Howth - Have Your Say
HOWTH PUBLIC REALM
STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION
DRAFT
Howth Public Realm Consultation: Draft Report

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Acknowledgements
1.0 INTRODUCTION

Background
Howth is a picturesque seaside village located on the peninsula of Howth Head, north east of Dublin city, within the Fingal County Council area. In 2005 the village was identified as one of 10 locations for which an Urban Strategy (UCS) was to be prepared. In March 2008 an UCS was undertaken. This sought to create a realistic vision for the centre of Howth by providing objectives and frameworks to guide development both generally and in relation to specific sites. However since the drafting of this Strategy the country and county have undergone significant economic challenges and we have generally seen very little development in any sector. While there would appear to be some improvement in our economy and development on a more modest scale has recommenced in recent times, we do have to question whether in these changed times does the UCS remain valid; and if it does how to we progress it. Conversely if the UCS no longer remains valid it is necessary to explore how can we give it new meaning. The Council in a desire to face this challenge head on is seeking to actively and pragmatically support businesses and communities at strategic and local levels. In Howth a number of key local and business stakeholders approached the Council looking to re-engage with the planning authority to assist to revitalise the village.

To begin addressing the above the concerns and aspirations of the local community it was decided to initiate a public consultation process to establish what the current thoughts were relating to Howth, identify issues that required to be addressed and identify a range of practical solutions to address those issues. In doing so it would also assist in empowering the local community, identify local leaders to work with one another, state agencies and the local authority to prioritise possible projects and advance them in a co-ordinated manner.

During the summer of 2014 a multidisciplinary team within Fingal County Council began to consider how best to appraise the current state of the public realm in Howth, the issues facing the village and what the priorities may be for the future.

A key part of the Consultation process was the holding of a Public Consultation Evening in October 2014. The purpose of this Interim Report is to outline the Consultation process in more detail, set the context of Howth, share information that was gleamed from the night, and begin to identify a number of potential public realm projects.

This Report marks the next stage of the process, where having identified potential projects we are now seeking their validation, looking to prioritise them and perhaps most importantly identify key stakeholders, lead organisations and individuals to assist the Council and in some instances drive the process further to help ensure that the projects are delivered.

Howth and its Public Realm
Improving the public realm is an important component of any Urban Centre Strategy, where the public realm may be described as streets, footpaths, and other publically accessible open spaces, and public and civic buildings. It includes privately owned spaces and buildings that support or facilitate public life and social interaction.

The focus of the public consultation is to identify projects that will lead to the enhancement of the public realm. To clarify and express a common understanding and definition of ‘the public realm’ it was agreed that the following definition is the most helpful.

The public realm is defined as ‘publically owned streets, footpaths, rights-of-way and other publically accessible open spaces, and public and civic buildings and facilities’.

It was also acknowledged that the public realm comprises both “physical” and “social” dimensions; where the “physical” dimension of the public realm refers to:

‘the series of spaces and settings which may be publically or privately owned that support or facilitate public life and social interaction’,

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And the ‘social’ dimension of the public realm refers to:

‘the activities and events occurring there (which) can be termed the socio-cultural public realm.’

As outlined by the Heritage Council in the National Public Realm Plan, an enhanced public realm can provide a number of socio-economic, environmental and cultural benefits such as:

- Increased pedestrian flow i.e. ‘footfall’ = enhanced ‘vitality and vibrancy’
- A longer stay by shoppers and visitors = increased spend per head and in turn the local economy benefits
- Increased rents and property values = enhanced ‘viability’
- Increased street activity = pavement cafes, street markets, performances
- Reduction in accidents and crime = reduction in public expenditure
- Decreased noise and air pollution = better health
- Multiplier effect = wider regeneration including heritage revitalisation

The Key Characteristics of Howth

Howth is a significant and economically important settlement, with a population of 8,261, within the CSO area designated for the Howth area (Census 2011).

The present Character of Howth is derived from the following elements:

- Howth enjoys a unique coastal location, with a working harbour, marina and associated industries.
- The settlement, its harbour, seafront area, village and immediate surroundings has an important heritage comprising a number of Architectural Conservation Areas, protected structures and monuments.
- The village has an eclectic mix of shops, restaurants and bars; many based on the it’s maritime and sea food offer in particular.
- The quality of the natural environment, coast and beaches, Howth mountain and the Peninsula overall is an important resource enjoyed by residents and visitors alike.

Threats that currently exist within the village include:

- Traffic management and congestion particularly during the summer months and weekends;
- the need to better manage visitor movement, particularly within the working Harbour area and sea front area avoiding potential conflict with ;
- the need to better integrate the harbour/sea front area with the rest of the village and Peninsula.

The impacts of these threats on the amenity of the Village for both citizens and visitors is becoming more prevalent and requires to be addressed as a matter of urgency.

The process undertaken is an attempt to demonstrate how it is possible to address concerns and maximise opportunities by all those who have taken part.

