

DART+

South West



DART+ South West

Submission on Additional Observation to the Draft Railway Order Application

Córas Iompair Éireann/Iarnród Éireann (CIÉ/IE)

April 2024

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1. Introduction

The DART+ South West Railway Order application (dated February 2023) was submitted to An Bord Pleanála on the 22nd of March 2023. The An Bord Pleanála (ABP) Statutory Consultation was from March 29th until May 16th, 2023 (7 weeks). A total of 120 written observations were received and accepted by the Board and subsequently provided to CIÉ/IE. CIÉ/IE responded to each of these written observations in its report dated September 2023 to ABP “*Submission on Observations to the Draft Railway Order Application*”.

On the 5th of April 2024, ABP wrote to the applicant, CIÉ/IE, to notify them of an additional submission received in relation to the Project and invited CIÉ/IE to provide a written response. This report provides a response to the additional submission made to An Bord Pleanála (“the Board”) for the DART+ South West Railway Order application.

2. Response to Observation

2.1. Ref 121 – Helen Fayne

Submission Location – Claremont Lawn, Glasnevin

In April 2024, An Bord Pleanála invited CIÉ/IÉ to respond to an observation received from Helen Fayne. Below is a summary of the issues raised in the observation and the applicant's response to these issues.

- 1. Summary of Issue Raised – Concerns relating to the substratum land take from under the garden and impacts this will have now and in the future. Will the ground subside or cave in at any stage? Seeks guarantees in relation to any associated risks.**

Response to Issue Raised

The proposed works at this location include soil nailing. The extent of the soil nailing is as indicated on the Property Server Plans which were included in the notification pack issued to the property owner.

No adverse structural impacts to individual properties are anticipated as a result of these works. The works will not cause the ground to subside or cave in.

At its closest location, the uppermost soil nail will pass approximately 7m below the building, which is significantly below the influence of standard foundation depths and will not impact the foundations or cause settlement or subsidence.

Soil nails have been successfully used around Ireland and extensively across the UK, without impacting or causing damage to properties.

As outlined in Chapter 17 of the EIAR, if consent is granted by An Bord Pleanála, a Property Protection Scheme will be established for the proposed Project. As part of this scheme, a pre-construction structural and condition survey will be carried out before works commence. Post construction, a condition survey will be carried out after the works are completed and will be used to assess if any deterioration has occurred. In the event of any damage, this will be made good. The surveys will only be carried out with the permission of the property owner and at a time of their choosing.

- 2. Summary of Issue Raised – Concerns in relation to the noise levels and vibration levels. Have been told the entire project is 4 years and minimum 5 weeks of this will be on the railway line behind my home. Noise from works will be severe and will impact on quality of life. Enjoyment of the garden will not be possible (including by children playing, pets). Noise levels will make it extremely difficult to work from home.**

Response to Issue Raised

The overall construction programme for the DART+ South West Project is expected to take 50 months. Work will not be continuous in the area, but there will be periods of construction activity.

Chapter 14 of the EIAR assessed the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the proposed DART+ South West Project. Construction works at this location will be predominantly at the time of the closure of the Phoenix Park Tunnel Branch line (PPTBL), during this time work will be carried out on a number of work fronts simultaneously along the rail corridor to minimise disruption to local communities. Due to the extensive nature of the works, some construction works may continue beyond this closure period, requiring works to be carried out during off peak periods or under safe working arrangements.

It is acknowledged that short-term increases in noise impacts will occur in certain areas during the construction phase of the proposed Project due to the requirement to use heavy plant and machinery. Section 14.7.1 of the EIAR identifies general mitigation measures that will be implemented during construction works. The extent and nature of the construction noise impacts is dependent on the activity (for example site clearance, ground investigation) and proximity to noise sensitive locations. The predicted noise impact from the construction activities was assessed against the thresholds of significance for construction noise. A list of activity-specific measures to mitigate the construction noise impacts if the threshold values are exceeded have been included in Section 14.7.1 of the EIAR. By applying these mitigation measures, the impacts of construction stage noise will be managed. There will also be ongoing community liaison channels in place during construction to respond to any specific concerns that arise.

If night-time works are required, they will be undertaken in accordance with the mitigation measures that have been included in the EIAR in Section 14.7.1, which aim to reduce impacts as much as possible. A Noise Management Plan will be part of the construction stage of the project. CIÉ/IÉ will ensure residents living near the rail line are informed of upcoming works and given advance notice of any disruptive works.

