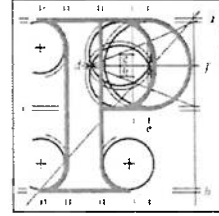


**Our Case Number:** ABP-320164-24



**An  
Bord  
Pleanála**

Órla Horn & Chris Horn  
Glentora,  
Balkill Road  
Howth  
Co. Dublin  
D13 FR94

**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 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](http://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](mailto: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
Glaio Áitiúil	LoCall	1800 275 175
Facs	Fax	(01) 872 2684
Láithreán Gréasáin	Website	<a href="http://www.pleanala.ie">www.pleanala.ie</a>
Ríomhphost	Email	<a href="mailto:bord@pleanala.ie">bord@pleanala.ie</a>

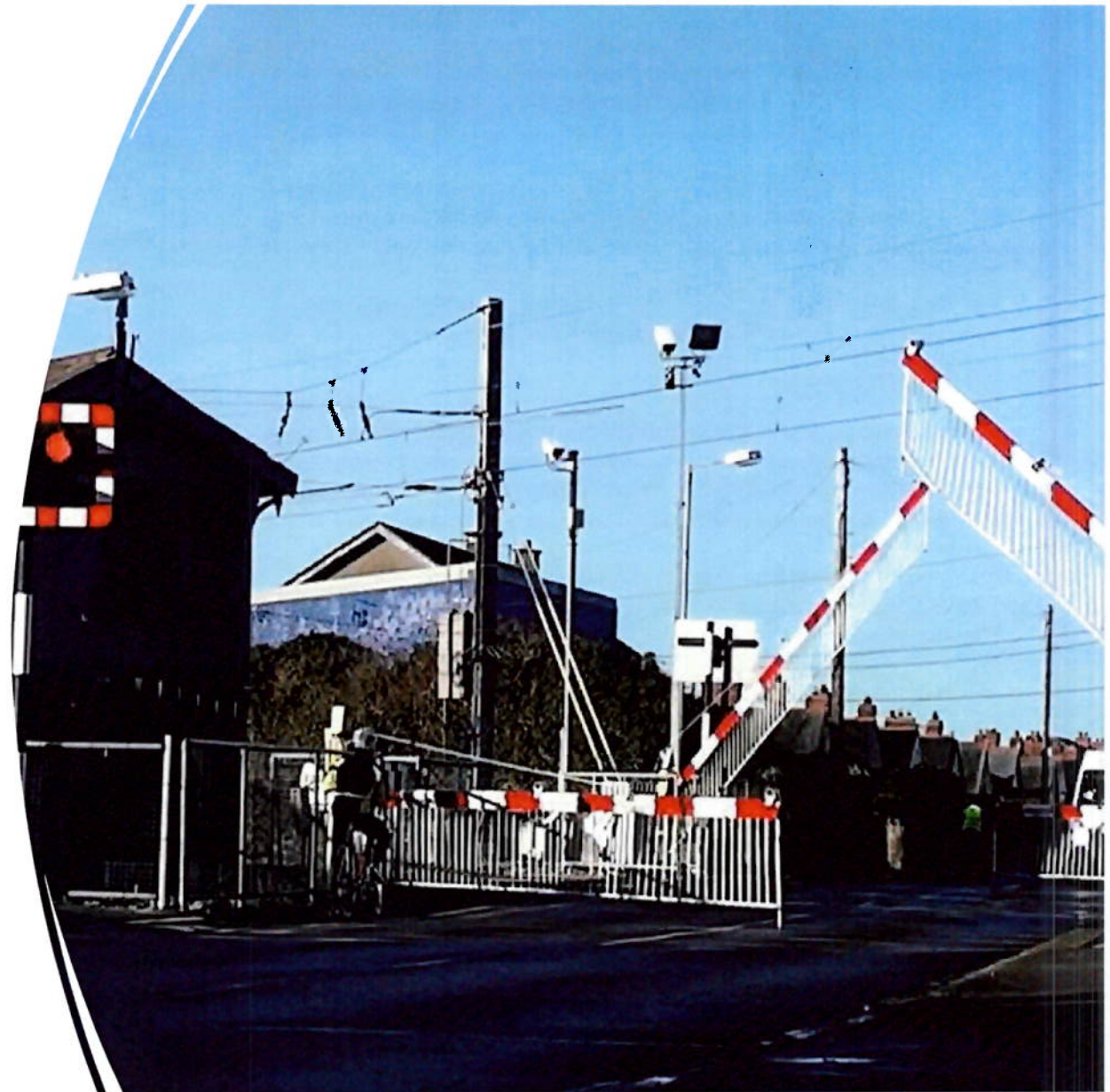
64 Sráid Maoilbhríde	64 Marlborough Street
Baile Átha Cliath 1	Dublin 1
D01 V902	D01 V902

