



Compulsory Purchase Order Guidebook

February 2026



Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) Process Guide for the DART+ Programme

Introduction to DART+

DART+ is Iarnród Éireann's plan to revolutionise travel in the Greater Dublin Area. It will see the DART (Dublin Area Rapid Transport) network grow from its current 50km in length to over 150km, bringing DART travel with all its benefits to new and existing communities.

It will promote multi modal transit, active travel, boost regional connectivity and make public transport the preferred option for more and more people. The DART+ Programme will deliver frequent, modern, electrified services within the Greater Dublin Area and will improve connectivity to regional towns and cities.

The DART+ Programme includes the following rail improvements:

- DART+ West - Maynooth and M3 Parkway to the City Centre
- DART+ South West - Hazelhatch & Celbridge to the City Centre
- DART+ Coastal North - Drogheda to the City Centre
- DART+ Coastal South - Greystones to the City Centre
- DART+ Fleet - purchase of new train fleet to increase train services.

The DART+ Programme has successfully applied for Railway Orders for its West, South West and Coastal North routes. Applications for Railway Orders for the Coastal South route and a new Depot will be made in the future.

What is a Compulsory Purchase Order?

A Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) is a legal function that allows statutory bodies like Córas Iompair Éireann (CIÉ) / Iarnród Éireann - Irish Rail to buy land and property for large infrastructure projects such as railway schemes where a compelling case for the benefit of public interest can be demonstrated. Compulsory purchase powers are provided to enable this to happen.

Having obtained the Railway Order, CIÉ can now commence the compulsory acquisition process. Given the scale of the DART+ project, a number of public and privately owned properties will be impacted and acquired, in whole or in part. For the DART+ South West project due to the geography and topography of the route a large majority of the CPO acquisitions are substratum – requiring underground access to properties along the railway, instead of access to the land surface. CIÉ commences this process by serving notices to treat and the recipient can then lodge their claim for compensation.

1. Statutory Basis & Competent Authority

Railway Orders are granted by An Coimisiún Pleanála (formerly An Bord Pleanála) in accordance with the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 (as amended).

2. End-to-End lifecycle of land acquisition

1. Pre-application and public consultation (non-statutory): design development and early engagement.
2. Railway Order application to An Coimisiún Pleanála (formerly An Bord Pleanála): submission of design drawings, EIAR, NIS, and supporting reports
3. Decision: Railway Order made (with conditions/modifications where applicable).
4. **Post-Order implementation: issuing of Notices to Treat to owners/lessees/occupiers identified in the Order's schedules. (This is the current phase for DART+ South West taking place in February 2026)**
5. Notice of Entry (Notice to Enter): possession of lands for works.
6. Recipient of Notice to Treat submits their claim.
7. Negotiation: agree compensation and scope of works; prepare settlement terms.
8. If no agreement: referral to independent Property Arbitrator (1919 Act, as amended).
9. Conveyancing process and payment of compensation.

3. Roles and Responsibilities

Actor	Role	Key Documents	Stage
	Receives Railway Order applications, conducts consultation/Oral Hearing, makes decision and conditions.	Railway Order, Inspectors Report, Decision and Schedules	Application → Decision
Iarnród Éireann (Irish Rail) / CIÉ	Promotes and delivers DART+ works; issues Notices; engages on valuations and Accommodation Works; completes conveyancing.	Notice to Treat; Notice of Entry; Settlement terms; Contracts for Sale/Land Agreements	Post-Order → Construction
National Transport Authority (NTA)	Programme sponsor and funder; oversight of delivery and engagement.	Programme governance artefacts	Programme lifecycle
Department of Transport	Funding source		Programme lifecycle
Landowners/Lessees/ Occupiers	Provide title/interest evidence; appoint surveyor/solicitor; prepare claim and engage on Accommodation Works; execute conveyancing.	Claim submission; title deeds/lease; Letters of Authority	On receipt of Notice to Treat
Property Arbitrator	Independent assessment of compensation where parties cannot agree.	Arbitration decision	If required

4. Statutory notices and typical content

Notice to Treat

Formal invitation to submit claim for compensation.

Notice of Entry / Notice to Enter

Notice of intention to take possession of lands.

5. Land, rights and schedules typically authorised by a Railway Order

- Permanent acquisition of identified land parcels (Property Plans).
- Temporary possession of lands (with reinstatement obligations).
- Acquisition of substratum land and airspace where needed.
- Acquisition of rights of way and other easements (including placing poles/wall fixings).
- Extinguishment or temporary interruption of public/private rights of way.
- Alteration of public roads and construction of new roads.

