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**CHAMBER**  
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## **Submission to Tivoli Docks Issues Paper**

### **07 July 2017**

Cork Chamber commends Cork City Council for its approach in beginning the preparation of the Local Area Plans for Cork City Docks and for Tivoli Docks. We share the commitment of Cork City Council to promote and support the sustainable economic development and growth of Cork City to meet the current and future needs of the population. As such, Cork Chamber welcomes all future opportunities to engage with stakeholders to fulfil this vision for Cork.

It is essential that the local area plan for Tivoli and the City Docks are integrated into future city development plans, regional economic strategies and the forthcoming national planning framework to ensure that all future plans reflect the broader vision of the City at regional and national level.

In this submission, Cork Chamber has identified a number of key areas that we feel need to be addressed within this pre-plan issues exploration stage.

Cork Chamber is the leading business organisation in Cork supporting and representing the interests of close to 1,200 businesses employing over 100,000 people in the region.

#### **Tivoli – Future Place in Cork**

The development of Tivoli Docks presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to create a whole new urban quarter in Cork city. The Tivoli site itself is ideally located for new development and an expansion of Cork city. In addition to being located only 2.5 kilometres from the city centre, connected with infrastructure, and situated adjacent to an existing railway line, the Tivoli site is south facing and blessed with a waterfront.

Having access to a 61.5 hectare site in such a location for future development is unique in Ireland, if not in Europe and an international urban planning competition should be explored as part of future development plans.

Cork Chamber is of the view that Tivoli should become a new urban and self-serviced community combining residential quarters with a large employer on site, schools, medical services, childcare centres and all other amenities required for citizens on a day-to-day basis. Planning for the Tivoli Docks should aspire to create a multi-modal, medium-high to high density, mixed used area. The precedent for tall buildings has been set by the Silversprings Hotel. Anything below this height would be a waste. Cork Chamber contends that the Tivoli Docks should not be an extension of, neither a replacement of, Cork city centre, which should remain the centre of activity for retail, bars, restaurants, hotels, festivals and cultural activities.

We also suggest that development of Tivoli is approached as an international pilot project for future urban planning incorporating concepts such as living cities initiatives, smart technologies, urban greening, clean energy and green transport.

### **Climate Change and Sustainability**

Cork Chamber contends that it is essential for an in depth Climate Change and Sustainability assessment to be undertaken of this area to guide the development plan, ensuring resilience to the 1 in 100 year flood scenario and beyond, and ensuring sufficient distance between development and the river's edge, and the implementation of appropriate measures such as for example, flood relief channels etc. There is an opportunity here to create an amenity space at the river's edge in the form of seating areas, a greenway for walking and cycling, a community green space with surfaces that can dissipate and absorb flood and storm impacts.

As part of national agenda and regional agenda to meet Climate Change targets and to increase resilience as well as increasing the ability to sustainably manage and to further create an enabling City for residents, emphasis should be on Public Transport.

While emphasis on alternatives to private car usage is most appropriate, much of the population are car owners currently and as we move towards a more integrated public transport system, it is still necessary to provide for the practicalities of daily living. Given the connectivity with the rail wail in Tivoli, the Tivoli Docks could become a pilot project for sustainable living in Ireland.

There is an ideal opportunity here to initiate a greenway from Kent Station along the river front to Dunkettle and onward to Little Island/ Cobh. CSO Census data from 2016 shows cycle commuting as having the largest percentage increase of all means of transport, rising from 39,803 in 2011 to 56,837 in 2016, an increase of 42.8 per cent over the five years. It is important that any future development of Cork city is mindful of the growing demand for adequate and safe cycling infrastructure as well as the public health benefits that would be brought about by enabling more people to cycle to and from work and the city through investment in infrastructure. This greenway can have the dual function as a flood relief zone.

Development of Tivoli Docks also provides an opportunity to explore roof top gardens, living walls, the connection with the river via appropriate seating arrangements (that may potentially have a dual purpose as flood dissipaters). Cork City has potential to become the leader nationally and

internationally in creating a landmark green urban environment following international design and best practice. Alongside this, such a location would greatly enhance the application of Cork City towards achievement of the European Green Capital award. Such a location has the potential to attract and further grow interest in Cork from a tourism perspective as well as its potential in creating a location that is attractive to a skilled overseas and domestic workforce.

