

## Frequently Asked Questions

**Q. I regularly travel on the Maynooth line/M3 Parkway, what will DART+ West do for me after the project is finished and the line is electrified?**

**Response:** Maynooth line customers will benefit from more frequent and reliable services after the project is finished. There is currently a maximum of 7 trains per hour in each direction. After DART+ West is completed, services will have the ability to increase to 15 trains per hour per direction, subject to demand.

Also, the type of train you will be travelling on will be different. They will be a DART type electric or battery-electric train. These trains are more environmentally friendly than the current diesel-powered trains which will contribute to reducing greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector and supports the Governments Climate Action Plan. The utilisation of DART trains on the Maynooth Line will increase the passenger carrying capacity from 4,500 to 13,750 passenger per hour per direction. This will address the train overcrowding issues reported by customers in 2018/2019.

The project will link good quality public transport to sustainable land use management and can also assist in local regeneration, economic development and support the development of new communities along the route. This is a key objective of Project Ireland 2040 and the National Planning Framework.

The integration of public transport with sustainable land use planning will reduce the dependency on private car use and ultimately support reductions in greenhouse gas emissions from the transport sector.

DART+ will integrate with other public transport modes (Bus, Luas and the future MetroLink) as well as walking and cycling infrastructure. This will have a positive effect on transport patterns and lifestyle choices. The provision of sustainable transport network supports options for where people live, work, study, access services and use public amenities. It can promote more active and healthy modes of travel by supporting people to walk or cycle to public transport links for onward transfer to their end destinations.]

**Q. I regularly travel on the Maynooth line/ M3 Parkway Line to & from the city centre, what will change for me when the project is being constructed?**

**A.:** We will endeavour to maintain weekday passenger services during the construction phase. However, there this will require construction works during night time periods. There may be a

requirement for specific daytime works on the railway corridor, but where such works occur we will endeavour to limit these disruptions to weekends and off-peak times as much as possible.

The public will be advised in advance of any planned disruptions to services and alternative services/connections that will be bus provided. Details of the likely phasing and any potential disruptions to services will be identified as the project progresses.

**Q. Will any services to stations stop/be affected by the project?**

**A.**The project will continue to serve all the existing stations along the Maynooth and M3 Parkway lines (including Pelletstown which is under construction) with the addition of a proposed stop at the future Glasnevin Metrolink Station (once developed) and Docklands/Spencer Dock station. The only other change will be that there will be more train services and more passenger capacity on these services.

**Q. I live near one of the level crossings that are being proposed to be closed, how will I now get to and from my home?**

**A.** Iarnród Éireann is endeavouring to minimise any potential impacts to communities along the line. However, due to the projected increase in services, level crossings along the route will be untenable as the gates would be down to such an extent that certain communities would be completely locked in.

As part of the project we are proposing to construct alternative vehicular bridges at Ashtown (via an underpass), Coolmine (road overbridge and a separate pedestrian and cycle bridge) and Barberstown (overbridge). There will be pedestrian and cycle bridges constructed at Clonsilla and Porterstown. No alternative access is currently planned at Blakestown. For more details of the proposed plan for each location, please see the project website [www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth](http://www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth). The alternative infrastructure new bridge crossings will be available for use and only then will the level crossing be closed. This is to ensure continued connectivity for communities north and south of the railway corridor.

If you wish to communicate any specific issue you have with the team please write email the Community Liaison Representative at [DARTMaynooth@irishrail.ie](mailto:DARTMaynooth@irishrail.ie) or call the Project Helpline No. 01-8235127.

You can contact the Community Liaison Officer and we will endeavour to address your query.

