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News

Construction work on Luas extension to begin next month

New website to provide details of disruption caused in city by €368m project

Steven Carroll

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Construction work on the extension of Dublin's Luas system, which will see the Green and Red lines linked for the first time, is to begin next month.

Minister for Transport Leo Varadkar today signed the first contract for the €368 million project and said the development was “a milestone” in plans to deliver a high-quality public transport network that would make Dublin a “connected city”.

The contract relates to “preliminary enabling work” which involves the investigation and infilling of more than 300 underground cellars along the proposed cross-city route.

The cellars were largely used for coal storage in the past and the works are to be “carefully monitored” with items of archaeological interest recorded, the Department of Transport said.

The project is to be funded by the Exchequer but Mr Varadkar said the Government had made progress on securing half the funds through a loan from the European Investment Bank involving a “preferential interest rate”.

The plan involves a 5.6km extension of the light-rail system from St Stephen's Green to Broombridge in Cabra.

The new line will integrate with suburban rail services on the Maynooth and Dunboyne train lines and serve the planned DIT campus in Grangegorman. A new bridge being built over the river Liffey will carry the southbound Luas track from Marlborough Street to Hawkins Street.

The main construction works are expected to begin in early 2015 and finish by 2017 and could employ as many as 800 people during their course with a 60 permanent positions likely to be filled after their completion.

The linking of the lines and extension of the system is expected to result in the number of Luas trips taken rising by about 10 million to 40 million annually.

The department said it was “inevitable” that the construction works would lead to disruption in the city but that “everything possible is being done to ensure that such disruption is kept to a minimum and the city remains open for business”.

A website providing updates and information on such matters has been established at www.luascrosscity.ie.

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