

Response to Further Information Request

Clifden Town Centre
Enhancement Project





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1.

INTRODUCTION

This report was prepared on behalf of the applicant, Galway County Council, in response to the Request for Further Information dated 2nd May 2025 by Galway County Council with regard to the application under Pln. Ref. ABP-321144-24. The application relates to the enhancements to the public realm of Clifden town centre, enhancements to Beach Road Quay, and redevelopment of the Harbour Park Area. The full description of the proposed development as per the public notices is as follows:

“Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, Notice of Direct Planning Application to An Bord Pleanála. In accordance with Section 177AE(4)(a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 as amended, Galway County Council are seeking approval from An Bord Pleanála for the proposed development of a public realm scheme in Clifden, Co. Galway.

The proposed works include:

- i. Alterations works to the Clifden Town Centre area on Seaview Road, Main Street, Market Street, Market Hill, Bridgewell Lane, Bridge Street, and Hulk Street comprising:*
 - a. The reconfiguration and resurfacing of roads and realignment of parking spaces including removal of 58 no. On-street parking spaces leaving a total of 155 no. on street parking spaces,*
 - b. The widening and realignment of existing footpath areas, including the provision of new soft and hard landscaping,*
 - c. The installation of new and upgraded public lighting throughout the town,*
 - d. Relocation of The Beacon Statue,*
 - e. Installation of new public art,*
- ii. Alterations to and resurfacing of Beach Road Quay public realm comprising:*
 - a. The provision of pedestrian and seating areas on the quay side of Beach Road quay, including the installation of 6 no. seating areas, and ancillary paving and landscaping,*
 - b. Remedial works to the quay wall (NLAH reg no. 30325017), including the resetting of dislodged stones, the removal of vegetation, and remedial masonry works,*
 - c. The replacement of existing railings along the quay wall,*
 - d. The installation of public lighting along the roadside,*
- iii. Redevelopment of the Harbour Park area south of Beach Road and to the west of Clifden town centre.*
 - a. The demolition of the existing playground on site, and the construction of a new park including multi-age playground areas, including the provision of:*
 - i. Cycle Parking,*
 - ii. Timber Play Furniture,*
 - iii. Picnic benches and seating areas,*
 - iv. An Amphitheatre Performance Spaces,*
 - v. Climbing Wall*
 - vi. Pump track,*
 - vii. Running Track,*
 - viii. Car Park,*
 - ix. Sports pitch,*
 - b. Resurfacing, paving and hard & soft landscaping of the park area,*
- iv. All other associated and ancillary works*

This application is supported by Natura Impact Statement (NIS)

An Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Report has been undertaken in respect of the proposed development and concluded that an Environmental Impact Assessment Report is not required.”

The report replies on a point-by-point basis to the 6 requests of Further Information as set out in the request letter received from An Coimisiún Pleanála, including a request to respond to the submissions received on the application during the statutory consultation period.

Should you require further clarification on any aspect of this response, please do not hesitate to contact this office

2. ITEM 1: ROADS AND TRAFFIC

2.1 Subitem (i)

Having regard to the Stage 1 Road Safety Audit submitted with the application, it would appear that a number of the recommendations (Problems 2.1.1-2.1.24, 4.1.1-4.1.3, 5.1.1-5.1.2, Observations 1-3) have not been incorporated into the proposed development. You are requested to outline the rationale for same.

Response

Appendix 2: Clifden RSA Response Tracker indicates how the current scheme that was submitted to the Board (now Commission) has been updated to resolve the issues that were raised in the Road Safety Audit.

2.2 Subitem (ii)

The applicant should clarify if the proposed development will impact on existing vehicular access/egress at the junction of Market Street-Bridewell Lane.

Response

Bridewell Lane provides an access point to a small yard that is surrounded by several sheds and garages. It is only very occasionally used by vehicles. As part of the scheme proposals, we have however provided vehicle access to the yard area. Access from the carriageway/Market Street is provided via a 5.8m wide access point that will be surfaced in stone sett paving. This surface treatment will ensure that the route is consistent with the other materials being used as part of the public realm improvements, but the small plan size of the paving will mean that the access point is distinguishable from pedestrian areas but also can withstand vehicular use. The design has been auto-tracked and we can confirm that vehicles up to the size of a box van can access the yard.

2.3 Subitem (iii)

The applicant should submit proposals addressing the potential for any pedestrian safety issues to arise at the northeastern entrance to Harbour Park on the Beach Road area of the site.

Response

Drawing 11632-LUC-HP-XX-DR-L-0002 **Harbour Park Landscape GA** has now been amended to indicate a pedestrian lane on Beach Road. Whilst the existing road isn't wide enough to accommodate a segregated kerbed footpath the white-lined pedestrian lane will provide safe refuge for pedestrians making their way to the park from the town centre. Additional signage warning vehicles of potential pedestrians in the carriageway will also be provided. Vehicle traffic along Beach Road is currently very low as the road serves only 10 houses, 5 apartments and a guest house/hotel. The Stage 2 Road Safety Audit will assess this route in more detail.

2.4 Subitem (iv)

The applicant should clarify if proposed loading bay dimensions accord with DMURS guidelines. Proposals to comply with DMURS standards should be outlined, if/where applicable.

Response

DMURS states that the dimensions of a loading bay should be 2.8 x 6m to cater for large vans. Facilities for larger vehicles, such as trucks, should be located off-street. Drawing **11632-LUC-TC-XX-DR-L-0200 Clifton Town Centre Hard Landscape Proposals - Sheet 1 of 3** has now been amended to replace the loading bay immediately to the south of the market Place that didn't comply with this guidance with a new larger loading bay so that all loading bays now comply with this guidance.

2.5 Subitem (v)

The number of on-street parking spaces to be removed from the town centre should be clarified.

Response

The Car Parking Survey Report (PR01C) Section 1.3.3 Parking Gap Analysis identifies that the proposed draft Town Centre Enhancement Plan retains 150 no. car parking spaces in the Town Centre thereby, resulting in loss of 63 no. car parking spaces when deducted from the original 213 no. spaces.