Scope

It was considered that the public consultation be primarily is centred on the settlement of Howth and its core area. Essentially this would be the area defined as the boundary of the Urban Centre Strategy as given in the Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017. (See Map)). However from the outset it was considered that the boundary should not fixed because of the location of Howth on the Howth peninsula, the relationship and interaction of the Village in its wider context, particularly with Howth Mountain and Howth Head.

In considering the public realm this will provide a basis upon which actions to seek to strengthen and enhance the attributes which contribute to the distinctive physical and social character of the village. In doings so guiding principles will be to ensure that the interests of all users of the Public Realm are considered in a socially inclusive and holistic manner. Any further developments or improvements must take into account of prevailing planning legislation and development context.
Expected Outcomes
In engaging with the citizens, businesses and visitors of Howth through an informal, open and flexible process it is hoped that the outcome of the process would allow us to identify short, medium and long term actions for the village which could inform Council proposals and works for the area, as well as identifying areas or actions where the local community or businesses can assist in delivering an enhanced public realm.

FIGURE 1: Sheet 10 of 2011 - 2017 Development Plan

FIGURE 2: Extract from Development Plan Showing UCS boundary
2.0 HOWTH IN CONTEXT

A Historical Perspective
The earliest record of Howth is a reference to it on a map compiled by Ptolmy in the early 2nd century. In this map Howth is represented as a small island called Edri Deserta, which is derived from the ancient Irish name for Howth Benn Etar, meaning peak of Etar, which remains with us today in the Irish translation of Howth as Binn Eadar. The most striking remnant of early settlement is the portal tomb in Howth Demesne, built over 4,000 years ago. The Iron Age promontory fort on the Baily was built about 2,000 years later. During the 9th century Howth become one of the chief Viking settlements in the Dublin area. The name Howth itself is from the Norse ‘hoved’, meaning head, thus reflecting its Viking heritage.

During the medieval period, the St. Lawrence family took control of much of the lands on the peninsula and constructed Howth Castle. Ecclesiastical structures, such as St. Mary's Abbey, were also built during this period, while Howth village itself evolved as a small fishing community. By the 19th century Howth had become a popular seaside resort and many of the impressive coastal buildings date from this time. Howth Harbour was constructed between 1807 and 1813 as the mail packet station in Dublin, on the Dublin to Holyhead route, however due to the continuous silting up of the harbour this route was transferred to Dun Laoghaire in 1834. In the late 19th and early 20th Century, the area had gradually become a dormitory settlement of Dublin. Today, although it has become an affluent coastal suburb, it still retains its appeal as a seaside day-excursion destination, as well as remaining a working harbour providing employment to the local fishing community.

The Key Character of Howth
The present character of Howth derives from the following elements:

- Vibrant harbour area, with commercial fishing industry, marina development and associated businesses.
- Village centre set back from the seafront area.
- Castle and golf course
- Proximity of Howth Mountain and beaches to the Village.
- A busy residential and tourist village with large amounts of local and visitor traffic
- A commuter village located on the DART line north of Dublin.
- Significant pedestrian and vehicular traffic in the harbour and sea front areas.
- Active residential community involvement and interest in the development of their village.

Planning Context: What Does the Fingal Development Plan say about Howth
The Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017 sets out objectives and uses for development within the County. It is a statutory document that is reviewed every six years.

Within the Development Plan Howth is described as a Howth is a distinctive settlement located within a unique natural and built environment. Howth Head is a Special Amenity Area and there are also several Special Areas of Conservation and Special protection Areas located on and around the peninsula which must be protected into the future. In addition to areas of protection associated with the natural heritage, there are also several Architectural Conservation Area (ACA) designations in Howth. This contributes to the character of the village and offers, in conjunction with listings under the Record of Protected Structures protection to the built heritage of the village.

Howth has an important maritime heritage focused on the historic harbour. Today the harbour plays an important role both for the fishing industry and the marina is an amenity/leisure asset. The settlement fulfils a predominately leisure role for visitors with restaurants, cafes, bars and some niche shopping such as arts and crafts.
Development Strategy
The development strategy for the area provides for the development of the village in a manner that will protect its character and strengthen and promote the provision and range of facilities, especially the retention and promotion of retail convenience shopping and community services to support the existing population and tourists. Future development will be strictly related to the indicated use zones including the infilling of existing developed areas rather than further extension of these areas. Development will be encouraged which utilises the recreation and educational potential of the area and other nearby natural environments of high quality. The strategy for the Howth peninsula is to ensure the conservation and preservation of its sensitive and scenic area, in particular through the implementation of the Howth Special Amenity Area Order.

Objective HOWTH 1
Implement the Urban Centre Strategy for the village core including the detailed urban design guidelines and actions for the harbour and village area, and respect the special historic and architectural character of the area.

Objective HOWTH 2
Encourage the retention and development of ground floor commercial/retail uses within the core of the village. Such uses should be of a convenience and comparison retail mix with emphasis on the latter. Office provision should also be encouraged to ensure a vibrant village core.

