

## Gary Gannon Metrolink Submission

Dear Minister

I am contacting you in relation to the recently announced plans for MetroLink and the impact that these plans, as are currently proposed, will have on a large part of the northside of Dublin. I must state that I am strongly in favour of the MetroLink project. The North Side of Dublin has, for many years, been overlooked in the allocation of public transport resources. This does not mean however, that we will accept MetroLink at any cost and that is the reason I am writing to you today.

As the plans currently stand, there is provision for a tunnel boring launch site and metro station at a site referred to as Griffith Park West, St. Mobhi Road, Glasnevin. The site, as I am sure you are aware, is home to the Na Fianna GAA club, along with Scoil Mobhí and Scoil Chaitríona and includes a pitch for Home Farm FC. It is also adjacent to the Whitehall College of Further Education.

I believe it to be incomprehensible that neither the NTA, TII nor indeed your Department thought it necessary to engage in meaningful pre-consultation with any of the aforementioned organisations before the plans for MetroLink were publically announced. Indeed, it is very much seen as an insult to the huge voluntary efforts that go in to making this a successful and vibrant community, that state agencies could treat them in this manner. The shameful neglect to inform those affected will mean that the agencies that are responsible for the delivery of MetroLink, both of which operate under your remit, will find it extremely difficult to build trust in the community as the project progresses.

The prospect of Na Fianna GAA club and Home Farm FC losing the use of their playing pitches during the construction of MetroLink is utterly unacceptable. Na Fianna, in particular is at the heart of the community in this part of north Dublin. The club

has a huge membership with hundreds of parents and children using the club on a weekly basis. It is an intrinsic part of family life for many and an important component of the social fabric of the Glasnevin, Drumcondra, Whitehall, Phibsboro and Ballygall areas.

On a personal note, myself and my partner Rachel purchased a home in Glasnevin this time last year- as we intend to build our family, it was the sporting assets of Na Fianna and the schools along Mobhi Road that added significant attraction to this area for us. That this is a risk now as a consequence of this decision, is a source of significant anxiety to us both.

As Minister with responsibility for sport, I am sure that you understand the role that sporting clubs up and down the country play in the life of the community. To uproot these clubs and deny them access to their facilities for six years will simply not be tolerated and the plans must be reconfigured to recognise this. In addition to the impacts on the sporting clubs, the impact that the launch site would have on the schools is extremely problematic and would undermine the safety and viability of the schools. The disruption which the extensive and long term works would cause, along with the access issues to what is a heavily used campus of activity for children and adults, is unconscionable.

Minister, I would ask that you engage with the TII and NTA and address the need to find an alternative solution which will not have such an overwhelmingly negative impact on an entire community, I would respectfully ask that this issue be resolved as a matter of urgency so that there is no further delay in the delivery of a public transport system that the city desperately needs.

I look forward to a response at your earliest convenience.

Yours faithfully,

Councillor Gary Gannon