



**Comhairle Cathrach
& Contae Phort Láirge**
Waterford City
& County Council

Chief Executive's Report

CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT ON SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED ON PART VIII
PLANNING APPLICATION FOR THE SOUTH EAST GREENWAY ACCESS RAMP
AT ABBEY ROAD, FERRYBANK, WATERFORD
SEPTEMBER 2021

1. INTRODUCTION

This Chief Executive's Report forms part of the statutory process as required by Part XI of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) and Part VIII of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

The Chief Executive's Report summarises and details the outcomes of the public consultation on the Part VIII Planning Application relating to proposed South East Greenway Access Ramp, Abbey Road, Ferrybank Waterford.

- A description of the nature and extent of the proposed development including a plan of the proposed development and map of the area to which it relates is contained in Section 1.2 and Appendix A.
- An evaluation of whether or not the proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area is contained in Section 1.4.1.
- The screening determination on why Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required is set out in Section 1.5.
- A list of the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations is set out in Table 2.1.
- A summary of the issues raised, and the response of the Chief Executive is set out in Table 2.2. and Table 2.3; and;
- A recommendation as to whether or not the proposed development should proceed with as proposed, or as varied or modified as recommended in the report or should not proceed with, as the case is set out in Section 3.

1.1 Description of the Proposed Works - Consultation

The notice of the Part VIII planning application for the Greenway Access Ramp was advertised in the Waterford News and Star, on Tuesday 29th June 2021 and placed on public display from 29th June 2021 to 27th July 2021.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development were made available for inspection or purchase, at the Council offices in Waterford City, Dungarvan and Kilkenny Area Office, Ferrybank during public opening hours for the period 29th June to 27th July inclusive (excluding Bank and Public Holidays). A copy of the plans and particulars of the proposed development could also be viewed on the Waterford City and County Council website at <http://waterfordcouncil.ie/projects/public-consultations/index.htm>

Submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development, dealing with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the development would be situated may be made in writing to the local authority, or online at <http://bit.ly/NorthQuays-Part8s> no later than 10th August 2021.

Notice was given to prescribed bodies in accordance with Article 81 of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and circulated internally within the various departments of WCCC including Planning, Heritage, Roads and Environment.

Prior to the publication of the notice of the proposed development, public consultation involved:

- Notified Waterford Metropolitan Council at the June 2021 meeting of the intention to commence the Part 8 process in relation to a ramp linking the Abbey Road to Greenway.

- Extensive public consultation on the South East Greenway dating back to 2016 when the project was first mooted and ongoing to today in 2021. A number of public meetings were held in Slieverue and New Ross followed by door to door consultations with those who requested same. This consultative process has been ongoing with landowners, residents groups and individuals being consulted and kept informed of progress. This current Part 8 for the access ramp is within the site boundary of the Part 8 for the wider South East Greenway (previously known as the Waterford to New Ross Greenway)

1.2 Summary of the Proposed Development

The nature and extent of the proposed works, as described in the public notice is as follows:

Construction of an access ramp to serve the South East Greenway at Abbey Road, Abbeylands, Ferrybank.

The proposed development will comprise the following: -

- 2 metre wide access ramp to access the South East Greenway
- Ramp to be 90 metres in length at a gradient of 1 in 20
- 1.4 metre high timber fence to Greenway side of ramp
- 87 metre length gabion wall to allow for construction of ramp
- 2.5 metre wide opening in existing stone wall at Abbey road bridge
- Existing footpath on Abbey Road to be widened to 2 metres to school entrance
- Chicane barrier to slow cyclists down to dismount before reaching exit on to Abbey Road
- Public lighting, drainage, temporary fencing, signage and all associated site development works

Refer to **Appendix A** of this report which includes a plan and sections of the proposed development and map of the area.

1.3 Other greenway related planning applications

The South East Greenway is proposed to provide a safe recreational facility for tourists and local users to walk or cycle from New Ross to Waterford along the former, now disused railway line that traverses through Ferrybank and bound to the north and south by residential development and zone development land. It is proposed to link with the existing Waterford Greenway from Waterford to Dungarvan via a Sustainable Transport Bridge over the River Suir.

