

Submission by Mark Dargan BE

I believe the current plan has many major flaws, and I object strongly to taxpayer's money being spent on such a wasteful and ill thought out proposal.

1) Dubious justification for Green Luas upgrade to Metro.

It is claimed at the outset that the Luas Green line southern sections will have to be upgraded to metro, because the current 5,000 per hour peak passengers will increase to 15,000 per hour by 2030. I believe that this number has not been adequately researched or forecast. The basis for the 15,000 per hour peak movements is cited as the NTA transport strategy for the Greater Dublin area. Chapter 4: page 9 of this "2030 vision" actually predicts an increase in Inner Suburbs to City Centre city commuter movements, as a share of total movements, from 13% to 15% by 2030 which, combined with a GDA projected population growth of "up to 25%" implies an increase in peak hour passengers from the current 5,000 per peak hour to 6,500 per peak hour - NOT anything like the 11,000 or 13,000 cited.

Furthermore the de minima 2030 projected congestions map (Ch.5 p.4) shows the Green line as red (congested) only between Dundrum and St Stephen's Green. I would argue that many passengers use the Luas Green line because it is the ONLY time-reliable public transport link to city centre for much of the south inner city, over a large quadrant between Cornelscourt to the east and Greenhills to the west.

If, instead of cannibalising the existing, popular, Green line, another Luas line serving Rathgar/Teranure and Rathfarnham were built with the money, it would greatly improve public transport for those neglected areas **AND** divert current and future traffic from the Green line, ensuring an upgraded Luas line would suffice.

The "Luas 'After' Household Survey September – November 2006" surveyed Rathfarnham as a control area and found:

*"Looking at the individual areas within the Control Sample, the most dramatic fall-off has been among residents of Rathfarnham. From being the most satisfied in 2004 (91%), they have now become the least satisfied (59%). A review of potential improvements to the area that would have a positive impact on residents suggests that of the three Control Areas, Rathfarnham residents appear the most exercised by matters of transport and access. Mention of improvements such as access to the city, to adjacent areas, and to the airport and access to transport modes, particularly the Luas and train/DART, is significantly ahead of Lucan and Drumcondra. **Indeed, of all the improvements listed, access to Luas is top of the overall wish list for Rathfarnham residents (mentioned by 77%).** The fact that they are tantalisingly close to the Green Line catchment may well have fuelled this desire." (Page 6)*

2) Green Line enforced obsolescence of 1.2 km of track from Charlemont Place to St Stephen's Green, constructed at vast expense.

The proposed plan will render practically unused the remaining Luas green line between Charlemont Place and St Stephens green. Why would anyone travelling to the city centre from the south not just stay on the train to St Stephen's Green, rather than change at Charlemont Place? The "Luas 'After' Household Survey Sept – Nov 2006" clearly shows that a majority of south-north trips are to the city centre.

3) Flawed vision of driverless trains.

It is claimed in the report that driverless trams (which would be the obvious choice) will require "full segregation" of passengers at stops (walls with sliding door opening to match train doors). Given the rapid evolution of driverless technology, whereby cars are already safely travelling on public roads with no segregation, it seems a huge waste to plan to build this "segregation" infrastructure, which should not be needed.

3) MY community divided.

Were the proposed plan to go ahead then my townland of Ranelagh/Rathmines would be very greatly adversely socially affected. My local shopping street of Dunville Avenue would cease to become a viable shopping street, with the likely closure of long established and much-used shops like Morton's and Rosalin's. Dunville Avenue is at the heart of my local Belgrave community and I would be effectively isolated from many friends who live the "other side of the tracks". This will physically divide this "Belgrave" community down the middle. Vague suggestions that "lifts" might be provided for pedestrians and cyclists are not practical solutions.

4) Road Connections by Car

In the morning rush hour access to Donnybrook and the east of the city (Docklands) would become almost impossible, since the one remaining nearby road-rail crossing would be at the Ranelagh Triangle, already a huge peak hour bottleneck. Even with the current available Dunville Avenue connection, it usually takes 15-30 minutes to reach the Morehampton Road in the morning. This time would certainly double were Dunville avenue to be cut off to traffic permanently.

There are many more places, including Cowper Road, where pedestrians and cyclists can safely cross the Luas tracks which would be lost were "full segregation" to be enforced.

Conclusions

The critical issues I raise in points 3 & 4 could be alleviated by continuing the underground section of the Metro all the way to Milltown, with no stops from St

Stephens Green. This would have an important benefit of improving airport/city centre journey times from Sandyford.

However, on balance, I feel a MUCH better solution is to **end the Swords/ Airport Metro at St Stephen's Green**, connecting there with a slightly upgraded Green line and a new "Blue " line, following the R110 west from Stephens green, then out New Street, the R137 to Terenure and on to the R114 to Rathfarnham.