

# **SEA meeting – Monday 9th September 2024**

## **Portobello Harbour Park Development Part 8**

### **Introduction**

This reports summaries the Part 8 planning report which recommends that the Part 8 should proceed for consideration at the next City Council Meeting in October. This report provides a brief site description, information on the proposals and conclusions and recommendations. Also included is the Part 8 site location map and landscape masterplan.

### **Site Description**

The site is situated on the northern bank of the Grand Canal at Portobello, just west of La Touche Bridge. The site includes an area of hard standing which extends south from the southern edge of the public road at Portobello Harbour, in front of the Lower Deck pub and the adjoining apartment building to the west, and is bounded to the west by the façade of the recently constructed Nyx hotel. The site also includes a paved area to the south of hotel, which extends south to the canal bank. To the east the site extends in front of the corner where Richmond Row meets Portobello Harbour, and incorporates an area of the public road at Richmond Row to the south of the junction. To the south the site extends to the northern edge of the canal and includes an area of the canal towpath/walkway. The southeastern part of the site includes the paved area to the south of Portobello House, an existing three-storey over basement building which is in educational use, the section of Richmond Row which extends to the junction with Richmond Street South, including a vehicular and cycle route, and the public footpath and canal towpath to the south of this.

The site is an open, publicly accessible area which includes areas of public road, footpath, cycle lane, canal towpath and a paved area west of Richmond Row which contains trees set within raised planters which also act as seating, together with lighting, bollards and a Dublinbikes station. The site is surrounded by development including the existing recently constructed hotel building to the west, the three-storey public house on the corner of Richmond Row and adjoining three-storey apartment building with setback fourth storey, traditional two and three-storey houses on Richmond Row and the three-storey over basement Portobello House which is currently in educational use. The site is within the canal ring adjacent to Portobello, Rathmines and Harold's Cross and appears to generate significant numbers of pedestrians and cyclists as a destination, a through route to the city centre and for exercise and social interaction. The site has a stated area of c.0.25 hectares (2,500m<sup>2</sup>).

### **Proposals**

The proposal is for an urban park occupying a former hard surfaced plaza and areas of public road, footpath and canal bank. Overall the proposal provides for a welcome amenity in an area which is largely residential and is currently deficient in quality public open space. The proposal is in keeping with the Z9 zoning objective which is 'to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity, open space and ecosystem services' and with the Z11 zoning objective which is to 'to protect and improve canal, coastal and river amenities'.

The proposed development will need to accommodate a range of functions within a limited space, including active and passive recreation and children's play, for local residents and the wider community, while also accommodating movement by pedestrians (including those of different ages and abilities), cyclists, electric bikes and scooters in addition to local access, servicing and emergency vehicles, while also facilitating biodiversity along the canal bank. Having regard to the need to balance differing requirements, the proposal is broadly in keeping with development plan policies relating to provision of a high quality, permeable, legible and connected public realm, contributing to the greening of the city, contributing to sustainable

urban drainage and facilitating biodiversity by the use of pollinator-friendly planting. The proposed new space has been designed to be a high quality space with planting, seating and facilities for a range of active and passive recreational activities. The proposed space will link into the network of open spaces and walking and cycling routes along the banks of the Grand Canal, and will provide for the reallocation of road space for more active modes of travel, including walking and cycling. The proposal is also in keeping with conservation policies in the reuse of existing historic materials and enhancing the setting of the surrounding protected structures and the red hatched conservation area along the canal bank.

The potential conflicts between some users of the space are noted. The applicant has set out the rationale for the design of the space using the 'share with care' model and the provision of limited space for skateboarding. These and other issues will need to be managed and their impact should be subject to review when the park is operational. This can be included in the recommendations below. Issues relating to noise, litter and anti-social activity should be addressed by park management and policing, where required.

It is noted that Transportation Planning Division have no objection to the proposed development, subject to a number of recommendations which are set out below. The recommendations by the NTA, in relation to maintenance of the existing segregated cycle track *in situ* or reallocation of the existing road carriageway to cyclists only as a replacement, maintenance of passive provision for the future extension of the segregated cycle track towards the north bank of the canal in the southwest corner of the site and consideration of alternatives to the removal of the entire Dublin bikes facility, are noted. The applicant should liaise with the NTA in relation to these concerns.

