



Coleman Architects

Report in accordance with the requirements of Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001 (as amended) Enniscrone Main St. Public Realm Improvements Paving Project

1.0 Introduction

Sligo County Council is seeking to redevelop a key urban space in Enniscrone town centre in order to enhance its pedestrian use and the usage of its existing external commercial areas.

Enniscrone lacks any suitable functional public open spaces such as a public square for the enjoyment of locals and visitors and such a development is considered essential for Enniscrone to prosper and become a place people want to visit and spend time in. Well designed and planned public spaces enhance the physical environment and improve the 'livability' and sustainability of urban centres. They provide a focal point for the community and a place where residents and visitors alike can meet for a variety of purposes.

The space that is currently the road junction is proposed to be a focal point for locals and visitors alike, and it is intended to enhance and improve the existing pedestrian areas, external seating areas and all external spaces.

The proposal is to redevelop this road junction into a high quality permanent public plaza for all residents and visitors to use and enjoy and possibly provide the opportunity to host a wider range of events and activities. The new plaza will enhance the character and amenity of the town and will help promote Enniscrone as a destination and a must-visit venue for tourists to Sligo and the Northwest's Wild Atlantic Way.

The proposed new plaza will have interpretive elements for visitors, enhance private (bars and restaurants) and public recreational/social areas for public enjoyment. The space may be capable of accommodating a variety of open-air activities, such as outdoor markets, live performances etc.

2.0 Description of the proposed development

The proposed works consists of the renewal of a portion of Enniscrone Main St. and Cliff Road from approximately the Southwestern end of Gilroys Bar to the Northeastern end of The Pilot Bar, and to the end of Gilroys Bar (Northwards) on the Cliff Road with view to providing a predominantly pedestrian plaza area. The relevant area is quite central to

Enniscrone and consists of approx. 1580 sqm of public area, divided into two main paved areas: 800sqm of non-vehicular areas and 780 sqm of vehicular (the road) areas.

The existing footprint of the proposal includes a road junction where the Cliff Road (North/South) joins Main St. The junction is flanked by the external areas in front of Gilroys and the Pilot bars (Northwest of Main St.) and in front of Hopkins Bar, a restaurant and icecream parlour (Southeast side of Main St.). A further parking area exists along the East side of Gilroys Bar, and a stone building which has on occasion been a restaurant opens onto the Cliff Road on the opposite side. The relevant area is therefore a very busy and important hub of public access to those premises and of public leisure use to their frontage areas, especially in summer months.

The existing fabric of the public spaces consists of concrete 'sett' pavers finish to the pavements and forecourts, with high road kerbs against the Main Street and Cliff Road which consists of standard asphalt with double yellow lines on all sides. The junction to Cliff Road allows a one-way vehicular access towards the pier area (North). Two asphalt speed ramps have recently been constructed to slow traffic on the Main St. at the location of the junction. Existing street fixtures include signposts and street lighting. The road surfaces and edges are worn and frayed with various ages of asphalt finishes. The signage and lighting are worn and unsightly. Dish drains and iron gully and manhole covers exist. The road design through the area is visually and physically predominant over the pedestrian aspects.

The proposal involves the complete removal of all surfaces and fixtures in the relevant area and replacement with new fabric throughout. The existing vehicular movements will be retained but it is intended to provide an overall area in which the pedestrian activities are to the fore and not secondary to the vehicular. The ideal scenario would be the pedestrianisation of the urban space, but as this is not possible the design concept is of a pedestrian plaza with vehicular movement superimposed.

The following is a summary of the proposal as per the attached drawings and images:

- Creation of new paved plaza with pedestrian areas at the same level as the roadways;
- Vehicular access on to the area will be ramped at entry/exit points, i.e. 3no. traffic ramps;
- The non-vehicular areas are paved with granite slabs with a uniform directional pattern throughout the plaza, to give cohesion to the overall area. Granite retains a bright aspect and is less prone to staining than limestone or concrete;
- The vehicular areas are of minimum road widths so to maximise the pedestrian areas. The proposed vehicular surface is of rough granite cubes. This finish complements the pedestrian paved areas in colour and materials but more importantly produces a tactile sensation to drivers which makes it clear that the road is to be slowly traversed and is not a normal public road;
- Delineation lines of limestone strips and dished limestone drains are added at the junction of the vehicular and pedestrian areas so to provide a visual and tactile barrier between the two;
- Generously wide pedestrian crossing points of smooth small-scale granite paving blocks also provide tactile and visual contrast at the crossing points;
- Crossing points are preceded by sets of stainless steel studs which provide strong tactile sensations and complement the granite finishes with their bright and long lasting finish;
- Granite bollards provide protection to the pedestrian due the equal level of road and pavement;

