

Chief Executive Report
on
Submissions Received following the display of the
Draft Flower Hill and Abbeylands Urban Design Plan



November 2021

Background

Meath County Council in conjunction with the Paul Hogarth Company Consultants prepared a Draft Urban Design Plan for Flower Hill and Abbeylands. The Draft Plan and accompanying Natura Impact Statement was on public display from Wednesday 25th of August to Friday 24th of September 2021.

The Draft Plan was on display at Meath County Council, Buvinda House and Meath County Library in Navan and was also available to view on Meath County Councils online consultation portal. Submissions were invited by the Planning Authority on the Draft Plan over the four-week period.

In total 11 submissions were received by the Planning Authority, some from Community Groups, landowners and Public Bodies. Many of the submissions supported the Draft Urban Design Plan and the strategy included therein while other submissions raised issues of concern to be addressed in the finalisation of the Plan. This report cites the names of the individuals/groups who made submissions, gives a summary of the issues raised as well as the Chief Executive Response to the issues raised in the submissions received. .

This period of public consultation, taken in conjunction with the previous community workshops/public meetings was an extremely beneficial and informative process and will assist in the finalisation of the Urban Design Plan for the regeneration of Flower Hill and Abbeylands.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-1
Submitted by:	Thomas Robertson
Submission Theme(s):	Pedestrian Movement
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>The submission welcomes the following proposals from the Draft Urban Design Plan:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The two-way cycle track on Flower Hill being a positive addition to the town and help in developing a robust network of cycling infrastructure. 2. The potential for a pedestrian and cycle bridge to connect the new scheme to the town centre. 3. The potential for a riverside greenway along the River Boyne and River Blackwater would help connect Blackwater Park and local housing / shops. <p>The submission recommends that particular care should be taken at the Round O Junction for cyclists and perhaps the addition of a raised pedestrian crossings with an adjacent cycle crossing.</p>	
Chief Executive's Response	
<p>The Council notes the support for the 2-way cycle way at this location as well as the riverside greenway. The enhancement of active travel through enhanced pedestrian and cycling infrastructure throughout the study area is an objective of the Plan.</p> <p>The specific comments raised in relation to a raised pedestrian crossing with an adjacent cycle crossing at the Round O Junction is also of note and will be taken into consideration in the drafting of the Street Enhancement Project (refer to section 4.0 of the Draft Plan i.e. Projects: Flower Hill Tomorrow, Action 1)). which will be advanced following the finalisation of the Draft Urban Design Plan.</p>	
Chief Executive's Recommendation	
No change required.	

Submission No.:	MH-C55-2
Submitted by:	Luke McGovern
Submission Theme(s):	Pedestrian Movement
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>This submission is made by a local resident Luke McGovern. As a local resident he experiences many of the issues which the Plan aims to address. The submission raises some concern with regard to the following objectives;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The difficulty for pedestrians traveling over Pollboy Bridge due to the pathway only being wide enough for one person. 2. The lack of provision towards green areas, trees and planters in order to project vibrancy into the area. 3. Concern over the current speed limit on the road being 50km/h, submission recommends the council to introduce a default speed limit of 30km/h. 4. Outdated pedestrian crossing at the Round O Roundabout to be updated to include flashing amber lights and zebra crossing lines to provide safety for pedestrians. 5. Incomplete cycle infrastructure on N51 heading north towards the fire station. The cycle lane abruptly ends and forces cyclists onto a very narrow shared pathway. 6. Unsuitable pedestrian footpath along the N51 towards Pollboy Bridge. The submission outlines that the footpath is very steep along that section of the road and is extremely difficult for pedestrian with pushchairs and wheelchairs. 	
Chief Executive's Response	
<p>The Council notes and welcomes this submission from this local resident who is very familiar with the challenging issues facing Flower Hill.</p> <p>It is the opinion of the Chief Executive that many of the issues raised will be addressed under section 4.0 projects: Flower Hill Tomorrow, though, Action 1) Streetscape Enhancement. This scheme will be developed following the finalisation of the Draft Plan and will included detailed specifications and proposals in relation to an improved street design including widening pedestrian pavements, new pedestrian crossings, cycling infrastructure, the introduction of quality paving, street trees, quality street furniture, car parking and lighting.</p> <p>The Streetscape Enhancement Scheme outlined in the Draft Plan aims to address many of the issues raised through the provision of new pedestrian crossings, enhanced pavements</p>	