2.6 Subitem (vi)

Treatments of existing EV charging points should be outlined, if/where applicable

Response

There are currently 2 No EV charging spaces in the public car park adjacent to the Station House. There is also 1 No EV charging space in the public car park to the south of the tourist information office. As a result, we are not providing any additional spaces in the town centre as part of the public realm enhancement project but will be providing 1 no. EV parking space in the new car park in Harbour Park.

3. ITEM 2: CULTURAL HERITAGE

3.1 Subitem (i)

Details of proposed replacement railing at Beach Road Quay should be clarified and outlined on drawings and sections.

Response

Additional drawing **11632-LUC-BR-XX-DR-L-0603 Beach Road Quay - Steel Railing Detail** has now been provided to indicate a traditional steel rail treatment for the paved area that surrounds the steps that lead down to the sea. The rail will have a black polyurethane finish which will ensure that whilst the rail is in keeping with the historic character of the quay wall, they will be resilient to erosion from salt laden air.

3.2 Subitem (ii)

The applicant should clearly outline their proposals for existing bollards.

Response

Existing drawing **11632-LUC-BR-XX-DR-L-0200 - Beach Road Hardworks** has now been amended to indicate the location of all existing bollards that will be retained.

3.3 Subitem (iii)

Proposed material treatments for all quay bollards should be clarified and these should be outlined on drawings and sections.

Response

Additional drawing **11632-LUC-BR-XX-DR-L-0604 Beach Road Quay – Pillar Mooring Bollard Detail** has now been provided to indicate more detail for the mooring bollards that are proposed for the Beach Road area.

4. ITEM 3: NATURA IMPACT STATEMENT

4.1 Subitem (i)

The applicant should consider all Statutory Instruments applicable to relevant designated European Sites in respect of the relevant Qualifying Interests/Special Conservation Interests.

Response

A number of the Site Specific Conservation Objectives (SSCO) documents were updated since the planning reference ABP-321144-24 was submitted.

The SSCO document for the West Connacht Coast SAC [002998] was updated in November 2025 (Version 2 of the SSCO document). The SSCO document for the Slyne Head Islands SAC [000328] was also updated, in December of 2024 (Version 2 of the SSCO document). The relevant Qualifying Interests (QI) designated for these SACs and their associated conservation objectives have been updated within the NIS. This has been reflected in **Table 4.1** of the as well as in **Section 5.1.3** and **Section 5.1.4** of the NIS.

The Inishbofin, Omev Island and Turbot Island SPA [004231] SSCO document was also updated in July of 2024, Illaunnanoon SPA [004221] SSCO document was updated in March of 2025 and the High Island, Inishshark and Davillaun SPA [004144] SSCO document was updated in April 2025. These updates have been reflected in **Table 4.1** of the NIS.

4.2 Subitem (ii)

Consideration should be given to the potential impact of lighting on otter at construction and operational stages.

Response

An assessment of the potential impacts on otter, a designated QI species of the Twelve Bens/Garraun Complex SAC [002031], as a result of the potential requirement for construction phase lighting, as well as the proposed operational phase (permanent) lighting has been provided in **Section 2.1.4** of the NIS. The assessment of potential adverse effects as a result of light disturbance to the QI species otter has been assessed in **Table 5.1** within **Section 5.1.1.1** of the updated NIS.

Mitigation measures to prevent any adverse effects on otter if lighting is required during the construction phase has been provided in **Section 6.2.2.1**. Operational phase lighting mitigation to prevent any adverse effects on otter has been provided in **Section 6.2.3**.

4.3 Subitem (iii)

The location of the site compound should be outlined.

Response

The location of the site compound has been included in **Figure 6-1** within the NIS and is discussed in the mitigation measures in **Section 6.2.1.1.2** under '**Site Setup**'.

5. **ITEM 4: PLANS**5.1 **Subitem (i)**

The status of the Clifden Local Area Plan 2018-2024 should be clarified.

Response

The Clifden Local Area Plan 2018-2024 has expired and been succeeded by the Galway County Development Plan 2022-2028 (GCDP). Volume 2, Section 5.1 Clifden Small Growth Town of the GCDP defines the statutory planning policy context for the town. However, we would like to note that the proposed development is still in compliance with the goals and objectives of that LAP. In particular, **Objective ED 5** provides for the revitalization and regeneration of the town centre provided for by this application, supported by **Objective LU 1**. The Harbour Park and Beach Road Quay portion of the proposal are supported by **Objective CF 5**.

Objective ED 5 – Town Centre Management

“Subject to appropriate resources, the Council in collaboration with local stakeholders shall prepare a town centre management plan for Clifden. The Management Plan will consider some or all of the following:

- *Upgrade of public lighting*
- *Connectivity of the Town centre including upgrade of paving,*
- *Consider upgrade/redesign of Market Square*
- *Scheme for façade improvement on identified priority streetscapes.*
- *Upgrade and improvement of street furniture.*
- *Consistent sustained signage design policy within the Town Centre.*
- *Provision of appropriate quality soft landscaping and planting as well as functional public spaces.*
- *Car parking management.*
- *Consideration of reuse of backlands within the town centre for civic space/other uses.”*

Objective LU 1 – Town Centre/Commercial (C1)

*“Promote the development of the town centre as an intensive, well connected, high quality, well-landscaped, human scaled and accessible environment, with an appropriate mix of uses, including residential, commercial, service, tourism, enterprise, public and community uses as appropriate, that provide a range of retail, services, facilities and amenities to the local community and visitors. **The town centre and associated main streets shall remain the primary focus for retail and service activity within Clifden.**”*

Objective CF 5 – Recreation, Amenity and Green Spaces

*“Protect existing recreation and amenity green spaces from inappropriate development, so as to maintain their attractiveness and role in enhancing the residential amenity and overall character of Clifden and **facilitate the provision of open spaces and civic spaces at suitable locations within the plan area.**”*

Section 6.6 of the Planning Report prepared by MKO and previously submitted with the application identifies the key policy priorities of the GCDP, including those which relate to Clifden, and provides and assessment of how they interface with the proposed development. However, we would like to emphasise policy **CSGT 1 Sustainable Town Centre**. This policy supports the redevelopment and regeneration of the public realm in Clifden’s Town Centre and measures which focus activity on the

town centre area. The proposal seeks to improve the public realm of the town centre, ensuring that it remains the heart of the community for years to come and can support the changing patterns of retail, social, and tourism uses of recent years.