There are a number of recent planning permissions that provide for this interconnected greenway from New Ross through the North Quays, over the Sustainable Transport Bridge and onto Bilberry and the existing Waterford Greenway to Dungarvan. There are also pedestrian and cycling linkages to the proposed transportation hub to the North of the SDZ site. Relevant recent planning permissions that allow and promote this connectivity include the following:

2018 P8 Ref 07/16 - Part 8 planning permission granted by Kilkenny County Council for the development of the disused railway line on lands which extend from within Waterford

City and County Council's administrative boundary (Abbey Road) through to Rosbercon, New Ross as a cycle and pedestrian route.

The proposed ramp is located to the east of Abbey road and will provide sloped access from the end of this section of the proposed Greenway, directly onto Abbey Road adjacent to existing schools, care facilities as well as local shopping outlets and services.

2019 P8 Ref 09/18 - Part 8 planning permission granted by Waterford City and County Council for the Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) Access and Road infrastructure Improvements; providing vehicular, pedestrian and greenway access to the North Quays SDZ site.

This application incorporates setting back the existing Abbey School boundary wall and widening the existing footpath to the entrance of Abbey School. Agreement has been secured with the school to accommodate these works.

2019 P8 Ref 04/19 – Part 8 Planning permission granted by Waterford City and County Council for the construction of a new transport hub that incorporates the integration of the Waterford to New Ross Greenway across the site.

2019 Ref ABP-303274-18 - An Bord Pleanála grant of planning permission for a proposed Sustainable Transport Bridge that accommodates pedestrians, cyclists, an electric shuttle bus service and a plaza at the South Quay landing point.

2019 P8 - Part 8 Planning permission granted by Waterford City and County Council for the construction of cycling and pedestrian corridor from the existing greenway car park at Bilberry to the proposed South Quay Plaza, Waterford City.

2020 PI Ref 19/928 - Planning permission granted by Waterford City and County Council to Falcon Real Estate Ireland Ltd for a mixed use development within the SDZ site. It incorporates a riverside promenade along the entire length of the site and a pedestrian and cycle route linking to existing and future 'Greenways' and proposed Sustainable Transport Bridge.

There is also provision for 2 no. pedestrian connections across the railway line linking to Dock Road and the proposed Transport Hub development as well as connection to the two access points at granted under Part 8 09/18 SDZ Access and Road Infrastructure Improvements.

1.4 Planning Policy

A review of key national, regional and local planning policy documents has been undertaken. The key policy documents relating to the proposed development are discussed below.

The South East Greenway development is part of Government policy entitled 'Smarter Travel: A sustainable Transport Future' that ran from 2009 to 2020 and identified certain key goals and objective to introduce a national sustainable transport network. The National Cycle Policy (NCP) was implemented in conjunction with the Smarter Travel policy, whose mission aimed to 'create a strong cycling culture in Ireland' which also 'encouraging recreational cycling'.

Project Ireland 2040: National Planning Framework (NPF) and the National Development Plan 2018-2027

The NPF is the Government's long-term strategic planning framework guiding national, regional and local planning and investment decisions over the next 25 years. The NPF companion document is the National Development Plan, a ten-year strategy for public capital investment of almost €116 Billion known as the 'Project Ireland 2040'. Their joint publication is intended to create a unified and coherent plan for the country aligning the investment strategy with our strategic planning documents.

The five cities of Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Galway and Waterford will be targeted to accommodate 50% of overall national growth (Waterford Metropolitan area to grow by 30,000-35,000 people by 2040) between them which will have implications for overall population and employment growth and new housing provision in these locations. The key future growth enablers for Waterford City include:

“Delivering the North Quays SDZ regeneration project for integrated, sustainable development together with supporting infrastructure, including a new pedestrian bridge or a pedestrian/public transport bridge over the River Suir”

“Progressing the sustainable development of new greenfield areas for housing and the development of supporting public transport and infrastructure”

The future population targets for the north side of the City are an important prerequisite for sustainable mobility and to create walkable urban environments. The proposed development will connect and provide an alternative and more sustainable mode of transport between existing and zone residential lands with neighbouring schools, care facilities, local services and in the longer term to the mixed use commercial SDZ site, transportation hub, sustainable transport bridge and Waterford City Centre itself. It will support a modal shift towards walking, cycling and public transport framed in the context of a compact sustainable concentric city model.