Objective HOWTH 3
Implement the Howth Special Amenity Area order, the associated management plan and objectives for the buffer zone and subject these documents to Habitats Directive Assessment within 12 months of the adoption of the Development Plan.

Objective HOWTH 4
Provide traffic calming in Howth Village taking account of its environment as a residential, tourist and local shopping area, and in particular, the need to protect the residential amenity of Main street from the effects of vehicular traffic.

Land Uses & Zoning Objectives
The map (Figure 1) is an extract from the Fingal Development Plan 2011-2017. In addition to land use zonings it also shows Specific Objectives relating to Howth and identifies the location of Architectural Conservation Areas, Protected Structures and the Record of Monuments and Places.

Architectural Conservation Areas (ACAs)
There are 5 Architectural Conservation Areas within Howth, namely:

- Balscadden
- Howth Castle Demesne
- Howth Historic Core
- Howth – Nashville Road & Park
- Howth – St. Nessan’s Terrace, St. Peter’s Terrace, Seaview Terrace & The Haggard

Individual Statements of Character have been produced for each ACA. These serve as guidance documents and show the boundaries of each Area. The ACAs are also defined on the Development Plan Map No. 10. Works that materially affect the character of an ACA require planning permission.
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Protected Structures
Within the boundary of the Public Realm Area there are a number of Protected Structures. The protection extends to both internal and external features. The Protected Structures are listed in Appendix 3 of the current Development Plan and indicated on the accompanying maps by a yellow circle. Works that materially affect the character of a Protected Structure requires planning permission.

Record of Monuments and Places (RMP)
There are a number of known archaeological sites and features within Howth and surrounding area. These are listed in the RMP and are protected by national monument legislation. The Minister for Arts, Heritage and the Gaeltacht must be notified of any works proposed to or in the vicinity of these sites.

Howth Urban Centre Strategy
As noted, Howth already has an Urban Centre Strategy (UCS):

The Vision for the development Strategy for Howth is to:

- Promote a Thriving Village
- Add to Quality of Life
- Enhance Howth as a Cultural/Tourism Destination
- Provide an Attractive Public Realm
- Capitalise upon the Existing Harbour
- Create a Well Connected & Accessible Village
- Expand the Village at Techrete
- Promote Sustainability

From the outset of this Public Consultation exercise it was not the intention to duplicate the work already done as part of the UCS; rather with specific regard to public realm, re-engage with the local community to identify those issues that continue to be of concern to local stakeholders.

Fulfilling the Requirements of the Habitats Directive
Some of the projects identified because of their potential material effect or impact on Natura 2000 sites will require screening for Appropriate Assessment. The Appropriate Assessment is an assessment, based on best scientific knowledge, by a person with ecological expertise, of the potential impacts of a proposed plan or project on the conservation of any Natura 2000 site. The 2011-2017 Fingal Development Plan indicates the Natura 2000 sites located within the boundaries of Fingal. The Baldoyle Bay SAC & SPA; Howth Head SAC and SPA; and Ireland’s Eye SAC & SPA are the nearest Natura Sites to the centre of Howth.

If screening determines the need for Appropriate Assessment to be done for any of the proposed projects, the Appropriate Assessment must be presented with a full Strategic Environmental Assessment for the proposed project.

The map below shows both the location and boundaries of the SPAs and SACs and their proximity to Howth Village.

Details of the SPA and SAC including their full areas of coverage can be found in the Development Plan (Chapter 5). Details can also be obtained from the National parks and Wildlife Service (www.npws.ie), where detailed descriptions and Site Specific Conservation Objectives can be sourced.

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3.0 ENGAGING WITH THE COMMUNITY

Identification of Key Stakeholders

As a means of gauging local views relating to Howth and the public realm in particular it was decided to invite key private and public stakeholders, that represent Howth to a participatory workshop to tease out pertinent issues relating to the village.

An invitee list of approximately 100 stakeholders, representing local businesses, community and resident organisations, public representatives, harbour officials and interested individuals was compiled and were invited to attend a Public Workshop, held on 22nd October 2014 at Howth Yacht with the sole objective of obtaining their views, aspirations and suggestions regarding Howth Public Realm. Public Realm Workshop On the evening some 50 individual stakeholders attended representing a wide range of businesses and community organisations. The event was facilitated by Fingal County Council staff from a number of Departments, including Planning, Economic Development and Fingal Tourism. The evening was opened by the Council’s Chief Executive.

During the evening participants were asked in turn and under the themes of Destination, Streetscape and Movement to identify positives and negatives in the village which may assist in identifying projects that might address various issues under each theme by asking them to answer the following questions:

- What do you like about Howth?
- What do you dislike about Howth?
- How would you change Howth?