CSGT 1 Sustainable Town Centre

*“Promote the **development of Clifden, as an intensive, high quality, well landscaped, human scaled and accessible environment**, with an appropriate mix of uses, including residential, commercial, service, tourism, enterprise, public and community uses as appropriate, that provide a range of retail services, facilities and amenities to the local community and visitors. **The town centre and associated main street shall remain the primary focus for retail and service activity within these plan areas.**”*

Further, the delivery of both the revitalised Town Centre public realm and Harbour Park will create new community and public green spaces, as well as areas for cultural activities (e.g. Harbour Park amphitheatre) and improved play areas in line with policy **CSGT 3**. These areas will also support tourism development, improving the reputation of the town as a key destination along the Wild Atlantic Way and as location of outstanding beauty, heritage, and quality in line with policy **CSGT 5**.

CSGT 3 Community Facilities and Services

“To encourage and support the expansion and development of existing community facilities and services to meet the needs of the local community.”

CSGT 5 Tourism Development

“a) Promote and facilitate the further development of Clifden as a key tourist destination for the benefit of the town and its surrounding areas.

b) To support and facilitate in co-operation with relevant bodies and landowners, the provision of tourism amenity routes around the town.

c) Encourage and assist the development of the sustainable tourism potential within Clifden in a manner that respects, builds on, protects and enhances the cultural, built, architectural, archaeological and heritage significance of the town including natural heritage and biodiversity, and its local amenities.”

The delivery of the wider project will create an integrated walking and cycling network linking Beach Road Quay, the Harbour Park, and the Town Centre together for residents and visitors. Further, the proposals will enable connections to future projects such as the Connemara Greenway and open the potential for an integrated active travel network with Safe Routes to School or other similar programmes. This supports policy **CSGT 8**.

CSGT 8 Pedestrian and Cycle Network

“Encourage and support the development of a series of pedestrian and cycle routes linking the residential areas to the town centre and local community services where feasible.”

Finally, we wish to note that only water compatible Community Use development will be permitted on the lands zoned for Community Use in the west of the Plan area that overlap with Flood Zones A and B (refer to Land Use Zoning Map). The [2009 The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Guidelines for Planning Authorities](#) note that “Amenity open space, outdoor sports and recreation and essential facilities such as changing rooms” is considered ‘Water-Compatible Development’ and as such is considered appropriate for Flood Zones A and B as indicated by Section 3.5 of those guidelines. Therefore, the proposal is in line with policy **CSGT 12** of the development plan.

CSGT 12 Water Compatible Community Uses

“Only water compatible Community Use development will be permitted on the lands zoned for Community Use in the west of the Plan area that overlap with Flood Zones A and B (refer to Land Use Zoning Map).”

5.2

Subitem (ii)

Appendix 1 of the Preliminary Pre-Design Stage Asbestos Management Plan should be submitted.

Response

A complete copy of the **Preliminary Pre-Design Stage Asbestos Management Plan**, with Appendix 1, has been included with this response for the Commission’s consideration.

6.

ITEM 5: PRESCRIBED BODIES

A list of the prescribed bodies notified of the application for approval should be submitted.

Response

The following prescribed bodies were notified of the application in line with the requirements of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended):

1. *An Chomhairle Ealaíon*
2. *An Taisce*
3. *Córas Iompair Éireann*
4. *Fáilte Ireland*
5. *Inland Fisheries Ireland*
6. *National Transport Authority*
7. *The Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage*
8. *The Heritage Council*

7.

ITEM 6: SUBMISSIONS

The applicant is invited to respond to the submissions received; a copy of the submissions was circulated to Galway County Council via their agent MKO on the 1st December 2024.

7.1

Response to Further Information

The following section provides a summary of the comments and concerns raised in submissions during the statutory consultation period, with common topics grouped together. It also lists the respondents who made comments under each given topic and then provides a response to the matters which have been raised.

7.1.1

Parking and Traffic

Anne Conroy	John O Reilly	Pauline Fagan
Catriona Coyne	Joseph Joyce	Peter Lewis
Clifden Bike Shop	Kevin Gavin	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association
Cllr Gerry King	Laurence McGonagle	Seamus & Rosanne Burke
Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Mairéad King	Simon Conneely
Connemara Chamber of Commerce	Maria Black	Sinéad Keogh
Ellen Claire Nee	Matt O'Sullivan Estate Agent, Auctioneer & Valuer	Teresa & John Cleary
Gerald Stanley & Son Ltd.	Michele & Brian Hehir	The Connemara Hamper
Gráinne Martyn	Mullarkey's Bar	The Foyle Family
Harry Joyce	O'Dalaigh Jewellers	Walsh's Bakery
Heather Greer	Pat Casey	Edie Moran
Julia & Paddy Foyle		

Concerns around the reduction in parking, as well as the safety and traffic impacts of the provision of parallel and reverse-in echelon parking were prominent, particularly in the town centre. Several respondents expressed concern about the inclusion of private car parking such as SuperValu in the parking assessment. Some expressed a 'right to park' outside their property. Others expressed concerns about impacts to tourism, traffic, and access for the mobility impaired or elderly. Respondents frequently requested or suggested that further off-road parking be provided at locations such as the tourist office. One respondent expressed concern about the provision of parking on the Beach Road Quay on their business.

Mixed feedback on the provision of bus set down/stop was received, with some respondents being positive, while others expressing that only one space is needed or that the proposed location is not appropriate due to being on a hill, or outside their property.

