

# DÚN LAOGHAIRE HARBOUR DRAFT MASTERPLAN

DRAFT  
CONSULTATION  
REPORT



SEPTEMBER 2025

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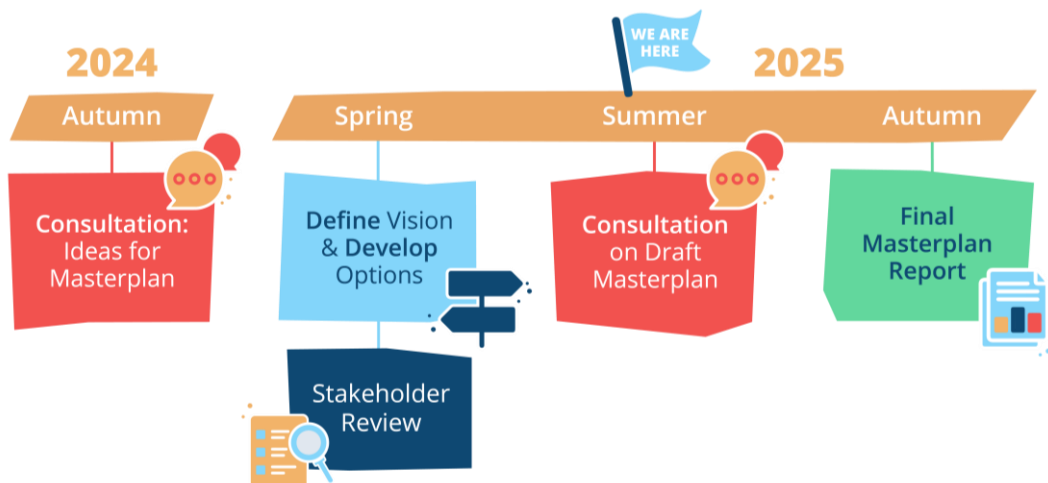


## 1. INTRODUCTION

Dún Laoghaire Rathdown-County Council, with support from Fáilte Ireland, are creating a Masterplan for Dún Laoghaire Harbour to guide its operations and development into the future.

This report outlines feedback received during the public consultation on the Draft Masterplan which took place from 16th June to 28th July 2025. This follows an earlier round of consultation which promoted interest in the Masterplan and to invite ideas for the Harbour's improvement from a variety of different perspectives.

The report provides an overview of activities completed and outlines key themes that emerged. It has been compiled by M-CO who are managing stakeholder engagement for the Harbour Masterplan. The report will inform the preparation of the final Masterplan by Arrow Architects and SLETH, who are leading the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan consortium.



Draft Objectives were developed to guide the process, reflecting existing policy priorities and research. These were as follows:

**Inclusivity & accessibility** - Make the Harbour a more inclusive and accessible recreational amenity for the enjoyment of everyone.

**Movement & connectivity** - Improve connections between and around the Harbour and Dún Laoghaire town through placemaking, design and integrated sustainable mobility.

**Heritage & tourism** - Make the Harbour a world class destination offering new and enhanced attractions, rooted in its distinctive heritage and character.

**Business & growth** - Support and promote existing mixed uses (maritime, recreational, fishing and commercial services) while fostering new economic, community and tourism opportunities.

**Regeneration** - Rejuvenate and repurpose former ferry lands and other opportunity sites through appropriate, sustainable development for public, visitor and commercial needs.

**Climate** - Build climate resilience through climate adaptation and mitigation measures and adoption of circular design principles.