By considering these questions it would also enable an initial analysis to look at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the village (A SWOT Analysis). It was hoped that we would see some consensus here - that a shared vision for Howth Public Realm would develop and if so we would be in a position to identify priorities, and mechanisms to deliver on such priorities.

Analysis

The exercise above resulted in a lively debate between participants in each group. Over 1000 comments were received on over 800 Post-Its. In addition after the event further correspondence was received elaborating on themes raised during the evening.

Initial analysis of all the comments received suggested that overall there was a strong feeling that Howth was a place that was well liked as a place in which to reside and do business. It was an attractive seaside destination benefiting from a vibrant harbour, seaside location with the attractions of Howth Head on its doorstep. It was generally seen to benefit from close proximity to Dublin and with the DART relatively easy to access on public transport.

There were however some notable “dislikes”, including for example a perceived disconnect between the harbour and village area, and a disconnect between Howth and its immediate environment, especially Howth Head. During the summer months and weekends Howth was frequently congested, and felt to be somewhat over run by tourists and on occasions suffered from anti-social behaviour.

When asked about how Howth may be improved suggestions as to how best to overcome the “dislikes” that had been identified came to the fore with suggestions relating to ways of easing congestion through better traffic management, ways of managing better movement around Howth and surrounding areas and better attractions adequately signposted.

These comments have now been analysed and a SWOT Analysis undertaken. Details of the SWOT analysis are as follows:
SWOT Analysis

Strengths
- An attractive seaside setting with vibrant, historic harbour and seafront.
- Close proximity to attractive beaches, and Howth Hill and landscape affording the possibility to participate and enjoy countryside activities.
- Close proximity to Dublin City and benefits from DART connection.
- Number and aesthetic and cultural value of historic buildings and attractions.
- Friendly and welcoming atmosphere
- Numerous venues for meeting and socialising, including cafes, bars and restaurants.
- Free car parking.

Weaknesses
- Poor visual appearance when entering Howth; a number of prominent derelict sites and signage.
- The condition of a number of historic buildings and shop frontages are of a lower quality and condition.
- Potential conflict between commercial and leisure uses within the harbour area.
- Frequent traffic congestion and poor traffic management, particularly during summer months and weekends.
- The quality and maintenance of roads and footpaths is considered to be poor. The quality of pedestrian way finding is poor, within the village and leading into and out of surrounding area.
- Poor visual and physical linkage between the village and beaches and Howth Head.
- Loss or lack of tourist accommodation.

Opportunities
- An upgrade of building frontages along key streets within the Harbour Area and Village.
- Develop and integrate existing derelict or vacant sites.
- Improve connectivity between Howth, the Peninsula and beyond.
- Improve way finding between the Harbour Area, the Village and Howth Head.
- Maximise Coastal Location and particularly access to beaches.
- An upgrade of the road surfaces and pavements.
- Improve pedestrian and cycle linkages to, from and within Howth and surrounding area.

Threats
- Traffic congestion within the Village and Sutton Cross.
- Over emphasis of tourist related development to detriment of other commercial activities.
- Decline in retail and commercial activity due to changing shopping habits and attitudes.
- Overcrowding with visitors at peak times with instances of anti-social behaviour.
From the SWOT analysis the Three Strategic Themes were further distilled under each generic heading and ideas and proposals generated.

**Destination:** i.e. the attraction of Howth both to residents of the village and to visitors, as both a commercial and tourist destination.

The following key issues relating to the theme of destination were identified:

- Recognition that Howth is a vibrant multi-functional village and includes a commercial harbour. The need to retain this mix of functions which responds to and reflects the needs of the harbour and residents needs to be carefully balanced with the needs and wish to maximise tourist or visitor potential in a sustainable and manageable way.
- Awareness of visitors attractions and potential to expand on or create additional attractions within Howth
- Availability of facilities and events to enhance the visitor stay
- Ability to accommodate and respond to the different needs of both visitors and locals who spend time in the village.
- While the stakeholders recognised the significant commercial advantage brought about as a result of the success of Howth as a tourist or visitor destination, ensuring the economic viability of many of the shops, restaurants and amenities enjoyed by residents, it was felt that the cost of this also needs to be acknowledged and where possible better managed. It terms of promoting Howth as a destination the key challenges will be to ensure Howth remains a popular destination for residents as well as visitors and that essential services and infrastructure is put in place to meet any the needs of visitors (whether improved traffic management, footpaths, meeting areas, way finding, policing, etc.)

**Movement:** i.e. the ease and comfort with which pedestrians, buses, bicycles, car and other vehicular traffic move about Howth.

