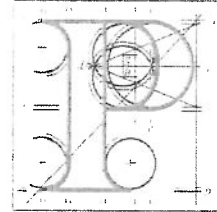


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Michael and Pamela Hilliard
Dunbo Lodge
4B Dunbo Hill
Howth
Dublin 13
D13RC99

Date: 30 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 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

We wish to strongly object to Irish Rail's DART + Coastal North plan.

The direct DART service from Howth, Sutton and Bayside is being sacrificed to be replaced by a shuttle service to Howth Junction. There is no guarantee that any direct city centre link will be retained. When it's gone it's gone!

At a time when population growth in our area is booming a decision has been taken to cut off our vital direct rail service.

With Howth Junction as the 'hub' we believe we face into an impossible situation. It is notorious as a trouble spot for passenger safety and security. Nothing has happened over the past 30 years to lead us to believe this will improve under the proposed plan.

A shuttle DART service will require people to transfer DARTs at Howth Junction Station if they want to continue into the City Centre.

Howth Junction is on the edge of an industrial estate – it is bleak, cold and, at night, isolated, dark and frightening. Not alone are there issues of safety, but compounding this for the elderly, parents with young children and buggies, and wheelchair users is the fact that the lift is regularly out of service.

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. Hardly a figure to engender trust in the future.

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.

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 5pc longer than they currently are. This has the potential to impact traffic on the wider road network including buses and cars that aren't passing through the level crossings.

There is, however, an alternative.

Irish Rail have recently announced plans to provide four tracks between Connolly Station and Malahide Station to facilitate the separation of commuter and intercity services. These plans provide the viable alternative to removing direct services from Howth, Sutton and Bayside.

Increasing infrastructure capacity by adding new lines should be the priority, not the reduction of existing services.

**Michael and Pamela Hilliard
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