Planning Land Use and Transportation Strategy 2004 – 2020 (PLUTS)

The PLUTS was adopted by Waterford and Kilkenny councils in 2004 in order to provide a vision and strategy for the development of Waterford City and Environs up to 2020 and is currently integrated into the Regional Planning Guidelines. It seeks to readdress the current spatial imbalance bringing the northern side of the River Suir fully within the economic and social ambit of an expanded Waterford City. Core Principles of the PLUTS include the promotion of a concentric city – balanced growth with connectivity between North and South of City including Road and pedestrian linkages.

Transforming Waterford - Integrated Transport Proposal

Transforming Waterford provides high level costings relating to transportation proposals some of which are based on the PLUTS and strategic City infrastructure requirements deemed necessary for the sustainable development of the City.

In accordance with regional and national planning policies it identifies the importance of the link between the existing and the proposed Greenway that traverses through the heart of the City and onto New Ross. It is a critical corridor to connect and encourage connectivity between the North and South of the City.

Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy

Waterford Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy aims to address all land transport modes up to 2040, being prepared by the NTA in collaboration with Waterford City and County Council, Kilkenny County Council, the Southern Regional Assembly and Transport Infrastructure Ireland. The objectives include the provision of a metropolitan area cycle network and the development of a more walkable city.

2013 Waterford City Development Plan

It is and has been an objective of the 2013 Waterford City Development Plan to improve the link from the Greenway to the City Centre. Extracts from specific objectives in relation to 'sustainable modes of transport' are referenced below:

Objective OBJ 6.2.1

To provide a citywide cycle network to link all areas of the city to each other via main routes. Existing and proposed extension of the City's cycle network is also outlined on the zoning objectives map. The proposed network is both radial and orbital, with some elements located off street in amenity areas.

Objective OBJ 6.2.2

To expand the network to connect the city centre to any proposed North Quay development with a foot/cycle bridge.

Objective OBJ 6.2.4

To provide cycling and walking networks between neighbourhood areas, further negating the need for car based journeys.

In addition to these objectives the plan also promotes permeability, especially where feasible next to schools, local shopping centres and existing and proposed employment locations.

Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022- 2028

In June 2021 the Draft Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 was placed on public display. There are a number of relevant transport objectives relating to the provision of cycling and pedestrian infrastructure.

Trans 07 - Supporting Active Travel

We will promote walking and cycling as efficient, healthy and environmentally friendly modes of transport by delivering a comprehensive network of safe walking and cycling routes, and investigate the potential for quiet routes which will be a high quality, fully connected and inclusive, across the Waterford City and County with associated placemaking, green infrastructure corridors and public realm improvements in accordance with best accessibility practice and promotion of the initiatives contained within Smarter Travel, A Sustainable Transport Future 2009 – 2020 or any update thereof. All proposals shall ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network.

Trans 09 - Connectivity and Permeability

Ensure that all developments can provide full connectivity/permeability to the adjacent road network (pedestrian, cycle and vehicular) and/or to adjacent lands which are zoned for development and lands which may be zoned for development in the future.

Trans 37 – Road and Street Network

We will prioritise road and traffic safety measures on all roads/streets across the City and County. In particular we will support and facilitate ‘School Streets’ in the vicinity and on the approaches to school premises based on the Fingal School Streets Pilot Project (2019).

Ferrybank Local Area Plan (LAP) 2017 - 2023

This Plan has a strong emphasis on Green Infrastructure and encourages ‘modal shift’ from private motor cars to more sustainable transport options. The plan outlines the ‘blue print’ for future bus lanes, bike lanes, pedestrian walk ways, cycle lanes and Greenways throughout the Area and also promotes the concept of neighbourhood connectivity using cycle and pedestrian permeability. Section 10.3.1 of the plan specifically deals with ‘Green Routes’ and infrastructure.

The Plan supports number of existing plans and strategies that are relevant to the area, they include:

- Objective: 1D *‘To maximise the connectivity between Ferrybank, the City Centre and the North Quays SDZ and to take account of the opportunities afforded by the planning scheme for the SDZ.’*
- Objective:1E *‘To seek to implement in full the provisions of the Waterford Planning Land Use and Transportation Study 2004 (PLUTS) and any review thereof undertaken.’*
- *‘The objectives to support a greenway into the site (via the disused railway (Waterford to New Ross) line that runs through the Belview area.’*

North Quays Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme (2018)

The North Quays Strategic Development Zone (SDZ) Planning Scheme was adopted by Waterford City and County Council in February 2018. The Planning Scheme sets out a vision to:

- To create a sustainable, compact extension to the City Centre that will serve a future population of 83,000 people.
- A regeneration catalyst for the City and Region and the establishment of a sustainable modern city quarter.
- Creation of an integrated multi-modal transport hub designed to sustainably meet the access requirements of The City.
- Building on the context and the riverside location of the site to create a high-quality urban quarter as a natural extension of the City Centre.

