



## PROPOSED WALKWAY AT ARDMORE BEACH IN THE TOWNLAND OF DUFFCARRICK



**CHIEF EXECUTIVE REPORT  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT ACT, 2000 (AS AMENDED), PART XI  
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT REGULATIONS 2001 (AS AMENDED),  
PART 8**

27<sup>th</sup> September 2023

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## 1.0 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 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

This Chief Executive's Report provides for:

- 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 (Section 1 and Appendix A).
- An evaluation of whether or not the proposed development is consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area having regard to the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 (Section 1.3).
- The screening determination on why Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) is not required (Section 1.4).
- A list of the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations (Table 2.1).
- A summary of the issues raised and the response of the Chief Executive (Table 2.2 and Table 2.3).
- 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 may be (Section 3).

## 2.0 DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED WORKS

The notice of the development under Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, and the requirements of Part 8, Article 81 & Article 120(3) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, for the proposed beach walk at Duffcarrick, Ardmore was advertised in the Dungarvan Leader and Dungarvan Observer, the local newspapers on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023 and was placed on public display from the 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023 until the 4<sup>th</sup> of September 2023.

Plans and particulars of the proposed development were available for inspection or purchase, at the Civic offices in Dungarvan between the hours of 9.30am to 4.00pm Monday to Friday for the above period (excluding Bank and Public Holidays).

A copy of the plans and particulars were also made available to view online, on Waterford City and County Council's 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 were to be made in writing to.

- the Director of Economic Development, Waterford City & County Council, 35 The Mall, Waterford
- or by emailing [outdoorrecreation@waterfordcouncil.ie](mailto:outdoorrecreation@waterfordcouncil.ie) on or before 4pm on 18<sup>th</sup> of September 2023 and were to be clearly marked Development of Walkway at Ardmore Beach.

Notice was also given to prescribed bodies in accordance with Article 81 of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended).

## 2.1 SUMMARY OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

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

- Construction of a 2 to 3 metre-wide walkway to extend from Ardmore Car Park at the southern end of the beach to Curragh Car Park at the northern end of the beach over a distance of approximately 870 metres, in the townland of Duffcarrick, Co. Waterford
  - The surface material will be robust, non-slip, accessible and suitable for use in a marine environment e.g. concrete/tarmacadam or similar.
  - The full extent of the walkway will be designed to be fully accessible for users with reduced mobility.
  - The design includes beach access at key locations.

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- The design will include the following ancillary infrastructure:
    - o Low level lighting.
    - o Amenity/look-out areas with benches, seating etc.
    - o Posts with lifebuoys.
    - o Handrails/balustrades where necessary.

**Appendix A** of this Report includes a plan of the proposed development and appropriate map of the area.

## 2.2 PLANNING POLICY

The proposed walkway is to extend from Ardmore Car Park at the southern end of the beach to Curragh Car Park at the northern end of the beach over a distance of approximately 870 metres, in the townland of Duffcarrick. It is proposed to construct the walkway on the landward side of the proposed coastal protection works which are planned at the same location. The development will improve the existing informal link between the two car parks.

Ardmore is a coastal, heritage village with a rich history. Ardmore Beach is one of County Waterford's Blue Flag Beaches. Recreational walking infrastructure at Ardmore already includes two of Waterford's most significant walking trails including St. Declan's Way and Ardmore Cliff Walk and the proposal will enhance the available offering.

Under the Waterford City and County Development Plan 2022 – 2028 the route traverses lands zoned Rural Village with a stated objective to protect and promote the character of the Rural Village and promote a vibrant community appropriate to available physical and community infrastructure. The upgrading of the existing informal route is a Specific Development Objective of the Development Plan –

Ardmore Development Objective –

**ADD08** - As opportunities arise, the Council shall provide a promenade/pedestrian walkway from the village centre north along the coastline.

There are other relevant Development Objectives also for Ardmore

**ADD01** - It is an objective of the Council to promote the village as a tourist destination based on its scenic coastal location and ecclesiastical heritage whilst protecting and enhancing these assets.

**ADD03** - It is an objective of the Council to protect and promote the existing public walkways and routes through and around the village, including that related to St Declan's Well and Way.

