to what it once was. It all just makes me feel like my rights as a human being, an Irish citizen and a homeowner are being trampled on and while still incomprehensible to me that strangers seem to have a right to tell me that I no longer have any rights at all. At the moment I feel a bit trapped and feel like the option to sell up and move out to get away from all of this is not open to me, although ultimately selling up is absolutely not something I want to do.

Practical issues that would arise if I decided to sell up;

5. Grounds

1. Property prices have risen since I bought in 2013 and a property fully comparable to mine (same size, features, amenities, location etc) would now be out of my reach financially
2. I am 48 years old now and a mortgage over a shorter term would not be affordable (e.g. if I worked until age 60 that would mean I have 12 years left in my working life)
3. As I would no longer be a first-time buyer, schemes to assist first time buyers would no longer be available to me
4. I no longer have enough savings for a deposit and don't know how I would come up with that amount of money again
5. How would I bear the costs associated with moving such as legal, estate agents, relocation, travel/commuting etc?

Other issues and alternatives:

1. The monies for metrolink and the monies supposedly available as compensation could be spent on better things. An example would be to divert monies that form compensation packages into a reroute away from residential homes instead of taking peoples homes and then paying compensation
2. One hundred percent reassurance should be given to affected home owners that loss of property, parking, green areas, amenities, local access will be accounted for with a like-for-like trade-off **or better**...and under no circumstances traded off leaving affected homeowners with a worse outcome or financial detriment. If this absolute reassurance had been given at the time the metrolink project was made public in 2018 it would have saved an enormous amount of stress, doubt and worry that the current limbo situation creates
3. The notification I received on 22 March 2018 was an enormous shock to me and continues to have a mental health impact. As such I believe that mental health impacts should be mitigated to the highest possible level, through major improvements in commitment to like-for-like outcomes in the event of the loss by home-owners of all the items mentioned above. Communications with affected home owners could also be adjusted to take much greater account of the emotional and lifestyle loss that is resulting from the horrible limbo situation, the loss of personal security in the future, possible loss of equity of their home and the safety and peace that homeowners are supposed to be entitled to according to the Irish constitution
4. Constitutional rights should be enhanced so that such enormous loss faced by someone like myself does not create such limbo, fear and trauma but instead that affected homeowners are guaranteed like-for-like if they have to give up their home, leave their home, or end up with a home that is not the home they bought
5. TII/ An Bord Pleanala/ NTA should go back to the originally selected route through Drumcondra, where properties have already been acquired. I have read that more than €200 million has already been spent on the acquisitions and plans for that route.

If metrolink happens:

1. The home I chose, secured and am paying the mortgage on will be gone for ever

5. Grounds

2. I believe there will be a financial loss to me because no project runs without hiccups and I feel that the likelihood of potential damage to my building being mitigated fully is very slim (i.e. potential damage to the property foundations, the outside surrounds (currently a lovely well-maintained green area, mature trees, parking spaces for each apartment) and safe walking and driving access to and from the apartments to the main road
3. Compensation is unlikely to restore all of those losses and I feel that money is being taken directly out of my pocket to fund this project
4. The savings, time, energies and research I put into selecting the right location and securing the mortgage and chosen apartment will all have gone to waste

Other relevant matters:

There are also some other matters I must mention as they are pertinent to the issues I am experiencing and to the transport issue in Dublin;

A route was previously selected through Drumcondra and €23 million was spent on acquisitions of properties there, plus a further €200 million on plans for that route. A railway order was in place and I must question how can this horrendous waste be justified? Or what is to show for it? What happened to those people whose homes were acquired? Were they treated fairly? Why were those plans not picked up again after halting due to the 2008 recession – given that Ireland has long since come out on the other side of the recession. There is now a very real possibility that another recession is on the cards and indeed there is a never-ending housing crisis that also needs attention. The decision by people in power to abandon that route and identify this new one is hard to stomach and defies logic and I feel it should be remedied or answered to.

Apartments at royal canal:

I have seen in the news in May 2021 that planning permission has been given for a development of over 200 apartments on the banks of the Royal Canal in Phibsboro – which was identified back in 2015 as a key development site. This site which has been **vacant** at least since 2015 and is only a stone's throw from my apartment block could surely have been used in some way for metrolink instead of looking to uproot myself and other people from their homes. I'm just mentioning it because of the irony that while I and other people face the loss of their homes to make way for metrolink, new homes are planned for that vacant site and am wondering if this site might be any better as a possible location for the station that is proposed as the 'Glasnevin' station – instead of building apartments there.

