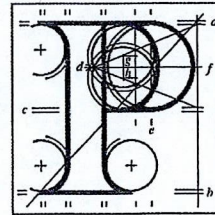


Our Case Number: ABP-310286-21



**An
Bord
Pleanála**

Niall Collins
Red House Hill
Patrickswell
Co. Limerick

Date: 21st July 2021

Re: Railway works and all works necessary to eliminate and, where necessary, upgrade seven numbered level crossings and carry out all associated and ancillary works along a 24-kilometre section of the Dublin to Cork Railway Line.
Fantstown, Thomastown, Ballyhay, Newtown, Ballycoskery (Ballyhea Village), Shinanagh and Buttevant, Co. Cork and Co. Limerick.

Dear Sir,

An Bord Pleanála has received your recent letter in relation to the above-mentioned case.

The contents of your letter have been noted.

Please be advised that copies of all submissions / observations received in relation to the application will be made available for public inspection at the offices of Cork County Council and Limerick City and County Council and at the offices of An Bord Pleanála when they have been processed by the Board.

More detailed information in relation to strategic infrastructure development can be viewed on the Board's website: www.pleanala.ie.

If you have any queries in relation to the matter, please contact the undersigned officer of the Board.

Please quote the above mentioned An Bord Pleanála reference number in any correspondence or telephone contact with the Board.

Yours faithfully,

Kieran Somers
Executive Officer
Direct Line: 01-873 7250

RA03

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64 Marlborough Street
Dublin 1
D01 V902

LDG-041786-21.



Minister of State
Niall Collins TD



An Bord Pleanála,
64 Marlborough St,
Dublin 1.
8th July 2021

AN BORD PLEANÁLA	
LDG-	_____
ABP-	_____
08 JUL 2021	
Fee: €	Type: _____
Time: 14.14	By: Harrel

Railway Order – Dublin to Cork Railway Line (Eliminate and Upgrade of Level Crossings between Limerick Junction and Mallow) Order 2021 (XC201 Thomastown and the XC187 Fantstown)

Dear Sir/Madam,

I would like to provide the following submission in relation to the XC201 Thomastown Upgrade and the XC187 Fantstown proposed closure as outlined in the Railway Order.

In January 2020, the elected members of the Cappamore Kilmallock Municipal Area of Limerick City and County Council invited Irish Rail and Jacobs to attend their Municipal District meeting to discuss the project, in particular, Thomastown and Fantstown Rail Crossings. Subsequently two motions were passed by the members outlining their concerns and that of the local community. I fully agree with the positions taken by the Councillors. The text of these motions have been sent to you by the Council and Councillors.

(XC187) Fantstown Rail Crossing.

In 2009, the elected members of the Kilmallock Area (Limerick County Council) unanimously rejected the proposed extinguishment of the public right of way due to the concerns of the residents living in the area and how it would affect them. They also highlighted our concerns at the subsequent Oral Hearing that took place regarding the proposed extinguishment of the public right of way.

Following recent meetings with elected members and the residents of the Fantstown area, concerns are still being highlighted to us as elected members:

1. Division of the parish, including rural isolation.
2. Long delays and waiting times at the rail crossing.
3. The imminent closure would result in two cul de sacs.
4. Access for emergency services.

(XC201) Thomastown Rail Crossing.

Following a recent meeting with elected members and residents of the Thomastown community, (Appendix 3), the following points were highlighted to us:

Concerns with the width of the road which is not wide enough for two vehicles to pass safely and as this is a rural area there are a number of farms in close proximity to the rail crossing with a significant movement of agriculture machinery, including milk trucks, animal feed deliveries, tractor and trailers during silage season etc. The volume of agricultural machinery will also increase on this road especially during the busy harvesting season which further outlines the importance of having a wider two lane road.

The new junction planned for the Charleville - Kilmallock road (R515) is designed in an unsafe way as it will cause stacking of cars when a vehicle is turning off the R515 onto the new road.

The Effin community has been linked by the railway crossing for a long number of years and the amenities and services are all on the south side of the railway crossing (i.e. primary school, GAA facilities, church etc.). This new road is a major step forward in uniting what was a divided Parish and the volume of traffic will increase tenfold at a minimum as a result of this proposed development and therefor in the interest of health and safety for road users a wider two lane road is essential.

In your consideration of this Railway Order please have regards for the Limerick County Development Plan that was passed in 2010 with the aim of setting out a framework for proper planning and sustainable development in County Limerick and the Vision Statement as follows:

"Limerick County Council will adopt a positive and sustainable approach to balanced development thereby enhancing the lives of people who live in, work in and visit the County, whilst protecting the natural and built environment."

Yours Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Niall Collins', with a stylized flourish at the end.

NIALL COLLINS TD
MINISTER OF STATE