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There are a number of policies in the Development Plan which support tourism, walkways, coastal access, outdoor recreation etc. and these are listed hereunder;

## **Tourism Policy Objectives**

### **ECON 26 Tourism Product and Infrastructure**

In collaboration with landowners, local communities, relevant stakeholders and social enterprise, we will promote, facilitate, encourage investment, and deliver improvements to our tourism product, infrastructure and facilities, including improved car, bus and bicycle parking, walking and cycling trails, directional signage/information boards, and service/rest facilities. Proposals for development shall ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network.

Tourism product developments and infrastructure/ facilities will be subject to normal planning and environmental criteria. The potential environmental effects of a likely increase in tourists/ tourism-related traffic volumes in particular locations/along particular routes shall be considered and mitigated as appropriate. Such a consideration should include potential impacts on existing infrastructure (including drinking water, wastewater, waste and transport) resulting from tourism proposals.

Any such works shall incorporate and integrate elements of green infrastructure, where appropriate, and be designed in accordance with the principles of universal design. In particular we will continue to advance initiatives such as the INTERREG 'Local Flavours' programme aimed at encouraging, strengthening and delivering investment and improvement to rural economic development and tourism and heritage assets in the following principle (rural cluster) areas and tourism-related initiatives:

- Blackwater Valley
- Waterford Blueways
- Coastal Walks
- Comeragh Uplands
- Waterford Greenway
- Copper Coast Geopark
- Waterford Estuary
- Gaeltacht na nDéise

## **Coast and Marine Policy Objectives**

### **C&M 06 Public Coastal Access**

We will facilitate appropriate public access to the coast and the sustainable development of coastal walkways subject to ecological, Habitats Directive and climate risk assessments.

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## **Amenity Management Policy Objectives**

### **BGI 10 Trail Development and Public Rights of Way**

We will protect public rights of way which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore and riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility. We will work in collaboration with state bodies, development agencies, landowners and local communities to support the maintenance and promotion of existing trails and outdoor recreational amenities. We will examine the sustainable environmental and economic development potential of additional trails and outdoor recreational amenities and associated infrastructure whilst ensuring adherence to best practise principles in relation to upland path repair and management. Derived proposals will ensure no adverse impacts on ecological integrity including the Natura 2000 Network.

### **BGI 13 Community Engagement and Sustainable Amenities**

We will support communities and ensure recreational trails and outdoor recreational amenities and associated facilities are developed in sympathy with the natural environment and do not pose adverse impacts on habitats, species, the ecological integrity of the Natura 2000 Network and landscape amenity or affect ecosystem services including flood risk and climate change impacts such as coastal erosion. In doing so ensuring to realise the positive impacts of development of outdoor recreational amenities and trails including health & wellbeing, social, cultural, economic and tourism benefits as well as enhanced community resilience.

### **BGI 15 Managing our Amenity Assets**

To actively monitor and maintain trail and outdoor recreational amenity management standards and carry out interventions including trail surface repairs, diversion and access management where required.

### **BGI 18 Outdoor Recreation**

To promote outdoor recreation and increase access to the natural environment.

### **BGI 19 Outdoor Recreation Access**

We will ensure that accessibility is taken into account at planning and design stage in the development of all outdoor recreation facilities to ensure that there are opportunities for everyone to engage in the outdoors and facilities are developed for them to do so.

The proposal is consistent with the above Policies and Development Objectives.

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## 2.3 ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT DETERMINATION

Waterford City and County Council has carried out an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) Screening Report in accordance with requirements of Article 120(1B)(b)(i) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and has determined that there is no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment. Accordingly, it has determined that an EIA is not required in respect of this proposed development. The EIA report and recommendation of the screening were made available with the Part 8 planning application for the duration of the consultation period.

An Appropriate Assessment Screening was carried in accordance with Article 250(1) of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) and has determined no potential for significant effects on the conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 sites Helvick Head-Ballyquinn SPA.

The development does extend into the buffer zoned of the Duffcarrick Wetlands but will not result in any works which will impact on same directly or indirectly.

Water Framework Directive Assessment Report. There are no High Status Objective Water Bodies within a 1km buffer of the application site boundary. The HSO Assessment includes HSO Rivers, HSO River Subbasins, HSO Transitional, HSO Lakes, and HSO Coastal.

It is noted that the works extend into a potential Flood Zone but the subject development in itself is not a vulnerable use, will not introduce a new walkway but rather an upgrade of an existing informal arrangement. The proposal will not negatively impact on any third parties and is to be provided in conjunction with approved coastal defences.