The following key issues related to the theme of movement were identified:

- Pedestrian access to/from and within the centre of Howth.
- Way-finding signage for all.
- Cycle facilities, including bike shelters.
- Vehicular movement within the centre of the Village
- Parking – adequacy and location

**Streetscape:** i.e. the visual aspect and practicality of streets presented to locals and visitors.

The following key issues related to the theme of streetscape were identified:

- Street furniture: provision of appropriate street furniture (signage, seating, lighting, bins etc.)
- Conservation: of historically important buildings and features.
- Shop fronts and building facades: improvement of existing shop fronts and building facades and guidance with respect to future changes to shop fronts and facades.
- ‘Greenery’: improved accommodation of ‘greenery’ within Howth (whether relating to trees, flowers or parks).
4.0 Potential Public Realm Projects

Identification of Projects

Through the Workshop Event a number of projects have been identified as being a priority or of critical importance for the improvement of the public realm within Howth, and these are detailed in the tables on the following pages. While there are undoubtedly multiple benefits relating to various projects identified for ease of readership they are continued to be considered under the lead themed headings i.e. Destination, Movement and Streetscape. These projects and their implementation represent key steps in improving the public realm of Howth.

Potential Public Realm Projects are now detailed.

Destination Projects

Projects listed under Destination, have the key aim of raising and promoting Howth as a place to reside, visit and do business. These projects include raising the awareness of what Howth has to offer generally through marketing, the provision of local and visitor information, and raising the quality of local and visitor experience. Potential projects will include audits of facilities currently available within Howth; ways of maximising the coast and beaches; maximising opportunity sites; dealing with ‘eye-sore’ sites; and providing an enhanced welcome to persons visiting Howth as well as providing a better experience for visitors once they've arrived and for residents through the provision of better signage information route ways etc. A number of projects are overarching in nature, in so far as they will depend upon other projects and reinforce improvements in movement and streetscape. However individually and collectively the implementation of the projects will contribute positively to the enhancement of Howth’s public realm.

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<th>Project:</th>
<th>Background:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Lead:</th>
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<tr>
<td>D1: Awareness of Offer</td>
<td>Audit Existing Events Calendar, and explore feasibility of expanding future event’s offer: Project: Maximise potential to increase range of events and activities within Howth and surrounding area.</td>
<td>Howth benefits from an enviable coastal location, working harbour and wide range of restaurants etc. and has an existing offer of events that had been successful e.g. the Prawn Festival. However it was felt that perhaps more could be offered building on the coastal location, heritage of the village, existing attractions and close proximity of Howth Head and Ireland’s Eye. To ensure existing events and activities are organised and promoted in a coordinated manner along with new opportunities to maximise the potential for their success and available for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors alike.</td>
<td>FCC, Chamber of Commerce, Community Council, Community Organisations, Fingal Tourism.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D2: Marketing &amp; Promotion:</td>
<td>Explore different avenues for Marketing and promoting Howth as a destination, utilising modern and traditional forms of marketing and information dissemination incl. social media; development of a bespoke App.</td>
<td>Howth benefits from an enviable coastal location, working harbour and wide range of restaurants etc. and has an existing offer of events that had been successful e.g. the Prawn Festival. However it was felt that perhaps more could be offered building on the coastal location, heritage of the village, existing attractions and close proximity of Howth Head and Ireland’s Eye. To ensure existing events and activities are organised and promoted in a coordinated manner along with new opportunities to maximise the potential for their success and available for the benefit of residents, businesses and visitors alike.</td>
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<td>D3: Raise the quality of the visitor experience</td>
<td>Design and develop a series of themed walks e.g. based on natural and historic attractions.</td>
<td>While recent initiatives such as the installation of the new Tourist Kiosk has been welcomed, there was a feeling that on arrival there was still a lack of focus on where to go, what to do. Howth has an interesting heritage and a number of attractions set within an attractive environment and wider landscape; the potential of which does not appear to be fully maximised.</td>
<td>FCC, Fingal Tourism, SAAO Committee, Tidy Towns</td>
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<tr>
<td>D4: Coast, Beaches &amp; Howth Head</td>
<td>Explore ways to maximise opportunities to enhance the coastal attraction of Howth, particularly beaches and Howth Head.</td>
<td>It was widely recognised that people liked the location of Howth, its coastal location and the landscape of Howth Head. However there was a feeling that the potential of the area was not fully maximised to the benefit of locals and visitors. A disconnect between Howth Head and the village was identified, with access onto and off the mountain pathways directing people to for example the village could be improved, including better way marking. Access to Claremont Beach was not clear and notwithstanding ownership issues access to and views across Balscadden Beach and Bay was not clear. Access/signposting to the Cliff Walks from Howth and the Summit should be improved.</td>
<td>Help residents and visitors to enjoy the coastline and countryside experience. FCC/Private Interests – link with movement strategy projects such as Fingal Coastal Walks and cycle networks.</td>
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<tr>
<td>D5: Facilities &amp; Attractions</td>
<td>Audit existing Tourist and Leisure Facilities for Locals and Visitors.</td>
<td>During the evening a number of comments were made regarding the lack of attractions and leisure facilities within Howth and suggestions on what could be provided. Examples of the latter included the introduction of sailing trips, trips to Ireland’s Eye, the reinstatement of the Tramway. As a first stage it is suggested that a full audit of existing facilities is undertaken to affirm what currently exists, ensure that these are then marketed in a manner to maximise their full potential, explore how these may be expanded or linked with other attractions, identify gaps in the market, and encourage future developments as appropriate.</td>
<td>Chamber of Commerce, Community Forum</td>
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### Movement Projects

The key aim of potential projects noted hereunder relate to an agreed need to improve the pedestrian and cyclist environment (incl. footpaths, cross points and an awareness of the cyclist as a legitimate road user) and to address concerns and adverse impact of traffic congestion, lack of vehicular traffic free flow at key pinch points and to provide a co-ordinated and comprehensive review of car parking provision, particularly within the harbour, sea front and village areas.