6. Next steps for landowners involved in the DART+ Compulsory Purchase Order process

- On receiving a Notice to Treat, the recipient should appoint a valuation surveyor and solicitor. who should inform the project team via a Letter of Authority by registered post to: Córas Iompair Éireann, Group Property Management, Curzon House, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1, D01 H560.

7. Property Owner's Protection Scheme: Pre and Post Surveys

The works will be undertaken in a manner so as to avoid or minimise impacts on adjoining properties, and it is not anticipated that damage will occur. A condition survey may be required of existing structures and buildings adjacent to the works at certain locations. These will be determined on a case-by-case basis depending on the works required at that location. Should your property be deemed to require a condition survey you will be notified, and your permission sought to conduct the survey.

8. Independent advice

Further information can be found on the website of the Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (scsi.ie), including their [Guide to CPOs and Compensation](#).

Frequently Asked Questions

Definitions

Q1. What is a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO)?

A Compulsory Purchase Order is a legal process that allows certain statutory bodies, where a compelling case in the public interest can be demonstrated, to acquire land, property or rights over land without the owner's permission.

Q2. What is a Notice to Treat?

A formal invitation to submit a claim for compensation.

Q3. What is a Notice of Entry?

A notice of intention to take possession of lands.

Q4. What is temporary possession?

Temporary possession allows land to be used by the project and reinstated to the owner in the future.

The CPO process

Q5. Why is my land needed for the railway?

All or part of your land is required facilitate the construction of the works identified in the Railway Order.

Q6. Does this mean the project is definitely going ahead?

The Railway Order for DART+ South West has been approved, which confirms the statutory consent for the project. The CPO process is now underway to secure the land required.

Q7. When does the CPO process commence?

The process commences upon receipt of your Notice to Treat.

Q8. Who authorises a CPO?

An Coimisiún Pleanála.

Q9. Do I need a solicitor or surveyor?

You are entitled to appoint your own professional advisors.

Q10. Is all of my property subject to the Notice to Treat?

Not necessarily. The plans appended to the Notice to Treat show the extent of the proposed acquisition by the project, both permanent and temporary.

Q11. What if my property has a mortgage?

This will be dealt with by your legal representative as part of the conveyancing process.

Q12. What if I'm a tenant or leaseholder?

Tenants and occupiers have rights independent of the landowner and may be entitled to compensation. Once you have received your Notice to Treat, you should appoint a valuation surveyor and solicitor.

Q13. I will be away from the property that is listed for a long time. How do I receive my Notice to Treat pack?

If you intend to be away for an extended period, you should contact our liaison team.

Q14. I recently bought a property that may be subject to a CPO. How do I know if my property is part of the CPO process? How do I receive my Notice to Treat pack?

If you believe your property is affected, you can contact our liaison team.

Q15. What if I have moved house from the address that is listed on the title?

If you have moved away from a property impacted by the DART+ South West CPO process, and you still own the property, you can contact our liaison team.

[What happens after the CPO process begins?](#)

Q16. When will you take possession of my land?

You will receive a Notice of Entry advising you of the date that possession will be taken.

Q17. Can I stay on my land until construction starts?

You can stay on your land until possession is taken in accordance with the Notice of Entry.

Q18. Can I sell my property after being notified of a CPO?

Yes, as part of the conveyancing process your appointed solicitor will notify the proposed purchaser's solicitor that the property is subject to a CPO.

Q19. Can I apply for planning permission to extend or alter my property?

Yes. Applications will be reviewed to ensure they do not impact the proposed works.

Q20. What happens if access to the rest of my land is compromised as part of the CPO?

The acquiring authority will assess how the land is currently accessed and what alternative or replacement arrangements are required.

Q21. Will land being taken temporarily be reinstated?

Yes. Temporary land will be reinstated to an agreed standard and returned in line with statutory requirements once it is no longer required.

Objections, Valuations and Compensation

Q22. Am I entitled to compensation?

Owners and occupiers may be entitled to compensation.

Q23. How can I prepare a compensation claim?

Upon receiving a Notice to Treat you should appoint a valuation surveyor and a solicitor.

Q24. Will I be compensated for my land if it is being taken temporarily?

You can make a claim for compensation in respect of land taken on a temporary basis.

Q25. When will I receive my compensation?

After negotiations or an arbitrator's award and after the necessary legal documentation has been completed.

Q26. Who can I contact for help with my claim?

To find a professional and learn more about your rights, we recommend visiting: Society of Chartered Surveyors Ireland (SCSI) www.scsi.ie/advice/consumer_guides and the Law Society of Ireland - www.lawsociety.ie.