**Landscape & environment** - Maintain and enhance blue and green assets for biodiversity and healthier public spaces.



# 1. INTRODUCTION



## DRAFT SITE PLAN

### URBAN QUARTER

1. Pavillion Garden
2. Former Ferry Terminal
3. Pavillion Harbour Pool
4. St Michael's Pier Garden & Lookout Tower
5. Dún Laoghaire Culture Centre & Venue
6. The Marina Promenade
7. The Marina Plaza - Event Venue
8. Dún Laoghaire Cruise Tendering Terminal
9. Dún Laoghaire Conference & Spa Hotel

### RECREATION QUARTER – EAST PIER

10. Historic Trail

11. East pier Floating Platform
12. East Pier Cycle Lane

### ACTIVE QUARTER

13. Carlisle Pier Community Hub
14. Carlisle Pier Urban Square
15. National Watersports Event Building

### MARINA QUARTER

16. Memorial Garden
17. The Marina HQ
18. The Green – Pocket park
19. Linear park above the rail line

### LEISURE QUARTER

20. The National Watersports Square
21. Coal Harbour and The Floating Watersports Centre

22. The Warehouses (Sailing Clubs, Workshops & Storages)
23. The Mobility Bridge

### RECREATION QUARTER – WEST PIER

24. West Pier Community Cabins
25. West Pier Boardwalk and Mooring
26. West Pier Nature Park
27. The Gut Nature & Educational facility

## 2. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In June 2025, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council published a Draft Masterplan for Dún Laoghaire Harbour and invited members of the public to share their views through a consultation process.

The Draft Masterplan sets out a comprehensive and long-term vision for a 'Living Harbour', focusing on improving recreation, tourism, and economic vitality while also building climate resilience and increasing biodiversity. It includes proposed actions over short, medium, and long-term timeframes and addresses key themes that emerged from the Pre-Draft consultation phase, such as improved connectivity, waterfront access, and spaces for community and recreation.

The Draft Masterplan was open for public consultation from 16th June to 28th July 2025 with residents, stakeholders, and visitors invited to provide input through an online survey, email submission or drop-boxes in public libraries. This report documents the consultation process, who responded, and the key themes that arose in submissions.

**The Draft Masterplan consultation received a total of 636 submissions** through the online Citizenspace Survey (491), email submissions (107), printed survey submissions (32), and postal submissions (6). A majority of respondents (61%) were either local residents of Dun Laoghaire, Monkstown, Sandycove and Glasthule, or the wider Dun Laoghaire Rathdown. A large volume (65%) of respondents walk or wheel the piers, 24% swim in the area, and 20% sail.

A thematic analysis of the submissions is categorised in this report according to the different harbour 'Quarters' proposed in the Draft Plan, the harbour waterspace, environment and climate action, heritage and conservation, and transport and accessibility.

The **Urban Quarter** generated the most commentary. Repurposing the former Ferry

Terminal was popular, as was the proposed Pavilion Garden. The floating Harbour Pool also received positive feedback, although there were concerns that it might reduce the open sailing/racing area of Harbour water, its operational management, and had potential to be damaged in storms. The 'Lookout Tower' was welcomed by many, but some would prefer to see the former HSS 'dolphin' structures removed. There was positive feedback on the St Michael's Pier proposals including the Marina promenade, cruise ship terminal and hotel, conference venue and spa. Some concerns were raised about overdevelopment, building heights, impacts on views and privatisation of the waterfront.

The importance of the **East Pier** as a public amenity was highlighted in submissions. There was support for heritage, interpretative and refurbishment projects for historic structures such as the lighthouses, and the provision of public toilets. The floating pier at Berth 1 also attracted positive comment, although some were concerned about its impact on sailing activity and resilience to wave damage. The cycling 'greenway' received mixed feedback, with support for it balanced with concerns about possible impacts on pedestrians.

Submissions on the **Active Quarter** were generally positive about the proposed interventions at the Carlisle Pier. These included the proposed Community Hub and the National Watersports Campus Event Centre. Submissions stated that vehicular access to the harbour is essential for the continued operation of watersports in the area - for the movement of equipment that has no alternative but to come by road, such as boats, RIBs, Safety Equipment, Event Infrastructure.

Submissions on the **Marina Quarter** welcomed the proposed 'Pocket Park' as an additional public open amenity.



Submissions mentioning the **Leisure Quarter** (National Watersports Campus) welcomed the proposed Warehouses (for Sailing Clubs, Workshops and Storage) but some noted the lack of provision for on-land storage space and feared for removal of car parking spaces. Many welcomed the proposed mobility bridge, while some were concerned about possible impacts on sailing activity and boat yard access.