All material amendments to the road network or parking arrangements will be subject to detailed design, traffic impact assessment and HAD Screening, as applicable. While potential projects remain to be agreed, once they are it will be a priority within an appropriate time frame to develop a scheme upon which the appropriate planning consent can be obtained, and thereafter seek funding for the projects on a phased basis. Further detailed assessment of such projects will be required and public consultation in respect of the detail of the movement strategy proposal(s) being advanced. The projects will be designed as an integrated and complementary package of road and footpath improvement measures, with a consistent design philosophy and palette of materials, (reflecting the character and in particular the ACA status afforded to the different areas within Howth.)

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<td><strong>D6: Opportunity Sites:</strong></td>
<td>Encourage and facilitate the optimum use of vacant or under-utilised buildings or spaces.</td>
<td>A number of vacant or under-utilised sites were identified which not only gave a poor impression of the village to residents and visitors and impacted negatively. These included the former Techrete site, the Edros Site, Old Bailey Court Hotel; and vacant properties on Church Road, and derelict buildings on East and West Piers. The Martello Tower could be better used.</td>
<td>Reduce vacancy and allow all sites within Howth to contribute positively to the resident and visitor experience/visual amenity.</td>
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<td><strong>D7: Eye sore sites:</strong></td>
<td>Encourage and facilitate the aesthetic enhancement of less attractive sites/buildings.</td>
<td>In addition to a number of vacant or under-utilised sites were identified that impacted on the visual amenity of the area including the former Techrete site, the Edros Site and vacant properties on Church Road, the Lighthouse, and the toilet block at the East Pier mention of other private and commercial properties generally, although not specified, were made.</td>
<td>Remove 'eye sore' sites within the Public Realm (as part of Streetscape Enhancement)</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>M1: Traffic Management &amp; Vehicle Parking:</strong></td>
<td>To undertake a general review of traffic management focussing on areas of congestion and provision of vehicle parking.</td>
<td>Howth often experiences high levels of traffic movement, particularly during the summer months and weekend, where pinch points create congestion, busy road junctions and parking difficulties.</td>
<td>To improve traffic and pedestrian safety and free flow within and throughout Howth, focussing on particular areas of congestion, including rationalisation of parking provision, providing enhanced car parking and amenity to all those within Howth</td>
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<tr>
<td>Project: Traffic Movement: Harbour Road &amp; West Pier:</td>
<td>Background: The junction of Harbour Road with the Harbour generally and West Pier in particular was seen as a major area where congestion, and conflict of movements between commercial and private vehicles, entering and existing the Harbour area. This junction and immediate area also has significant pedestrian footfall.</td>
<td>Benefits: To encourage a clear free flow of traffic, enabling all road users to move in a safe manner with minimum delay.</td>
<td>Lead: FCC</td>
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<td>M3: Pedestrian Movement:</td>
<td>To improve and promote pedestrian movement throughout Howth.</td>
<td>To enhance pedestrian experience and facilitate increased pedestrian footfall within Howth creating a safer environment.</td>
<td>FCC</td>
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<td>M4: Cycle Management:</td>
<td>To investigate the provision of cycle lands and cycle calming methods.</td>
<td>To help facilitate and help promote the use of bicycles within Howth and the Peninsula in a safe manner to the benefit of all.</td>
<td>FCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>M5: Cycle Racks:</td>
<td>To identify a number of locations for cycle racks and facilitate their installation at key locations within Howth.</td>
<td>To assist in the promotion of cycling in Howth as a means of sustainable travel for residents and visitors to Howth.</td>
<td>FCC</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Undertake a detailed study to improve the movement of all road users, including commercial and private vehicles, cycles, and pedestrians at the entrance/exit to West Pier.</td>
<td>The need to a better environment for cyclists within Howth for both residents and visitors alike was raised by a number of people. This ranged from suggestion for cycle lanes, how cyclists interact with other road users and pedestrian, and the need to encourage safe cycling including the regulation of regulate speed of cyclists entering the village from Hill of Howth.</td>
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### Project: M6
**Parking: Harbour and Sea Front Area:**
- Undertake a review of parking within the Harbour and sea front area and implement improvements that are identified.

