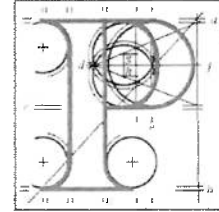


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Emily Davies
25 Thormanby Hill
Howth

Date: 17 September 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

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D01 V902	D01 V902

Emily Davies
25 Thormanby Hill,
Howth, Co. Dublin
16.09.2024

To whom it may concern:

I am writing to object to and share the below observations for the proposed removal of the direct DART services from Howth to Dublin City Centre. This change will have significant negative impacts on our community for several reasons:

1. **Loss of Direct DART Services** The direct DART services from Howth, Sutton, and Bayside to the city centre and beyond are vital to keeping our communities connected. DART services have been running to Bayside, Sutton, and Howth for 40 years, and a direct train service has been running to Howth Station since 1847. Removing these services will disrupt the established and essential connectivity that our residents rely on daily.
2. **Level Crossings** A shuttle DART service operating every 10 minutes in each direction would cause the level crossings to be closed for up to 30 minutes of every hour. For example, the crossing at Sutton Station could be closed for more than 32 minutes of every hour, and the Baldoyle Road crossing could be closed for more than 30 minutes of every hour in a worst-case scenario (Appendix A6.1 Dart+ Coastal North Level Crossing Assessment, page 11).
3. **Increased Traffic** The traffic assessment submitted by Irish Rail as part of their application shows that longer closures of the level crossings will result in more traffic congestion. The traffic study states that traffic queues on Baldoyle Road could be up to 59% longer than they currently are (Appendix A6.1 Dart+ Coastal North Level Crossing Assessment, page 29). This has the potential to impact traffic on the wider road network, including buses and cars that aren't passing through the level crossings.
4. **Sustainable Travel** It is National Policy to encourage people to use sustainable transport instead of their cars. However, 77% of people who took part in the 2nd public consultation said they would not be encouraged to use the DART over their cars (Appendix A3.2 PC2 Findings Report, page 21). Furthermore, Irish Rail's 2nd public consultation report found that: "The loss of direct services to Dublin City Centre was regularly cited in submissions as grounds for existing DART users from the Howth Peninsula to revert from DART usage to private car usage" (Appendix A3.2 PC2 Findings Report, page 33). Removing direct DART services does not align with our national transport and climate policy.
5. **Accessibility** A shuttle DART service will require people to transfer DARTs at Howth Junction Station if they want to continue into the City Centre. This will cause difficulties for people with disabilities, limited mobility, and wheelchair users where they need to use the lifts in

Recipient name

16.09.2024

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the station. In 2023, the Irish Independent reported that lifts at Irish Rail stations were marked out of service over 800 times in just 18 months. It can take days, and even weeks for lifts to be repaired.

6. **Local Businesses** The loss of direct DART services will have significant negative impacts on local businesses in Baldoyle, Sutton, and Howth. Businesses will have to grapple with delays to their deliveries and longer journey times for staff and customers.
7. **Schools on the Howth Peninsula** Sutton Park School, Santa Sabina Sec School, St Fintan's Primary School, Howth Primary School, Burrow School all have catchment areas off the peninsula. Due to already inadequate public transport parents must drop their children to these schools by traversing Sutton Cross. The traffic chaos already exists at school start and finish times. The chaos will be unimaginable when the DART crossing are closed twice as often
8. **Inaccurate surveys** At a meeting at the Marine Hotel on Mon 2nd Sept about the Irish Rail project for DART & Coastal North it was ascertained that at a previous meeting the study of commuter activity had not taken into account the apartments to be built at the Techcrete site in Howth and The Baily Court site in Howth and the development at the entrance to Howth Castle which together could add 2000 + people to the population which Howth Station serves. Proposed shuttle trains will not be able to accommodate the population of commuters wishing to travel when developments are completed next year as well as the thousands of tourists arriving and departing on trains. It was also mentioned that the traffic studies didn't include a figure for tourists coming to Howth every year which was greater than 1m people.

Oral Hearing I would request An Bord Pleanála hold an Oral Hearing for the DART+ planning application. An Oral Hearing will allow further discussion about the project and the negative impacts these changes will have.

On a personal note it would be hugely disappointing for the direct DART to Howth to be stopped as I have two young daughters, one of whom has a disability, who I would be concerned for regarding their safety if it became necessary to have to change trains at an unsecured station in order to travel to Dublin city centre.

In conclusion, the removal of direct DART services from Howth to Dublin City Centre will have far-reaching negative consequences for our community, including increased traffic congestion, reduced accessibility, and negative impacts on local businesses. I strongly urge you to reconsider this proposal and maintain the direct DART services that are so vital to our community.

Yours sincerely,

Emily Davies