### **Conclusion and Recommendations**

The Planning Authority considers the proposed development to be consistent with the provisions of the Dublin City Development Plan 2022 -2028 and in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Accordingly, it is recommended that a decision be made by Elected Members of the Council to proceed with the proposed development, subject to the following recommendations:

1. The applicant should obtain the consent of Waterways Ireland in relation to any works taking place along the canal edge.
2. Prior to completion of the park full details of all external lighting and signage elements shall be agreed with the Public Lighting Division.
3. The materials used in all paving, seating, bollards, signage, sculpture, play equipment and any other street furniture should be of the highest possible quality and durable. Construction materials and detailing shall adhere to the principles of sustainability and energy efficiency.
4. The applicant shall monitor the operation of the following aspects of the development and shall carry out a review after two years of operation to ensure that any issues are identified and addressed in the management of the park:
  - a) The use of the 'share with care' model of shared space;
  - b) The operation of the informal skateboarding areas.

5. Archaeology

If during the course of site works and construction archaeological material is discovered, the City Archaeologist shall be notified immediately. Further, it is obligatory under the National Monuments Amendment Act 1994 that such discovery is brought to the attention of the National Monuments Service and the National Museum of Ireland.

6. Drainage Division

The management of surface water and other drainage provisions for the development shall fully comply with the requirements of the Drainage Division:

- (a) The development shall incorporate Sustainable Drainage Systems in the management of surface water. Full details of the surface water management proposals shall be agreed in writing with Drainage Division prior to commencement of construction.
- (b) A licence will be required from the Drainage Division to allow the proposed surface water sewer diversion / extension / installation / abandonment works to be carried out. The licence must be obtained prior to the commencement of the works on site. All expense associated with carrying out these works are the responsibility of the developer.
- (c) Where it is proposed to reuse an existing surface water connection, a CCTV survey of this connection must be carried out and submitted to DPPDC Section. The use of the existing connection will only be permitted if it is confirmed that is in a good working order.
- (d) Where pipelines are to be taken-in-charge by Dublin City Council, as-constructed drawings of all pipelines complete with CCTV surveys, to a standard specified by DPPDC Section, must be submitted to DPPDC Section for written sign-off. This must be submitted no later than the completion of the development works on site. Please refer to Section 5 of the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works Version 6.0.

7. Transportation Planning Division:

- (a) Prior to the commencement of the development, the Proposing Department shall liaise with and seek agreement with the ITS Division within the Environment & Transportation Department with regard the required changed to the signalisation at the junction of Richmond Row and Richmond Street South.
- (b) Prior to the commencement of the development, revised plans detailing the relocation of the Dublin Bike Station shall be submitted to the Micro Mobility Unit in the Environment & Transportation Department for written agreement.
- (c) Prior to the commencement of the development, a Servicing Strategy shall be submitted to the Planning authority for written agreement.
- (d) Prior to the commencement of development autotracking of the plaza shall be submitted and the final plaza arrangement shall be agreed in writing with the Environment and Transportation Department to facilitate emergency access.

- (e) Prior to commencement of development, and on appointment of a main contractor, a Construction Management Plan shall be submitted to the planning authority for written agreement. This plan shall provide details of intended construction practice for the development, including traffic management, hours of working, noise and dust management measures and off-site disposal of construction waste and access arrangements for labour, plant and materials, including location of plant and machine compound. The Construction Traffic Management Plan shall seek to minimise impact on the public road and potential conflict with pedestrians, cyclists and public transport. The appointed contractor shall liaise with DCC Road Works Control Division during construction period.
- (f) The applicant shall liaise with the NTA where necessary in relation to the development to ensure current and future active travel routes (Portobello to Blackhorse Active Travel Scheme) may be accommodated as part of the overall redevelopment of this area.

8. Accessibility

The detailed design of the development shall comply with the principles of Universal Design and relevant accessibility standards.

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