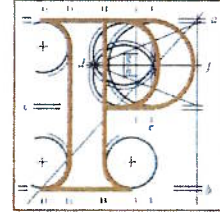


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Michelle McGrath & Colum Crowley
196 Sutton Park
Sutton
Dublin 13

Date: 24 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

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Glaó Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
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64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
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D01 V902	D01 V902

Irish Rail DART+ Coastal North Submission

Michelle McGrath & Colum Crowley

196 Sutton Park

Sutton

Dublin 13.

Oppose Irish Rail's plan to discontinue direct DART service from Howth

As part of the DART+ Coastal North project to extend DART services to Drogheda, Irish Rail plan to discontinue the current direct DART service from Howth, Sutton and Bayside stations to Dublin city centre, and introduce a shuttle DART service, i.e., passengers on a DART from Howth, Sutton and Bayside stations travelling to the city centre will have to transfer to another DART at Howth Junction station to continue their journey.

The extension of DART services to Drogheda should not impact the current direct DART service from Howth to the city centre, this direct DART service must be retained. We, Michelle McGrath and Colum Crowley, strongly object to Irish Rail's proposal to discontinue this service for the following 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 these communities.

DART services have been running directly to Bayside, Sutton and Howth for over 40 years, and a direct train service has been running to Howth station since 1847.

The loss of the direct DART service would result in a very significant deterioration to the public transport service in these areas.

It would be a massive blow to the communities, would have an extremely negative impact on the day to day lives of individuals living in these communities who use the DART.

2. Shuttle DART service

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 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.

The requirement to transfer to another DART at Howth Junction will increase journey times for people travelling from Howth, Sutton and Bayside, and there will be uncertainty around final destination arrival time. This will have a huge negative impact, especially on people currently travelling daily by DART from these stations to get to work or school. Such increased journey time and uncertainty around arrival times will discourage people from using the DART, and will encourage them to drive their cars instead.

3. Sustainable travel

It is National Policy to encourage people to use sustainable transport instead of their cars.

77% of people who took part in the 2nd DART+ Coastal North 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 therefore does not align with our national transport and climate policy.

4. Increased traffic

Such discouragement to use the DART, resulting in more people using their cars, will increase traffic.

Also, 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 negatively impact traffic on the wider road network, including buses and ambulances that are passing through the level crossings.

5. 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.

The requirement to transfer DARTs at Howth Junction station will also discourage the many tourists who currently visit Howth daily from going there, resulting in lost revenue for businesses in the area.