

**Re: Part 8: Access to Tramore Valley Park via Half Moon Lane Road Improvement Scheme**

To Whom It Concerns,

Cork Chamber is the leading business representative organisation in Cork, proactively working to identify and progress developments that are facilitative of sustainable economic growth. Representing an employer base of close to 1,200 businesses and over 100,000 employees across the region, Cork Chamber is the largest business representation organisation in the south of Ireland.

This submission has been guided by our commitment to the UN Sustainable Development Goals. Five specific goals have been identified which we actively advocate for throughout our work;



In representing the voice of business, Cork Chamber adds its strong support to the overall objectives, interventions, access and active mobility improvements proposed within the Access to Tramore Valley Park via Half Moon Lane Road Improvement Scheme.

As an overall note, and relevant in advance of and throughout the scheme, we highlight the importance of proactive engagement with the local business and residential community, and the Christ King Girls Secondary School administration to ensure effective communication on the different stages of the scheme and the ask on the existing and regular users of Half Moon Lane Road and the surrounding area.

The completion of this scheme will be a positive step in redressing the current imbalance of access to Tramore Valley Park, which is primarily focused on private vehicles, to now take

account of multiple transport modes. It will also drastically and positively enhance the overall accessibility of the amenity site to a larger population catchment area. Never has the availability of green space for City residents been so critical and while the call to increase the availability of green spaces in our City has been consistent before, and will remain after the Covid pandemic, the need now is even more urgent and in strongly supporting this, we also encourage strongly the completion of this improvement scheme with urgency.

### **Lower City Centre speed limits**

We support a progressive agenda and encourage the implementation of a calmer and safer vehicular speed limit throughout the city of 30kmph. As Tramore Valley Park is already a popular amenity site for City residents, and will increase even more so in popularity and usage as a positive from enhanced access, we encourage the adoption of traffic calming measures and a reduced vehicular speed limit on the approach roads (namely South Douglas Road) to the Half Moon Lane Road. The initiation of a slower speed limit will add greater balance in areas where vehicles must continue to travel and is important for enhancing how valuable road space in the city is better shared.

### **Delineation of cycle lanes, and improved pedestrian access paths**

We advise the addition of appropriate bollards e.g. orcas, armadillos, to enhance clarity around the delineation of cycle lanes and we encourage their addition especially on the busy arterial route from the City to Douglas via the South Douglas Road. To maximise the potential of this amenity park for residents, there must be safe access for all age groups, young and older, and of varying mobility abilities. We encourage the improvement of pedestrian access paths from the City and surrounds to ensure a consistency in pathway widths and surfacing. While this forms part of the Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, it is important that these elements are progressed without delay and in tandem with the critically needed enhanced access to the Park. Improving cycle access and pedestrian access requires the allocation of enhanced road spacing for alternative modes and especially from the main population feeder locations. With City centre residents anticipated as a core cohort of those using this access point, it will be critical to ensure safe access from the City centre to Half Moon Lane Road.

As this corridor is one of the main city arteries, it is imperative that any proposed infrastructure on the access route via South Douglas Road to Half Moon Lane Road is designed and implemented in a way that increases the safety for cyclists, appealing to cyclists of varying ages, confidence, skill and experience levels, and increases safety and appeal for pedestrians accommodating varying requirements for example path widths that accommodate buggies. We suggest that consideration be given to Age Friendly design principles, along with consideration of users with visual, hearing or mobility impairments. Furthermore, we ask that the adopted plans include appropriate seating along walking access routes, which is crucial to nurturing the liveability of the City.

The inclusion of rumble lines intermittently on road surfaces should be considered as part of this scheme, acting as a reminder to drivers of the higher proportion of vulnerable road users. Though especially on approaches to junctions where cyclists are required to navigate to the centre front of the traffic lane to undertake a right turn, and where there are pedestrian crossings. Alternatively, the use of differing road surfaces to indicate a subtle change in road

space prioritisation in addition to appropriate signage (while avoiding street clutter and excess signage) and traffic signalling. Finally, we highlight the need for quality pedestrian crossings and the timing of pedestrian lights and traffic sequencing as key to ensuring the walkability of these busy streets. Pedestrians should not be expected to wait for protracted periods at pedestrian crossings. It is important that these elements are designed to ensure no crowding at road junctions and to ensure the compliance with public health advise.

### **Public health guidelines and the provision of public amenity space**

Now more than ever we are in a situation that is testing the resilience and robustness of our urban and community spaces. To aid the societal response to COVID-19, it is necessary to accelerate the speed at which we adapt the urban and community recreation spaces to meet this challenge going forward. The availability of amenity spaces for City residents, be it green park space or car free amenity space is a necessity to enjoy safely their community and locality. While acknowledging the work ongoing by Cork City Council to expand and accelerate the provision of these spaces, we highlight that this will likely be a lasting outcome of the pandemic crisis and that the demand for spaces and multi modal access to such recreation spaces is paramount.

### **Tactical Urbanism, Governments Plan for Living with COVID-19**

It is crucial that all efforts to accelerate safe interactions, access to, and transit within our urban centres remains a key priority in addressing the threat of Covid-19. Through implementing tactical urbanism solutions from pop-up temporary cycle lanes to widening footpaths, these will increase the accessibility of amenity sites and the overall safety and permeability of urban centres. The WHO recommends the facilitation of sustainable cycle and walking as the optimal transport mode and to combat the transmission of Covid-19. We encourage Cork City Council to work with communities to identify pedestrian and cyclist pinch points on the main access routes to Half Moon Lane Road, and to apply tactical urbanism, temporary solutions as required to ensure safety of access.

### **Public lighting**

At design stage, consideration regarding appropriate lighting should be given. It is important that the type of lighting should be carefully considered in terms of shielding, setting appropriate lighting levels and consideration for lighting colour. Excessive, artificial lighting can cause light pollution which has negative effects on human health, the environment, biodiversity, and goals for climate action through energy waste.

### **Public Realm Upgrades (street furniture, lining and signage)**

We encourage the incorporation of as much indigenous planting as possible as a design is developed. This will greatly enhance the public realm and access, creating potential for indigenous planting to soften the visual hard edges, enhance biodiversity, drainage, dampen noise, pollution, and dust from traffic. The Chamber recommends that this opportunity should not be missed as it would detract from both the user experience and environmental opportunity.

Placemaking must be a core goal throughout all delivery aspects. The aesthetic, cultural and civic value of quality of place, biodiversity, tree planting and appropriate lighting are at the core



of what will make our City region attractive and sustainable and every effort must be made to ensure best practice is sought and attained throughout implementation.

The provision of amenity space is a priority for the Cork business community, identified in a previous quarterly economic trends survey to members within their top three priorities for increasing the liveability of the city, alongside housing, and public transport. I thank you for your time and consideration. Cork Chamber shares your commitment to developing a sustainable Cork city region.

Yours sincerely,

Michelle O'Sullivan  
Senior Public Affairs Executive