In relation to home-working patterns, it should be noted that the predicted noise levels in the EIAR applies to external locations at the most exposed facade. The noise levels inside the dwelling are expected to be significantly lower, to be of the order of 25 dB lower than the predicted external noise level. With a window partially open, the noise levels are expected to be of the order of 15 dB lower than the predicted external noise level. On that basis, it is not expected that construction noise will interfere with working from home. Furthermore, the noise assessment predicts the impacts at the most exposed facade which is the back of the house in the case of this property.

In relation to concerns regarding the use of the garden, the railway line adjacent to this property is in a cutting with a boundary wall at the top of the cutting. The predicted noise level will be reduced at this property location as the existing boundary wall at the top of the cutting and the topography will provide screening and will help to mitigate noise impacts.

As part of the construction strategy, a Community Liaison Officer (CLO) will be appointed for the duration of the construction works. The CLO will be in place to communicate with the residents and to address any concerns raised by residents during the construction phase. CIÉ/IÉ will ensure residents living near the rail line are informed of upcoming works and given advance notice of any disruptive works.

- 3. Summary of Issue Raised – Observer has an extension in the garden which is rented out. Concerned that noise levels could impact on keeping the current tenant and or getting a new tenant, may get reduced rent or no rent for length of time there is noise and disturbances.**

Response to Issue Raised

Chapter 14 of the EIAR assessed the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the proposed DART+ South West Project. A detailed description of the proposed construction works, and phasing is outlined in Chapter 5 Construction Strategy of the EIAR.

It is acknowledged that short-term increases in noise impacts will occur in certain areas during the construction phase of the proposed Project – see response to Issue 2 above.

The EIAR included an assessment of the future capacity. This is detailed in Section 4.10.4 and 4.10.5 of the EIAR. The proposed train movements were assessed in the relevant chapters of the EIAR. The operational rail noise at this location is expected to be lower than the situation without the project in place. This is presented in the EIAR Table 14.70, location R1 – which is a representative location in Clarendon Lawns - which predicts a slight positive impact from this Project. It should also be noted that the proposed level of service for the DART+ South West Project will be delivered incrementally over a period of time and will not come into effect in one timetable change.

If the Railway Order is granted, compensation will be addressed in accordance with statute and standard Compulsory Purchase practice and procedure, if and when statutory notices are served. i.e. the property owner will be entitled to submit a claim for compensation once the Railway Order is granted and an official notice is sent.

A property owner may be entitled to make a claim in respect of the acquisition under various headings. More information on CPOs and compensation is available from the website of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland website: <https://scsi.ie/a-clear-guide-to-compulsory-purchase-orders-and-compensation/>

- 4. Summary of Issue Raised – Concerns relating to works associated with Glasnevin Cemetery Road Bridge. The property is 2 houses down from the Glasnevin Cemetery Car Park and very near the bridge. State that the noise levels and disturbance from this will severely impact on them and for an extended duration.**

Response to Issue Raised

The existing Glasnevin Cemetery road bridge is nearing the end of its life-expectancy period. As part of the project, the existing bridge will be demolished and replaced. Work will be carried out from the railway as much as possible, but a construction compound is still needed for bridge works. The construction compound needs to be adjacent to the bridge itself.

The proposed location is in the parking area immediately adjacent to the bridge. Temporary construction hoarding will be provided at the construction compound location.

The works associated with Glasnevin Cemetery road bridge will be completed in an overall period of approximately 3 months. This includes preparatory measures, establishing the construction compound, installing the temporary pedestrian bridge, demolition and replacement of the vehicular bridge, removal/ decommissioning of temporary works and the construction compound, followed by landscaping.

At this property, the predicted noise impact at the most exposed facade is expected to be below the construction noise threshold for the majority of the construction works. However, there will be short-term increases in noise impacts that will occur during intensive activities. Section 14.7.1 of the EIAR identifies general mitigation measures that will be implemented during construction works. The extent and nature of the construction noise impacts is dependent on the activity (for example site clearance, ground investigation) and proximity to noise sensitive locations. The predicted noise impact from the construction activities was assessed against the thresholds of significance for construction noise. A list of activity-specific measures to mitigate the construction noise impacts if the threshold values are exceeded have been included in Section 14.7.1 of the EIAR. By applying these mitigation measures, the impacts of construction stage noise will be managed. There will also be ongoing community liaison channels in place during construction to respond to any specific concerns that arise.