Many submissions were positive about proposals for the **West Pier and The Gut**. They often expressed affection for the more naturalistic West Pier and some expressed a concern that proposed West Pier Community Cabins and Boardwalk would alter the current character. Some want to maintain swing moorings as a cheaper and more convenient option to pontoons. There was a lot of support expressed for proposals for the Gut area, particularly the Education Facility and the Nature Park at the back of West Pier. Submissions called for careful consideration of any adverse environmental impacts on the Dublin Bay biosphere and Special Protection Area (SPA). Some felt that the West Pier Nature Park might reduce useable water for watersports activities like wing-foiling.

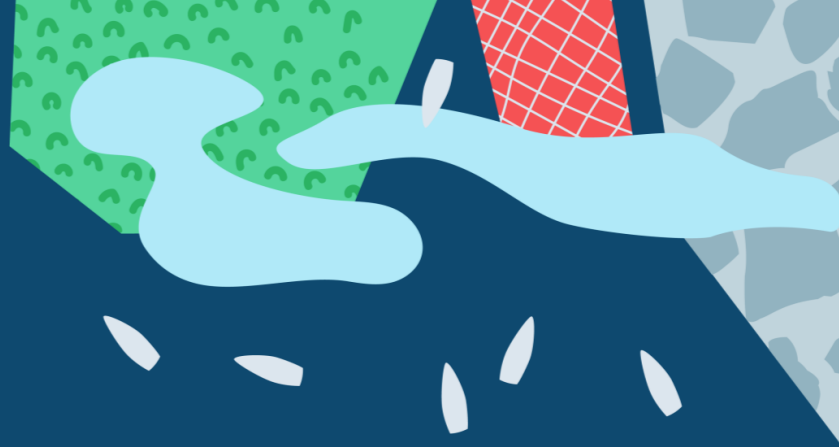
Many submissions commenting on the **Water Space** welcomed the enhanced access that the Masterplan would enable. Some called for the retention of swing moorings at both the East Pier and West Pier, while others highlighted the potential to replace them with equal or improved pontoon facilities at similar cost. There was some concern raised around potential change to fairways and open water space, particularly in reference to the proposed Nature Park at the back of the West Pier, the Pavillion Garden Pool and the Lookout Tower at the end of St Michael's Pier.

Many submissions expressed enthusiasm for **the environmental, climate action and biodiversity** interventions proposed in the plan including the Gut area. While the proposed Nature Park by the West Pier generated enthusiasm and support, there were some concerns about its impact on the Dublin Bay SPA. Some respondents expressed a hope that the area be “left alone”, while some saw it as an enhancement to an ecologically important area.

The historic and cultural **heritage** of Dún Laoghaire and its harbour is of huge importance to residents and visitors alike. Respondents expressed hopes that any interventions to the built environment of the harbour would be sensitively applied and would not overpower existing historically important sites and features or detract from views of the harbour and Dún Laoghaire town.

Ensuring **transport access** for harbour users engaged in both land-based and water-based activities was a frequent theme in the Draft Masterplan submissions. For many recreational watersports, access to the water's edge is important, given the need for year-round transport of heavy boats and equipment by car or trailer. Feedback emphasised the importance of embedding Universal Design principles in the planning and design process.





### **3. MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION PROCESS**





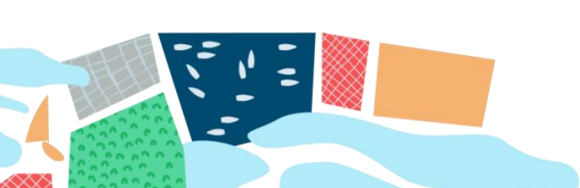
### 3.1 BUILDING ON PRE-DRAFT PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT

Between the 11<sup>th</sup> of September and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2024, a pre-draft consultation was held to gather ideas, hopes and considerations from a wide variety of stakeholders. A variety of engagement activities were held to promote widespread involvement, including boat tours, webinars and pop-up events. There was high participation numbers, including a total of 1,053 formal submissions and 36 individual meetings with more than 50 stakeholder groups. This produced a significant volume of ideas, which fed into the creation of the draft masterplan.