Concern around loading bay spaces was also identified in terms of the quantity and size reduction, as well as positioning at the bottom of a hill.

A couple of respondents requested campervan parking and facilities within the proposal.

Finally, three locations were claimed as being private property and identified as being used for private parking. Respondents objected to their inclusion with the plans. These locations appear to be public footpath, and the parking illegal. The first is the north corner of market street by Magee's. Concern over access to back yard of Stanley and Son (which is maintained). The second is off street parking in front of An Post and other shops by Seaview and the market. One respondent mentioned using the space to charge their EV. The final location is in front of the new north-east entrance to Harbour Park. Edie Moran identified that he has been using the land which is proposed to be used for the Harbour Park as parking as he does not have a parking space at his house. He has indicated he is concerned about access arrangements for himself, including the walk from the any parking. We would note that a new public parking lot will be provided as part of the park, and that there will be a direct and accessible path to the respondent's house.

Response

The role vehicular parking plays to the vibrancy and economy of Clifden is acknowledged by the design team and has sought to be facilitated via the proposed development. The proposed reduction in parking has been thoroughly assessed according to best practice in the Car Parking Survey Report submitted by Tobin Engineering in the original planning report. That report assessed the provision of parking within the town centre itself, as well as further parking lots outside of the area which could be impacted by the proposed development. It concludes that the spaces lost will be substituted by public parking locations outside the town centre, including the tourist office, station house, and proposed parking lot by the District Hospital and that therefore there is sufficient parking. It is acknowledged that the reduction in parking may result in an offset of activity to these locations, however, there is more than sufficient parking to serve the town centre including EV charging. In addition, improved wayfinding should enable drivers to more quickly and easily find available parking spaces. This availability of spaces is further enhanced by the provision of privately owned parking lots such as the SuperValu lot.

The design of Beach Quay Road has prioritised the prevention of parking along the Quay in order to halt further structural damage to the quay wall itself, as identified in the Structural Condition Inspection Report. In order to achieve this, a footpath has been set behind linear planting to physically prevent illegal parking. The effect of this is that the remaining road width is not suitable to provide parking. The importance of parking for the homes and businesses in the area however is noted. The shared space proposed for the road will facilitate short-term door-to-door drop offs. Additionally, there will be access to the new car park provided as part of the Harbour Park which is less than 200m away along the proposed footpath, as well as a continuation of the existing arrangements to the south of the project site. Further, the existing pull-in parking to the north of the residences on the quay will be retained.

The safety of the proposed layout and use of reverse-in echelon parking was assessed as part of the Road Safety Audit submitted with the application, which has further been addressed in **Item 1** of this RFI.

Concerns around loading bay sizes have been addressed as Part of **Item 1** of this RFI.

The proposed bus stop area has been designed to the standards set out by the NTA and includes sufficient set down and taper space for an array of vehicles in the national fleet, as well as those used by private operators. The shelter and signage will be to be completed to the design standards of the NTA. The provision of a bus stop outside of a business or home is submitted to be a net positive from a planning perspective due to the potential for increased footfall for the business, and increased accessibility for any homeowners in the area. Further, as the area is set down only the visual impact of

the stop should be temporary and minimal. The placement of the space on a hill should not hinder its operation, as evidenced by the numerous operating bus stops located on hills around the country.

The requests for campervan facilities by respondents is acknowledged by the Applicant. However, it is not currently within the scope of the project. All of the parking which can be provided for is on-street or is intended to serve Harbour-Park, and as such is not suitable for campervan usage.

With regards to the two locations identified by respondents as private property which are being utilised for car parking, it appears that both of these locations are part of the public footpath and have been unilaterally made into parking by the respondents. It is submitted that the respondents will benefit from the more formalized parking arrangements proposed, as well as the enhanced public space for both locations. We would note that pedestrian and vehicular access to the back yard of Stanley and Son is maintained. Please refer to drawing **11623-LUC-TC-XX-DR-L-0202 Hard Landscape (Sheet 3 of 3)** for further detail on access arrangements at this location.

7.1.2

Playground

Anne Conroy	Dunja Vulic-Aspell	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association
Clifden Bike Shop	Maria Black	The Foyle Family
Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Mullarkey's Bar	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association

Their primary concern about the playground in Harbour Park was regarding the inclusion of fencing and gates to ensure safety for children.

A few submissions expressed a desire to see a refurbishment of the playground instead of its replacement and relocation of the playground, partially given the hard work which went into fundraising for it and building.

Finally, a few respondents requested that universal access be considered with the playground design.

Response

The importance of the Harbour Park playground to Clifden is acknowledged by the design team and Applicant, as well as the hard work it took to fundraise for it, have it installed, and maintained. However, the existing facilities do not fully serve all ages, and do not meet universal accessibility standards. Further, there was a strong desire in the public consultation and by the Applicant to deliver a more green and softly landscaped area to enhance the overall quality of the space. Combined with the operation difficulties of refurbishing, relocating, and reinstalling and existing playground it was determined a new set was most appropriate.

The new playground and spaces in the park will cater to a variety of ages and be up to the latest standards for universal accessibility. The design of the playground is in line with international best standards and is partially enclosed by the existing boundary wall around the park, ensuring children cannot run into the road. There is strong oversight of the space, with formal and informal seating spaces for parents and caregivers to observe their children.

7.1.3

Road Width

Barry Reilly	Kevin Gavin	Pat Casey
Catriona Coyne	Lavinia O'Malley	Teresa & John Cleary

Clifden Bike Shop	Mullarkey's Bar	The Foyle Family
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There were a number of concerns about narrowing the streets. Concerns specifically over being able to pass delivery/stopped vehicles and the impact of this on traffic and emergency services were most common.

Response

The proposed road, footpath, and cycle lane widths are in line with the standards set out in DMURS, as identified by the DMURS Compliance Statement submitted with the application. Concerns around emergency vehicle access are acknowledged by the Applicant, including the potential need for parking enforcement to discourage illegal parking and unloading to support the proposed design.