### 3.0 SUBMISSIONS RECEIVED

A total number of 8no. submissions were received within the statutory timeframe, 5no. from prescribed bodies and 3no. from the public/stakeholders. The person/organisation and/or prescribed bodies who made the submissions are detailed in Table 2-1 below.

**Table-1 Submissions received within the statutory timeframe**

Submission no.	Name	Address
<b>Prescribed Bodies</b>		
1	Dublin Airport Authority	Cloghran House, Dublin Airport, Co. Dublin
2	Iarnród Éireann	Limerick Junction Railway Station, Limerick Junction, Co. Tipperary, E34 E984
3	Uisce Éireann	Bosca OP 860, Oifig Sheachadta na Cathrach Theas, Cathair, Chorcaí
4	Development Applications Unit	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage
5	Environmental Health Service	HSE, Local Health Office, Cork Road, Waterford X91 VX09
<b>Public Submissions</b>		
1	Ruth Walsh	Submission received by email
2	Dick Lincoln	Star Cottage, Cliff Road, Ardmore, Co. Waterford P36 K598
3	Teresa LeGear Keane and Michael Keane	Duffcarrick, Ardmore, Co. Waterford, P36 VK76. Submission received by email

A summary of the issues raised, and the Chief Executive's response and any recommendation is 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 No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
1	Dublin Airport Authority	No comment to make RE Part 8 proposal.	<b>Noted.</b> <b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.
2	Iarnród Éireann	No comment to make RE Part 8 proposal.	<b>Noted.</b> <b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.
3	Uisce Éireann	<p>Uisce Éireann (UÉ) have reviewed the plans and particulars and have the following observation:</p> <p>UÉ notes the proposed walkway location at its most northern end is very close to a 315mm outfall pipe that is connected to the Curragh Wastewater Pumping Station.</p> <p>It is unclear if the Walkway will interact with this pipe but UÉ does not allow for any potential build over of infrastructure that may inhibit access to the pipe and make it impossible to repair in the event of a pipe failure in the future.</p> <p>UÉ respectfully requests the following condition be included as part of any grant of planning permission.</p> <p>1. The applicant is required to contact Uisce Éireann's Diversions Dept. including submitting a 'Building Near Application' to Uisce Éireann prior to the commencement of the development.</p>	<p><b>Noted.</b> Prior to the works commencing Waterford City and County Council will adhere to the recommendations proposed by Uisce Éireann.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development, prior to commencement of the development consultation with Uisce Éireann will be required by condition.</p>
4	Development Applications Unit	<p>Outlined below are heritage-related observations/recommendations co-ordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated headings.</p> <p>Underwater Archaeology Unit - Wrecks that are less than 100 years old and archaeological objects or their potential</p>	<b>Noted.</b> Prior to the works commencing Waterford City and County Council will adhere to the recommendations proposed by the Department.

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Submission No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
		<p>locations can also be protected under Section 3 of the 1987 (Amendment) Act. Underwater cultural heritage can also encompass historic maritime/fishing infrastructure, bridges and other structures and features and archaeological monuments that lie on land or on the foreshore/underwater. The southern part of the proposed development is proximal to the Recorded Monument WA040-009001- Crannog. Recorded Monuments are afforded statutory protection in the Record of Monuments and Places established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1930-2014. In light of the above the Department recommends that the proposed development is the subject of an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA), to be submitted to this Department at the earliest opportunity to allow for full evaluation of its findings and for our subsequent recommendations to be received and agreed.</p> <p>Archaeological Recommendations</p> <p>1. The developer shall commission an Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) report which shall include the following:</p> <p>a. A desktop assessment that employs archival and historical records, cartographic and aerial photography sources, the topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland and a walkover survey to address the archaeological, including underwater cultural heritage, wrecks, archaeological objects, and built and maritime/industrial heritage of the proposed development area and its environs. The assessment shall include a full inventory and mapping of the sites of all identified archaeological/underwater cultural heritage and built heritage features and structures.</p>	<p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development, archaeological monitoring/investigation will be required by condition.</p>