and cycles lanes. Pedestrian crossings will be provided to ensure safer pedestrian desire lines.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-3
Submitted by:	Bernard Allan
Submission Theme(s):	Public Transport

Summary of Submissions:

The submission refers to a proposal for a bus stop to be provided on Flower Hill, located on the upper section of Flower Hill between Flower Hill Crescent and the filling station, for the following routes,

- 190 (Trim-Navan-Slane-Rossin-Drogheda) route operates every hour daily.
- 107 (Navan-Nobber-Kingscourt) route operates between four and six weekday journeys.
- Sillan Tours route 179 (Dublin-Kingscourt-Cootehill) route operates between four and six weekday journeys.

Chief Executive's Response

The promotion of public transport throughout Navan, including the study area is a key objective of the Council. Many proposals outlined in Navan Public Realm 2030 demonstrate the importance of public transport provision in the town. The Streetscape Enhancement Scheme will examine in detail public transport provision throughout the study area, examine how it can be improved and will ensure integration with the wider public transport network throughout the town which will be considered as part of the Local Transport Plan for Navan.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-4
Submitted by:	Robert Foy
Submission Theme(s):	N/A
Summary of Submissions:	
Not applicable to the Flower Hill and Abbeylands Urban Design Plan.	
Chief Executive's Response	
N/A	
Chief Executive's Recommendation	
N/A	

Submission No.:	MH-C55-5
Submitted by:	Navan & District Angling Association
Submission Theme(s):	Angling
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>This submission welcomes the Draft Plan and is not opposed to the considered redevelopment and regeneration for the area of Flower Hill and Abbeylands, along with the proposed development of a river park. The submission contains the following recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The section of the River Blackwater in the study area is in the control of Navan & District Angling Association 2. The existing apartment developments has resulted in access to the fishery area becoming problematic. 3. The submission strongly believes that fishing on both the River Boyne and River Blackwater forms a significant part of the social heritage in Flower Hill and Abbeylands and the town of Navan. 4. The submission suggests an opportunity for Navan & District Angling Association, Inland Fisheries Ireland and Meath County Council to join in a collaborative effort to deliver a high-quality fishing and angling facility. 	

5. Recommended that a similar facility as seen on the River Moy in Foxford Co. Mayo, which includes a wheelchair friendly fishing platform, to be developed for the River Boyne.
6. Navan & District Angling Association maintain exclusive fishing rights in the study area.
7. The submission expressed the disappointment on having no reference to angling or fishing in the Draft Plan.

Chief Executive's Response

The development of the riverside walk and the enhancement of the riverbanks is an important element of the Plan and the role of the Navan and District Angling Association as a key stakeholder is recognised in this regard.

Having reviewed this submission, the Council note the importance and merit of the provision of a dedicated fishing and angling accessible facility/platform (subject to Appropriate Assessment) along the new proposed river walkway.

It should also be noted that the proposed river walk-way will be accessible to the general public.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

Revise the Draft Plan to include reference to angling in the study area and also the provision of an accessible fishing facility, subject to Planning/Appropriate Assessment considerations.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-6
Submitted by:	Barney McMahon
Submission Theme(s):	On Street Parking
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>The submission is from Barney McMahon, a local shop owner i.e. Flower Hill Furniture. The submission raises a concern in relation to the proposed development, which includes a gateway building located across from Flowerhill Furniture. The submission states, currently there is a very limited parking facility located outside his premises and is concerned these parking spaces will be used by customers and visitors to the proposed gateway building.</p>	

Chief Executive's Response

The Council recognises the important role of local indigenous businesses in Flower Hill and is fully supportive of their continuing operation into the future. Meath County Council notes the concerns regarding parking and the proposed future development opposite the commercial premises.