- 5. Summary of Issue Raised – State they will be affected by additional vehicles, workers', machinery going into the cemetery for the works, more traffic on the estate, workers will park in the estate, general increase in traffic up and down their little estate. Safety issue will arise for children when they are crossing the road to go to the green area.**

Response to Issue Raised

CIÉ/IÉ acknowledges that the proposed compound at St. Paul's Cemetery will be in close proximity to existing residential development. Construction traffic will use the main entrance to the Estate off Finglas road and from there to St. Paul's section parking area, and will not pass in front of any homes. Traffic analysis undertaken as part of Chapter 6 Traffic and Transportation of the EIAR determined that the traffic from construction vehicles accessing the Glasnevin Cemetery compound was predicted to be less than 10% change in Average Annual Daily Traffic (AADT). The significance of effect associated with the traffic flow increase is categorised as Slight. Measures to mitigate the traffic and transport impacts from the construction phase of the Project are included in Section 6.6.1 of the EIAR. By applying these mitigation measures, the impacts of construction stage traffic on local communities will be managed.

CIÉ/IÉ and the appointed contractor will develop and implement a Construction Traffic Management Plan (CTMP) and this will be agreed with the respective local authorities prior to construction. The CTMP will include measures for minimising traffic delays, disruption and maintaining safe access to properties. Transport/ parking arrangements for construction staff will also be included. In this way, disruption to local residents will be kept to a minimum.

The CLO will have a mobile phone contact number that will be heavily promoted to the local community and impacted properties. The number will be operated 24 hours per day, seven days per week (24-7-365) throughout the construction period, to ensure that any emergency / pressing issues can be addressed in real time.

- 6. Summary of Issue Raised – Concerns relating to operational noise and the increased frequency of DART trains.**

Response to Issue Raised

Chapter 14 of the EIAR assessed the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the proposed DART+ South West Project on the receiving environment.

Details on the predicted noise from the operational phase of the proposed Project is presented in Section 14.6.2 of the EIAR. In Section 14.6.2 of Chapter 14 of EIAR it is stated:

“It is observed that the proposed Project results in an overall positive noise impact between Phoenix Park Tunnel and Glasnevin as the number of receptors with predicted noise levels greater than the noise criteria reduces as the DMUs (Diesel trains) currently travelling along this section will be replaced with EMUs (Electric trains).”

Given the large number of noise sensitive locations modelled, a representative sample of noise sensitive locations along the rail corridor were presented in the EIAR. The operational rail noise at this location is expected to be lower than the situation without the project in place. This is presented in the EIAR Table 14.70, location R1 – which is a representative location in Clarendon Lawns - which predicts a slight positive impact from this Project. It should also be noted that the proposed level of service for the DART+ South West Project will be delivered incrementally over a period of time and will not come into effect in one timetable change.

Timetabling of services is the responsibility of CIÉ/IE in conjunction with the National Transport Authority (NTA). New services and enhanced timetables are introduced in response to growing demand. CIÉ/IE in conjunction with the NTA publish and consult with the public on timetable alterations and service improvements, inviting feedback from members of the public prior to new timetables being finalised. This is current standard practice and information is published on the Irish Rail Website and press releases issued to media outlets.

7. Summary of Issue Raised – Concerns relating to impact of rodent infestation. Observer states behind their garden are hedging, bushes, trees, briars etc may be removed and rodents will infest garden and homes.

Response to Issue Raised

CIÉ/IE acknowledges that there will be a loss of vegetation to facilitate the Project. Volume 4, Appendix 15.1 of the EIAR indicates areas of removal of vegetation, vegetation to be retained and mitigation planting. At this location, the vegetation on the slope face of the existing cutting will be removed, however the vegetation/trees at the top of the slope will be retained.

A Construction Environmental Management Plan has been prepared as part of the draft Railway Order application. The CEMP will inform the construction management on site. CIÉ/IE and the contractor will have responsibility for prevention and management of pests and vermin.

While rodents may be temporarily displaced as a result of initial construction activities, there is nothing in the construction phase which would lead to an increase in the number of rodents, and given the measures are likely to decrease in the area. Rodent control, good sanitation, including arrangements for regular disposal of food and material attractive to pest, disinfecting contaminated work areas and worker education via toolbox talks are important actions which will be implemented.

A pre-construction survey of rodent activity and sanitation will be carried out. This will document the level of rodent activity, sanitation problems and actions to be implemented. Once construction begins, regular inspections for rodent activity will be carried out. Inspection records will be maintained, and a program of control will be adjusted to match construction sequencing. If a rodent problem arises the project team will address it.