Cork Chamber also emphasises the necessity to including linking infrastructure in addition to footbridges (or potentially the adaptability of these footbridges in the future to facilitate a Light Rail) to ensure a connection between the commuter rail network and the bus rapid transport network (future Light Rail line) which runs along the South Docks. We should seek to avoid the planning mistakes in Dublin with no interlinkage between the LUAS. Planning must provide for the commuter rail network to be linked to any future bus rapid transport routes to allow effective cross city journeys.

In contrast to the City Docks, Cork Chamber believes the makeup of Tivoli Docks should be more residential than commercial. However, in order for this quarter to be self-sustainable, it is essential that there also are a number of businesses providing services and products that meet the needs of the local population (small shops, cafes, medical practices etc.). In addition, we believe the plan for Tivoli should include one large employer that will ensure a flow of people to the area. Flexibility in planning should be provided so that such a large employer is not predetermined, but rather an area is set aside to respond to market demand.

### **Delivery Challenges and Infrastructure**

The primary delivery and infrastructure challenge for Tivoli to be developed falls outside Cork City's existing boundaries and instead into the county. Relocation of the Port of Cork to Ringaskiddy, which requires an upgrade of the M28 and investment in infrastructure to relocate Seveso sites, is the first and foremost challenge. In the short-term all focus should centre on ensuring that the Port of Cork can move to a new home, to enable future development on the Tivoli site. Crucially, this cannot happen without the M28 being delivered and that Seveso sites and fertiliser activities can continue from another suitable location.

Cork Chamber supports the vision presented in the issues paper in respect of infrastructural deficiencies. The Silversprings Interchange, Eastern Access Road, and a new rail station will all be required to facilitate the development of the site.

As regards public transport, Cork Chamber proposes that a greenway running along the waterfront from Kent station through Tivoli and onto Dunkettle is developed. This greenway would facilitate both cycling and pedestrian paths, and could have a dual function as a flood protection zone.

It will be important to ensure a link between the Commuter Rail line and the South City Docklands Bus Rapid Transit line to ensure fluid movement in the future. Currently the plans are for two footbridges. Cork Chamber proposes that one of these should be adaptable to facilitate a Light Rail interconnector in the future. The Eastern Gateway Bridge is crucial in connecting Tivoli Docks with South Docks and to ensure a fluid movement of people to and from the North of the City to the South of the City, especially in light of future predicted population increases.

It is proposed that the Eastern Gateway Bridge favours Public/ Sustainable Transport modes in a bid to avoid over utilisation of available space allocation to car parking in the South or Tivoli Docks. The bridge should be adaptable to meet future commuter needs and aimed at accommodating private, and public/ sustainable transport in the short to medium term but with appropriate future emphasis on sustainable modes and the ability to adapt this bridge infrastructure to meet future transport modes e.g. possible use as fully Light Rail interconnector.

As regards phasing, we suggest that linkages across the river and the rail way station are prioritised at an early stage, the latter of which is less costly and could see early wins in terms of providing people residing around Tivoli, Silverprings and Mayfield with a new commuter option. Equally, the development of a greenway should be among the first priorities which also would create immediate wins in terms of a new leisure and commuter option for the people of Cork.

In terms of funding, Cork Chamber recommends Cork City Council to be ambitious and seek alternative avenues of funding, for example through ISIF or EIB, in recognition of the national capital plan having limited scope for additional investment.

## **Employment**

In order to achieve a self-sustaining community and a flow of people to and from the Tivoli Docks, the development of Tivoli must include a large employer in the area, e.g. an educational institute or a medical centre.

While the site overall should have a more residential than business/ commercial focus, it is important to maintain emphasis on mixed use development. Some form of anchor tenant or iconic building/facility should form part of the future Tivoli Docks to attract people to the area.

If the site is approached as a pilot project for new, urban living with a focus on green spaces and public transport, it would be reasonable to expect a high level of interest from new, innovative companies specialising in smart technologies or next-generation tech/ICT companies, as well as start-ups. Cork Chamber considers these types of industry could become the main drivers for employment growth in the area.

Cork Chamber maintains that our city centre should remain the retail and hospitality core of Cork city. Consequently, the level of retail development in Tivoli should be restricted to small businesses necessary for the local community, e.g. pharmacies, hair dressers, food services, butchers etc.

We also note that Cork City is currently lacking an international school suitable for executives coming to Cork from abroad. Given the location of Tivoli next to a rail way line which can accommodate students travelling in from both Midleton and Cobh, we suggest that the suitability of Tivoli to become a home to an international school is considered.