Unique features:

Lastly, my home has several unique features and I felt very secure in my future here. Over the years that I've lived here I've often had a sense of disbelief that I had achieved my dream home and a stable life and could support myself relatively well. Some of the reasons for my apartment's value and uniqueness are; the lovely grounds, the great location, the proximity to town and amenities, to Croke Park, Phoenix Park and a number of Colleges, the M50 and the Airport (and coincidentally to my place of work), the security of living on a second floor, the excellent

5. Grounds

management company, reasonable management fees, the fact that it wasn't a shoddy build in the boom years and the fact that it has two bedrooms – which is something I wanted as a safety net in case I ever felt I needed to let out a room for some extra income. In short, my home is highly valuable to me on a personal level as well as being a sound investment for a safe and secure future and I cannot imagine that the option will ever be available to me to buy such a home again.

I want my home and the surrounds: - the building and its foundations, the space and trees outside, the lovely locality, nearby shops and amenities not to be touched or impacted by metrolink and to remain living here peacefully and undisturbed. I do not want to be left in a precarious living situation; on a building site, in a hostel, a hotel, a dorm or a renting situation again; for god knows where and how long. There is trauma in having no knowledge of what type of living situation and future I could be facing and I simply want peace of mind and a home in all ways equal to what I have now.

I only want to be treated fairly and I want it to be recognized that people who have invested themselves, their working lives and their money into securing and paying for their own home cannot be left at the loss of their homes as they know them because of metrolink.

The thought of being pushed backwards on the property ladder to a point where the opportunity to buy the apartment of my dreams will never come up again is infuriating and frightening beyond words. Therefore I want to make it abundantly clear to you that I am vehemently opposed to the construction of metrolink/a metrolink station underneath or so near my home that it will create all of the issues that I've mentioned. Neither TII, the NTA, An Bord Pleanala or any other public bodies helped me to buy my home and I struggle to fathom that these or any other group could have the right to destroy or erase it.

One last comment I wish to include relates to the fee of €50 for submitting this observation. I cannot understand how it is even legal for there to be a fee for the right of an Irish citizen to have give their opinion and voice to a construction project that directly affects their home, their mental health, their finances and every aspect of their daily life. I was in disbelief when I phoned An Bord Pleanala and was told that the €50 goes towards the project because the cost of the project is huge. What sort of a screwed-up system is this that I an objector am being asked to give €50 for the privilege of having an opinion on the enormous monster that metrolink represents to me? I was advised that if I am listed on a schedule I'll be refunded the money, however I would naturally expect that I am on it. I expect to be refunded this money and furthermore my view is that this fee should be abolished.

Supporting materials

6. If you wish, you can include supporting materials with your observation.

Supporting materials include:

- photographs,
- plans,
- surveys,
- drawings,
- digital videos or DVDs,
- technical guidance, or
- other supporting materials.

You can insert photographs and similar items in your observation details: grounds (part 5 of this form).

If your supporting materials are physical objects, you must send them together with your observation by post or deliver it in person to our office. You cannot use the online uploader facility.

Fee

7. You **must** make sure that the correct fee is included with your observation.

Observers (except prescribed bodies)

- strategic infrastructure observation is €50.
- there is no fee for an oral hearing request

Oral hearing request

8. If you wish to request the Board to hold an oral hearing, please tick the "Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing" box below.

You can find information on how to make this request on [our website](#) or by contacting us.

If you do not wish to request an oral hearing, please tick the "No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing" box.

Yes, I wish to request an oral hearing

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No, I do not wish to request an oral hearing

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Final steps before you send us your observations

9. If you are sending us your observation using **the online uploader facility**, remember to save this document as a Microsoft word or PDF and title it with:

- the case number and your name, or
- the name and location of the development and your name.

This also applies to prescribed bodies sending an observation by email.

If you are sending your observation to us by post or delivering in person, remember to print off all the pages of this document and send it to us.

For Office Use Only

| FEM – Received | | SIDS – Processed | |
|-----------------------|--|-------------------------|--|
| Initials | | Initials | |
| Date | | Date | |

Notes