CIÉ/IE will ensure that effective communications channels between the community and the project team are maintained throughout the project, so that any concerns can be responded to.

As part of the construction strategy, a Community Liaison Office (CLO) will be appointed for the duration of the Project. The CLO will be in place to communicate with the residents and to address any concerns raised by residents during the construction phase. The CLO will carry out communications activities, such as:

- to provide information to local residents about progress of the project,
- to explain control measures being put in place,
- to inform the local community about works likely to cause disturbance and/or works planned to take place outside of core working hours.
- mitigations regarding the above issues.

The CLO will be available at all times during the construction phase if any issues arise.

8. **Summary of Issue Raised – Value of home will be impacted, home values will go down and even when finished, concerns that underground under the garden is owned by CIE and possible concern over subsiding. Potential buyers also be reluctant to buy property backing onto a busy railway line, will find it hard to sell or get a low value on the sale.**

Response to Issue Raised

The DART+ South West project will enable high frequency electrified rail services for the population of the area. The DART+ South West Project will offer an improved frequency and quality of services that will provide inter-modal connectivity and integration with other public transport services and this is expected to offer benefits to the residential properties and the communities served.

Chapter 14 of the EIAR assessed the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the proposed DART+ South West Project. Construction noise has been addressed in the response to Items 2 and 4 above. Operational noise has been addressed in the response to Item 6 above.

As previously noted in the response to Item 1 above, no adverse structural impacts to individual properties are anticipated as a result of these works. The soil nails will be a substantial distance below ground level and will get deeper as they advance under the garden. The soil nails will not be visible in the garden. The works will not cause the ground to subside or cave in.

If the Railway Order is granted, compensation will be addressed in accordance with statute and standard Compulsory Purchase practice and procedure, if and when statutory notices are served. i.e. the property owner will be entitled to submit a claim for compensation once the Railway Order is granted and an official notice is sent.

A property owner may be entitled to make a claim in respect of the acquisition under various headings. More information on CPOs and compensation is available from the website of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland website: <https://scsi.ie/a-clear-guide-to-compulsory-purchase-orders-and-compensation/>

9. **Summary of Issue Raised – Concerned that construction vibrations or vibrations from the DART could damage the structure of the property either at time of works or over time in years to come.**

Response to Issue Raised

Chapter 14 of the EIAR assessed the likely significant noise and vibration effects of the proposed DART+ South West Project on the receiving environment.

Construction Vibration

Vibration during construction is assessed primarily to ensure that no damage, not even cosmetic damage, occurs to buildings during the works. The criteria adopted depend on several factors including the source of vibration, for example transient or continuous, and the building type. Structurally vulnerable buildings or vulnerable structures will need vibration levels to be controlled to a lower threshold to avoid the risk of damage. Human response to construction vibration is also discussed, however, given the very low threshold of perception of humans to vibration it is not practical to implement vibration limits low enough to avoid any vibration being perceptible. However, good communication to building occupants by the contractor ahead of any vibration-intensive works is best practice to control this impact as perceptible vibration levels are more tolerable when the source and duration of the works is known.

No adverse structural impacts are anticipated from the construction works as the vibration from construction activities is below the guide values for cosmetic damage. However, vibration from some construction activities may be perceptible at some residences.

During the construction phase, a noise and vibration monitoring programme will be implemented by CIÉ/IÉ and the contractor to assess compliance of the construction works with the noise and vibration limits set out in Section 14.3.3 of the EIAR. The selection of monitoring locations (number and location) will be agreed with the relevant local authorities but will be based on the nearest representative noise sensitive locations to the working areas which will progress along the length of the proposed Project. Full details of the Contractor's provision for noise and vibration monitoring and procedures including provisions for publication of monitoring results will be submitted to and agreed by the Planning Authority prior to commencement of work.

As noted in the response to Item 1, no adverse structural impacts to the property are anticipated as a result of the proposed works. A condition survey will be carried out before any construction works commence. Post construction, a condition survey will be carried out after the works are completed.

Operational Vibration

The cumulative operational vibration levels are influenced by the number of intermittent events, such as trains passing. The cumulative operational vibration was calculated, including the new DART services, and compared with the guideline levels for daytime and night-time periods. The results are presented in Section 14.6.5 in Chapter 14 of the EIAR. At this property location, the predicted vibration during the operational phase is negligible and not significant. .