**Project Helpline** 01-8235127

**Email** [DARTMaynooth@irishrail.ie](mailto:DARTMaynooth@irishrail.ie)

**Postal Address:** Community Liaison Officer, DART+ Maynooth, Iarnród Éireann, Inchicore Works, Inchicore Parade, Dublin 8, D08K6Y3

For more information on the project you can look at the project website: [www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth](http://www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth)

**Q. What is the timeline for commencement of construction?**

**A.** Subject to the Railway Order being successfully granted by An Bord Pleanála it is expected that construction stage work will commence in 2022 and will be completed/operational in 2025.

**Q. My house backs on to the existing railway line. What will the impact be on me and my family during construction and when the project is completed/new DART service starts?**

### ***Construction Phase***

In order to maintain services during the day, the majority of the construction works along the railway line itself will take place at night. Works outside of the live railway corridor can progress during the day (i.e. construction of bridges associated with level crossing replacements, the construction of the depot, substations, construction compounds). Every effort will be made to avoid, reduce, and/or mitigate negative impacts, however, there is likely to be some disturbance experienced for those in close proximity to the railway line caused by noise, lighting or fencing/hoarding erected associated with the construction activities. The types of construction work required at each specific location will determine the type of impact that may affect the area/your property. However, there will be general linear works required along the full length, such as:

- Overhead electrification equipment along the full extent of the railway line. This will be similar in style to that currently used on the existing DART network.
- Modifications to the existing rail bridges such as modifications to the structure, track lowering or a combination of both.
- Substations will be required at intervals along the rail line to provide power to the network.
- Signalling upgrades and additional signalling will be required to the upgraded infrastructure.

Interfaces with existing utilities, boundary treatments, drainage works, vegetation management and other ancillary works will be required along the length of the project.

Upon appointment of a construction contractor a dedicated Community Liaison Officer will be put in place to communicate details of upcoming works and every potential mitigation will be put in place to minimise the disruption that may occur.

### ***Operational Phase***

During the operational phase, the sound from the trains and greenhouse gas emissions will reduce significantly. At certain locations, some parapet heightening or protection of the electricity wires will be required.

All likely significant effects during both the construction and operational phases will be identified and detailed in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report with a detailed schedule of mitigation measures identified to reduce those potential effects.

**Q. Parking is already challenging at some stations along the route. Will there be an increase in parking facilities to allow for increased demand?**

**A.** Under DART+ it is not proposed to provide any additional parking facilities at stations. However, Iarnród Éireann's Network Enhancement Division and the National Transport Authority's Park & Ride Development Office are working on other project to deliver enhanced parking at stations, for cars and bicycles in parallel to DART+ West.

**Q. How will the needs of those with sensory and mobility impairments be catered for in the new upgraded system?**

**A.** Accessibility is an important aspect of the design of the DART+ Programme. Where new interventions are made as part of the DART+ Programme, Iarnród Éireann will ensure that this is step free access. Furthermore, Iarnród Éireann will continue its rollout of the accessibility programme under funded projects. Together, DART+ and the Accessibility Programme will improve access to person's with reduced & impaired mobility and passengers with sensory impairments.

**Q. Why is a new Depot required?**

**A.** In order to support the DART+ Programme, a new Depot is being provided. The new Depot will accommodate maintenance of the new DART+ electrical carriages. DART+ provides for the provision

of up to 600 DART carriages. The existing DART Depot cannot accommodate the maintenance of the increased number carriages associated with DART+.

Iarnród Éireann estimate that there will be approximately 100 staff employed at the depot to support the DART+ maintenance functions, together with accommodating approximately 50 drivers.

The Depot will be designed as a Centre of Excellence and to the best industry standards. All buildings will be designed to Nearly Zero Energy Building (NZEB) design code. This will result in very low (if not zero) energy consumption. The design will incorporate energy efficiency, renewable energy sources and environmental improvement measures to a high industry standard.

Trains will enter the DART+ Maintenance Depot and pass through a train wash to the service area. Once servicing and internal cleaning is complete, the trains will either move to the main depot building for exams or a stabling area for night time storage.