A key output of this round of consultation was the identification of existing strengths the harbour possessed.

These were identified as follows:

- Natural beauty and wildlife
- Scenic views of Dublin Bay
- Safety and ease of access to walk the piers
- Sense of peace
- Healthy outdoor environment and recreation options
- Observing the boats and the ongoing commercial activities
- Life and dynamism of the Harbour
- Contrasting atmospheres between the East and West Piers
- Status as an important public amenity that must be protected
- Unique heritage features
- Sense of identity for Dún Laoghaire





## 3.2 STAKEHOLDER REVIEW WORKSHOPS

In February 2025, a series of large stakeholder workshops were held. The purpose of these workshops was to test emerging concepts with internal DLR departments, with county councillors and with key harbour stakeholders, before further development was done on the masterplan.

Key takeaways from these workshops included:

- **Preserve water space and integrate water activities:** the need to prioritise the efficient use of water space was raised
- **Balance new development and the Harbour's existing character:** avoiding overdevelopment to preserve the working atmosphere of the harbour.
- **Appreciation for the innovative and ambitious plan:** the ideas presented were met with strong support, with enthusiasm for moving forward and a clear desire to initiate a project as soon as possible.
- **Activate public spaces and improve accessibility:** create accessible public spaces to connect the water to the town and improve connectivity generally.
- **Parking and traffic management:** concern about possible loss of parking and how this will be addressed.
- **Enhance visitor experience and accommodation:** Address accommodation gaps, from hostels to hotels, improve retail and hospitality offerings, and create better experiences.



### 3.3 DRAFT MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

The Draft Masterplan was published by Dún Laoghaire County Council on the 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2025. A non-statutory public consultation was open from the 16<sup>th</sup> of June to the 28<sup>th</sup> of July, providing members of the public and stakeholders with the opportunity to see how their feedback to date had shaped the emerging masterplan for the Harbour, as well as to provide further feedback on circa 27 elements proposed as part of the Draft Masterplan.

A number of engagement touchpoints were organised for this consultation, including:

- Online Citizenspace survey
- Permanent exhibition of Masterplan summary boards in both the Lexicon Library and along the East Pier for the duration of the consultation.
- Pop-up information event in dlr Lexlcon on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July, during the Coastival festival.
- Information webinar on the 8<sup>th</sup> of July
- Drop-in information evening in the County Hall on the 16<sup>th</sup> of July.
- Display of the draft site masterplan in circa 20 no. parks across the DLR County Council area
- 25 individual meetings with Harbour and community stakeholder groups / organisations
- Feature in “DLR Times” July publication highlighting the forthcoming consultation
- Project leaflet distributed to local businesses & libraries, as well as at events.



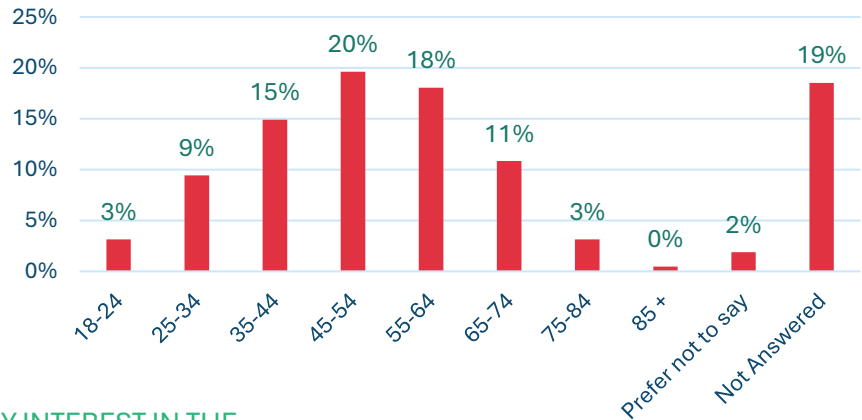
### 3.3 DRAFT MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