7.1.4

Public Art

Barry Reilly	Connemara Chamber of Commerce	Pauline Fagan
Clifden Bike Shop	John O Reilly	Teresa & John Cleary
Clifden Tidy Towns	Kevin Gavin	The Foyle Family
Cllr. Eileen Mannion	Matt O'Sullivan Estate Agent, Auctioneer & Valuer	Edie Moran

A number of submissions sought to have the Beacon monument retained in its current town centre location. Many identified a local love for the monument. Several suggested placing the Alcock and Brown memorial in other locations around town. Some suggested alternatives or additional monuments including to the Connemara Pony or using one of the Galway Orb sculptures. Edie Moran indicated that he is concerned about the provision of new public art in the Harbour Park to attract anti-social behaviour and obstruct the view from his house.

Response

Concerns around the relocation of the Beacon monument were identified during the design and non-statutory public consultation process. As part of this, the design team consulted with the artist of the monument. He expressed that the piece's relocation to the Harbour Park would be more fitting with its intended vision as a reference to beacons for passing ships, acknowledging the towns strong historic ties to the sea. As such, it is considered that the new location in Harbour Park is appropriate and retains the community value of the piece.

With regards to Edie Moran's submission, we would note that the park is positively overlooked from a number of points, which should incidents of anti-social behaviour. As such, the use of the park as a social space is not considered to be injurious to residential amenity. Further, the land's current status as an unoccupied and unsecured field already makes it a prime location for anti-social behaviour. The proposed development would assist in remedying this situation. We would also submit the provision of public art (The Beacon) within the park should have a minimal impact on the view of from the respondent's house. Further, we would submit that in combination with the provision of the landscape improvements associated with the park will enhance the quality and character of the view.

7.1.5

General Design

Clifden Tidy Towns	Joseph Joyce	Pauline Fagan
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Dunja Vulic-Aspell	Kevin Gavin	Sinéad Keogh
Harry Joyce	Michele & Brian Hehir	Teresa & John Cleary
John O Reilly	O'Dalaigh Jewellers	Walsh's Bakery

Respondents offered mixed feedback on some of the general design aspects of the plan, particularly for the town centre. Several respondents wanted to see more soft landscaping and greenery, while others were concerned that there was too much and it would block views of their shops or other scenic locations. Michele & Brian Hehir were particularly concerned that the soft landscaping, bus parking, and lighting proposed in front of their shop and home would totally obstruct it and damage their business. A few expressed that the design was too modern or 'cold'. Several mentioned disliking the canopies or thinking they were not fit for purpose. Again, concerns about blocking the view of shop fronts were raised here. One respondent also highlighted that introducing play elements in the town centre would be beneficial for families and kids.

Seating and dining areas were also had mixed feedback, with some respondents praising the new seating, others asking for more or in different locations, and others noting they disliked the current outdoor dining provisions and wanted to see them discontinued.

Finally, one respondent highlighted the historic nature of the bollards along Clifden/Beach Road Quay and requested that they be retained due to their character and association with the town.

Response

Feedback on the overall design is welcome by the Applicant and design team. We would note that many of these types of submissions received during the non-statutory consultation are often conflicting with each other, or with the results of the non-statutory consultation undertaken. For example, some praise the design style, greenery, or outdoor dining while others indicate they dislike it. In combination with the results of, and changes made based on, the non-statutory consultation undertaken, we would suggest that this indicates a reasonable compromise has been reached on meeting the wants and needs of as many stakeholders as possible.

The proposed design is in line with international best practice, universal accessibility standards, is based on the lessons learned from other Irish public realm projects and was carefully designed to both amplify and respect the existing character of the town. This includes showcasing the special character of the towns shops and buildings. The plan proposes a significant increase in green infrastructure and space in the town centre, enhancing both the character of the area and its climate resiliency. Existing spatial constraints and a strong desire to retain parking have limited the further expansion of green spaces or play elements in the town centre. Plans relating to the Beach Road Quay bollards have been addressed under **Item 2, Subitem 3** of this response.

7.1.6 Footpaths

Catriona Coyne	Heather Greer	Seamus & Rosanne Burke
Clifden Tidy Towns	John O Reilly	Sean and Jim O'Malley
Denise Moran	Kevin Gavin	Simon Conneely
Harry Joyce	Maria Black	Walsh's Bakery

A number of submissions regarding the width of the footpaths were received which expressed that the current width of the paths was sufficient. This was largely driven by concerns around the road width, or

in one case, that they might be visually unappealing. Some did also express dissatisfaction with the use of the footpath for outdoor dining.

Clifden Tidy Towns requested that based on their previous feedback as part of the competition, and issues with Galway County maintaining the area that all paving be set in a material that prevents weed growth, unlike the current paving.

Several respondents did request that universal access be considered, and that the quality and safety of existing facilities be enhanced including crossings, paving, and lighting in line with those principles.

Two respondents expressed concerns about the enhanced pedestrian facilities attracting anti-social behaviour. The locations mentioned were the entrance/ crossing to Harbour Park and Sculpture 13 (in front of respondent's house) and the path between Bridewell Lane and Ballyconneely road. Sean and Jim O'Malley are concerned about losing pedestrian access to the lane adjoining the Bridewell Building behind Market Street, indicating they have a historic access. Harry Joyce is also concerned about access to Bridewell Lane, and the potential of the design to enable anti-social behaviour due to a lack of overlooking or activity.

Response

The proposed road, footpath, and cycle lane widths are in line with the standards set out in DMURS, as identified by the DMURS compliance statement submitted with the application. Given the concerns expressed about universal accessibility, the design team has ensured that the relevant standards have been met to achieve this. The materials request by the Tidy Towns Team should be facilitated by the natural stone paving finish proposed in the Design Statement prepared by LUC, which has been chosen due to its durability, low maintenance requirements, and visual appeal. The request will be considered as part of the detailed design and construction process.

