

COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS **SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**



MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Monday, June 08, 2020

HEADED ITEM NO. 15

Chief Executive's Report on Public Consultation for Proposed Development of Community Centre at Slade Castle Walk, Boherboy, Saggart, Co. Dublin



Fig. 1 Entrance Elevation View of Proposed Development

1. Introduction

In accordance with the requirements of Part XI of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), ("the Act") and Part 8 of the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 (as amended) ("the Regulations"), South Dublin County Council is seeking planning consent to the proposed development of a community centre with total floor area (including existing floor area) of 610m² at Slade Castle Walk, Boherboy, Saggart, Co. Dublin. The proposed development will consist of:

- Conservation, restoration and renovation of the existing, unoccupied protected structure, the former St. Mary's National School building, for use as a community centre.

- Demolition of the rear north section of the projection-extension of the St. Mary's National School building to proposed new entrance.
- Construction of a new single storey entrance/ reception/ service area and a new single storey multi-function hall for the proposed Community Centre.
- All associated works and services including provision car-parking spaces and CCTV for security.

The purpose of this Chief Executive's Report is to present the outcome of the public consultation, to respond to submissions made during the consultation period and to make recommendations in relation to the proposed development where appropriate.

2. Legislative Context

Section 179 (3) (a) of the Act, requires that the Chief Executive shall, after the end of the public consultation period, prepare a written report in relation to the proposed development and submit the report to the members.

Section 179 (3) (b) of the Act outlines that a report shall—

1. Describe the nature and extent of the proposed development and the principal features thereof, and shall include an appropriate plan of the development and appropriate map of the relevant area.
2. Evaluate whether or not the proposed development would be consistent with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area to which the development relates, having regard to the provisions of the Development Plan and giving the reasons and the considerations for the evaluation.
3. List the persons or bodies who made submissions or observations with respect to the proposed development,
4. Summarise the issues, with respect to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area in which the proposed development would be situated, raised in any such submissions or observations, and give the response of the Chief Executive thereto, and,
5. Recommend whether or not the proposed development should be proceeded with as proposed, or as varied or modified as recommended in the report, or should not be proceeded with, as the case may be.

Under Section 179(4) of the Act, the Elected Members shall, as soon as practicable, consider the proposed development and the report of the Chief Executive. Following the consideration of the Chief Executive's report, the proposed development may be carried out as recommended in the Chief Executive's report, unless the local authority, by resolution, decides to vary or modify the development, otherwise than as recommended in the Chief Executive's report, or decides not to proceed with the development. A resolution must be passed not later than six (6) weeks after receipt of the Chief Executive's report.

3. Site Description

The proposed development is to be carried out on the site of the St. Mary's National School in Saggart which is located on Slade Castle Walk at the southern end of Saggart Village. The floor area of the existing school building to be retained is 277m² while the overall floor area of the completed development will be 610m² on a total site area comprising 3,043 m².

The site is zoned as residential and it is located within an area of archaeological potential. The building is a protected structure. The Zoning Objective for the site is 'to protect and/or improve residential amenity' and use as a Community Centre is identified as 'open for consideration' in the use classes related to this zoning objective in the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022. In addition, the site is immediately adjoining the area with Zoning objective VC 'to protect, improve and provide for the future development of Village Centres.

4. Scheme Description

The proposed single storey development comprises of the following key elements:

- Conservation and renovation of the existing school building to enable the existing classrooms to be repurposed as four generous spaces for multipurpose use (including sessional childcare) with associated ancillary areas repurposed as WC, office and storage.
- A short section of the existing rear ancillary building will be demolished to form the connection to the new entrance and extension.
- The new extension will house a multi-function hall for larger gatherings with associated storage area.
- The new glazed entrance / reception / youth café / ancillary area will form the hub of the building. This area will also house a small kitchen, store and WCs.
- The new glazed entrance areas will overlook a new public space, formed by upgrading of the existing school yard (also framed by the existing play shelter) which links the development to the village centre.
- A secure play space area is proposed for the south end of the site.
- Landscaped planting will be provided at the existing boundaries to enhance privacy and screening and provide an appropriate setting for the new building.
- Additional ancillary works to adjacent areas include foul drainage connection to the existing sewer. and an onsite sustainable drainage system and soakaway to retain surface water run-off.

Plans and reports for proposed development are shown on the following links:

[Site Location](#)

[Proposed Elevations](#)

[Part 8 County Architects Report for Public Consultation](#)

5. Public Consultation

Plans and particulars of the proposed development were initially available for public consultation through the Council's online Public Consultation Portal for six weeks from 21st February to 6th April 2020 inclusive. However, in accordance with the Order made under Section 251A of the Planning and Development Act, 2000, as amended, on the 29th March 2020, and subsequently extended, the closing date for submissions or observations for this Part 8 was extended to 4.30pm on the 1st June, 2020. During this extended public consultation period, information on the proposed development was available to the public and submissions were invited.

The public consultation on the proposed Saggart community centre development involved statutory and non-statutory elements including: the Council's online Public Consultation Portal, display in South Dublin County Council offices in Clondalkin, notices in the Echo Newspaper and information on social media including Facebook and Twitter.

The eventual total period for submissions and observations on the proposed Saggart community centre development to be made online and in writing was from 21st February until the extended closing date on 1st June 2020.

6. Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment

The proposal has undergone an Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and it is considered that implementation of the proposed development would not be likely to have significant adverse effects on the integrity or conservation objectives of any Natura 2000 network of sites.

The proposal has also undergone a preliminary examination for an Environmental Impact Assessment and the Planning Authority has concluded that there will be no real likelihood of significant effects on the environment arising from the proposed development and therefore an Environmental Impact Assessment is not required.