**Q. As the Depot is very near Kilcock Station, can DART+ West not be extended to Kilcock, so that the community at Kilcock can benefit from the increase in services?**

**A.** At present, Kilcock Station is a single platform station. Continuation of DART+ to Kilcock would require construction of double track into along a very narrow railway corridor, necessary overbridge modifications and the reconstruction of Kilcock Station to provide the necessary train infrastructure. This would present significant difficulties at the station and be disruptive to Kilcock town centre.

The transport assessment undertaken by the NTA is defining the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (2016-2035) has concluded that the short to medium term passenger demands west of Maynooth will be serviced increased numbers of diesel train services.

Electrification of the Sligo line beyond Maynooth remains an objective of Iarnród Éireann. It has been agreed that the NTA will consider the next phase of electrification on the Sligo Line and the required service levels to meet passenger demand in a review of the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. This review is scheduled for the end 2021.

It is important to note that the works now proposed along the Maynooth Line will not preclude future electrification of the line to Kilcock and further west.

The short to medium term future demands beyond Maynooth will be serviced by diesel trains released by the new electrified rollingstock and that, although the electrification of the line beyond Maynooth remains an Iarnród Éireann objective, termination at Kilcock presents difficulties in that the

station would have to be reconstructed to facilitate the required turnback capacity. The next phase of electrification will consider the appropriate location for turning back trains.

It was agreed that the NTA would consider the next phase of electrification in the review of the transport strategy. This is scheduled for the end of next year.

**Q. Will this project definitely go ahead?**

**A.** As well as Iarnród Éireann being committed to this project, it is provided for in the Programme for Government, the National Development Plan and the Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area. Ultimately all projects are dependent on Exchequer funding for financing. Subject to receipt of Railway Order approval from An Bord Pleanála and approval of the Project Business Case by Government, the project will go ahead.

**Q. Is this project dependent on DART Underground going ahead?**

**A.** No, the project does not depend on any other project in order to advance. It will interface with a number of other rail and public transport projects including MetroLink, Bus Connects, other DART+ projects. The project team is working closely with the relevant agencies in order to ensure that projects are developed consistent with each other.

**Q. Will the project link with MetroLink?**

**A.** Yes, a new fully integrated station serving both the DART+ Maynooth Line project and the proposed MetroLink project is proposed to be located off the Phibsborough Road (R108) adjacent to the Royal Canal. Iarnród Éireann and Transport Infrastructure Ireland (TII) are collaborating to provide this new station which will comprise:

- DART+ surface station. The station will have an east- west orientation on both Iarnród Éireann lines (GSR & MGWR);
- MetroLink underground station will have a north- south orientation;
- A shared concourse with full passenger integration; and
- Street level access and public realm improvements.

Details of the proposed station location which will be developed as part of the MetroLink Railway Order is available at [www.MetroLink.ie](http://www.MetroLink.ie).

**Q. How does the Railway Order application process work?**

**A.** Railway Order application is broadly similar to the planning application process. . The project is categorised as Strategic Infrastructure Development (SID) and Iarnród Éireann applies directly to An Bord Pleanála for permission. The Railway Order application process is set out in the Transport (Railway Infrastructure) Act 2001 as amended by the Strategic Infrastructure Act 2006.

Following two phases of public consultation, we will submit the Railway Order application. Any person or body may make a submission or observation in writing to An Bord Pleanála in relation to the application and / or the Environmental Impact Assessment Report.

The Railway Order application will include a number of technical documents and project drawings and an Environmental Impact Assessment Report. All of these documents and drawings together with any feedback/submissions received from the public as part of the statutory public consultation process will be reviewed and considered by An Bord Pleanála before a decision on the application is made.

We expect that An Bord Pleanála will conduct an Oral Hearing before they make a decision. At an Oral Hearing the authors of relevant reports and experts will give evidence on the submissions received and will be available for questioning.