**The Draft Masterplan consultation received a total of 636 submissions.** These can be broken down across the following mediums:

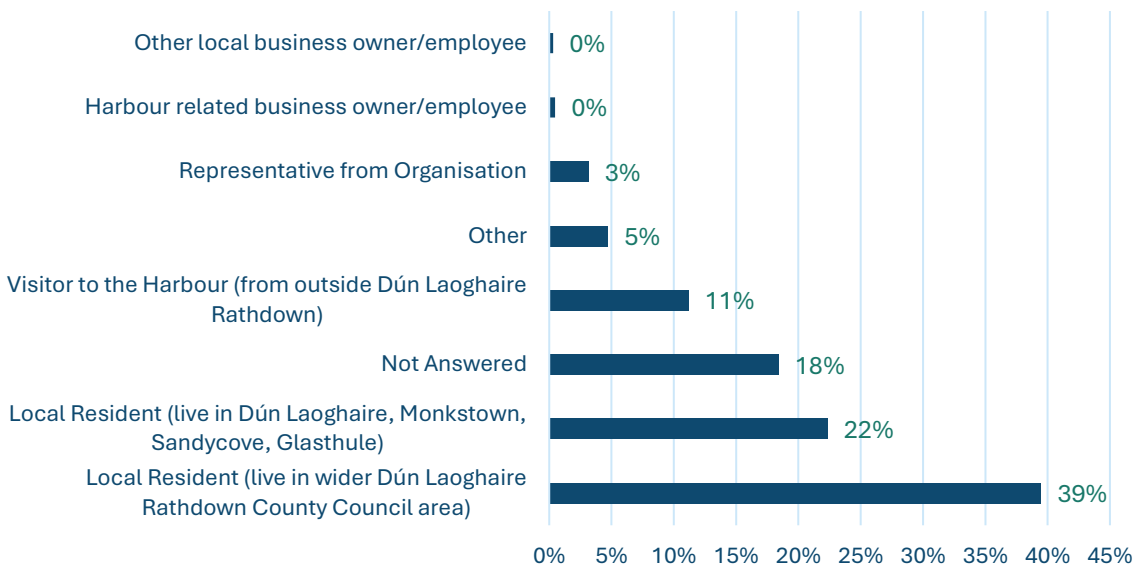
- Online Citizenspace Survey : 491
- Email submissions: 107
- Printed survey submissions: 32
- Postal submissions: 6

#### WHO TOOK PART?

What is your age range?