# Why the Proposed DART+ Coastal North Changes are Bad for Dublin

---

An Bord Pleanála Observation Submission by  
Órla & Chris Horn  
Glentora, Balkill Road, Howth, D13 FR94

9 Sept, 2024



### Howth Tourism – A boost to Dublin Tourism – 30 Minute Direct DART ride

- **6.3 million tourists visited Ireland in 2023** spending €7.3bn – At least 20% spent a few days in Dublin with many of those visitors choosing to spend a day in Howth accessible by DART
- **Prince William and Princess Kate** are examples of high value visitors who chose to visit Howth on their short stay
- **Howth** offers a wonderful array of things to do within a quick hop from Dublin City – linking the city to its beautiful NorthEast coastline
- **Direct DART Services have been running to Bayside, Sutton & Howth for 40 years, and a direct train service to Howth since 1847.**
- This DIRECT DART connection – with a known 30 minute ride – supports:
  - Pubs
  - Restaurants
  - Local Guided Tours
  - Boat Trips to Ireland’s Eye and across the bay to Dun Laoghaire
  - Market Crafts & Homemade Goods
  - Irish Music & Culture
  - Museums
  - Fish Sales on the Pier
  - Seal Watching
  - Bird Watching
  - Repeat visits and word of mouth recommendations to others
  - Golf
  - Rhododendron Gardens / Howth Dolmen Aideen’s Grave
- **Howth Castle & Deer Park Hotel & Golf Course** Development to Ashford Castle standards – attracting more high-end destination tourism with easy access to the DART

### **HOWTH WILL BE DISCONNECTED FROM ITS CITY IF THIS CHANGE IS ALLOWED TO GO AHEAD**

- **Howth businesses will suffer greatly causing commercial life to be jeopardised**
- **Howth tourists will be put off by disjointed, unreliable and an unsafe connection from Dublin City**
- **Howth goods deliveries will be delayed – both buying and selling**

### Howth Residents – Impact on Local Community and on Dublin City

- **New Apartments underway** – Techrete site x 512, Baily Hotel Site x 177
    - Planning for this huge over-development of Howth was approved based on existing access to Public transport - DIRECT DART
- HOWTH IS ALREADY GOING TO STRUGGLE HUGELY TO COPE WITH THIS IMMEDIATE GROWTH IN RESIDENTS WHO WILL RELY ON PUBLIC TRANSPORT TO GET ON/OFF THE PENINSULA**
- Many **residents working in Dublin IFSC and Dublin Grand Canal Docks** chose to live here due to reliability/frequency of DIRECT DART service from Howth – serving Sutton and Bayside as well
    - Employees will suffer serious delays at Howth Junction trying to get seats on packed trains coming in from Balbriggan++
    - They will arrive late to work which will cause major problems to these multi-national businesses where Return To Work ‘RTO’ post-COVID is now a minimum of 3 days per week (transitioning to 4 days in due course).