Further information on making a submission / observation in writing to the Board and Oral Hearing procedures are available from the Board's website [www.pleanala.ie](http://www.pleanala.ie).

**Q. Will there be road/bridge closures? How long for?**

**A.** Yes, it is anticipated that there will be road and bridge closures. The timing and duration of any closures will be on a case by case basis depending on the location and the complexity of the bridge, road and rail works required at that specific location. Details on any road closures, duration and temporary diversions will be developed as part and presented in the Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR).

**Q. Where will the ESB substations be located?**

**A.** It is currently envisaged that approximately 8 new substations will be required along the route to provide electrical traction power to the railway network for DART+ West. The specific locations are yet to be finalised, and this detail will be presented at the Preferred Option Public Consultation, which will take place before the end of the year.

**Q. Where will the compounds be located through the construction period?**

**A.** Locations of proposed construction compounds are currently being developed. The specific locations are yet to be finalised, and this detail will be presented at the Preferred Option Public Consultation towards end of 2020.

**Q. How close will the new tracks / OHLE / sub-station be to my house/back wall?**

**A.** In general, the track layout will remain unaltered, therefore trains will be no closer to property boundaries than at present.

The design development of these the elements is currently in progress. The specific locations and details are yet to be finalised, and this detail will be presented at the Preferred Option Public Consultation.

**Q. Will trees need to be cut down?**

**A.** Yes, some trees will need to be cut down to accommodate the new overhead line electrical equipment (OHLE) and infrastructure. The Environmental Impact Assessment Report will consider this issue in detail and provide mitigation measures.

Trees and branches from trees overreaching into Irish Rail property will need to be cut down where they may come into contact with OHLE and trains.

In cases where land is being acquired it is likely that trees within this land will be felled. All tree clearance will be undertaken in accordance with seasonal constraints and where this is not feasible trees will be examined by an ecologist to determine the presence of nesting birds and bats in advance of any felling or clearance. A landscape plan will be developed for the scheme to mitigate impacts.

**Q. Will you plant trees in my back garden to hide the sight of new OHLE masts?**

**A.** Generally, no new trees would be planted close to Overhead electricity lines. This is both for safety and maintenance reasons. A landscape and visual assessments will be undertaken as part of the design and Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) process. Where the assessments determine that visual screening is required this will be provided within Iarnród Éireann's lands or lands to be acquired by Iarnród Éireann as part of the Railway Order process.



**Q. Will my house/wall be damaged?**

**A.** 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. However, any houses or walls required to facilitate the development will be acquired as part of the Railway Order application process.

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 (e.g. piling, tunnelling).

Should your property be deemed to require a condition survey you will be notified and your permission sought to conduct the survey. The condition survey would take place at the pre-construction stage to provide assurance to property owners.

**Q. How will the local community benefit?**

**A.** DART+ West programme is seeking to significantly increase the frequency and capacity of train services on the Maynooth Line. This can be achieved by changing to electrified, high capacity DART trains and increasing the frequency of trains. Delivery of this project will support the existing communities along the railway and support future sustainable development. It will serve all existing stations along the railway corridor between Maynooth Station and M3 Parkway Station to Connolly Station and Spencer Dock Station using electrical power that has a lower carbon footprint than the existing diesel trains. The frequency and quality of service that will be provided will provide a viable transport alternative to communities along the route and help encourage people to switch from private car use. This will assist in Ireland reducing greenhouse gas emissions from transport and help combat climate change. The electrification of the rail line will predominantly follow the existing railway corridor.

**Q. Why is there a need for new roads and bridges as Diswellstown Road and Dr Troy Bridge are already available?**

**A.** The transport assessment undertaken for the Maynooth Line level crossing closures concludes that a vehicular/cyclist/pedestrian bridge to serve Coolmine communities and the wider area (north and south of the railway/canal corridor) is very important to existing and future traffic management. If the

level crossing is closed without the provision of a new relief bridge, then the capacity of Diswellstown Road/Dr Troy Bridge would be significantly adversely impacted. Journey times for road users would be increased and future land use development potential would be impacted.