- The existing parking area to the side (East) of Gilroys Bar is proposed to be part of the new general pedestrian areas, but with the option of providing car parking at certain times of the season. This will be achieved by the use of removable stainless steel bollards along the junction of the parking area and the road, allowing the parking area to be closed off from vehicular access when required. It is envisaged that this area will be used for various functions include external seating, where the sea view most prevalent, street trading, public entertainment area etc. Fixed stainless steel bollards along the pavement at the side of Gilroys Bar will separate this parking area from the pavement, or the safety of pedestrians when the relevant area is used for parking.

Note: It is envisaged that further fixtures will be constructed to complete the scheme. These will include the following (non-exhaustive list):

- Stone bollards for protection of pedestrians from traffic;
- Stainless steel fixed bollards;
- Planting of trees and planters;
- Directional 'fingerpoint' signage;
- Street lighting;
- Information/Wayfinding 'monolith' signage;

The above fixtures are subject to detailed design and are not part of this Part 8 proposal.

The existing areas in front of Gilroys Bar and the ice-cream parlour contain proprietary screens to shelter the users. These screens may or may not be used by the proprietors once the paving proposal is complete, as the new paved areas in front of the premises will be larger than the existing areas. It may be more cohesive to the overall sense of a pedestrian plaza that areas within it are not cordoned off. However shelter from wind is an important factor in outdoor seating areas especially on the coast so further analysis and agreements will be required.

3.0 Development Plan policy

Sligo County Council is committed to an urban strategy that aims to enhance the quality of its town centres, as contained in the Enniscrone Local area Plan 2014-2020 as currently incorporated into the Sligo County Development Plan 2017-2023) (SEDP).

The following are relevant excerpts from Enniscrone Local area Plan 2014-2020

11.1.3 Public realm

Considering the public realm as the entirety of urban features that are available for everyone to see and/or use, it is important to note the elements which influence the visual character of Enniscrone. At present there is no consistency in the manner in which the town presents itself to visitors and residents, despite the fact that there are valuable elements in the town on which to build a coherent urban image. Buildings lines and boundaries, streets and open spaces, street furniture including signposting and lighting, commercial signage, all deserve

design attention because they shape people's experience of the town. Safety, orientation and accessibility are important issues to consider when looking at improvements in the public realm.

P-TOU-1 Promote the development of tourism in a sustainable manner and encourage the provision of a comprehensive range of tourism facilities, subject to location, siting and design criteria, the protection of the environmentally sensitive areas and other planning considerations

It is a policy of Sligo County Council to: TOP -1 Improve the visitor experience to the town, and to co-operate with all stakeholders and appropriate agencies in promoting tourism and securing the development of tourism related enterprises and tourist facilities in the Enniscrone area.

TOP-2 Promote the development of tourism related-infrastructure and facilities within the town in order to increase visitor numbers and to create more local employment, subject to Appropriate Assessment under the Habitats Directive.

TOP-3 Ensure that the facilitation of tourism and related development does not impact negatively on the quality of the receiving environment or result in the deterioration of the quality of the tourism product.

Coastal zone tourism policies:

P-CZT-3 Promote awareness of the sensitivity of the coastal environment, amongst visitors and residents alike, through the provision of educational/heritage appreciation programmes, public information boards and other appropriate means.

4.4 Tourism

Tourism objectives

It is an objective of Sligo County Council to: TOO-1 Ensure that the redevelopment of the site zoned for mixed uses at the Pier presents an attractive frontage to the square and provides appropriate facilities for walkers and other visitors of the Pier, possibly including a cafe/restaurant.

TOO-7 Provide tourist information boards at strategic locations around the town and environs, highlighting points of interest and things to do in Enniscrone.