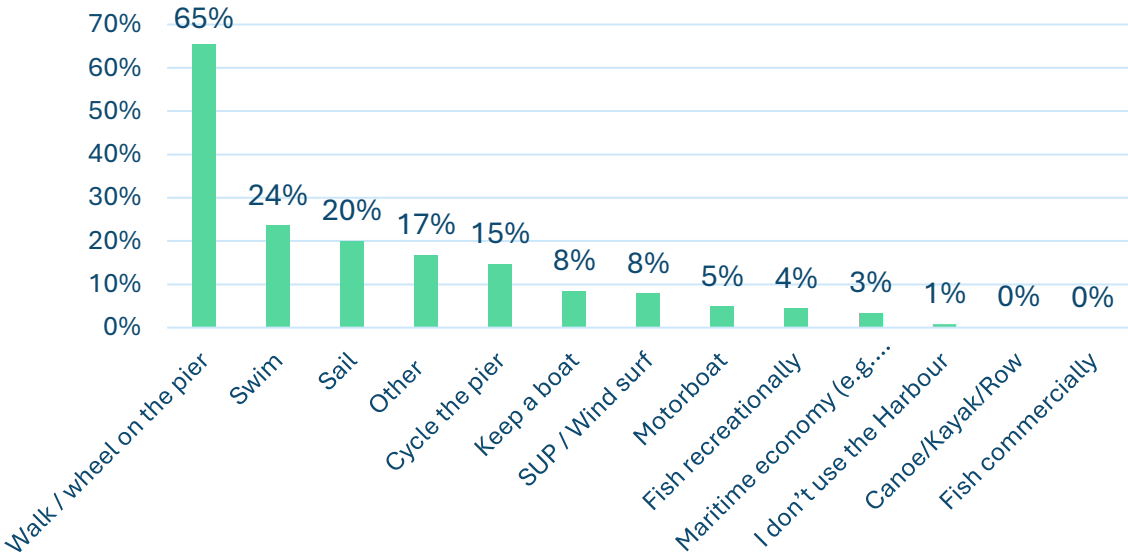


#### WHAT WAS THEIR PRIMARY INTEREST IN THE HARBOUR?



### 3.3 DRAFT MASTERPLAN CONSULTATION

#### HOW DO RESPONDENTS USE THE HARBOUR CURRENTLY?

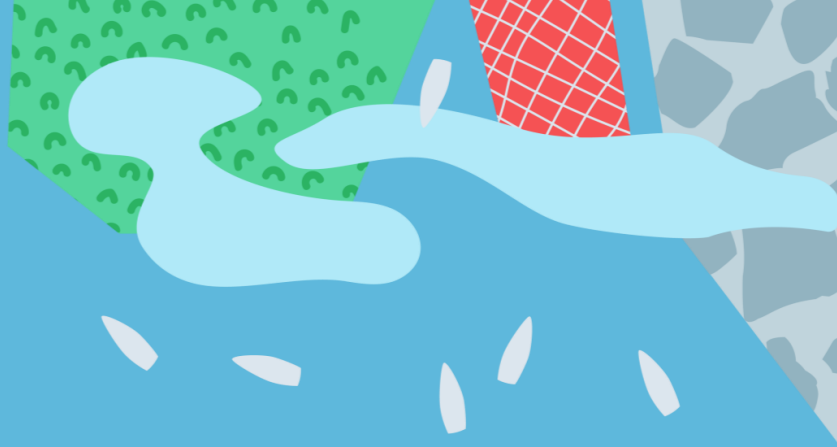


#### WHAT GROUPS MADE SUBMISSIONS?

|  |  |   |
|--|--|---|
| RIYC                                       | RMS Leinster Memorial Committee            | St Michael's rowing club. Dun Laoghaire |
| Irish Lawn Bowls                           | Reid                                       | St.Michaels rowing club                 |
| National Yacht Club                        | Marina Marketing & Management Ltd.         | INSS                                    |
| Save Our Seafront                          | DLR Tourism Development Section            | Dublin Bay Windsurfing Club             |
| National Watersports Campus Steering Group | Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) | Cycling Without Age                     |
| St Michael RC                              | Diving Ireland                             | People Before Profit                    |
| Dun Laoghaire Motor Yacht Club             | Living Streets Community Group             | DL Green Party                          |
| Save Our Seafront                          | Marina Marketing & Management Ltd.         |   |







## 4. FEEDBACK RECEIVED: KEY THEMES



MENTIONED IN  
**32%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.1 URBAN QUARTER

### 4.1.1 Pavilion Garden (incl. pool, garden and lookout tower)

Submissions noted that the former **Ferry Terminal** building offered a unique opportunity to establish a destination at the heart of Dún Laoghaire Harbour due to its key location between the town and the sea. It was considered by some to be well-suited for adaptive reuse as a covered market hall.

The concept for the **Pavilion Garden** was welcomed, with some requesting that it retain elements of the original St. Michael's Wharf, including the Dalkey granite paving quay walls and steps.

The idea of a **floating pool** was considered by many to be good idea. There were varying calls for it to be between 25m to 50 m length to allow for various swimming activities and adequate depth for Freediving training . There were submissions that sea-water could be used, but some expressed concern about pollution and water treatment. Requests were made for changing facilities, showers, sauna facilities and a separate pool for younger children.