The public realm, including footpaths, has been specifically designed to activate the town centre and make it a more engaging and livelier place. This includes elements such as public seating and pedestrian zones which have been placed carefully so as not to obstruct or narrow the footpath for users, while supporting a local café culture. This supports active and passive overlooking of the public realm and improve the feeling of safety. In short, the enhanced public realms and pedestrian crossings should decrease the potential for anti-social behaviour, not increase it. Access to Bridewell Lane has been addressed as part of **Item 1, Subitem 2** of this response. Antisocial behaviour in Bridewell Lane is being addressed through the provision of a detailed lighting plan, as well as by opening up the lane through scrub clearance, enabling a more open design which minimises blind corners or narrow passages.

7.1.7

Cycle Paths

Clifden Bike Shop	Gerald Stanley & Son Ltd.	Sinéad Keogh
Cllr Gerry King	Kevin Gavin	Teresa & John Cleary
Connemara Chamber of Commerce	Mullarkey's Bar	The Foyle Family
Connemara Greenway Alliance	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association	

The most common feedback and queries about the proposed cycle path in the town centre were around the lack of connection to other cycle paths, greenways, or key locations. This included the Connemara Greenway, local schools, and the future schemes on the Galway Road and the Sky Road. A couple of respondents expressed concern over the need for the lane at all, how it might impact on

the market (addressed in the **Market Section** below), or how the design of the shared pedestrian/cyclist junction on Main Street by the square may cause confusion.

Response

The importance of cohesive off-road connections for cyclists and the importance to gaining the full benefits of network effects are acknowledged by the design team. However, the focus of and funding for this project is on public realm improvements to the town centre, and as such connections to locations outside it such as schools are not within its funding remit. Additionally, given that key projects like the Connemara Greenway are still at the route selection stage, it was deemed to be pre-emptive to try and connect to an ultimately undecided route. However, the project has sought to provide projects such as the Connemara Greenway a direct and contiguous route into and through the town. Further projects under programmes like Safe Routes to School will also be able to tie into the proposed infrastructure, creating a tightly integrated cycling network for the area.

The proposed junction designs in the project are all in line with the standards contained in DMURS and have been assessed under the Road Safety Audit, including the details provided in **Appendix A** about the measures taken to address the concerns raised.

7.1.8

Harbour Park

Clifden Bike Shop	Dunja Vulic-Aspell	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association
Connemara Chamber of Commerce	Maria Black	

Suggestions and requests for the Harbour Park almost universally were requests for public toilets for the space. One was request was made for a sensory garden or other similar facilities to enhance accessibility for the neurodivergent people.

Response

The potential to add toilet facilities to the Harbour Park were explored by the design team but were ultimately determined to be impractical due to maintenance, sewage, and design requirements. A number of public toilets are available in the town centre which visitors to the park will be able to utilise.

A community garden area, landscaped view point areas, and expansive green spaces will be provided as part of the park and will contribute to creating a pleasant sensory and more neurodiverse friendly space. As with the rest of the proposed development, these spaces will be universally accessible.

7.1.9

Market

Clifden Bike Shop	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association	Teresa & John Cleary
Maria Black	Seamus & Rosanne Burke	The Foyle Family

Respondents expressed concern about whether the design left space for the Friday Market on main street.

Response

Space for the Friday Market on Main Street has been retained and enhanced as part of the public square, including via the provision of canopies to provide a more permanent and durable sheltered space. It will also minimise the effect the market has on the town's parking and enable safer, more accessible experience.

7.1.10

Ecology

Harry Joyce

Concern was expressed over the effect of the proposed lighting on bats, particularly around area by the Clifden Jail where the respondent claims rewilding has occurred.

Response

The existing scrub vegetation along the eastern and western boundaries of Bridewell Lane will be retained and protected. Further, areas of Wildflower Mix will be planted along Bridewell Lane, as detailed on Drawing 11623-LUC-TC-XX-DR-L-0402- 'Soft Landscape Proposals' and Section 2.3- 'Landscaping Proposals' in the submitted EcIA. As such, potential linear commuting and foraging habitat for local bat species will be maintained and enhanced in this area.

Lighting at the detailed design stage will be designed with consideration to the following guidelines: *Bat Conservation Ireland (Bats and Lighting: Guidance Notes for Planners, Engineers, Architects and Developers, BCI, 2010)*; *The Bat Conservation Trust (Guidance Note 08/23 Bats and Artificial Lighting at Night (BCT, 2023))*; and *Dark Sky Ireland*. The proposed lighting scheme will consider measures to help minimise the effect of artificial lighting on the local bat population.

Mitigation measures for lighting disturbance, if required during the construction phase, have been provided in **Section 6.2.2.1** of the NIS. Operational phase lighting (permanent lighting) mitigation has been provided in **Section 6.2.3** of the NIS.

7.1.11

Other Requests

Name	Request
Clifden Arts Festival	Wants to see a dedicated municipal arts venue, and outdoor performance space in the town centre.
Clifden Bike Shop	Public bike park location outside their front door causes issues with the bikes the shop parks outside.
The Foyle Family	Reduce works during tourist season to minimise impact on commerce

Response

Clifden Arts Festival

The Applicant and design team appreciate the Clifden Arts Festival's enthusiasm and support for the project and looks forward to future collaborations on events which will be made possible due to the proposed project. Unfortunately, due to the spatial constraints of the town centre a dedicated outdoor performance space in that area is not feasible. However, we wish to note that there will be space within the improved Market Square to hold small events, as well as throughout the other enhanced public spaces in the town. Further, an outdoor amphitheatre in the Harbour Park – a short walk from the town

centre and located on the near side of the park to town - will provide a new hub of activity for the town and enable a greater event capacity and the town centre is able to provide. In short, the project should enable multiple opportunities for a wide range of events at different scales.

Clifden Bike Shop

The concerns of the Clifden Bike Shop are noted as regards the bike parking. This location was specifically chosen so as to support the development of Clifden as a key hub along the Connemara Greenway and the wider region for cycling adventures. The Applicant will continue to consult with stakeholders during detailed design to find the best solution for the area, which supports the economic vitality of the town while creating an accessible and aesthetically pleasing environment.