It should be noted that any future development will be subject to future planning applications and parking within the curtilage of the site will be required to comply with the standards set out in the Meath County Development Plan 2021-2027.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No changes required.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-7
Submitted by:	Navan & District Historical Society
Submission Theme(s):	Heritage and Culture

Summary of Submissions:

The submission requests that the Draft Plan include the correct use of place names and street names for the area, in order to prevent the serious risk of losing an important aspect of Navan's heritage. The submission requests that Pollboy Bridge; Mill Lane, Pollboy Street, New Lane, Linkey Lane, Town View, Flower Hill, Abbeylands and the Mollies be displayed correctly in the plan and signage to be erected in the correct location as part of the regeneration of the area.

The submission requests that the urban grain of all traditional building along Pollboy Street, Flower Hill and New Lane to be retained. These buildings dictate the street/road formation and defines the unique fabric of this area of Navan. The submission states the built fabric of Navan has suffered significantly throughout the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, with the loss of many buildings of merit. The submission outlines that the loss of historic environments in Navan to facilitate new residential, commercial and infrastructural development in the interest of growth should no longer be entertained.

Disappointment is expressed by the fact that no reference was made to document the importance of Sir Francis Beaufort. The Navan and District Historical Society feel that

recognition of the Beaufort Family and their association with Flower Hill should be appropriately reflected in the Draft Plan.

The submission requests that the Draft Plan puts appropriate measures in place to secure any remaining industrial features (or remnants contained within these buildings, like the Millwheel in Elliott's Sawmill) and to incorporate them as part of any redevelopment in the study area. N&DHS requests that the plaque on the wall of Elliott's Mill to be reserved and incorporated appropriately. It is also requested that the proposed Abbeylands Quarter include an appropriate marker to Gasometer, which stood at the bottom of the Mill Lane.

Chief Executive's Response

The submission from the historical society is very much welcomed. Meath County Council is fully cognisant of the importance of the built heritage in the study area. The Council is aware that the area includes collection of protected structures, historical sites and monuments which reflect the area's history and personality, which it wishes to preserve. The Council aims to protect and conserve the local built heritage and will only permit well-designed new development which complements the historic character of the area, whilst still retaining its intrinsic character.

The Council notes the issue raised with regard to the spelling of place names within the study area and will address same in the final plan. The erection of appropriate signage will be considered in further detail as part of the Streetscape Enhancement Plan for the area.

The Draft Plan outlines the importance of the traditional built fabric and fine urban grain along Flower Hill which contributes to local identity, adds important heritage quality and character to the area.

The Council recognises the importance of including reference to Sir Francis Beaufort in the Final Urban Design Plan. The Council supports the provision of an appropriately designed art piece to commemorate Sir Francis Beaufort.

The protection of the industrial heritage features will be included as part of the Streetscape Enhancement Plan, which will be prepared following the completion of the Plan.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

Amend the Draft Plan as follows:

- The following sites/streets spelling/references to be included throughout the plan area. Pollboy Bridge, Mill Lane Pollboy Street, New Lane, Linkey Lane, Town View, Abbeylands and The Mollies.
- Include reference to Sir. Francis Beaufort and the provision of an art piece to acknowledge his life's work and birth at this location.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-8
Submitted by:	Brock McClure Planning and Development on behalf of City Cinemas Ltd.
Submission Theme(s):	Land Owner

Summary of Submissions:

The submission by Brock McClure Planning and Development on behalf of City Cinemas Ltd. states, City Cinemas Ltd. are the land owner of a significant proportion (5.63 acres) of the proposed lands within the subject study area of Flower Hill and Abbeylands. The submission also states that City Cinemas Ltd was not engaged with on the process of the plan.