**Background:**
- Parking within Howth, particularly along the sea front and Harbour area was frequently raised as an issue. In addition to a general traffic management and parking review the harbour area and sea front area in particular was highlighted where local traffic and visitor traffic sought opportunities to park. This also included potential conflict with commercial parking associated with the Harbour activities, the servicing of commercial businesses especially on Harbour Road and West Pier and the parking of coaches and overnight parking on the Middle Pier.

**Benefits:**
- To assist in the rationalisation of commercial and private vehicle parking within the central area of Howth.

**Lead:**
- FCC

### Project: M7
**Pedestrian Movement:**
- Undertake and audit and develop a scheme to improve park and ride opportunities for those wishing visit Howth particularly via DART and bus; and investigate the possibility of enhancing DART and bus connections particularly at weekends and summer service.

**Background:**
- A number of respondents considered that park and ride should be better promoted for those intending to visit Howth, taking advantage of the DART and bus. Congestion and delays at Sutton Cross and within Howth itself was mentioned and park and ride opportunities along with an enhanced bus and DART services should be explored, particularly at weekend.

**Benefits:**
- To help to minimise traffic congestion within Howth by encouraging and facilitating a greater use of public transport.

**Lead:**
- FCC, Iarnrod Eireann

### Project: M8
**Pedestrian Movement:**
- Provide traffic calming within Howth, including along Harbour Road and Church Road.

**Background:**
- The need to improve the pedestrian environment of Howth was an area of concern for a number of people. Issues raised were the need to improve footpath surfaces, crossing points and lighting (including the provision of lighting on East Pier).

**Benefits:**
- To reduce traffic speeds in the sea front area and thereby ease pedestrian movement and vehicle conflicts in this busy area, particularly at points where pedestrians cross from the Harbour area to the premises along Harbour Road; the area immediately outside the DART station; and in the vicinity of Church Street in the village, where traffic, including cyclists often come down from Howth Hill often at considerable speed.

**Lead:**
- FCC

### Project: M9
**Pedestrian Movement:**
- Provide for an enhanced pedestrian experience within Howth.

**Background:**
- The need to improve the pedestrian environment of Howth was a concern for a number of people. Issues raised were the need to improve footpath surfaces, crossing points and lighting (including the provision of lighting on East Pier).

**Benefits:**
- To provide a safer and attractive environment for pedestrians.

**Lead:**
- FCC
**Streetscape Projects**

To inform the nature and extent of projects to enhance Howth’s streetscape a series of audits of existing components of the streetscape is recommended.

Potential streetscape projects below focus on the need to develop strategies to ensure that improvements to buildings, street furniture and signage are undertaken in a comprehensive and co-ordinated manner to enhance the public realm. This for example could include Guidance to enable a rationalisation and development of distinctive signage for the town both to aid direction within the urban area and outwards to the surrounding coastline and Howth Head, ensuring Howth as a whole is equally served by signage and any disconnect between Howth and surrounding coastal walks and loop Walks on Howth Head are minimised. Signage could also be developed to impart information on historic and landscape features within Howth and surrounding landscape.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project:</th>
<th>Background:</th>
<th>Benefits:</th>
<th>Lead:</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S1: Buildings:</strong> Create a Design Guide for the building facades including shop-fronts.</td>
<td>There are a number of important building facades in Howth where individually and collectively contribute to the visual appearance of the streetscape. In many instances the impact through design and maintenance are of a good or reasonable quality. However in a number of notable cases there was a need for improvement. One way in which this could be encouraged would be the production of a Design Guide which would assist and guide individuals when seeking to improve their properties.</td>
<td>Ensure these buildings present a practical and attractive front to users</td>
<td>FCC, Tidy Towns, Chamber of Commerce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S2: Buildings:</strong> Create a Design Guide for lighting and wirescape information for businesses.</td>
<td>The provision of appropriate levels of lighting can contribute to people’s perception of an area in terms of safety as well as illuminating key buildings and structures. A number of persons commented positively on the illumination of St. Mary’s Abbey and graveyard, while others suggested that lighting on the East Pier was required. Wirescape could be an negative impact on the visual amenity of the streetscape, and where possible this should be minimised.</td>
<td>Maximise and enhance the visual amenity of Howth, particularly within the ACAs.</td>
<td>FCC, Tidy Towns</td>
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### Project: S3: Street Furniture

**Background:** Undertake an Audit of all Street Furniture and dependent on findings create a Design Guide for Street Furniture.

**Benefits:** The provision of street furniture and its design can have a significant effect on how people use the public realm as well as impact on the appearance of an area. During discussions the main element of street furniture mentioned was bins and the need for more in key locations, with more provided and for existing bins to be emptied on a more frequent basis especially during busy, summer months; also recycling bins requires a cover.

**Lead:** FCC, Tidy Towns

### Project: S4: Sea Front Area

**Background:** Develop a landscape plan and usage strategy for the open area of land along the sea front between the Harbour and Harbour Road.

