**COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS**

**SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

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**MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL**

**October 9th 2023**

**HEADED ITEM NO. 80349**

**Chief Executive’s Report on Public Consultation in relation to Proposed Development of a new Heritage Centre for Tallaght on SDCC land at Old Blessington Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, situated to the east of the Civic Theatre.**

# **Introduction**

In accordance with the requirements of Part XI 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 construct a new Heritage Centre for Tallaght on SDCC land at Old Blessington Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, situated to the east of the Civic Theatre.

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

# **Site Description**

The subject site is located on existing SDCC lands, adjacent to the existing Civic Theatre. The site is currently part of an existing SDCC car park, used by council and Civic Theatre staff, and customers.

The site is approximately 0.24 hectares and is bounded by an office development “Killakee House” to the east, Old Blessington Road to the south the existing SDCC car parking area to the north and the Civic Theatre to the east. In addition to containing parking the subject site contains some elements of soft landscaping, existing trees, and a variety of street furniture including lighting, bottle banks, bike lockers and boundary fencing. Some of these elements will be removed or modified to facilitate the proposed development as described on the Part 8 drawings.

The site is strategically located adjacent to Tallaght Shopping Centre and car-park to the south and the Red Luas line. Tallaght (The Square) Luas stop is located 200m to the east of the subject site.

# **Scheme Description**

The proposed Tallaght Heritage Centre development consists of an 870m2, two storey structure which will sit alongside other facilities forming a cultural quarter including the Civic Theatre, Rua Red, County Hall, and the County Library. The Heritage Centre is divided over two floors however the overall form will be commensurate with a building of 3-4 storeys in height giving the building sufficient civic scale to sit comfortably in its context.

The proposed Heritage Centre is designed and organised to provide a series of flexible spaces which can be used in a variety of ways to accommodate a series of exhibition and gallery type spaces. The intention is to provide a mix of permanent exhibition elements and spaces to accommodate changing temporary exhibitions, events and activities.

The Heritage Centre will serve as a vital community resource, fostering engagement with the history and legacy of Tallaght and the wider County while also helping to make tangible the future vision for the town and wider county area. This will be done through interactive and interpretive exhibitions tailored to the space by EPIC Consultants. The internal spatial arrangement will help create continuity between exhibition spaces and their respective programmes, while also allowing for flexibility for how the space is used in the future.

The proposal has a strong “saw-tooth” roof-form bringing north-easterly light to the exhibition spaces and providing the building with a distinctive and memorable architectural image within its civic context The architectural form also connects the building in scale with the adjacent Civic Theatre and echoes the mono-pitched roof form of the Civic Offices, visually connecting the new civic corridor that will be defined by the public realm project connecting the Town Centre to the Innovation Centre to the North.

The rational layout of the spaces and the circulation and other services spaces allow for maximum flexibility in uses. Carefully placed voids, lighting from above, views and garden spaces (including a terrace space at first floor level) will further help to orientate the visitor, provide dynamic visual connections to the town and enhance the enjoyment of the building’s users.

The proposed development will also include public realm works including hard and soft landscaping elements, sustainable urban drainage features and lighting to integrate the proposed development into its context and to create a positive contribution to the streetscape and the existing cultural quarter.

An Architectural Design Statement prepared by McCullough Mulvin Architects and a Planning Statement prepared by McCutcheon Halley Planning Consultants contain a comprehensive description of the proposed development and these were included as part of the public display and consultation information. Links to these documents are provided below.

A schedule of the Plans and reports for proposed development are included below and they are all available for access at the following Link:

[Tallaght Heritage Centre | South Dublin County Council's Online Consultation Portal (sdublincoco.ie)](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)

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| [Cover letter](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)  [Site Notice](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)  [Scanned Newspaper Notice](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)  [Architectural Design Statement](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)  [Site Location Plan](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre)  Proposed Site Plan Town Context  Proposed Site Plan  Existing Site Plan - Site Works  Proposed Site Elevations 1  Proposed Site Elevations 2  Rendered Front Elevation  Proposed Ground Floor Plan  Proposed First Floor Plan  Proposed Roof Plan  South Elevation Propose  West Elevation Proposed  North Elevation Propose  East Elevation Proposed  Section AA Proposed  Section BB Proposed  Area Schedule  Environmental Analysis Report  Electrical Services Installation Site Plan  Site Lighting Report  Engineering Services Report  Proposed Foul Drainage Layout  Proposed Storm Drainage Layout  Proposed Watermain Layout  Planning Statement  AA Screening  EIA Screening  Archaeological Study  County Architects Report  AA Screening Determination Tallaght Heritage Centre  EIA Screening Determination Tallaght Heritage Centre |

# **Public Consultation**

Plans and particulars of the Tallaght Heritage Centre have been on public display for over six weeks from 8thAugust to 21st September 2023 (inclusive). During the public consultation information on the proposed development was disseminated to the public and submissions were invited. The public consultation on the proposed Tallaght Heritage Centre development included the following statutory and non-statutory elements:

* + Newspaper Notice in The Tallaght Echo
  + Site Notices (3no. erected);
  + SDCC Public Consultation Portal;
  + Emails notifying the relevant prescribed bodies;
  + Plans and particulars of the proposed scheme available for inspection or purchase at the Planning Department counter in the offices of South Dublin County Council, County Hall.

Submissions and observations on the proposed Tallaght Heritage Centre development could be made online and in writing for a period of six (6) weeks from 8thAugust to 21st September 2023 (inclusive).

# **Legislative Background**

Section 179 (3) 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(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.

# **Environmental Impact Assessment and Appropriate Assessment**

The proposal has undergone an Appropriate Assessment Screening under the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC). This Council has determined that the 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.

