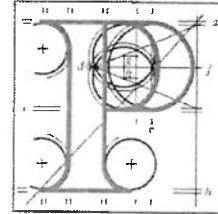


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Residents of Warrenhouse Road
c/o Karen and Brian Meenan
3 Warrenhouse Road
Baldoyle
Dublin 13
D13 E3C4

Date: 10 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 submission in relation to the above mentioned proposed railway order and will take it into consideration in its determination of the matter. Please accept this letter as a receipt for the fee of €50 that you have paid.

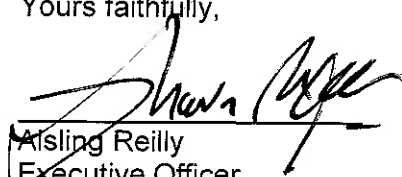
The Board will revert to you in due course with regard to the matter.

Please be advised that copies of all submissions / observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of the relevant County Councils and at the offices of An Bord Pleanála when they have been processed by the Board.

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 the meantime 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

RA05

Tel	Tel	(01) 858 8100
Glaos 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

5th September 2024

To whom it may concern:

We, the residents of Warrenhouse Road, Baldoyle in Dublin 13, object to the plans to remove the direct DART service from Howth, Sutton and Bayside on the following grounds:

1. 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. **As residents of Warrenhouse Road, the road closure for 30 minutes out of every hour is absolutely unacceptable. We have personal experience of Ambulances, Fire Brigades and Garda cars being stuck at the gates which have directly been the cause for increased stress and panic on the other side of the gates waiting for the train to cross to avail of emergency services.**

2. Road Safety – Dangerous driving on main road and regular breaking of Pedestrian Lights

When the boom gates are down, drivers use Warrenhouse Road as a dual lane highway. So cars as far back as Turnberry Estate travel down this main road on the 'wrong side of the road' to access Moyclare Estate or worse to access Burrowfield Road. While these gates are going down drivers get so full of road rage they regularly break the Pedestrian Lights. Our children cross the road here to get to the shop. **Please protect our children – a dreadful accident which resulted in the death of a child occurred here several years ago – please don't allow another child to die in this way.**

3. Motorbikes and cars increase speed to outrun the gates

On Warrenhouse Road we witness several times a day cars and especially motorcycles speeding along this main road to 'dodge the gates'. As soon as the flashing lights are switched on and the gates start to lower, cars and especially motorbikes increase their speed on Warrenhouse Road to get to the other side. There is a pedestrian crossing with traffic lights just before the gates – cars and motorbikes regularly crash these lights when the gates lights are flashing.

4. Access to schools/child safety

Children (especially teenagers) who are stuck at the gates regularly climb over to gain access to the other side. If they currently do this with a wait of 18 minutes every hour, how much worse is this situation going to be when the gates are down for a full 30 minutes every hour. This is a train crash waiting to happen. There are secondary schools on both sides of the tracks – children who don't want to be late regularly 'jump' the gates. Please don't let this proposed plan be the death of one more of our children on this main road.

5. Vehicles idling at boom gates increase CO2 emissions – this wastes fuel and money

A report by UCC found that two minutes of idling uses the same amount of fuel as 1.6km of driving. Engine idling wastes fuel and money. If drivers avoided idling for just 3 minutes every day of the year, CO2 emissions would be reduced by 1.4 million tonnes annually – the equivalent of taking 320,000 cars off the road. The residents of Baldoyle have conducted a study of the boom gates on the Baldoyle Road and can confirm that **NOT ONE SINGLE VEHICLE** switches off the engine while waiting for the gates to lift. So traffic idling on both sides of the gates is wasting time, money, fuel and causing increased CO2 emissions already sitting in traffic for 18 minutes out of every hour. **Why is this plan to increase the waiting time on both sides of the gates to 30 minutes out of every hour allowed to be put forward when this will affect the health and welfare of our entire community with increased air pollution?**

UCC Study: benefits of switching off the engine

6. Wheelchair users and others living in Warrenhouse Road

Warrenhouse Road is the residential home for many of the vulnerable members of our Baldoyle Community. L'Arche has three care homes on Warrenhouse Road <https://larche.ie/dublin/> and St Michael's House has two adult residential care homes on Warrenhouse Road. St Patrick's Nursing home is just around the corner from Warrenhouse Road.

These homes were especially chosen because they are bungalows which are imperative for wheelchair users and for their access to the main road. Why are these vulnerable residents who have settled in Warrenhouse Road for very good logistical reasons being subjected to this reckless proposed plan to shuttle trains to/from Howth/Howth Junction holding up these main roads. These vulnerable people in L'Arche, St Michael's House and St Patrick's Nursing Home regularly require an ambulance service – what will happen to them if the ambulance is caught at the wrong side of the gate for 30 minutes out of every hour? Who will take responsibility when somebody in Baldoyle dies because a shuttle service has taken priority over everything else in our village?

