

**Iarnrod Eireann (Irish Rail) Dart +
National Transport Authority Briefing
15 November 2023**

Rail Forum Member update note

Irish Rail have been on a market sounding in connection with the Dart+ Extension project. This has included briefings and selected 1:1s in Lisbon, Madrid, London and Dublin.

The session was hosted by Hilton Sanders, PMO / Systems Lead and commenced with video messages from both the Minister for Transport, Eamon Ryan and Irish Rail CEO, Jim Meade, both highlighting the capacity creation of the Dart+ programme and its importance to sustainability strategies.

Gary O'Halloran, Commercial & Planning Manager, Dart+ provided an overview which outlined the secured funding that the National Development Plan will provide (Euro165b) including its allocation to transport (Euro35bn). Gary outlined the operational picture of Irish Rail including recent investment in EMUs and its national government target of 51% reduction in carbon emissions.

Colm Reynold, Programme Director, Dart+ further advised that the Dart+ project, which entails tripling the existing Dart footprint of 50km, to 150km seeks to both double capacity AND significantly support climate change targets through moving away from diesel vehicles but also driving a reduction in car use. This is already in place with two fleet orders (185 EMUs and EEMUs) and a potential for up to 750 with Alstom.

Michael Finn, Programme Manager, provided very thorough overviews of each of the four elements of the Dart+ project:

- West – this is a 40km stretch of electrified railway, with 12 stations, removal of 6 level crossings, 12 electrical substations, new pedestrian footbridges and underpasses. This will deliver an upgrade from 6 trains to 12 trains per hour, and allow growth from 4500 passenger journeys to 14000. Anticipated value Euro *unknown*
- South West – this is 20km stretch of electrified railway, 6 new substations, 6 bridge works and 6 new substations. There is a widening project, 4 km, delivering 4 track and involving 5 bridge reconstructions as well as 2km of pile retained walls and lowered track. Anticipated value Euro1bn.
- Coastal North – This is a 37km extension of OLE, 8 new substations and 1 bridge reconstruction. A further 4 stations are provided for as well as a depot. Anticipated value Euro600m.
- Coastal South – This section is already electrified and operational but the project seeks to double vehicle frequency and further mitigate the single track stretch between the terminus and penultimate station (Bray). All 7 level crossings to be removed and replaced with underpasses.

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Colm outlined the key milestones and indicative timeframes:

	West	South West	North Coastal	South Coastal
Prelim Design	Achieved	Achieved	2024	2025
Railway Order Application*	Submitted, pending response	Submitted, pending response	Submitting 2024	Submitting 2025
Tendering	2024	2025	Staggered accordingly	Staggered accordingly
Construction	Staggered accordingly	Staggered accordingly	Staggered accordingly	Staggered accordingly

*Planning Application process

Tom Carey, Advisory Consultant from Turner & Townsend provided an update on the Procurement Strategy Development.

They recognise that this is a complex and challenging programme which will require a collaborative partnership approach. They see the market events as a mechanism to effectively consult with market and have on completion (today), they will have had 85 1:1s in addition to the 4 events.

Whilst the strategy is not yet confirmed, indicative thinking is as follows:

- Anticipate tendering to commence in Q1 2024
- Combining signalling, telecoms & electrification framework Euro750 preferred contractor with *possibility* of a reserve contractor to de-risk the programme (unclear how this would work in practice). (Package breakdowns: West Package, Euro300m; South West Package Euro150m, Coastal North Package Euro 300m)
- Civils & structural framework – multiparty framework with 3 contractors (Euro600m)
- Permanent Way framework Euro150m (specifically the widening to 4 tracks, of which Irish Rail will undertake the track lowering).
- Dart West+ Maynooth Depot (D&B, Euro150m; Spencer Dock Station (D&B Euro100m, including challenging piling and track modifications)

Tom outlined some interfaces and free issue of materials;

- CBI Technology partner to replace solid interlocks
- Involvement of Chief Civil Engineer of Irish Rail
- Free issue of some materials indicated
- NEC4 Preferred form of contracting
- Client model – intelligent / integrated client which seeks client partner to assist the process and collaborative working with primary contractor/s.

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Gavin English, Procurement Lead, Dart+ ran through some procurement procedures.

- Anticipated launch of tender in E tenders in early 2024 and standard notification to the tender codes. They will inform participants of the 4 x events as a courtesy.
- 2 stage process with Pre-Qualification that establishes the company tendering, environmental capabilities and identified collaborative partners. Teams/suppliers etc will be expected in this stage so key for interested parties to engage with **ahead of Pre Qualification**.
- Successful tenders will be awarded on the basis of most economically advantageous...with Value for Money being key. This is not necessarily the cheapest...they are seeking right team, right quality, sustainability **and price**.
- Tender clarifications will, unless commercial sensitive, be communicated via the e tendering platform.
- Companies seeking to support client procurement can not be part of the contractor alliances/JV/Consortia.

Hilton closed the session by reiterating the project is strategic, government backed (all political parties) and financially supported. Whilst they are seeking value for money, they recognise that a fair risk reward profile is required.

Q&A Panel

This was substantial and few questions /responses can be found below

- Frameworks will also have mini tenders thereafter
- The power requirements for 26 substations is already being put in place with off grid work occurring now.
- Many questions regarding engaging with consortia, SMEs and supply chain. Whilst there may be some mechanisms to engage with wider audiences (recognising Spain/ Portugal/Ireland and UK as event locations), there was not currently a policy regarding SMEs (regarding SME involvement, protection of, minimum participation, scoring enhancements for bids using SMEs).
- No anticipated policy regarding innovation.
- No anticipated policy to support or instruct on local content.
- No plans to release the criteria ahead of PQ stage.
- Depot pre-tender underway.
- No restriction on lots (*except where there is a client/contractor conflict of interest).

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National Transport Authority

Eoin Gillard, Assistant Director Transport Investment for NTA presented about some wider transport infrastructure opportunities – including Metrolink, LUAS and bus. These are also borne out of the Transport planning document (2021-2030) which set out the Euro35bn mentioned previously. Of that sum, Euro15bn is allocated to NTA, and Euro7bn is allocated to Irish Rail (Euro3bn and Light Rail Euro4bn).

Metrolink

North Dublin tunnel involves single bore tunnel, with 16 stations (11 underground). This will require 8 substations and will be 12 km in length. A separate company will be formed for this project.

LUAS Light Rail

This extension will be 4km, with 4 new stops. The Railway Order is to be submitted in Q1, 2024 with an indicative timeframe for procurement and market consultation in late 2024.

LUAS Cork

This 18km stretch will have 23 stops and include a section in the city centre that is catenary free. This project is at preferred route stage with consultation in 2024.

Luas Lucan

This is a 16km stretch with 15-18 stops and estimated at Euro1-3bn investment. This is in early project station with consultants recently appointed.

There are Bus Livery opportunities in Dublin.

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