The Foyle Family

A preliminary schedule of the construction work sequencing is included in the CEMP, as well as measures regarding hours of working. The Applicant will continue to liaise with the community to mitigate impacts during the construction stage, including on tourism, the local economy, and traffic. Further measures with regards to timing will be dependent on the length of time required for planning approval, and the detailed design process, and as a result cannot be provided at this stage.

General Comments

There were a number of submissions on the project which included comments or feedback which we wish to acknowledge and thank the respondents for, but do not require a further response or are immaterial to the planning process. The general topics of these comments and respondents who made them are listed below.

General objection to whole project

Adel Hade	Barry Reilly	Edie Moran
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Expressed the project was a waste of money

Barry Reilly	Heather Greer	John O Reilly
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Generally supportive of the project

Clifden Arts Festival	Gerald Stanley & Son Ltd.	Teresa & John Cleary
Clifden Bike Shop	Harry Joyce	The Foyle Family
Cllr Gerry King	Mullarkey's Bar	Walsh's Bakery
Connemara Chamber of Commerce	O'Dalaigh Jewellers	Julia & Paddy Foyle
Connemara Greenway Alliance	Pat Casey	

Supportive of the Harbour Park

Barry Reilly	John O Reilly	Scoil Mhuire Parents Association
Connemara Chamber of Commerce	Kevin Gavin	The Connemara Hamper

Dunja Vulic-Aspell	Matt O'Sullivan Estate Agent, Auctioneer & Valuer	The Foyle Family
Ellen Claire Nee	Mullarkey's Bar	
Gerald Stanley & Son Ltd.	Pat Casey	



APPENDIX 1

PRELIMINARY PRE-DESIGN STAGE ASBESTOS MANAGEMENT PLAN

**PRELIMINARY PRE DESIGN STAGE ASBESTOS
MANAGEMENT PLAN**

FOR

**ENCAPSULATION OF FORMER LANDFILL,
HARBOUR PARK / SHORE ROAD HISTORIC LANDFILL,
CLIFDEN, CO. GALWAY**

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This preliminary Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared by CACL in accordance with requirements of the Safety, Health and Welfare at Work (Construction) Regulations 2006.

2.0 GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

2.1 Title

Encapsulation of former landfill, where soil samples revealed the presence of asbestos fibres. Encapsulation by use of asbestos warning membrane and concrete, for the purposes of new build.

2.2 Client:

The Client is Galway County Council.

2.3 Site Location

Harbour Park / Shore Road Historic Landfill, Clifden, Co. Galway

2.4 Project Description

This Asbestos Management plan is related to only one area of the Harbour Park / Shore Road Historic Landfill Project (See Appendix 1 for area). It is proposed that this area will be covered first by an Asbestos warning/hazard membrane, and then by a constructed hard-capping layer and hardstanding. These two elements should cover the entirety of the area where illegal C&D waste is present.

2.5 Drawings/Specification

See Appendix 1

2.6 Site Restrictions

Area is not in use

2.7 Relevant Adjoining Land Use

Adjoining Lands are referenced in Application Form - Volume III - Section D - Part A - Volume I - Report

3.0 Design Stage

Those involved in the design stage of this project should be aware of legislation contained in the following:

HSA 393 -

https://www.hsa.ie/eng/Publications_and_Forms/Publications/Chemical_and_Hazardous_Substances/Asbestos_Guidelines.pdf

HSG210 - <https://www.hse.gov.uk/pubns/books/hsg210.htm>

4.0 ASBESTOS RISKS

WORKING WITH ASBESTOS PARAGRAPH

The following is the non-exhaustive list of work involving particular risks to the safety and health of persons as set out in Schedule 1 of SI 504 of 2006 on what elements if any of the works may fall within each particular risk category. It should be noted that many of the risks on the project arise out of working methods which are at the discretion of the Contractor and as such cannot be determined by the Client. Elements of the works are still awaiting design.

This project will involve work with asbestos containing materials. Appropriate PPE and RPE must be worn at all times. Only operatives, including those in a supervisory position, trained in working with asbestos should be involved with these works. All precautions should be included in the Plan of Work and Method Statement, including preparation prior to commencement, control measures, exposure levels (ensuring the exposure level is not exceeded), cautionary procedures during work, fibre suppressant measures and post works decontamination.

5.0 PROJECT SPECIFICS

Construction and demolition waste to be covered by asbestos warning membrane, followed by hard-capping. Representative operatives in close proximity to the asbestos containing materials should have Asbestos Awareness Training. Operatives in close proximity to the works will be required to wear suitable Personal Protective Equipment and Respiratory Protective Equipment, including Category 3, Type 5/6 Coveralls, and P3 filtered mask, work boots, gloves, etc. All precautionary procedures should be followed until the defined

encapsulation of the material takes place, that is the covering of the material with concrete.

Health & safety procedures, safety statement and site specific method statement will be required prior to commencement on site. This should include emergency procedures and decontamination procedures, and should appoint persons responsible. Site specific method statement will require a named independent analyst.

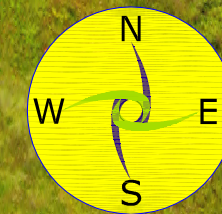
No standalone decontamination unit will be required, but there should be a designated area for decontamination, getting dressed/undressed.

Suppressants should be sprayed on to the asbestos containing materials while works take place.

Air monitoring should take place at various points before, during and after the works. Baseline air monitoring should take place prior to works commencing. Further air monitoring should take place during works, and after the works have been completed. Representative personal air monitoring should also take place.

The information contained in this Asbestos Management Plan has been prepared prior to the commencement of the work on site. It does not take account of any matters or information which may come to light after that time.

