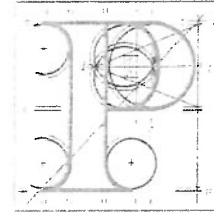


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Elaine Hassett and Joshua Hilliard
4 Dunbo West
Howth
Co. Donegal

Date: 31 October 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 and oral hearing request relation to the above mentioned case. The contents of your letter have been noted.

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

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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
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D01 V902	D01 V902

Observations on Strategic Infrastructure Development Application 320164

(DART + Coastal North)

Under the proposed DART+ Coastal North project the loss of direct DART services to and from Howth/Sutton/Bayside to Dublin city centre and further south will have a detrimental impact on thousands of commuters every day, including those working in other parts of the city and students attending colleges and schools.

As we have seen recently with the shambolic introduction of a new DART timetable which prioritised the north – south rail line over other commuter lines, including the Howth/Sutton/Bayside line, giving greater importance to certain locations over others will only result in areas like Howth/Sutton/Bayside becoming a backwater in terms of public transport.

Major housing projects in the Howth, Sutton, Bayside and Baldoyle areas, such as the apartments at the Techrete site, the Baily Court Hotel development, the Santa Sabina development in Sutton and proposals for Howth Castle lands will only add to the demand on an already overstretched and under-resourced rail link when thousands more commuters will seek to use such a service. Some of these developments have used the regular direct DART service has a selling point for prospective buyers / investors.

With the population of Howth/Sutton/Bayside growing apace due to these developments coupled with the high volume of tourists who visit Howth annually – 750,000 visitors/tourists use/visit the area, according to Fingal County Council – it would be more logical to preserve the current direct DART service rather than curtail it.

Any proposed reduction in rail services on the Howth line will only add to the pressure on the local road network. In the last 18 months we have seen increased delays due to the above mentioned building works in the area. When these housing developments are occupied the lack of capacity under the DART+ Coastal North will only force commuters into their cars and increase traffic congestion at choke points such as Sutton Cross, Baldoyle Road and Sutton level crossings.

The end result will be that road traffic in these areas will only worsen, especially during the summer months and at weekends all year round, therefore failing in one of the proposal's goals i.e., to encourage people to use public transport more.

We have serious concerns about the safety and accessibility of the Howth Junction/Donaghmede DART station which is the proposed location for commuters to switch to and from the north – south rail line and onto a shuttle service to Howth.

Anti-social behaviour at this DART station persists because Irish Rail has repeatedly failed to tackle this issue with scant security infrastructure or personnel on duty at this station to keep commuters safe.

The proposed shuttle DART service from Howth Junction will also prove difficult for people with disabilities, limited mobility, wheelchair users and those with young children in buggies to navigate a badly designed, unsafe train station where more often than not the lifts are out of order.

The proposed reduction in direct DART services to and from Howth will have a detrimental effect on local businesses in the Howth/Sutton/Balydoyle/Bayside areas which depend on a reliable and easily navigable transport link to bring tourists to the area. Another side effect of curtailing this valuable transport connection would be increased delays to deliveries and journey times for these businesses' customers and staff.

Based on the above, we request that An Bord Pleanála holds an oral hearing into the proposed DART+ Coastal North project to allow people who will be directly affected by these planned changes to voice their concerns and give a more rounded picture of the impact such proposals would have on their daily lives.

Elaine Hassett and Joshua Hilliard

4 Dunbo West,
Howth,
Dublin 13