In general, we also note that if Cork needs a second CUH, then north of the river would appear to be a logical place to enable regional access from the north and east. Tivoli is already on a rail line, hotels and B&B accommodation are located near, and the site is close to the proposed Northern Ring Road. Tivoli (or a site north of Blackpool District Centre) connected by a North-South rapid transport corridor) would represent a more balanced approach than the sites mooted at either Curraheen or Riverstown. The North side has lacked a regional hospital since the closure of the North Infirmary. A site with a large employers such as a hospital or educational facility close to either would stimulate a demand for private housing on the north side and could support regeneration goals of Cork city's north side.

## **Housing**

Cork Chamber advocates for the promotion of mixed use urban villages, well served by public transport networks and where residents are within walking distance of employment opportunities, and supporting social and community infrastructure including shops, services, schools, community and leisure facilities.

We believe that a mix of house types (apartments to townhouse style to add character to the area) along with a mixture of accommodation sizes for different categories of households should be planned for, including both elderly citizens, families, young professionals, etc. It is essential that the appropriate mix, type and range of housing are planned for so as to promote the development of balanced sustainable communities. Due to the location and proximity to the City Centre, and as is replicated internationally, Cork Chamber strongly contends that this location should be medium to high density to meet current and future housing needs.

It is also essential that a variety of tenure types is provided and that all housing/ apartment developments contain an acceptable proportion of larger flexible units to ensure that such developments are sustainable and provide suitable and viable long term options for families allowing people the choice and opportunity to remain in an area into the future and as their needs change, as such ensuring a 'Lifecycle Approach'. In the context of the latest Census results, we note how more people are starting families while living in apartments. Therefore, it is essential that amenities required for family living are planned for in the area. For example, we suggest that apartments are built around courtyards with playgrounds, garden/barbeque areas, and that space is provided for parking bicycles, prams, laundry facilities, etc. which would support that families can remain in the area long term should the wish to.

There must be flexibility as regards apartment sizes to accommodate a range of family sizes via one, two, to three bedroom units as well as townhouse style accommodation to ensure a diversity and the development of a distinct character. Residential developments should be market led and there should be flexibility as regards apartment sizes towards the larger than minimum sizes such as in Dun Laoghaire - Rathdown Council area.

There needs to be an emphasis on high density and the adjacent creation of amenity green spaces and rooftop spaces that are conducive to a thriving, healthy and sustainable community (for older and

younger people). This is the opportunity to creating a truly unique and attractive location complementary to our City environs.

Equally, we suggest that areas are planned around small plazas similar to Southern Europe so that each neighbourhood will get a focal point and support a community feel.

### **Place Making**

The Tivoli site is unique in that it is facing the waterfront. Critical to planning must be to ensure that all development should be pulled 50-100 meters back from the waterfront. The waterfront should be reserved for public use (similar to South Bank in London) and a greenway.

Given its location and historic connection with the waterfront, Cork Chamber proposed that a public harbour bath similar to those in existence in Copenhagen is part of Tivoli's future vision. Not only would this make Tivoli an attractive place to live, it would also draw visitors while also supporting public wellbeing.



*Harbour bath at Islands Brygge, Copenhagen*

Equally, a section of the Tivoli site could be reserved for river and boating activities. For example, the location would be perfect for a small marina for visiting boats or houseboats. Again, this would offer some vibrancy and uniqueness to the area as well as enable any visitors to Cork by private boat to travel to the city or East Cork via the rail way line.

As above, Cork chamber believes Tivoli could become an excellent case study for future urban living. Consequently, non-car modes should take centre stage in the planning process. Pedestrianised streets, access to the river and cycling facilities should be prioritised to deliver an attractive, alternative way of living to the current norm.

While naturally any large employer will require vehicular access, no surface car parks should be allowed in the area.

There should be an emphasis on greenspaces, and the creation of a location that is a destination in itself, iconic while being complementary to the heart of Cork city. The location should provide for adequate community space appealing to all age groups. The Tivoli Docks should have the amenities conducive to a viable and thriving population and should be inclusive of such amenities as schools, crechés, sports and exercise grounds open to the public, etc.

The opportunity exists here to promote the efficient use of land and energy to minimise the carbon footprint.

### **Other**

Cork Chamber proposes the exploration of a range of options to facilitate the timely and co-ordinated implementation of the future Tivoli Docks Local Area Plan which could be inclusive of a Cork Docklands Development Forum, as either a statutory or non-statutory body, and inclusive of private business representation.