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Submission No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
		<p>b. Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a final assessment report to this Department describing the findings of the UAIA. The report shall contain an archaeological impact statement that comments on how the extent, location and levels of all proposed works required for the development may impact upon any identified or potential underwater cultural heritage, archaeological or built heritage structures or features. This report should be illustrated with appropriate plans, sections and photographs. Where archaeological materials are shown to be present, further mitigation measures will be required and shall be described in the report. These may include recommendations for institution of appropriate archaeological buffer zones/archaeological exclusion zones, engineering and architectural redesigns to allow for preservation in situ, excavation and/or monitoring as deemed appropriate. No construction works shall commence until this Department has had the opportunity to fully evaluate the findings of the UAIA and our recommendations have been received and agreed by the proponent.</p>	
5	Environmental Health Service	<p>The principle of the project is considered satisfactory.  The description of the project is considered satisfactory.  Public consultation was noted.  The construction phase of the development creates potential temporary emissions which should be managed / mitigated.  Part of the works are in a potential flood zone and works should be carried out at the appropriate time of the year only.  Works should be carried out in accordance with best practice.  The works should be considered in the context of climate change and climate resilience.  The proposal will promote physical activity and potential health gain.</p>	<p><b>Noted.</b> There are coastal protection measures to be provided which will be provided in advance or in conjunction with the proposed walkway, the walkway is not a coastal defence but will be the landward side of same.</p> <p>Construction works and on site operations will be carried out in accordance with best practice.</p> <p>As part of the wider reinstatement works and projects in the area biodiversity enhancement measures can be carried out where appropriate.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.</p>

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Submission No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
		Biodiversity enhancement measures should be included in the project. Mitigation measures to ensure protection of surface and ground waters. Should concerns be raised regarding the impact of the works same should be managed/addressed by a designated person.	

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

Submission No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
1	Ruth Walsh	<p>The author is delighted to see the proposal is going to be developed but requests that the walkway be slightly extended to service the pedestrian access to Healy's Caravan Park. The existing informal walkway in place is hard for persons with mobility issues to use.</p>	<p><b>Noted.</b> At this time the requested works are outside the scope of the proposed Walkway / Part 8 Proposal. Further extension / new coastal walks maybe considered in the future subject to funding.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.</p>
2	Dick Lincoln	<p>The author supports this development.</p> <p>The proposal is a social enhancement and tourism product.</p> <p>Author refers to already existing coastal protection and suggests use of more environmentally friendly form of construction rather than concrete.</p> <p>Author suggests that low level lighting be omitted.</p> <p>Estimate of potential footfall of 50,000+ per month in summer. Raises number of issues.</p> <p>Car parking facilities at present are inadequate. Will need to be enlarged at each end having regard to the Water Activity Centre also.</p> <p>Currently 5 access points proposed. There should be 10 or 1 every 100 metres. Additional ramped accesses at Curragh and at Ardmore end near recently installed picnic benches should be provided.</p> <p>Construction related traffic, parking and storage should not use Main St, existing car parks. Proper base should be set up for construction with independent access from Dungarvan Road.</p> <p>The Construction Management Plan should be subject to stakeholder engagement and publicly available on planning file.</p>	<p><b>Noted.</b> There are coastal protection measures to be provided which will be provided in advance or in conjunction with the proposed walkway, the walkway is not a coastal defence but will be the landward side of same. Appropriate low level lighting will be provided only which shall not negatively impact on visual amenities or ecology. There are wider plans for traffic management, car parking etc. which will be delivered subject to all necessary funding and consents being in place separate to the current proposal. The coastal defences and subject works will ensure appropriate access to the beach. Construction works and on site operations will be carried out in accordance with best practice.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.</p>

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Submission No. / Ref	Name	Summary of Submission	Chief Executive Response & Recommendation
3	Teresa LeGear Keane and Michael Keane	<p>The proposal traverses lands owned by Michael Keane close to the beach front. Teresa LeGear further states that lands were zoned to allow for a tourism development on foot of her engagement in the Development Plan review process.</p> <p>The proposed walkway bisects lands under Michael Keane's ownership and traverses existing beach accesses, 3no. stated. It is stated that vehicular access is currently available to the beach and should be maintained for Michael Keane's tractor in particular.</p> <p>The walkway should not compromise direct access from the zoned lands to the beach. The use of the walkway by bicycles and scooters could represent a risk to persons crossing from the zoned lands to the beach.</p> <p>Save the use of the walkway being limited to walking only 'traffic calming' / measures to reduce speed are required.</p> <p>While landownership and consents are something that needs further discussion it is recognised that the proposal would be an asset to locals and the tourist industry.</p> <p>The author remains available for further consultation.</p>	<p><b>Noted.</b> The proposal will provide a formal walkway from Curragh Car Park to the Ardmore Beach Car Park which will also service the zoned lands referred to by the author. There are coastal protection measures to be provided which will be provided in advance or in conjunction with the proposed walkway. The coastal defences and subject works will ensure appropriate access to the beach.</p> <p><b>Recommendation:</b> No change to proposed development.</p>