As a result of the above, in accordance with Part XI of the Act, the Elected Members of the Council can consider the proposed Saggart Community Centre, under Part 8 of the Regulations.

7. Outcome of Public Consultation Process

A list of all the persons, organisations and bodies that made submissions is provided in the table below including the method of submission together with links to copies of the submissions received.

A total of four (4) submissions/observations were received.

Ref.	Person/Prescribed Body	Method of Submission	Link to Submission
1.	South Dublin Conservation Society	Public consultation portal	South Dublin Conservation Society submission
2.	Saggart Community Centre Board of Management	Public consultation portal	Saggart Community Centre Board of Management submission
3.	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht	Written Submission	Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht submission
4.	South Dublin County Council Architectural Conservation Officer	Written Submission	South Dublin County Council Architectural Conservation Officer submission

A summary breakdown of the issues raised in the submissions is as follows:

Ref.	Category of Submission	Count
1.	Conservation/Protected Structure	2
2.	Archaeology	1
3.	Provision of sufficient car parking	1

8. Summary of Issues Raised and Chief Executive's Responses & Recommendations

Submission Category No. 1 – Conservation / Protected Structure

- Maximise retention and incorporation into the new development as many period features associated with the building as possible.

- Noted that St. Mary's National School (former) is referred to in the Council's Record of Protected Structures - Schedule 2 of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2016-2022 under Map Ref. No.424.
- Requirement for a Method Statement and Schedule of Works to be agreed with and approved by the Council's Architectural Conservation Officer regarding the specific treatment of internal finishes and the repair and reinstatement of architectural features.
- Recommendation that conservation, repairs and restoration work to the existing Protected Structure and associated be carried out in accordance with good conservation principles and conservation methodology and the [Conservation Report](#) issued for public consultation as well as ensuring that the Protected Structure is appropriately safeguarded during the proposed works.
- Have a display of historical images and local ephemera associated with the building.

Response:

All works to the existing Protected Structure will be carried out in accordance with good conservation principles, period features associated with the building will be retained and incorporated into the development and appropriate consideration will be given to maintaining the character of the building, all balanced with the provision of a state-of-the-art, energy efficient and accessible Community Centre.

The requirements of the Architectural Conservation Officer regarding the Protected Structure are noted and will be followed as part of the development process. In this regard, a schedule of works and method statement have been prepared and issued to the Conservation Officer and will be further developed as the project progresses to detailed design stage.

The proposal for a display of historical images and local ephemera is not a planning matter but is a worthwhile idea which will be passed to the Community Centre's Board of Management for consideration.

Submission Category No. 2 – Archaeology

In their submission, the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht highlighted that the development site is located within the zone of archaeological potential for Saggart. Accordingly, it is required that a suitably qualified archaeologist be engaged to monitor all topsoil stripping and overburden at the development site.

Response:

The requirements of the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht in relation to archaeology will be followed as part of the development process and, as noted in the [Conservation Report](#) (Section 9) for public consultation, a consultant archaeologist will be appointed by the Council to prepare an Archaeological Impact Assessment and monitor all excavation work.

It is noted that most of the site is covered in tarmac and concrete. As this was not original to the site, this build up can be removed without undue disturbance of the older ground below.

Submission Category No. 3 – Parking

The incoming Board of Management for the Saggart School House Community Centre made a submission that, while strongly welcoming the proposed community centre and design, expressed strong reservations about the proposed number of car parking spaces for the facility having regard for their plans and aspirations for the viability and success of the centre and also the general challenges around parking in Saggart Village. The Board requested that parking be reviewed and that a minimum of 20 parking spaces be provided for the centre to meet its needs and maximise its potential

Response

The concerns of the incoming Board of Management in relation to the challenges associated with the limited proposed parking facilities for the centre are noted. While the centre had been designed to engage directly with the village and to prioritise people over cars in line with criteria set out in the current County Development Plan, with a car-free space at the entrance to the Community Centre for safe access and for use by the public, the ongoing viability and sustainability of the facility is also of paramount importance to the local community. Although, the viability of carparking on site is limited by a number of key constraints including safety, the extent of the brief and the size and shape of the site, a review was undertaken by our Architectural Services team leading to an alternative layout safely providing additional on-site parking spaces along the bringing the total number of spaces to 10. A subsequent review at the request of the Community Development team has increased this provision to a total of 14 spaces by encroaching partially on the proposed play space area (see figure 2 below -additional parking shown within the blue triangular area of the site).

The cars have a separate vehicular entrance and are separated from the pedestrian entrance by bollards for safety purposes. Some of these bollards can be removable to facilitate pedestrian events in the square. This represents the maximum number of additional spaces that can be provided without unduly compromising the character or safety of the site and substantially addresses the concerns of the Board of Management while also ensuring that sustainable travel modes and car-sharing are key considerations for staff and users of the facility in so far as possible.

Separate to this Part 8 process, the Council, in conjunction with the local community and the Board of Management, will seek to examine the potential for further parking enhancement in the local area including achieving access to the existing underground parking across the road from the proposed development.



Fig. 2 Revised Plan of Proposed Development incorporating additional car-parking spaces (numbered)

10. Recommendation

Following review and consideration of the submissions, it is viewed that the issues raised in the submissions are satisfactorily addressed as outlined in the foregoing report. Accordingly, it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area and therefore it is recommended that the Council adopt the following Motion:

“As the proposed development is in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, the Council approves the development of the proposed Saggart Community Centre, including conservation, renovation and extension of the existing St. Mary’s National School, Protected Structure, at Slade Castle Walk, Boherboy, Saggart, Co. Dublin.”