Others expressed reservations about the proposed pool. Some highlighted that there was already potential for a swimming pool in the area of the Roger Casement statue / Dun Laoghaire Baths. A number of submissions stated that the proposal to locate a pool here would reduce the open sailing/racing area of Harbour water, and detract from the safe movement of small vessels. How the pool would be managed and maintained was a concern for some. Others noted that North Easterly storms could destroy floating facilities proposed. There was a suggestion to place the pool on the easterly corner of the Plaza Pavilion Garden instead.

The **viewing platform** was welcomed by many as a means to enjoy the scenic view of the harbour. Other submissions expressed

concern that it would be a hazard to the navigation of small sailing craft, reducing the boating amenity within the harbour. Some submissions called for the existing HSS Dolphins to be removed.



#### 4.1.2 St Michael's Pier (incl. Marina promenade, Cruise ship terminal, Hotel/Conference & Spa)

Submissions welcomed proposals at St Michael's Pier, including a hotel and conference venue. It was proposed in submissions that such a venue would provide lasting employment across hospitality, retail, technical, and event management roles. Case studies from similar venues were cited, such as the SSE Arena in Belfast, which shows a local business uplift of 30-40% on event days, underscoring the potential economic boost for Dún Laoghaire.

Local businesses submitted that a multi-purpose 5,000-seat event centre could be a transformative addition to the harbour. Hosting concerts, cultural events, conferences, and sports, it could have the potential to attract over 500,000 visitors annually, increasing town footfall by 15–25%. It was stated that visitors could be attracted through the provision of a suitable, multi-use venue which could also be used for concerts, conferences and cultural events.

Some submissions called for a low-cost hostel for sailors, focusing on affordable accommodation so people can enjoy the water and amenities. Others noted that any hotel should be open to the public, not just guests. It was proposed that a significant building in the harbour environs would be a suitable place for a cultural centre/art gallery or 'People's Museum of Dun Laoghaire' and that such a venue should be managed professionally with support from Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council.

A number of submissions expressed concern about proposals for St Michael's Pier within the draft plan. It was suggested that high buildings such as the proposed Conference

Centre, Ferry Terminal Market Hall and Dún Laoghaire Cultural Centre and Venue could disrupt winds in Dun Laoghaire Harbour from the south, making sailing in the harbour less safe for sail training and other sailing vessels.

Others noted that the scale, density and height of any development in the harbour area should be respectful of the high amenity environment. It was proposed that development be of similar height to the existing Ferry Terminal building and that the heights should protect vistas of the harbour.

Submissions requested that new structures respect the architectural language, echoing the area's existing charm rather than overshadowing it.

Some submissions requested that no part of the waterfront should fall into private commercial ownership as proposed by a hotel and conference centre. Some questioned the need for a conference centre/spa hotel and others queried the impact on existing hotels in the Dún Laoghaire area.



It was suggested that the proposed Carlisle Pier Community Hub could instead provide conference spaces which would in turn ensure the use and maintenance of this proposed public building.

Some proposed that less emphasis be placed on cultural and civic spaces and more focus should be put on housing / apartments suggesting high-density housing, of at least 6 storeys in some parts of the harbour.

There were different opinions on cruise ship activity, with some stating that it not be facilitated, while others welcomed it. Some felt that the harbour should be dredged so that cruise ships could access it fully, noting the economic importance for the area. Others submitted that the use of the central harbour channel for cruise ship tenders results in a hazard to harbour users and limits the availability of the inner harbour for recreational use.

It was suggested that the Dún Laoghaire Harbour Masterplan puts too much emphasis on encouraging tourism, mainly in the form of cruise ship facilitation, at the expense of facilitating a more sustainable economic model through taking advantage of the prospect of offshore/nearshore marine industry.

Some queried the proposed location of tender berthing to the exposed northeast face of the former terminal, while other welcomed its location as a covered, sheltered area for a discreet and functional terminal facility.

Some submissions called for more parking to be provided at the urban quarter and others expressed concern about additional car traffic that might be generated. It was proposed that the urban quarter could feature a single bus terminal near the train station in to improve connectivity with the greater Dublin area.





