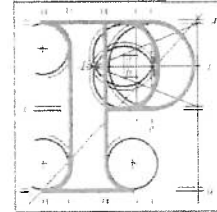


Our Case Number: ABP-320164-24

Your Reference: Residents of Corr Castle



An
Bord
Pleanála

Corr Castle Management CLG
c/o Smith Property Management
37-41 Dunboyne Business Park
Dunboyne
Co. Meath

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 submission and oral hearing request 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
Glao Áitiúil
Facs
Láithreán Gréasáin
Ríomhphost

Tel
LoCall
Fax
Website
Email

(01) 858 8100
1800 275 175
(01) 872 2684
www.pleanala.ie
bord@pleanala.ie

64 Sráid Maoilbhríde
Baile Átha Cliath 1
D01 V902

64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

Corr Castle Management CLG

c/o Smith Property Management, 37-41 Dunboyne Business Park, Dunboyne, Co. Meath
Phone: 01- 8255423, Fax: 01-8252187 e-mail; info@spm.ie

An Bord Pleanála

64 Marlborough Street

Dublin D01 V902

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG- _____	075595-24
ABP- _____	
17 OCT 2024	
Fee: € 50.00	Type: CASH
Time: _____	By: POST

Submission on proposed shuttle service for Howth/Dublin City as part of DART + Coastal North Railway Order 2024, submitted on behalf of the Residents of Corr Castle by Edmond O'Neill, Chairman, Corr Castle Management CLG

12 October 2024

Dear Sir/Ms.

Corr Castle Management Co.CLG ("CCM") is an elected management company acting on behalf of the residents of Corr Castle to represent their interests across many areas.

We are writing to you regarding the plan called "DART + Plus Coastal North" by Irish Rail which wishes to expand the DART service to Drogheda and provide a changed DART service to Howth and its surrounding areas. Irish Rails' ambition to do this in a manner which will both improve the passenger experience and be environmentally better than at present is commendable. The proposed changes to the Howth Dart service are wholly unacceptable to us and we wish to register our serious objections and submit these observations for your consideration.

Irish Rail propose to end/seriously reduce the direct DART service from Howth and replace it with a shuttle. A direct rail link between Howth and Dublin City has operated satisfactorily for over 175 years. Our residents view the introduction of a shuttle service from Howth to Howth Junction as a serious diminution to the service we currently enjoy. It is a case of robbing Peter to pay Paul.

As part of this plan, Irish Rail intends to provide an hourly service to Belfast and a DART every 10 minutes from Drogheda. This is to be achieved using the 2 tracks into Connolly station. We believe that the existing infrastructure is totally inadequate for this plan.

Irish Rail have recently announced that they intend to add 2 further tracks servicing Connolly Station from the north. We believe that this investment should take priority over any plans to expand the existing DART by curtailing the Howth service.

We wish to submit the following Observations for your consideration.

1. A Shuttle service will have a major negative impact on Howth.

Our residents represent a cross section of the local community. Many are retired and elderly; others are parents of school going children. Others are commuters to Dublin City. All will be seriously inconvenienced by this plan to change trains and platforms at Howth Junction.

The present service is direct, punctual and reliable. Transferring onto other trains at Howth Junction which are likely to be packed and designed mainly for those who can stand is likely to cause people to abandon this shuttle service and use cars.

The lack of coherent planning for the Peninsula by all the relevant agencies is a core problem. Approx 1000 new apartments are being built. The population is going to increase significantly. Tourist traffic is at record levels. There will be a big increase in the number of people on the move. At recent public meetings about these changes, many people spoke of buying houses in the Howth Sutton area because of the reliable direct DART service for both students and commuters.

Irish Rails plan to seriously reduce the effectiveness of this service at this time is appalling planning.

2. Changing trains at Howth Junction

The Dart station at Howth Junction has a notorious reputation for anti-social behaviour. Many complaints have been made to Irish Rail about the lack of visible and reassuring security here.

Passengers travelling from the Howth/Sutton/Bayside stations to Dublin City and southwards and those travelling from Dublin City northwards will be required to change trains at this station. This will be a huge worry for many of our residents. The disabled, senior citizens and persons with infants in buggies will be seriously disadvantaged. Lifts are often out of service. Security staff are rarely seen. Irish Rails proposal for improved entrance, better signage and brighter lighting is not an adequate response.

We believe that Irish Rail are ignoring the people's needs and concerns. There is a huge lack of confidence in Irish Rail regarding Howth Junction due to their failure to deliver on previous promises to make Howth Junction safe for passengers.

3. Traffic problems at level crossings with increased shuttle DART services

The proposal to run up to 6 shuttles per hour between Howth and Howth Junction will create major problems for road traffic at the 4 level crossings, Baldoyle Road, Sutton Station, Lauders Lane and Howth Lodge. There are regular traffic jams at these crossings – backing up to Sutton Cross. Allowing for 6 DARTs per hour each way, the closure time per hour is likely to be up to 32 minutes. This will present major traffic delays and delay the progress of emergency vehicles – ambulances, fire brigades, gardai etc.

It will also seriously delay the H3 and No 6 Bus Connect services introduced over the past few years. Is it not illogical that the NTA would devalue their own new bus services.

Those trying to get to the stations are likely to be regularly stuck in traffic. The overall result is that many existing users of the service will revert to cars, or worse still may not travel out at all.

4. Challenges for students

There is a regular flow of students of all ages to Howth, Sutton, Kilbarrack and Baldoyle schools and then contra traffic going into the city and further south. All this is facilitated by the direct Dart service. Both parents and students have confidence that they will get to their destinations on time. With this new proposal, they will have little confidence that they will get to their local station in time, esp. with new proposed level crossing closures.

The proposed changes would require four separate train journeys each day, two of which will be at the peak periods. The proposed changes will be a retrograde and possibly dangerous step for all these students.

Parents and guardians of these students have been satisfied with the safety of their children who board at one point and alight at their destination station.

At the recent Public Meeting about the Dart changes, great concern was expressed at the prospect for vulnerable school children having to change en route at an unsupervised DART station, where school students are often targets of verbal and physical assault. If the shuttle service is implemented, many families may take the decision to revert to car transport. The safety of all children, including school going children, must be a legal and moral priority for Irish Rail. There are potential legal issues here.

5. Tourists

Howth is an important tourist destination attracting over a million tourists annually. It is also an important recreation centre for the northside population. The direct service is hugely important to these users.

The loss of this service will damage the commercial centres of Howth. The plans for the expansion of the tourist attractions in Howth including those related to Howth Castle, the new hotel and golf course and others will all be negatively impacted.

It is also very important to those employed in the tourist and service industries. They need to get to work punctually.

6. Oral Hearing

There is widespread opposition to the proposed downgrading of the DART service. This was manifested at the recent public meeting in the Marine Hotel Sutton, packed to overflow. The opposition was unanimous.

We request that An Bord Pleanála arrange an oral hearing to hear of the great concern at the current proposals. Those concerned are the very large number of passengers who rely on the DART service today and who will face major problems if the present proposals go ahead.

7. Fee

The submission fee of €50 is enclosed herewith.


Edmond O'Neill