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**Re: Cork North Docks Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure Project**

To whom it may concern,

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the public consultation on the Cork North Docks Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure Project.

Cork Chamber represents 1,200 members together employing 130,000 people throughout the city, metropolitan area and county. Our vision is to lead a transforming and ambitious Cork City and County, uniting, representing and supporting our members and community. Our direction is guided by our formal pledge to uphold the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Cork Chamber has also been designated an SDG Champion by the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment for 2024-25.

Cork Chamber's advocacy efforts are guided by the views and priorities of our partners, and are shaped by our continuous engagement with members, our board and key stakeholders in Cork City and County. Cork Chamber is deeply committed to sustainability, embedding it within all our activities and initiatives.

We welcome the opportunity to contribute to the consultation process on the Cork North Docks Public Realm and Transport Infrastructure.

The aims of this project include upgrades to the public realm along Horgan's Quay, including the addition of new parks, seating, and recreational amenities, as well as the realignment of the N8 road to prioritise sustainable transport and improve traffic management.

Cork Chamber shares in this vision of creating sustainable transport corridors and people-centric environments. Such projects will contribute to Cork's development as a sustainable city with vibrant communities and a strong quality of life. In doing so, Cork will be well-positioned to attract and retain investment and talent.

**Transport & sustainability**

At the heart of this scheme is the creation of sustainable transport corridors, including upgrading existing facilities. New infrastructure that prioritises pedestrians, cyclists and buses

is essential to ensuring connectivity between the existing city centre and the new docklands area.

This scheme places a strong emphasis on active and public transport. High-quality pedestrian and cycle routes, along with a dedicated bus lane on the realigned N8, promote modal shift and reduce reliance on private cars.

It directly supports Cork Chamber's call for a multi-modal, reliable, and inclusive transport network, as outlined in our submission to the National Development Plan.

By supporting walking, cycling, and bus travel, the scheme contributes to lower emissions and improved air quality along the riverfront.

It complements Cork Chamber's climate advocacy and our commitment to embedding the UN Sustainable Development Goals in regional business practices.

While Cork Chamber supports the goal of scheme, we encourage engagement with the community in the area and the undertaking of active awareness campaigns to ensure that these works have a minimal impact on the public, in particular commuters on the existing N8 on Horgan's Quay, which is a particularly busy artery during the morning and evening commutes.

## **Urban evolution**

Urban evolution has been identified by Cork Chamber's members as a key priority for Cork's future development. Creating and maintaining safe, welcoming and thriving public realm spaces in our urban centre is critical to ensure that Cork remains an attractive place for those wishing to live, work, visit or invest in Ireland. Urban centres across the country have undergone significant changes in recent years, presenting challenges for businesses and residents alike, and demanding a renewed approach to sustainable urban development.

Revitalising our urban centres must be a priority for all levels of government, in line with the ambitions set out in key policy documents including the National Planning Framework, Cork City Development Plan, Cork Metropolitan Area Transport Strategy, Cork City Centre Revitalisation Action Plan, City Centre Movement Strategy, and Cork City Climate Action Plan.

The National Planning Framework, in particular, sets out ambitious targets in terms of the development of more sustainable environments, including improved public spaces and more sustainable, active travel options.

The new urban parks and landscaped waterfront promenade will deliver meaningful enhancements to the public realm. These improvements align with Cork Chamber's vision for attractive, vibrant spaces that foster civic pride and draw talent, tourism, and investment. Spaces for leisure, events, and community interaction are central to a thriving business environment and support wider goals of city centre vitality.

The goal of creating a resilient and sustainable docks is in line with Cork Chamber's aims, while the project also sets out an overall ambition of ensuring that the North Docks is a liveable, inclusive and accessible destination, and these changes will go a long way towards making that a reality.

We also welcome the inclusion of greenery along the docks, and the integration of flood prevention measures in the scheme using nature-based solutions.

## Conclusion

The North Docks scheme delivers on several key priorities for Cork Chamber. It promotes sustainable mobility, enhances the public realm, and enables transformative regeneration in the Docklands.

This is an opportunity to shape a high-impact project that reflects Cork's ambition for inclusive growth, liveability, and climate leadership.

While we support the scheme, Cork Chamber also calls for:

- Integration with BusConnects and the proposed Luas Cork route to ensure seamless multimodal transport connections.
- Business-friendly design in public spaces, including event potential, retail frontage, and urban activation.
- A comprehensive environmental and river-use study for proposed bridges to balance climate, access, and amenity goals.

We applaud the work done to date in regenerating the wider Cork docklands area as a place to visit, work and live, and note that the proposals for the North Docks outlined in this project will be a significant contributor to the success of the wider scheme and encourage all stakeholders to the progress with the aims as and when possible to do so.

Yours sincerely,



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Conor Healy  
CEO