The Planning Scheme’s vision is supported by a range of principal goals including:

- *To provide for sustainable patterns of movement and access with priority for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport.*



Figure 1.1 Transport Hub and Access Strategy – Source: North Quays Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme 2018

1.4.1 Evaluation of the Planning Policy

Having regard to the provisions of national, regional as well as the current and draft Waterford Development Plans and the North Quays SDZ Planning Scheme as described above, this evaluation has found that the proposed development supports and is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the proposed development relates. It will provide additional permeability and connectivity within Ferrybank, local schools, services and to the city centre and aid in the modal shift to more sustainable modes of transport.

1.5 Screening Determination

Waterford City and County Council carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report supported by an AA screening in accordance with requirements of Section 120(1B)(b)(i) and has determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Accordingly, it has determined that EIA is not required in respect of this proposed development. The EIA report and recommendation of the screening were made available with the Part VIII planning application for the duration of the consultation period.

2. SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

A total of 3 submissions were received within the statutory timeframe. The person/ organisation and/ or prescribed bodies who made the submissions are detailed in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Submissions received

Submission Ref	Name	Address
Prescribed Bodies		
PB 01	Developments Applications Unit, Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	Government Offices, Newtown Road, Wexford, Y35 AP90
PB 02	Kilkenny County Council	County Hall, John Street, Kilkenny
Public Submissions		
PS 01	Martin Power	Powers Funeral Directors, Abbey Road, Ferrybank, Waterford X91 HH56

A summary of the issues raised, and the Chief Executive response and any recommendations are provided in **Table 2.2 and Table 2.3.**

Table 2.2 Summary of Prescribed Bodies Submissions, the Chief Executive's Response, and Recommendations

Submission Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
Prescribed Bodies			
PB01	Developments Applications Unit, Dept of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	<p>The proposed development is in close proximity to a Recorded Monument (WA009-008 Religious House) that is subject to statutory protection.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. WCCC shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist to supervise all demolition and site clearance works and carry out monitoring of all associated groundworks. Any archaeological features / materials exposed shall be fully recorded. 2. The National Monuments Service shall be notified in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of site preparation works, including any demolition and site clearance works. This will allow sufficient time to obtain the necessary monitoring licence. 3. The archaeologist shall submit a final written report to the Planning Authority and to the National Monuments Service following the completion of all archaeological monitoring/supervision of works on site. <p>The Local Authority shall have regard to the archaeological policy of the Department of Culture, Heritage & the Gaeltacht as outlined in their policy document entitled "<i>Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage</i>", (1999). In particular preservation is –situ of archaeological remains.</p>	<p>Noted.</p> <p>Recommendation: No change to project - WCCC will comply with the requirements and conditions of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage.</p>
PB 02	Kilkenny County Council	<p>KCC supports the proposed development and makes the following observations.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Widening the existing footpath to 2 m will result in the Abbey Road carriageway being reduced to between 5.4 an 5.8 m in width that may limit access to this area by larger vehicles. The width should be maintained at 6.5 and 7 m width to facilitate continued two-way HGV traffic. 2. Advise that a drop kerb be provided at the roadway edge for cyclist and should be detailed at final design. 3. A sign advising cyclist to dismount should be considered. 4. The policies and objectives of Kilkenny's Local area and County Plans should be considered and incorporated into the final design. 	<p>Noted: The Part 8 application for SDZ Access and Infrastructural Improvements (P 8 09/18) allows for the set back of the Abbey School boundary wall to widening the existing Abbey Road footpath and connect with this proposed greenway access ramp. It is part of the main construction contract.</p> <p>In the interest of safety this element of the main construction contract works should be constructed at the earliest opportunity and coordinate with the construction of the access ramp.</p> <p>The implementation of the footpath widening</p>

