

River Liffey Pontoon – Islandbridge.

Dublin City Council has developed proposals for the installation of a pontoon in the River Liffey at Islandbridge Weir to allow greater and safe access to local rowing clubs from the western stretch of the Liffey to its eastern extent towards the city centre. The Culture Recreation & Economic Services Department of Dublin City Council have developed proposals for Part 8 approval for the scheme. It is our intention to lodge Part 8 proposals in the coming weeks and we therefore notify the Area Committee of this.

The stretch of the River Liffey near Islandbridge, is home to over 13 rowing clubs catering for over 700 members. This part of the Liffey is the only suitable location for river rowing within Dublin City. The clubs who are located along this stretch of river have been established since the turn of the 20th century and form a valuable part of the community that animates the river. Whilst most quality water courses for rowing would stretch up to 3000m – 5000m the available rowing section of the River Liffey only stretches 1800m's. It is now proposed that a pontoon should be constructed directly beyond the weir at Islandbridge to allow for greater access to the eastern Liffey towards Ringsend.

Dublin City Council has a remit for providing sport and recreational opportunities and facilities within the City of Dublin. The construction of a pontoon off the weir at Islandbridge will allow for greater and safer access for the rowing clubs in the area. With 6 clubs at full capacity utilising the 1800m stretch of river the construction of the pontoon will help to relieve the pressure on the river by allowing for the larger boats to access the eastern section of river. This will free up more space in the current section for children, OAPs and beginners.

Rowing on the River Liffey is tidal and therefore the pontoon will also allow for rowers who are based on the eastern stretch of the river access the western section of river for a long period of time. At present the window of opportunity for rowing in the eastern section is a maximum of 90 minutes. The pontoon will crease this by 170% (approx.) to 4 hours per day.

Currently access to the eastern section poses a health and safety concern with regards to how the rowers launch their boats from the island. The construction of the pontoon will allow rowers gain access in a safer and more secure environment.

This project will also support partnerships with the local rowing clubs. DCC currently own and operate the Municipal Rowing Centre which is one of the 6 clubs mentioned above. The project serves to deliver improved opportunities to citizens whilst promoting health and wellbeing.



Beginner Quad Rowing Boat with Rowers from the Dublin Municipal Rowing Centre



Photo of the Hers Outdoors annual event at the Municipal Rowing Centre



Proposed location for the pontoon.

Concept

Dublin City Council appointed an architect led design team, (led by Sean Harrington Architects) to bring forward proposals for the development of a pontoon on the second island on the river Liffey. As part of the design process a range of experts have been engaged to assist with the development of a sensitive design to ensure minimal impact on the surrounding environment both during the installation and operation of the pontoon. Detailed surveys and reports have been prepared in relation to biodiversity, tree management, invasive species, bats, archaeology, river management and ecology, structural issues,

flooding, health & safety, access etc. The result of this work has ensured an integrated design and agreement from stakeholders.

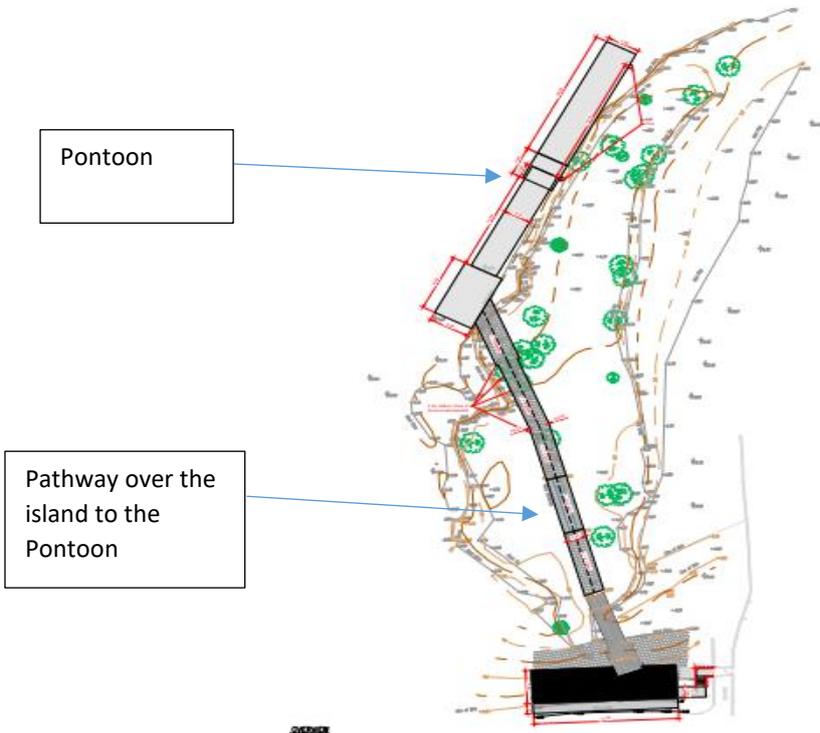
It is proposed to construct a floating pontoon system within the River Liffey which will be accessed via a new concrete platform built out from the riverbank and connected to the pontoon by a new gangway. Steel piles will be driven through the river bed to support the proposed pontoon. The concrete platform will be constructed using a number of precast caisson structures which will be filled with clean, crushed stone and topped with an in-situ concrete deck slab. Rock fill placed against the side of the caissons and the riverbank will provide scour protection to the edges of the concrete platform. The works also include the removal of vegetation on the approach to the pontoon and the construction of a new access walkway which will be used by rowers carrying boats between the upper and lower reaches of the River Liffey, either side of the existing weir at Islandbridge.



Islandbridge weir



View of island from the Irish War Memorial Gardens car park



Sample drawing of the pontoon.

Following the survey by the Arborist a small number of trees which are diseased and non-native will be removed and replaced with native species to encourage the local wildlife back on to the island. Below is the proposed tree planting plan.



Proposed tree planting

Should planning permission be approved DCC propose development of detail design ahead of the issue of tender documents for construction with the project scheduled to be completed by the Q4 2024.

Site constraints include the nesting period of native and migratory birds along with the migratory fish spawning season.

Other challenges include dealing with invasive species, such as Japanese Knotweed.

The overall cost of the project is in the region of €700,000. DCC are in on-going positive discussions with stakeholders including OPW, the local rowing clubs, local residents, and the Salmon anglers etc.

Once the construction work is completed on the island the pontoon will be floated up stream and put in place for use.



Proposed delivery of the pontoon to the island for installation.