It is submitted that the landowners have a clear vision for the development of this site to provide retail, commercial, residential and other uses. The owner welcomes the aspirations and goals of the Draft Plan yet submits that the inclusion of a 'concept plan' setting out block layouts for the subject site is premature and should be omitted from any final version of the plan.

Chief Executive's Response

The Council engaged extensively with the local community and key stakeholders in the formulation of the Draft Plan. Two no. public meetings, which were publicly advertised and very well attended were held by the Council prior to the finalisation and display of the Draft Plan.

The Council notes that the subject lands are in third party ownership i.e. of City Cinemas Ltd. The layout included in the Draft Plan outlines a form and pattern of development considered appropriate at this location. The proposed block layout is indicative and sets out principles for the future development for the area. Any proposed development within the subject site will be subject to the planning application process.

Chief Executive's Recommendation
No change recommended.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-9
Submitted by:	Dave Anderson, Navan Cycling Initiative
Submission Theme(s):	Cycling
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>The submission from Navan Cycling Initiative agrees with a lot of the issues that were raised in the Draft Plan i.e. from the area of Flower Hill feeling 'cut off' from the centre, the street being hostile, with heavy volumes of traffic, air and noise pollution, very narrow and unsafe paths and no cycle infrastructure.</p> <p>The submission welcomes the inclusion of a two-way cycle lane on Flower Hill, which will provide more sustainable movement options, and the concept of the River Park.</p> <p>The main focus of the submission is the 'cyclability' of the proposed design. The submission states;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The design is not in compliance with the National Policy Objectives set out in the National Planning Framework, "Prioritising walking and cycling travel modes". 2. The Draft Plan does not show the start of the cycle lane, where it joins the R147 Dublin-Kells Road. 3. Junction design is key to ensuring safe, comfortable journeys, and to ensure that the design fully adheres to the National Cycle Manual. The submission has made 5 observations on individual junctions <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Junction at Mill Lane; does not show what segregates the cycle lane from motor vehicles. The submission suggests that it is unclear how cyclist will be protected when seeking to turn up Mill Lane. ii. Junction at Ratholdren Road; the submission suggest that it is unclear how cyclist turning up Ratholdren Road will be protected. iii. Junction at New Lane; the submission states that it is unclear how the side road entrances are being treated. iv. Junction at Flower Hill Crescent; the submission states that it is unclear how the side road entrances are being treated. 	

- v. Junction at Round O Roundabout; the cycle lane does not appear to facilitate onward travel for cyclists through the roundabout. There are existing cycle lanes heading up to the roundabout which end abruptly forcing cyclists to mix with HGVs and heavy traffic.

Chief Executive’s Response

Meath County Council welcomes the submission and acknowledges the importance of the Navan Cycling Initiative for promoting and encouraging cycling in Navan. The Council recognises cycling and associated infrastructure as an essential element of any integrated urban design plan at this location.

The Streetscape Enhancement Design Project will include junction design and detailed specifications with regard to new cycle infrastructure. The layout and workings of the aforementioned plan will be informed by the Transportation Department of the Council and will be fully integrated into the overall cycling network for the town and consistent with the objectives of the NPF.

Chief Executive’s Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-10
Submitted by:	Joan O’Brien
Submission Theme(s):	Design Quality
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>This former resident of Flower Hill welcomes the publication of this much-needed Draft Plan. The submission reflects how the Draft Plan addresses many of the wishes expressed by the community and is satisfied to see the creative and imaginative proposals. The submission is very much looking forward to seeing the implementation of the actions from the Draft Plan.</p> <p>The submission addresses the proposed development between Ratholdren Road and New Lane and requests that it is of a very high standard in design and incorporate an appropriate mix of housing, such that will create an example for the wider area. The submission strongly urges the council to resist the implementation of any new apartment development on Flower Hill, due to the fact that there is already a complete</p>	

overconcentration of apartment development which are very unsightly, poorly maintained and have contributed to the rise in antisocial behaviour in the area.