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## 4.0 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION

The proposed development will support the policies and objectives of the current City & County Development Plan 2022 - 2028 and complies with Ministerial Guidelines, Government policies and with the Regional Spatial & Economic Strategy. It is considered therefore that the development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Submissions received from prescribed bodies include for requirements which can be addressed by condition and submissions received from the general public are generally in support of the proposal and when concerns have been raised same are addressed on a submission by submission basis above.

The project will provide a formal walkway which will be useable by persons of all abilities year round. The walkway will serve as a high-quality pedestrian connection between the two car parks and service adjoining and future developments. The proposal will not only provide enhancement RE above but will also serve as an upgraded Section of St. Declans Way which extends from Cashel, Co. Tipperary to Ardmore Monastic Site.

The proposal will impact positively on the experience and amenities of both residents of Ardmore and Visitors.

Waterford City & County Council are committed to the Waterford City and County Development Plans strategic objectives to protect, manage, and enhance the natural heritage, biodiversity, landscape and environment of Waterford City and County in recognition of its importance as a non-renewable resource, providing a unique identity and character for the City and County as a natural resource asset (Chapter 9). As set out above there are a number of specific objectives and policies within the Development Plan in support of this strategy and the subject project.

The Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) requires a Development Plan to preserve public rights of way, which give access to seashore, mountain, lakeshore, riverbank or other place of natural beauty or recreational utility. The Council recognises the importance of maintaining established rights of way and supports initiatives for establishing new walking routes and enhanced accessibility.

Prior to works commencing the relevant landowners will be contacted, Uisce Éireann will be consulted and a suitably qualified archaeologist will be engaged. Final details of the low level lighting and the operation of same will also be agreed.

It is recommended that the Part 8 be approved as outlined and in accordance with the following condition.



1. An Underwater Archaeological Impact Assessment (UAIA) report shall be prepared to include the following:

- a. A desktop assessment that employs archival and historical records, cartographic and aerial photography sources, the topographical files of the National Museum of Ireland and a walkover survey to address the archaeological, including underwater cultural heritage, wrecks, archaeological objects, and built and maritime/industrial heritage of the proposed development area and its environs. The assessment shall include a full inventory and mapping of the sites of all identified archaeological/underwater cultural heritage and built heritage features and structures.

- b. Having completed the work, the archaeologist shall submit a final assessment report to this Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage describing the findings of the UAIA. The report shall contain an archaeological impact statement that comments on how the extent, location and levels of all proposed works required for the development may impact upon any identified or potential underwater cultural heritage, archaeological or built heritage structures or features. This report should be illustrated with appropriate plans, sections and photographs. Where archaeological materials are shown to be present, further mitigation measures will be required and shall be described in the report. These may include recommendations for institution of appropriate archaeological buffer zones/archaeological exclusion zones, engineering and architectural redesigns to allow for preservation in situ, excavation and/or monitoring as deemed appropriate. No construction works shall commence until this Department has had the opportunity to fully evaluate the findings of the UAIA and our recommendations have been received and agreed by the proponent.

Reason: To ensure the continued preservation (either in situ or by record) of places, caves, sites, features or other objects of archaeological interest and in the interest of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

2. All low level lighting proposed to the walkway shall be cast downward only and installed by a suitably qualified lighting specialist. The lighting shall be directed and cowled such that light spillage to the adjoining lands does not occur outside the boundary of the site.

Reason: In the interest of environmental protection and the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

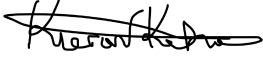
3. Final details regarding beach accesses to be agreed with the Roads Department of Waterford City and County Council and copied to the Planning Section for record purposes.

Reason: In the interest of pedestrian safety and public amenity.

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4. Prior to commencement of the development Uisce Éireann's Diversions Department shall be consulted including the submission of a 'Building Near Application' to Uisce Eireann.

Reason: In the interest of clarity, proper planning and sustainable development.



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Kieran Kehoe,  
Director of Services  
Corporate Services, Culture & Planning

29/09/2023





