

2010-09-18

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Recommended Citation

Kelly, Olivia, "Initial Hearings on Dart, Luas Lines Next Week" (2010). *Media*. 49.
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News

Initial hearings on Dart, Luas lines next week

Olivia KellySat, Sep 18, 2010, 01:00

ALMOST 400 groups and individuals have been invited to An Bord Pleanála preliminary hearings next week on the proposed Dart underground and cross-city Luas lines.

The planning board is holding the meetings to establish how much time it needs to set aside for both hearings and what sized venues will be required. It is expected to announce dates for the full public hearings soon after.

Some 278 parties who made submissions and objections to the Iarnród Éireann Dart underground plan will be invited to address the hearings.

A further 91 letters have been sent to those who made submissions on the Luas line, which is under the remit of the Railway Procurement Agency.

The lower number of submissions does not necessarily indicate a lesser interest in the Luas line, An Bord Pleanála said, as residents often group their submissions and objections together. However, as the Luas is no longer included in the Government's capital spending programme, it is likely to be of less immediate concern than the Dart underground.

The 7.6km line from the docklands to Inchicore will link Heuston Station to the Dart for the first time. The line will also connect with the planned Metro North at St Stephen's Green. An Bord Pleanála is due to make a decision on Metro North next month.

The Luas BXD, known as the "missing link", is a 5.6km line running from the Luas Green line at St Stephen's Green to the Iarnród Éireann station at Broombridge in Cabra. If constructed, this line would link the Green line from Sandyford to St Stephen's Green with the Red line from Tallaght to Connolly Station. The lines would meet up at O'Connell Street. The Luas BXD would then run to Parnell Square, Broadstone, Phibsborough and Cabra.

Provision would be made for a future stop at Grangegorman once the DIT campus had relocated to the former hospital site.

Separate hearings for both projects are likely to take several weeks. Tunnelling under residential and historic buildings is likely to be the most contentious issue with the Dart underground.

In relation to the Luas line, Dublin City Council, the Dublin City Business Association and a number of other bodies have already told An Bord Pleanála they consider the use of overhead wires in the heart of the city centre to be unacceptable.

Business interests in the city are likely to raise concerns about the disruption and closure of streets during the construction of the line

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