7. Impact on all other forms of transport

Warrenhouse Road and Strand Road are the two main arteries for Portmarnock, Malahide and Baldoyle. Warrenhouse Road in particular is the main bus route from the city centre to Malahide. This proposed shuttle service between Howth and Howth Junction will cause gridlock on both these roads throughout the day and night across these main arteries and residential roads. People travelling to school, college and work in buses are also adversely affected by these 30 minute road closures every hour. **Essentially the shuttle service is being prioritised over all a variety of transport from taxis, buses, cyclists and pedestrians. Why are you proposing this when so many people are being adversely affected?**

8. Loss of direct DART services

The direct DART services from Howth, Sutton and Bayside to the city centre and beyond are vital to keep 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.

We have conducted a survey in Warrenhouse Road and have found that residents who currently use the DART service to attend school, college or work every day, will, particularly in the case of our younger and older residents, be nervous waiting for a connecting train in Howth Junction/Donaghmede where there has been a high level of crime in recent years.

9. Increased traffic and air pollution

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. This has the potential to impact traffic on the wider road network including buses and cars that aren't passing through the level crossings.

These road closures affect buses (this is a main bus corridor), private cars, taxis, mini-vans, delivery trucks, cyclists and pedestrians. The residents of Warrenhouse Road have conducted a survey and can report that motor vehicles on both sides of the tracks don't turn off their engines while waiting for the gates to lift. A bus, car, taxi or motorcycle idling in traffic is causing more air pollution than vehicles traveling along any other main road.

Why must we wait for a shuttle train which closes our main road for 30 minutes every hour while this adversely affects the air quality of everyone living in Baldoyle?

10. 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 public consultation said they would not be encouraged to use the DART over their cars. 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."

Removing direct DART services does not align with our national transport and climate policy.

11. Accessibility

A shuttle DART service will require us to transfer DARTs at Howth Junction Station if we want to continue into the City Centre for work or study. This will cause difficulties for residents with disabilities, limited mobility, and wheelchair users where we 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. **Why should the people of Baldoyle who have one of the highest reported users of wheelchairs in Dublin tolerate this?**

12. Local businesses

The loss of direct DART services will have significant negative impacts on local business in Baldoyle, Sutton and Howth. Businesses will have to grapple with delays to their deliveries and longer journey times for staff and customers. **Already there is a reported loss of business by the local barber and hairdresser on this road with clients being stuck on the wrong side of the gates being late for their hair appointments.** A 30 minute wait every hour while the shuttle train discommodates everyone will most certainly result in those clients moving their business elsewhere. Again, why should we tolerate this?

13. Length of time waiting at gates currently exceeds other countries wait time 4:1

In Baldoyle, drivers can expect to wait a minimum of two minutes for the train to cross, longer if there are two trains crossing in both directions, the residents of Warrenhouse Road have recorded wait times in excess of 10 minutes which seriously affects traffic in both directions. **In other countries, like Japan and the USA, the gates lift 30 seconds after every train crosses. Why does it take four times longer in Ireland?** The wait time of 18 minutes in every hour is already an extraordinary inconvenience for residents of Baldoyle, why are there plans to increase this to 30 minutes out of every hour?

14. Oral Hearing

We request that An Bord Pleanála calls an oral hearing for this DART+ planning application so you can hear directly from the people who live in Warrenhouse Road, Baldoyle, and others who are affected by this change.

We are available to be contacted at any time to discuss this matter:

karen.p.meenan@gmail.com is the contact email for all correspondence

Karen and Brian Meenan, 3 Warrenhouse Road, Baldoyle, Dublin 13 D13 E3C4
Brian Graham, 5 Warrenhouse Road
Louise and Martin Doyle, 6 Warrenhouse Road
Sabrina and Bryan McMahon, 7 Warrenhouse Road
Jennifer Duffy, Community Leader, L'Arche, 8 Warrenhouse Road
Ann and Paul Murphy, 9 Warrenhouse Road
Leonie and Gerry O'Hanlon, 11 Warrenhouse Road
Caroline and Frank O'Dea, 13 Warrenhouse Road
Loreta and Bernard Cosgrave, 15 Warrenhouse Road
Ann and Brian Cosgrave, 15 Warrenhouse Road
Aine and David Dorran, 17 Warrenhouse Road
Louise Gallagher and Mark Ryan, 19 Warrenhouse Road
Carol and Michael Kelly, 22 Warrenhouse Road
Chris Denver, 23 Warrenhouse Road
Karl Swan, 24 Warrenhouse Road
Bernie Bourke, 35 Warrenhouse Road
Amanda and Aidan McGuinness, 6 Burrowfield Road
Nicola and Paddy Coogan, 7 Burrowfield Road
Jill Cooke, 16 Burrowfield Road
Lloyd Mutandwa, Care Manager, St Patrick's Nursing Home, Dublin Road, Baldoyle