**Benefits:** The Harbour and Harbour Road were viewed by many as being the core area of Howth and as such it was generally considered that while the open grassed area was important it was not fully contributing to the visual amenity of the area.

**Lead:** FCC

### Project: S5: Signage

**Background:** Develop a signage and way finding strategy (including historic and cultural signage) within the urban area and within the wider Peninsula, including Howth Head (co-ordinate with Movement and Destination signage projects).

**Benefits:** A significant number of people mentioned that signage, particularly within Howth, but also on the Peninsula and Hill was poor. Signage as well as providing immediate direction could be used to ensure that all people, were not only aware of where attractions and facilities were but also as a means of providing directing people away from the Harbour area thus relieving congestion, ensuring all areas were accessible and that visitors and walkers were given informed choices in where they wanted to go.

**Lead:** FCC, SAAO Committee, Chamber of Commerce
5.0 NEXT STEPS
The projects outlined have been drafted using the responses and opinions gleamed from the public consultation evening. At this stage, as previously stated, these are now circulated for general validation and to ensure that any key projects have not been missed.

Prioritisation of Projects
In terms of priority the projects have not been ranked in order of importance nor has any anticipated date of delivery been given at this stage. However the lead driver or proponent who could be responsible for advancing the delivery of the project is identified below; including those projects that fall within the Councils remit. These key stakeholders include public sector bodies, community groups, schools and private sector bodies and individuals. The extent to which different stakeholders will need to take the lead in implementation will vary depending on the nature and scope of the proposed project or projects, and the priority attached to them. In general terms, the Council will need to take the lead in street and public space projects, whereas community groups and individuals will be primarily responsible for projects relating to private property, with input from the Council as appropriate. There may be considerable scope for public private partnership arrangements or joint ventures, particularly where land, buildings or supporting infrastructure necessary to facilitate projects are in public ownership. Key stakeholders whose input will be directly or indirectly needed include Fingal County Council, Department of Marine, Howth and Sutton chamber of Commerce, Failte Ireland, the Heritage Council, the National Parks and Wildlife Service, the Tidy Towns Committee, the Office of Public Works, Iarnrod Eirean, Community Groups, Schools and private sector individuals.

Once the projects have been validated along with lead organisations/individuals prioritisation of the projects identified can be made.

Once this second stage of public consultation has been undertaken, with responses analysed and amendments made where appropriate and incorporated, a Final Report will be produced. It is intended that the Final Report, will include actions that may be undertaken to commence project initialisation; and the role the Council can play in assisting this process.
HOWTH PUBLIC REALM CONSULTATION

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
Participating Local Organisations & Community Groups included:

- T. Flanagan, TD
- A. Power, Senator
- D. Healy, FCC Councillor
- J. Guerin, FCC Councillor
- B. McDonagh, FCC Councillor
- D. Ni Laoi, FCC Councillor
- C. O’Callaghan, FCC Councillor
- K. Redmond, FCC Councillor
- N. McLoughlin, Active Retirement
- B. Keegan, Friends of East Mountain
- P. Hennessy, Friends of East Mountain
- C. Knowles, Howth Horses
- D. Cousins, Howth Riding Club
- M. Turvey, Resident
- Howth Peninsula Heritage Society
- D. Ó Cathasaigh, Howth Peninsula Heritage Society
- T. Doyle, Howth Sea Angling Club
- W. Kelly, National Transport Museum
- Howth/Sutton Lions Club
- M Ó Neill C.Y.M.S
- Country Market
- Howth Literary & Arts Festival
- Friends of Balscadden Bay
- A. Thornton, Hill Watch
- C Ni Laoi, Friends of Balscadden Bay/ Howpath Pathways
- Vincent Lawlor, Tucketts Lane Residents Association
- S. McCann, Summer project/Howth Brownies/Church of the Assumption
- A MacManus, King Sitric/Howth is Magic
- J. MacManus, King Sitric/Howth is Magic
- S. Davis, Various
- C. Sargent, Howth/Sutton Community Council
- H. Lynch, Friends of Balscadden Bay, Community Centre
- D Caulfield, Howth Pathways
- A. Healy, Visit Howth Peninsula LTD
- B. Lacy, Howth Pathways
- J. G St. Lawrence, Howth Castle
- B. Hewson, Church Street Residents
- Howth Castle
- N. Doonan, Carra/Howth Express
- R. Fitzpatrick, Deerpark Residents Group
- M. O’Connor, The Summit Inn
- T. Gaffney, Summit Inn/Waterside
- B. O’Brien, Investment Funds
- B. Gannon, Howth Yacht Club
- B. Dillon, Howth Yacht Club
- J. Doherty,
- J. Fitzgerald,

Observing

Capt. R. Maitra, Harbour Master

FCC would like to thank Howth Yacht Club for providing accommodation for the Public Consultation Evening.

PUBLIC REALM STRATEGY: Having Your Say
Aerial showing proposed Howth Public Realm Lands

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