Jonathan Fagan
CACL
Date: 03/12/2021



LEGEND

- Site Boundary
- Old Domestic Waste identified in 2014 (red Hatch)
- Old C&D Waste identified in 2014 (blue hatch)
- C&D Waste from school identified in 2020 (yellow hatch)
- Areas where asbestos was found in soil

- NOTES
- FIGURED DIMENSIONS ONLY TO BE TAKEN FROM THIS DRAWING
 - ALL LEVELS SHOWN RELATE TO ORDNANCE SURVEY DATUM AT MALIN HEAD

Issue	Date	Description	By	Chkd.

Client:
Galway County Council

Project:
Tier 2 Site Investigation &
Tier 3 GQRA Assessment
of Former Shore Road Landfill

Title:
Location of Old &
New Waste Types
(i.e. Domestic or C&D Waste) &
Areas where Asbestos was found
in 2020 within Historic Landfill

Scale:
1:500@A3

Prepared by: C.D. Checked: P.M. Date: 01-11-20
Project Director: P.MULROY



P.G.M. = 3
Eastings = 65402.506
Northings = 250496.947
Elevation = 2.240m

3.1

3.2



APPENDIX 2

CLIFDEN RSA RESPONSE TRACKER

Clifden Town Centre Enhancement - RSA Response Tracker

			Resolved
RSA Item	Description	Response (in accordance with planning drawings)	Actioned
Town Centre			
2.1.1	Absence of tactile paving	Tactile paving has been added to all crossing points in accordance with the guidance	Yes
2.1.2	Road markings not in accordance with chapter 7	Road markings have been applied in accordance with the guidance	Yes
2.1.3	Signage not in accordance with chapter 7 TSM	Signage drawings have been supplied in accordance with the guidance	Yes
2.1.4	Clashes with kerblines and utilities	Localised relocation of service covers will take place in close liaison with service providers and be described further in the detailed design stage. Kerblines have been adjusted where possible to avoid such clashes	Yes
2.1.5	Dimensions not shown on drawing	Dimensions have been added to the drawings showing all key measurements.	Yes
2.1.6	Space to accommodate local traders not shown	Footpath widths throughout the scheme have been widened to accommodate greater spill out space and opportunities for local business	Yes
2.1.7	Lack of tie-in information	greater detail has been indicated of how the scheme ties into the existing streetscape surfacing and kerbs	Yes
2.1.8	Lack of clarity on priority of road users at main street, bridge street, market street junction	The latest signage drawing indicates the priority of road users which was not provided on the drawings reviewed at RSA stage. The latest signs and lines drawing indicate the priority of users. The crossings are currently shown as uncontrolled but may become controlled at detailed design stage.	Yes
2.1.9	Lack of footway continuity at crossing point	the layout has been adjusted to ensure consistency and continuity with the footway at crossing locations	Yes
2.1.10	Obstructions and clashes with existing urban realm	Existing urban realm causing clashes with new public realm have been removed on the latest drawings	Yes
2.1.11	Lack of detail on cycleway termination	Tactile paving has been included to indicate the termination of the cycleway	Yes
2.1.12	Lack of detail to aid visually impaired road users	This will be resolved at the detailed design stage and has been working inline with current gradients	Yes
2.1.13	Removal of existing controlled crossing point an issue for mobility impaired users.	The crossing distance has been reduced and 4no uncontrolled crossing points integrated upon a raised table giving greater pedestrian priority. The right turning lane has been removed as part of the scheme but every arm of the junction has a crossing point.	Yes
2.1.14	Kerb type and railings not matching existing	The existing railings have been shown to be retained on the plans	Yes
2.1.15	Existing kerbs shown not accurate to flush /	The area indicated on the RSA is outside of the scheme proposals and has been removed on the latest plans.	Yes
2.1.16	information required on the height and setback of the road signs inline with TSM	Signage plans have been provided as part of the planning application. Such detail design relating to height and set back of road signs will be further refined at detailed design stage.	Yes
2.1.17	Existing loading bay not incorporated into the	Adequate loading bay spaces have been provided throughout the scheme at key locations	Yes
2.1.18	Issue with proposed trees on Main street crossing	Layout of trees has been adjusted to ensure clear visibility of oncoming traffic.	Yes

Clifden Town Centre Enhancement - RSA Response Tracker

RSA Item	Description	Response (in accordance with planning drawings)	Actioned
2.1.19	No entry road markings shown to be facing the	This has been removed and the no entry will be signposted	Yes
2.1.20	A left turn marking has not been incorporated at the junction coming from Bridge	Signage and marking plans have been provided as part of the planning application. Any alterations will be accommodated at detailed design stage	Yes
2.1.21	The echelon parking bays along a section of Market Street and Main Street may cause issues with	It has since been acknowledged that reversing into the bays and pulling out forward with greater visibility of oncoming traffic is safer	Yes
2.1.22	Double yellow lines are not shown on the approaches to all crossings which may	Yellow line markings will be shown at the detailed design stage	
2.1.23	Details on the road markings and taper length have not been shown on the	The bus layby has been adequately tracked and designed in accordance with the guidance. Further markings will be outlined as required in the detailed design stage	Yes
2.1.24	No details have been provided on the existing bollards in front of Circle K	The existing bollards have been shown with final positions to be confirmed at detailed design stage	Yes
Harbour Park			
4.1.1	details of sight lines, swept paths, drainage, utilities and accommodations works have not been provided to the	Drainage, signage, line markings, tracking and visibility splays were supplied as part of the planning application	Yes
4.1.2	No visibility splays have been provided to the audit	These were supplied as part of the planning application	Yes
4.1.3	Existing public lighting pole has not been included as	The scheme includes for a new lighting scheme to replace existing.	Yes
Beach Road Quay			
5.1.1	details of sight lines, swept paths, drainage, utilities and accommodations works have not been provided to the	Drainage and line markings were only required on this part of the scheme - as supplied	Yes
5.1.2	No boundary treatment has been provided to protect road users near the pier along the active docking station.	It has been agreed with the client team that no railings will be installed along the quay edge (as is currently the case) This is largely due to the condition of the wall which not structurally sound enough for this installation	Yes