**Q. Can the public consultation period be extended due to the Covid-19 pandemic and associated restrictions?**

**A.** Continued progress on DART+ West is critical to providing improved national transport infrastructure, in accordance with the requirements of Project Ireland 2040 and the Climate Action Plan. Therefore, the closing date for this round of public consultations will remain as 7th October.

The reason for the closing date for submissions on 7th October is to ensure that the first round of public consultation submissions can be fed into the ongoing design process in an efficient manner to ensure that they will be assessed by the overall design team in the re-evaluation of the Multi-Criteria Analysis (MCA) and subsequently the Emerging Preferred Route Options and to determine if there is an objective basis to change any emerging recommendations. The outcome of this process will be made available for further public scrutiny as part of the second round of public consultation.

**Q. Can you advise the proposed DART journey time to Maynooth from Connolly and Docklands?**

**A.** The journey time from Connolly to Maynooth will not be significantly different than today's travel time of approx. 30-35 minutes. DART+ West is about increasing capacity and transitioning to electrical traction power. Whilst new rolling stock will be deployed, the operational pattern is for all DART+ trains to stop at all stations. Therefore, whilst there may be some efficiency in travel time over today, travel time improvements are unlikely to be significant.

**Q. What traffic assessment and traffic modelling has been undertaken to inform the assessments?**

**A.** The Maynooth Line Transport Study (CSEA/Systra, July 2019) is the reference document in relation to the traffic impact appraisal of level crossing closures and the traffic mitigation provided by providing additional bridges across the rail/canal corridor. This is provided in Annex 3.1 of the Preliminary Option Selection Report provided on the Public Consultation website ([www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth](http://www.irishrail.ie/DARTMaynooth)). Section 3 of this report (Page 32) provides information on all automatic traffic counts (35 No.) and junction turning counts (48 No.) undertaken. Figure 3.1 and Figure 3.11 shows the locations of each automatic traffic count and junction turning count. This information was used to calibrate and

validate the local area model, to provide an accurate representation of traffic movements within the study area. Section 4.2 of this report (Page 56) details the overall methodology followed in the road based assessment.

**Q. In relation to Coolmine, what order (if there is one) have the options been discounted?**

**A.** A multi-criteria analysis (MCA) mechanism was developed on the basis of “Department of Transport Tourism and Sport (DTTAS), Common Appraisal Framework (CAF) for Transport Project and Programmes March 2016” for options assessment. It includes the following six appraisal criteria as follows:

- Economy,
- Safety,
- Integration,
- Environment,
- Accessibility and Social Inclusion, and
- Physical Activity.

Multi-Criteria Analysis – MCA can be used to describe any structured approach to determine overall preferences among alternative options, where the options should accomplish multiple objectives. The term covers a wide range of techniques that share the aim of combining a range of positive (benefits) and negative (costs) effects in a single framework to allow for easier comparison of alternative options in decision-making (CAF, 2016).

The Options assessment process for DART+ West was a two-stage multi-criteria analysis. The first stage, MCA1, identifies options that are not feasible and options which are obviously inferior to others based on the six appraisal criteria. The second stage, MCA 2, is a more detailed assessment of the higher ranked (feasible) options from MCA1.

In the case of the Coolmine Level Crossing, eight Options, in addition to the Do Nothing and Do Minimum options, were assessed as part of MCA 1. Four of these options were deemed feasible and more advantageous compared to other options based on the CAF criteria. The Do Nothing and Do Minimum options were not deemed feasible. The options brought to MCA 2 were Option 1, Option 3 with Footbridge, Option 4 and Option 6. Following a detailed MCA 2 assessment it was deemed that Option 3 with a footbridge was the emerging preferred option on the balance of the CAF criteria compared to other options considered.

