



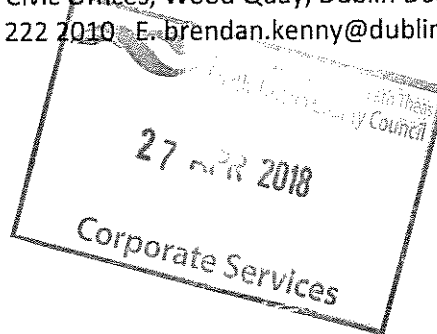
Comhairle Cathrach  
Bhaile Átha Cliath  
Dublin City Council

Oifig an Leas-Phríomhfheidhmeannaigh  
Seirbhísí Tithíochta agus Pobal  
Oifigí na Cathrach, An Ché Adhmaid, Baile Átha Cliath D08RF3F

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23<sup>rd</sup> April 2018

Mr. Colm Murphy  
Meeting Administrator  
Corporate Performance and Change Management  
South Dublin County Council  
County Hall  
Tallaght  
Dublin 24



Ref: M10/0318

**Re: Motion agreed at March meeting of South Dublin County Council**

Dear Mr. Murphy,

I refer to this Motion which relates to the Former Magdalene Home at Sean McDermott Street in Dublin city.

Dublin City Council acquired this site in 2005 from the Sisters of Charity. The site includes the Former Convent, a Chapel, and other buildings. It measures just over two acres in total.

The Laundry Building itself was badly damaged by fire in August 2005 and had to be demolished by Dublin City Council later that year for Health and Safety reasons.

It is a prime site close to O'Connell Street; however, it is located in an area that has suffered from serious social problems including a recent murderous feud and is in need of significant Social, Economic and Physical Regeneration. This proposed redevelopment of the site presents a strong opportunity for such regeneration.

Currently the site is largely vacant and under-utilised but includes a number of existing (and protected) buildings including the 19<sup>th</sup> century former convent with adjoining chapel.

The full site was put on the market for sale in early 2017 and currently Dublin City Council is finalising negotiations with the preferred bidder. It is a key strategic site in the centre of Sean McDermott Street and has great potential to create a landmark mixed development.

The Bid includes the following:

- **A Hotel** – comprising c.350 bedrooms and ancillary accommodation (restaurants, bar, meeting rooms/conference facilities)
- **Commercial, Retail, and Café facilities**
- **Gallery/Exhibition/Event Centre/Concert Hall** – Chapel Conversion
- **New Community Centre** – c.200 square metres

- **Supermarket** – c.1800 square metres
- **70 Residential Units**

We are very conscious of the history of this property/site and the controversial role also played by the Magdalene Homes at other locations throughout the country.

It is very appropriate that a suitable permanent memorial be included in any proposed redevelopment of this property/site. Therefore there will be a specific condition in the Development Agreement with the Purchaser for the provision of such a memorial.

We recently commissioned a detailed archaeological survey of the site which uncovered no evidence of any burials; however, all stages of construction on the site will be monitored by a Grade 1 conservationist.

### **Benefits of the Development:**

#### Employment Potential

- Hotel – approximately 100 permanent and temporary staff
- Retail and residential accommodation – 60 to 75 staff
- Construction Jobs – 500 staff (Local Employment Charter)
- Total Investment - €55 to €75 Million

Dublin City Council and the North East Inner City (NEIC) Implementation board (arising from the Taoiseach's Taskforce) are working in partnership to develop new streams of training to equip local people with the necessary skills to take up employment in emerging roles that are being created by employers in the area. The partnership involves the varied business sectors (financial, ICT) in the Docklands area, construction companies specialising in the retail, housing and commercial sectors and the ongoing voluntary sector requirement for childcare services.

The provision of locally based bespoke training courses in these sectors is being supported by the Department of Social Protection, City of Dublin ETB, Dublin City Council, and Dublin Town. The course output will be managed and delivered by the Local Employment Service, Dublin Institute of Technology, local Community Training Centres, etc.

The NEIC Programme Office are currently developing courses in construction and hospitality services to meet the emerging job vacancies in the retail/hotel market locally and the opportunities for sustainable jobs in the construction sector both in the Docklands area and the new Social Housing developments across the central area of the city.

- The potential of a new hotel in the existing Convent Lands will provide an ideal employment opportunity for local people appropriately trained to apply for the various roles required to operate a successful hotel. The development will support the long-term economic and social regeneration of the area.
- Major restoration of important historic and protected buildings on site.
- Major development project funded by the private sector.

We are strongly of the view that the strategic position of the Convent site merits an economic regenerative solution which will benefit the whole area in terms of footfall, jobs and act as a catalyst for further physical redevelopment in the area.

The redevelopment of the Convent in Sean McDermott Street is dependent on the proposed disposal of the site being approved by the Elected Members of Dublin City Council. If the disposal is not approved then no redevelopment will take place.

It is not clear at present when this proposal will be coming before the Councillors for approval. It had been earmarked for the May meeting of the City Council but that is now unlikely as discussions/negotiations continue with the preferred bidder.

We are committed to the provision of a suitable memorial on the site and this will be one of the conditions of the ultimate Development Agreement with the developer if and when the disposal is approved.

The preferred bidder is very open to such a condition.

As previously indicated we will be very happy to consult with the various interested parties on the type of memorial that will be implemented. We have commissioned a Consultant Heritage Architect to prepare some initial drawings/suggestions to assist this consultation process.

Yours Sincerely,

  
Brendan Kenny  
Deputy Chief Executive