It 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 Tallaght Heritage Centre for Tallaght on SDCC land at Old Blessington Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, situated to the east of the Civic Theatre

under Part 8 of the Regulations.

1. **Outcome of Public Consultation Programme**

A total of 5 formal submissions/observation were received.

A list of all the persons, organisations and bodies that made submissions is provided in the table below together with a link to the submission received. For reasons of data protection, these documents have the personal addresses of submitters redacted.

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| --- | --- | --- |
| **Person/Prescribed Body** | **Link to Submission Received** | **No. of Submissions Received** |
| Consultation Portal Submissions  5 no. individual submissions made. | [Consultation Portal Submissions](https://consult.sdublincoco.ie/en/consultation/tallaght-heritage-centre) | 5 |
| Prescribed Bodies |  | 0 |

1. **Summary of Issues Raised and Chief Executive’s Responses and Recommendations**

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| **Summary of Submission No. 1 – Mr. Stephen Fitzgerald**  Submission suggests that the design of the building and landscape use as much stone as possible and take inspiration from historic structures in Tallaght rather than a modern design approach. |

**Response:**

* The proposed development is intended to accommodate activities that celebrate the past, present and future of Tallaght and the wider county – it is considered that the contemporary design approach and use of high quality materials is appropriate to the function of the building and its development context.

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| **Summary of Submission No. 2 – Mr. Gary Tyrrell**  Submission welcomes the consideration of renewable energy technology including Solar Photovoltaic (PV) in the proposal and asks that PV panels be included at design stage on the proposed roofs. |

**Response:**

* The use of solar Photo Voltaic technology is intended to form part of the overall sustainability strategy for the development and will be considered as part of the overall detailed design process post-planning stage. If considered to be an effective element in the overall servicing strategy, PV panels can be incorporated onto roof or other surfaces of the building as appropriate.

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| **Summary of Submission No. 3 – Mr. Christopher Maher**  The Submission welcomes the proposed development as a welcome addition to Tallaght with positive contributions to social and cultural life and benefits for active travel. The submission and asks that as much street furniture and open green space is included as possible. |

**Response:**

* The support for the proposal is welcome. It is the intention to integrate the proposed development into the site context through the use of high quality public realm works to include hard and soft landscape element, lighting and street furniture to enhance the overall public realm and connect the development to the wider town centre area.

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| **Submission No. 4 – Tallaght Community Council**  The Submission welcomes the proposed development, the focus on Tallaght specifically. The submission commends South Dublin County Council and look forward to the timely delivery of the project.  The submission welcomes the recommendation included in the Archaeological Desk Study that *“..periodic archaeological monitoring should take place as part of the initial construction on the site.”* - the submission asks that the community will be kept informed of any finds of note, if any, during the development phase. |

**Response:** The support for the proposal is welcome. In the detailed design, site investigation and construction stages it is intended to retain the services of an archaeological consultant to monitor the works and to assess and report on any findings. It is the intention to integrate the proposed development into the site context through the use of high quality public realm works to include hard and soft landscape element, lighting and street furniture to enhance the overall public realm and connect the development to the wider town centre area.

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| **Submission No. 5 –** South Dublin Conservation Society  The Submission makes a number of points relating to the development which are summarised as follows:  **A Detail Design Issues:**   |  | | --- | | Storage is limited. Staff facilities to include office are kitchenette indicated on the plans.  **B Sustainability**  PV installation should be included from the beginning.  **C Exhibition Concept:**  The submission states that public consultation should have taken place before the tender for the exhibition management was put out, so that the public viewpoint would inform this process.  The submission outlines the following areas could be considered for inclusion in the exhibition content:   * Artifacts and objects including archaeological finds. * Archaeological history, ancient history and legends, * Writers, artists and other notable figures associated with the Tallaght area. * Industrial and aeronautical history. * Irish language * Ecclesiastical history, * Traditional and folk music * The concept of ‘100 objects’ as a basis for presenting the history of the area. * History of housing and critical reflection on suburban expansion in the 20th century. * Recent development of the area.   **D Focus of Centre**  Clarification is sought on whether the proposed centre is Tallaght specific or is intended to cover the history of the county area. | |  | |

**Response Item A – Detail Design Issues:**

* The observation is welcomed and will be brought to the attention of the design team for consideration in the detailed design process to be carried out post-part 8 stage. This process will include a detailed and ongoing assessment of the project brief and schedule of accommodation including an assessment of need for staff facilities.

**Response to Item B – Sustainability:**

* See response to submission 2 above.

Response Item C – **Exhibition Concept:**

* The detailed submission outlining potential exhibition themes and concepts is welcomed. Many of the themes and topics mentioned will be included in or referred to in the permanent and exhibition and the submission will be brought to the attention of the design team. One of the objectives of the centre is to facilitate a program of temporary exhibitions which will allow a focus on very specific themes such as those outlined in the submission.

**Response to Item D -Focus of Centre**:

* The overall intention of the Centre is to focus primarily on the people and places of Tallaght and this will complement other heritage, cultural and civic facilities in the wider county area including the Round Tower Heritage Centre in Clondalkin, the Hellfire Club / Montpelier Hill, Rathfarnham Castle and Pearse Museum. The story of Tallaght is however deeply connected with the wider county, regional and national context and it is considered appropriate that the centre should facilitate the widest and most inclusive interpretation of what constitutes the history and heritage of the area and its people.

# **Recommendation**

Following consideration of the submissions, it is considered that the issues raised in submissions will be 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 Tallaght Heritage Centre for Tallaght on SDCC land at Old Blessington Road, Tallaght, Dublin 24, situated to the east of the Civic Theatre.”*

End of document.