**These Multi-National employers provide high-paying professional jobs which support the local community – a huge proportion of staff live near a DIRECT DART line – with a good number in the Bayside, Sutton, Howth area. This will adversely impact Dublin’s International business reputation.**

### Sustainable Travel

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

77% of people who took part in the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

## Our Vulnerable in Society – Impact on Seniors, Children, People with Disabilities

### DART Shuttle Accessibility Impact:

- Instead of a secure seat direct to town, our vulnerable residents/visitors will have to disembark at Howth Junction:
  - Climb up/down steep stairs when the lift is broken (which it will be – often). Irish Independent 2023 report found that lifts at Irish Rail stations were out of service over 800 times in 18 months due to vandals, rough sleepers and chewing gum. It can take days, and even weeks for lifts to be repaired. People have got trapped in the lifts.
  - Wait for the lift when it is working – dark and dangerous when alone – often anti-social behaviour in the dark areas of train stations – not just Howth Junction which has a well-earned intimidating reputation
  - Wait on a packed platform to try to get on a packed train coming from Balbriggan++
  - Not know how long the journey will take them in either direction as Howth Junction will be a ‘crapshoot’
  - Increased difficulty for people with limited mobility and wheelchair users
- Suffer EVEN LONGER delays at the level crossings in Baldoyle, Sutton & Howth
  - Get stuck at the gate for up to 32 minutes of each hour
    - Already at 18 minutes per hour, our citizens suffer a 4:1 delay versus citizens of other European cities
- These delays and travel uncertainties will impact our Seniors who are connected to their community through being able to access:
  - Community Halls & Social Outlets offering:
    - Dementia-Inclusive Choir
    - Senior Dance Classes
    - Bowling, Bingo
    - Gardening, Pottery & Art Classes
    - Social interaction – wellness and positive mental health
- Children trying to get to school and extra-curricular activities
- People trying to attend doctor’s appointments

## ‘DOUBLE-WHAMMY’ of DART Shuttle AND Level Crossing Extended Delays

### GRIDLOCK on and around the Peninsula

- **Howth Maritime & Seafood Festival over 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> September gave a true taste of what the gridlock would be like**
  - Fingal CC was right to encourage people to take the DART
  - Even at that, there was total GRIDLOCK trying to get on/off the peninsula by road – with buses and cars taking one hour to get from Strand Road, Baldoyle/Sutton to Howth
- **Buses would be impacted by the level crossing stoppages making buses just as badly impacted as cars**
- The Peninsula has:
  - No overpass
  - No tunnel
  - No affordable, reliable, frequent commuter ferry to town
  - No bus lanes
  - It DOES have cycle lanes but Howth hill is too steep for most residents
- Without a viable DART service, there is NO WAY to get on/off except through Sutton Cross by Bus or Car
- Many people need to use their cars to do a weekly family shop for example – traffic must be managed so that people can get on/off the peninsula within reasonable traffic conditions
- **This DART+ Coastal North Change would cause HUGE further delays to people. The Irish Rail traffic study shows that traffic queues at Baldoyle Road could be 59% longer than they currently are (Appendix A6.1 Dart+ Coastal North Level Crossing Assessment page 29). And these delays are already outrageous.**
- This would be certain to cause rash and aggressive driving with people trying to outrace the gates – People would get injured or killed by reckless driving behaviour

### Air Pollution & Energy Wastage

People sitting at closed level crossings keep their car engines running (as do buses), in the futile hope that the wait won’t be too long. **Idling engines are wasteful and dirty producing more exhaust emissions than an engine in motion**

### ORAL HEARING

I am requesting that An Bord Pleanála calls an ORAL HEARING which can be attended by members of the public. This will allow further discussion about the project and the hugely negative impacts these proposed changes would have on our neighbourhoods, our city, and indeed our country.

## Links embedded in these points

[Key Findings Inbound Tourism Annual 2023 - Central Statistics Office](#)

[Kate And William Finish Second Day In Ireland With Cliff Walk In Howth \(evoke.ie\)](#)

[14 Things to do in Howth \(With 1-Day Itinerary Map\) \(theirishroadtrip.com\)](#)

[Deer Park Hotel to be demolished to make way for new 'destination' Howth development - Lovin Dublin](#)

[More than 500 apartments approved for Howth site – The Irish Times](#)

[Permission granted to demolish Howth hotel and build 177 apartments despite local opposition \(thejournal.ie\)](#)

[Irish Rail lifts put out of service 800 times by vandals, rough sleepers and chewing gum | Irish Independent](#)

[Dive into a weekend of fun at Howth Maritime and Seafood Festival | Fingal County Council](#)

<https://www.dublinlive.ie/news/dublin-news/irish-rail-confirms-sutton-worst-27992746>

[Why is idling harmful? | NC DEQ](#)