

Cork Chamber
Fitzgerald House
Summerhill North
Cork
17th September 2021

Planning Application: Bishop Lucey Park Regeneration Project

To Whom It Concerns,

Cork Chamber represents 1,200 members together employing 100,000 people throughout the city, metropolitan area and county. Our vision is to be a world-leading Chamber of Commerce, delivering on a progressive economic, social and sustainability agenda at the heart of a vibrant business community.

As such, we are determined to ensure that our 202-year-old Chamber continues to create a positive legacy. Our direction is guided by our formal pledge to uphold the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals five of which have been identified by the Chambers Ireland network.



Plans to regenerate Bishop Lucey Park could not come at a better time for the city which is on the cusp of recovery after the fallout of the COVID19 pandemic. In addition, the population is set to continue to grow over the next 20 years and the proposed Cork City Development Plan intends to attract an increasing number of young families to take up residence in the city centre. It is therefore essential that public spaces in the city, such as the well-known Bishop Lucey Park, are fit for purpose, modern, and authentic to the history and character of Cork City. Furthermore, the park is situated in the centre of what will be a vibrant and energetic area of the city upon completion of the highly anticipated Event Centre and Beamish and Crawford Public Realm Infrastructure Project. A central green space like this will be a much-needed contrast to the external urban development that is taking place in its surrounds.

It is welcome to see a design that focuses on the medieval wall and makes a feature of it visible. The

city wall is part of the historic fabric of Cork city and should be a legacy for future generations and a means of keeping the history of the city alive, this design helps to achieve this goal. It will also serve as an addition to the tourist offering in the medieval quarter. The planned tower structure that will overlook the park to the west is also a nod to the history of the city and perhaps the towers that once featured in the city's walls. The tower will also have a functional purpose and can be used to hold banners and lighting rigs for varying events throughout the year.

The park itself will also offer a unique experience from a tourism perspective by creating an open, bright space accessible to everyone particularly those who have just visited the English Market and are looking for a bench or seating in an outdoor area. Meanwhile the steps leading into the park from South Main Street will also act as a tourist attraction by allowing a new vantage point of a very historic part of the city. The construction of a plinth, 'a new ruin', will become a focal point of the park and it will be flexible in terms of its function i.e., for seating purposes, for play, as a sculpture for tourists to visit.

It is essential that the new design supports the improvement of pedestrian permeability through the park. The new bridge that proposes to take visitors from the Grand Parade directly through the park will serve an important purpose in this regard. Bishop Lucey Park will also provide a new connection from South Main St and the planned Event Centre to the Grand Parade and will therefore facilitate further footfall by providing an accessible link between events, retail and hospitality.


The focus on tree planting as highlighted in the plans must be commended. In particular, the addition of semi-mature trees is a welcome proposal as it will create an immediate visual affect. A total of seven trees are to be removed to accommodate the new design, and seven further trees are set to be replanted. This number should be increased and biodiversity should be considered in both the development process s and subsequent maintenance. The roof of the planned pavilion is set to facilitate wildflower growth, this should be replicated at every other opportunity throughout the park.

The lighting of Bishop Lucey Park will be of utmost importance as the space itself is opened up more freely under the new designs with the removal of gates and rails. Considerations that have been taken into account in this plan include safety, minimum energy use and the control of lighting to prevent energy waste. However, it is imperative that the lighting is neither too harsh nor too soft and complements the lighting being installed as part of the upgrades planned for the areas surrounding the park. It is welcome to see the inclusion of trees as a means to achieve this balance by uplighting the existing and proposed trees using discreet flush fittings embedded in the ground surface.

The overall design will enable the much-needed transformation of Bishop Lucey Park into a modern city centre park to be proud of. The retention of the city wall and the entrance arches on the Grand

Parade, the addition of a water feature, the installation of a plinth, shelter and tower as well as the refurbishment of various existing features such as the Bronze swan fountain will provide the conversion that Bishop Lucey Park needs without compromising the character of a central iconic feature in the heart of the city. Visually, this upgrade is exactly what this area of the city needs as it prepares for its own transformation with the arrival of an Event Centre, population growth and the associated increase in footfall that is likely to follow from visitors and locals alike. We commend the City Council and the architects behind the design, Hall McKnight Architects, for their work on this project and we ask that our comments be taken into consideration.

Yours Sincerely,



Conor Healy
Chief Executive