

Q & A Report

Pre-Draft Development Plan consultation Webinar on Environment and Heritage

Date: August 18th 2020

Question: Can you confirm if the elected members read all the submission sent in or who reviews the submissions?

Answer: Submissions are summarised into a Chief Executive Report which is brought to the elected members for discussion. The report makes recommendations to the elected members as to how the submission is to be considered in terms of policy or objectives going forward for inclusion in the draft development plan. The elected members will have access to the full text of every submission made, as well as the Chief Executives summary, report and recommendation on those submissions.

Question: A friend of mine is trying to access this webinar, but Eventbrite is telling him it has been postponed. I got in through Eventbrite, though. Is there a link that I can send him so that he can access it?

Answer: There is a link on the consult.waterfordcouncil.ie landing page that should facilitate a direct link to the meeting.

Question: Will these webinars be available to view again later?(It took me ten minutes to get on here. very tricky)

Answer: Apologies, we are experiencing some difficulties with technology but thanks for sticking with the meeting. The webinars will be published on consult.waterfordcouncil.ie development plan page in the coming days.

Question: I'm delighted that the parks and open spaces will get attention, Peoples Park is pretty OK but needs a bit of TLC, Wyse Park needs a lot of attention, and it's lost. Ballybricken green is a disgrace and the triangle in The Glen is a lost opportunity. A substantial park is needed in the Dunmore Rd area. The old GlanBia site with its trees and water frontage is ideal.

Answer: The maintenance of existing parks are operational issues, the Development Plan will look at a Green Infrastructure Strategy to create connectivity between open spaces and identification of open space within new developments and a park of regional scale.

Further comment from attendee: Yes, it's not maintenance, its investment in these spaces, some planting, trees and quality design please.

Question: I'm concerned about a beautiful listed building in Waterford City that is in danger of collapse onto the street. The owner has allowed deterioration for many years, the weed filled heavy iron gutter fell onto the pavement last winter, and luckily no one was injured. The owner is in serious financial trouble, I'm told, with his mortgage holder. I know an investor that will buy it and restore it, but it needs The Council to issue something to expedite

things, what options are available? Do conservation officers have powers to step and encourage proactiveness before it's too late and is beyond recovery?

Answer: The owner or occupier of a protected structure is legally obliged to prevent it becoming endangered, whether through damage or neglect. Following inspection of the building and depending on the condition, the options open to the Council under the Planning and Development Act 2000, as amended, include the issuing of a Section 59 (Notice to require works against endangerment) or Section 60 (Notice to require the restoration of character). Please note that owner may be eligible for grant aid under the BHIS to carry out repairs and the owner is welcome to contact rryall@waterfordcouncil.ie for any further information.

Question: Re Conservation....why is the City Wall in the photo under The Bishops Palace not a major attraction? Its where all the tourists gather and is plastered, painted covered with plants? Surely it should be fully restored and the modern planting removed, perhaps replaced by a water feature to refer to the river that was there in Viking times?

Answer: Looking at earlier photos of this section of the city wall, the lower section has had the render removed since 2009. Over the centuries the city wall has been removed or the height reduced in several locations as may be the case here. We will enquire further as to why there is still plastered section (possibly a modern retaining/barrier wall). Your comments with regard to the planting obscuring the rubble stone wall are noted.

Question: Chairman's arch is fantastic, well done, can we open up more of these back alleys - there are lots in the area?

Answer: The draft development plan will consider how to approach the regeneration of underutilised sites across the city and the city centre in particular with a view to facilitating the consolidation of a city centre community/neighbourhood. Along with active land management measures and policies there will be a focus on identifying regeneration sites so as to proactively bring these back into suitable use through public investment. Immediate significant areas of interest would be in and around O'Connell Street, Jenkins Lane, and Spring Garden in addition to completing the historic link between Greyfriars and Bailey's New Street to mention some.

Question: As we go through the period of the development plan will the Council receive progress reports?

Answer: The Council will be presented with detailed progress reports at each stage of the process. Also, there will be a series of dedicated workshops to facilitate the discussion of options as well as detailed policies and objectives.

Question: The Climate Action bill heads have yet to be finally drafted - as you say there's another 50 days left for them to decide what goes in there before it even goes up for debate in Leinster House. How do you envision the council including that important piece of legislation when it won't be done by the deadlines for submissions here? Will there be

another opportunity for people to update submissions based off the outcome of that legislation or who will the development plan be updated, with public consultation, to reflect the requirements laid out in it?

Answer: The Draft Plan will not be published until June of next year and there will be another round of public consultation at that point.

Question: Where can we find out what extent of the work you describe here (retrofitting etc) goes in meeting the carbon targets locally/nationally?

Answer: Information is available through a number of sources such as the Sustainable Energy Agency of Ireland reports, the National Climate Action Plan, the Climate Change Adaptation Strategy of Waterford City and County Council and from the Climate Action Regional Offices (CARO).

Question: I don't think people not being able to afford energy during the recession is a sustainable model of us reducing energy usage (although we are going into another recession so I'm sure we will see that trend again). I know there has been plans for wind energy infrastructure off the coast of Waterford but there has been local opposition to that. How are you going to address that?

Answer: The City and County Development Plan will deal with on-shore energy infrastructure whereas off-shore development will be dealt with in the forthcoming National Marine Planning Framework and associated legislation. Wind energy proposals off-shore are likely to be dealt with as Strategic Infrastructure Developments and the function of assessing and determining such proposals will likely lie with An Bord Pleanála.

Question: Do the various strategies (Climate Change as understood by Moderator) have deadlines for implementation and fines for missing targets?

Answer: Failure to meet the targets nationally will result in fines being issued by the EU which we will have to pay as a collective nation. In addition Section 15 of the Planning Act states that it shall be the duty of a planning authority to take such steps within its powers as may be necessary for securing the objectives of the Development Plan. Also, the Chief Executive of the planning authority is obliged to present a report to the elected members on the progress made in securing the objectives of the Development Plan within two years of its adoption.

Question: There is a lot of useful information in these presentations. Will the slides be available after the webinar?

Answer: Some are already accessible via the consultation portal consult.waterfordcouncil.ie and a link to a recording of this webinar will be placed on the portal in the coming days.

Question: Will the water issues at Tramore and Bunmahon be addressed?

Answer: As part of the development plan preparation process, the planning authority is working closely with Irish Water to align development objectives and the growth of towns and villages with the provision of service infrastructure such as water supply and waste water treatment in particular. Aligning the settlement hierarchy and the core strategy of the development plan with the capital investment plan of Irish Water is critical to securing the sustainable growth of our settlements. Where infrastructural constraints are identified through the development plan preparation process, the plan will need to address these by means of appropriate land-use zoning, identifying a phased approach to development of land, by agreeing appropriate policy solutions with Irish Water and by identifying the infrastructural needs along with the appropriate actions to overcome them.