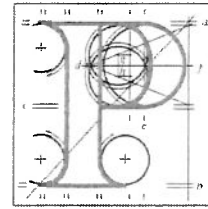


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Cllr Cathal Haughey
Fingal County Council
Main Street
Swords

Date: 05 November 2024

Re: DART + Coastal North Railway Order 2024 - Northern Line between Dublin City Centre and Drogheda including the Howth Branch
Dublin City Centre and Drogheda, located in counties Dublin, Meath and Louth

Dear Sir / Madam,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent letter in relation to the above mentioned case. The contents of your letter have been noted. Please accept this letter as a receipt for the fee of €50 that you have paid.

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 relation to the matter please contact the undersigned officer of the Board at laps@pleanala.ie

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

Aisling Reilly
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-8737131

RA03

Teil	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 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

Submission on NA29N.3201
Councillor Cathal Haughey
Fingal County Council
Main Street
Swords
Co. Dublin

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am making a submission on the DART+ Coastal North Railway Order, Bord Pleanála Case Reference: NA29N.3201.

In general, I am supportive of the aspects of the Railway Order which relate to delivering the infrastructure which will extend the DART further north, to Drogheda. However, this Railway Order is part of the overall DART+ Coastal North Project which has stated the possibility of the loss of the direct DART to the Dublin City from Howth, Sutton and Bayside. This direct service would be replaced by a shuttle service to Howth Junction-Donaghmede. I am strongly against this aspect of the project.

I support the infrastructure that will extend the DART to Drogheda but I propose that a condition should be placed on this planning permission if granted, which would mean the direct service to Dublin City from Howth, Sutton and Bayside is retained. I also request that an oral hearing take place on this matter.

The Howth peninsula is an area that is naturally cut-off from the rest of Dublin geographically. It is important that it retains its current level of public transport and connectivity to other parts of Dublin and beyond. Further to this, the population of the peninsula is set to increase due to new housing developments.

Losing the direct line is a downgrade of the current public transport service. There are other knock-on effects to losing the direct train which I will outline.

Difficulty for passengers to board a Southbound DART at Howth Junction-Donaghmede

DART+ Coastal North would lead to DARTs beginning in Drogheda. Every passenger who gets on a DART from Howth, Sutton and Bayside, would have to disembark the train at Howth Junction-Donaghmede, and then try to get on a Southbound train, which will be packed as it will be starting from Drogheda. I believe there will be issues with capacity at Howth Junction-Donaghmede.

Safety and accessibility issues at Howth Junction

There are long-standing problems with accessibility and safety at Howth Junction-Donaghmede. There are infrastructure upgrades to Howth Junction-Donaghmede as part of this plan, which are welcomed. However, I do not believe safety and accessibility issues have been adequately addressed. Under this plan Howth Junction-Donaghmede would see a significant increase in passengers using the Station, with many of these passengers having mobility issues and being wheelchair and pram users.

Improvements can be made to Howth Junction-Donaghmede without Howth, Sutton and Bayside losing the Direct service.

Increased wait times at level crossings

There are four level crossings along the Howth Branch, Baldoyle Road level crossing, Sutton level crossing, Lauders Lane and Howth Lodge. The wait-times at these level crossings are already an inconvenience for locals and visitors to this area. Under the proposals, the wait-times at these level crossings would be significantly increased. Some of them could be closed for a combined 30+ minutes every hour, meaning the barriers would be closed for longer than they are open. I believe these plans negatively impact train users in this area, but the increased wait-times at level crossings mean they also impact car users, bus users and those cycling and walking. Car Traffic in this area is already notoriously chronic. Removing the direct DART reduces the public transport service in the area, leading more people to use their cars. Adding more cars and increasing the wait-times at level crossings will have a significant impact on traffic in the area. I am concerned about accessibility for emergency services if these changes were made.

Impact on Tourism and Businesses

The Howth peninsula is one of the biggest tourist attractions in County Dublin. This is vital to the businesses in Howth and the surrounding areas. It is reasonable to argue that tourists in Dublin City are less likely to travel to Howth if it involves a 2-legged train journey rather than a direct train. Less visitors to Howth will negatively impact the local economy. Trains to Howth are often at maximum capacity on weekends, particularly in the Summer. If this plan goes ahead, all of these passengers would have to disembark at Howth Junction-Donaghmede.

As stated, I support the infrastructure which would extend the DART to Drogheda. However, I have outlined a number of reasons why the direct service should be retained for Howth, Sutton and Bayside. I argue that a condition should be placed on this planning permission that would require Irish Rail to continue offering a direct service from these stations.

Kind regards,

Councillor Cathal Haughey