Submission Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
Prescribed Bodies			
			<p>work will negate the provisions necessary for cyclists e.g. drop kerb, signage, etc.</p> <p>Recommendation: Coordinate with North Quays main construction contract to ensure the widening of the existing Abbey Road footpath shall be implemented at the same time or in advance of the access ramp construction. Policies and objectives of the Kilkenny local and are County plans should be considered and incorporated into the final design.</p>

Table 2.3 Summary of Public Submissions and the Chief Executive's Response, and Recommendations

Submission Ref.	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
Public Submissions			
PS 01	Martin Power	Mr Power is concerned that there is no provision for car parking near this access point and that greenway users will utilise his funeral home parking facility. The nearest public car park is one km away. Seeking solutions or guarantees that his car park won't be used in the absence of any other parking.	<p>The provision of an access ramp at this point will provide an access point to/ from the greenway until such time as the greenway is extended into the SDZ site, City Centre and new Bilberry link to the Waterford Greenway, when additional links will be created.</p> <p>In the short term 1.3 km of the greenway will be constructed and it is envisaged that it will be utilised by the local community as a local cycle/ walkway and will not be a car borne destination.</p> <p>In the longer term a carpark will be constructed at the east end of this stretch of greenway (1.3 km from Abbey Bridge) as well as the provision of below ground car parking in the SDZ site, both facilities will be signposted and cater for car borne visitors to the greenway.</p> <p>Recommendations: The promotion of this greenway access point will not be signposted or promoted on existing vehicular routes. The situation will be reviewed on completion of the North Quays and full South East Greenway construction works.</p>

3. RECOMMENDATION

Having regard to the provisions of national, regional and local policy (including the current Waterford City Development Plan 2013-2019, Ferrybank Local Area Plan, the North Quays SDZ Planning Scheme (2018) and PLUTS) as described above and relevant Ministerial guidance, this evaluation has found that the proposed development supports and is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates. The recommendations included in **Tables 2.2** and **Table 2.3** that **include a number of minor modifications** are recommended to be included.

Recommended amendments include:

1. WCCC shall comply with all requirements of the Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage that include the following conditions:
 - i. WCCC shall engage a suitably qualified archaeologist to supervise all demolition and site clearance works on site and to carry out monitoring (licensed under the National Monuments Acts 1930-2014) of all associated groundworks. Any archaeological material/features exposed during the course of these works shall be fully recorded by the archaeologist.
 - ii. The National Monuments Service shall be notified in writing at least four weeks prior to the commencement of site preparation works, including any demolition and site clearance works. This will allow the archaeologist sufficient time to obtain the necessary licence to carry out any required archaeological monitoring.
 - iii. The archaeologist shall submit a final written report to the Planning Authority and to the National Monuments Service following the completion of all archaeological monitoring/supervision of works on site. All resulting and associated archaeological costs shall be borne by the developer.
2. Prior to commencement of the proposed development there shall be coordination with North Quays main construction contract to ensure the widening of the existing Abbey Road footpath shall be implemented at the same time or in advance of the access ramp construction.
3. Policies and objectives of the Kilkenny local area and County plans shall be considered and incorporated, where relevant, into the final design.
4. The promotion of this greenway access point shall not be signposted or promoted on existing vehicular routes. The situation shall be reviewed on completion of the North Quays development and full South East Greenway construction works.

It is recommended that the proposed development should proceed as amended in this Report.

4. NEXT STEPS

The members of a local authority shall, within 6 weeks of the receipt of this Report consider the proposed development and the contents of this Chief Executive's Report.

Following the consideration of this Chief Executive's Report, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's Report, unless the local

authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, other than as recommended in this Report, or decides not to proceed with the development.

For a resolution to have effect as per above, the resolution has to be passed not later than 6 weeks after the receipt of this Report, and in the case of a resolution not to proceed with a proposed development, it shall state the reasons for such resolution.

APPENDIX A

Proposed Development Drawings

Drawings List

Drawing Number	Drawing Title
WCC01-MWP-ZZ-01-DR-C-5600 S2 P01	Site Location Map
WCC01-MWP-ZZ-01-DR-C-5601 S2 P01	Proposed Abbey Road Access to the Greenway Sheet No 1
WCC01-MWP-ZZ-01-DR-C-5602 S2 P01	Proposed Abbey Road Access to the Greenway Sheet No 2
WCC01-MWP-ZZ-01-DR-C-5603 S2 P01	Greenway Details - Typical Sections