Chief Executive's Response

The Council welcomes the support expressed in this submission for the Draft Plan. The Council notes the concern of the former Flower Hill resident in relation to the design of future development and the provision of additional apartment developments. It should be noted that the Draft Plan promotes high-quality design and finish, taking into consideration the scale and massing of the surrounding context. The provision of new development which reflects the original footprints and character of the area is also promoted in the Plan.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No change required.

Submission No.:	MH-C55-11
Submitted by:	National Transport Authority (NTA)
Submission Theme(s):	Transport
Summary of Submissions:	
<p>The NTA is supportive in principle of the preparation of the Draft Plan and the proposals it contains related to sustainable travel. While the submission from the NTA acknowledges the intention that this Urban Design Plan will support the Navan Local Area Plan in providing strategy for the area, the submission recommends that a Local Transport Plan should be prepared in tandem with the proposed LAP, using the Area Based Transport Assessment (ABTA) methodology issues by the NTA and TII.</p> <p>The submission outlines the following observations and recommendations on the subject plan;</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. The junction at the end of Pollboy Bridge is of critical importance due to all pedestrian and cycling journeys converging at this point. The submission is clear that it is important that not only the bridge but also Flower Hill and the R162 to the north, and Watergate Street and Market Square to the south, provide adequately for sustainable modes of travel.2. The NTA is supportive of the intention to provide for cycling in both directions on Flower Hill, which is currently a two lane, one-way road. While it is proposed in the Draft Plan to develop a two-way cycle track on this route. The NTA	

recommends that the design of the cross section of Flower Hill should be informed by a wider consideration of cycling provisions on the adjacent road and street network.

3. Importance should be given towards the design of cycle lane tie-ins at each end, in order to provide a continuous connected route between the town centre and the full extent of Navan north of the River. Such considerations should be informed by the principles of network planning contained in the *NTA's National Cycle Manual*

The submission from NTA briefly discusses the proposed Urban Quarter, in which they outlined;

- i. The important role the new Urban Quarter has in terms of delivering a new array of walking and cycling destinations
- ii. The need for crossing facilities along the main roads needs to be addressed in the design of the pedestrian and cycling routes.
- iii. It is recommended that the network of routes throughout this site should be developed in accordance with the guidance contained in the *National Cycle Manual*.

While the submission is supportive of the intention to provide for cycling in both directions on Flower Hill, the NTA recommends that the design of cycle infrastructure on this road should be informed by a more comprehensive local cycling network developed in accordance with the network planning principles contained in the National Cycle Manual, and that any revision to the road in the meantime should not preclude the implementation of an alternative layout at a later date.

The submissions also recommend that a cycle network serving the Abbeylands site should be developed, informed by Local Transport Plan preparation and the guidance contained in the National Cycle Manual.

The NTA welcomes the opportunity to work with the Council in this regard in due course.

Chief Executive's Response

Meath County Council welcomes the submissions from the National Transport Authority (NTA). The contents of this submission have been considered and the Council agrees with the importance on creating connections between Flower Hill and the town centre. As outlined in the Draft Plan the aim is to create a well-designed streetscape project which promotes active travel between the town centre and northern neighbourhoods to greatly improve connectivity and accessibility of the area.

The Council is aware of the importance of providing a continuous connected cycle route and the amalgamation between each cycle lane to flow continuously. As stated on the Draft Plan all measures, which relate to the Streetscape Enhancement are subject to detailed design and will form part of the future Streetscape Enhancement Project. The layout and workings of the cycle plan will be designed and completed by the Transportation Department which will be informed by a more comprehensive local cycling network developed in accordance with the network planning principles contained in the National Cycle Manual. The Local Transport Plan for Navan will address the provision of a comprehensive pedestrian and cycle network in Navan.

Chief Executive's Recommendation

No change recommended.