Enniscrone LAP: Tourism policies

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6.6 Recreation and open space There are just over 12 hectares of public open space within Enniscrone, including the park known as Castle Field, the amenity area known locally as the Hollows, located parallel to the beach, and various incidental amenity open spaces located throughout a number of housing estates. Private open space within Enniscrone consists of the golf course and the pitch-and-putt facilities, both of which are well maintained and open throughout the year.

For a town the size of Enniscrone, the amount of public open space is more than adequate. However, it is considered important to improve the amenity potential of these areas and to increase pedestrian accessibility throughout and between these areas.

This involves ensuring that all roads and streets have adequate footpaths, all new roads are constructed with wide footpaths and grass verges where possible and new pedestrian/cycle linkages are created at appropriate locations around the town.

11.2.1 Town centre refurbishment

In order for an urban area to function effectively as a town, it is important that the built fabric provides a central open space for markets, events, street festivals etc. The town centre zone as defined in Chapter 8 (refer to objectives TCO-3 and TCO-4 in Chapter 8) should be refurbished in two phases (refer to UDO-1).

Phase 1 of the town centre refurbishment would incorporate an extended area in front of and to either side of Our Lady's Assumption into Heaven Church. The car park in front of the church has the potential to become an urban square, after the removal of the kerbing and walls currently in place. It is envisioned that this area will feature a shared surface for vehicles and pedestrians and it would be marked by a "speed table" at each end (speed tables are extended flat-top humps intended to slow down traffic)

A public realm strategy for the town centre zone should be prepared in conjunction with the Roads Section, which will draft a traffic management plan for a wider area. The traffic management plan will focus on reducing speed through the centre and retro-fitting the Main

Street in accordance with the recommendations of the Design Manual for Urban Roads and Streets (2013)

Note: The proposed Public Realm Enhancement Proposals do not extend up Main St and as far as the Church, but may be extended in future to cater for the full provisions of Phase 1 above.

4.0 Vehicular design

The proposal necessitates the narrowing and creation of control measures for the two-way vehicular traffic that will continue to traverse the relevant site after redevelopment. The main road will continue to be a two-way street, and the Cliff road will continue to be a one-way street in accordance with the current vehicular movements. It is intended that the resizing of the pedestrian and seating areas in the relevant site will be maximised for the users thereof, however equal emphasis must be placed on the detailed design of the roadways, levels, materials, markings, crossing points etc. It is intended that the vehicular entrances at both ends of the relevant plaza, i.e. on Main St. will be narrowed to the minimum width allowed for such roads that will be safe and functional for all road users and pedestrians. The roads within the plaza will similarly be narrowed to those extents. The pedestrians will also be prioritized when designing the road surface treatments, crossing points, signage and vehicular ramps.

It is intended that the current parking areas on Cliff Road, and within the proposed Plaza site will be removed and the areas redesigned for the enhancement of the public realm, with multiple possible uses for those areas. The use of those areas at times perhaps of lower tourist numbers, could also revert to car parking.

The proposed paving layout will also be designed with the requirements of truck deliveries, emergency vehicles and the possibilities of occasional (chance, unsafe, illegal or unintentional) vehicular traffic in consideration.

5.0 Conclusion

Sligo County Council is committed to transforming the core of Enniscrone into a place of safety and amenity and designed with the pedestrian as priority,, providing a balance between the demands of vehicular realities and the need for calmed places for people to traverse, rest, eat, meet, carry out their business affairs and avail of the amenity that civic places can provide.

The Public Realm Plan for Enniscrone and the initiatives proposed therein embodies this idea and the redevelopment of the Enniscrone Main St is the first step towards achieving such a vision.

6.0 What happens next?

After the expiration of the period during which submissions or observations may be made, a report will be prepared and presented to the elected members of Sligo County Council. This

report will incorporate a list of the persons or bodies that made submissions, along with a summary of the issues raised by them and the Chief Executive's response. This report will also recommend whether or not the proposed development should be proceeded with as proposed, or should not be proceeded with.

Following consideration of the Report by the members of the Council, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Report, unless the members, by resolution, decide to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the Report, or decide not to proceed with the development.