MENTIONED IN  
**31%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.2 EAST PIER INTERVENTIONS

The importance of the East Pier as a public amenity was highlighted in submissions supporting the proposed interventions. It was noted that DLRCC estimates an average of 6,000 walkers per day, with Sundays in March and April increasing to above 15,000 people per day. Other weekends have more than 13,000 during the Regatta and Coastival.

Some suggested that the conversion of the **lighthouse** into a public interpretative facility which could document aspects of Dún Laoghaire's maritime past, including the 'Kingstown Lifeboat Disaster' of 1895. It was submitted that the East Pier lighthouse is a protected structure (architectural designation) rather than a National Monument (an archaeological designation).

Numerous submissions requested that the development/ redevelopment of public toilets be included as part of the East Pier projects and that permanent toilets should also be provided at the East Pier lighthouse.

There were calls also for the re-instatement of East Pier sun shelters and that the bandstand be re-furbished and adapted to modern needs. It was suggested that free standing food/coffee units on the pier and in the battery should be incorporated into more permanent structures.

While some welcomed the proposal for a 'Historic Trail', they felt it was still important to honour the existing plaques and monuments located along the Pier and that these should be preserved and enhanced. There was a call for a memorial to the 'forgotten Irish' emigrants who left Ireland via the Carlisle Pier.

The proposed **floating platform** at Berth 1 was a concern to some. It was stated that such a floating 'non-permanent' wooden structure would be damaged by wave action. Others noted that navigating small boats between Berth No. 1 and Berth No. 2 (Carlisle Pier) is challenging and that any additional constriction or underwater hazards in this navigation would be detrimental to the use of the Harbour as a training and racing area. Others suggested the pontoon at Berth 1 was an exciting opportunity to host outdoor events and performances that could be viewed from the East Pier.

Submissions noted that vehicular access must be preserved for the Yacht Clubs in the area.

The location of a **cycle path greenway** on the outer seaward side of the east pier generated a lot of comment. It was submitted that this would require careful consideration of levels and avoidance of impacts on the protected structure and on views and would need to take cognizance of wave overtopping and impacts. It would also need to ensure that conflict between pedestrians and cyclists is avoided. Many submissions queried the need for a cycle lane on the pier, expressing concern about conflict between cyclists and pedestrians, though this may indicate some confusion over the exact configuration of the proposal in this regard. Some questioned whether the cycleway might block the view to Howth from the end of East Pier. It was also suggested that trishaws be allowed on the pier irrespective of the construction of a separated, seaward-side cycleway.

MENTIONED IN  
**7.5%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.3 ACTIVE QUARTER

### The Community Hub

There were many submissions expressing support for a **Community Hub** building at the East Pier.

Some submissions noted that this building is proposed to be located on space currently used by the Royal St. George Yacht Club as a safe storage facility for Safety Boats and RIBs and that alternative storage space would be required.

Submissions also highlighted the need to maintain the current access to the yacht clubs adjacent to Carlisle Pier.

Some called for the facilitation of other activity and sports to support community engagement all year round. Ideas included all-weather covered football pitches and a covered skatepark with flood lights.



### The National Watersports Campus Event Building

There was strong support for the National Watersports Campus Event Building from a variety of key harbour stakeholders and the public.

There was some concern expressed about dual use of the new Event slipway with the RNLI that could pose operational safety concerns and delays if there were

lifeboat callouts during events. It was suggested that the slipway design's dual slope requirement warrants reconsideration for dinghy accessibility.

It was proposed that a relocation of the RNLI could be an opportunity to provide segregated facilities for the newest generation of lifeboats and avoid interactions on the event slipway. It was submitted that relocating the RNLI to a location adjacent the Cruiseship Terminal and Hotel, could afford easier access to the RNLI for callouts and result in a more direct and visible route to the harbour mouth resulting in greater safety for all harbour users.

Some noted that high buildings along the water front could disrupt winds in Dún Laoghaire Harbour coming from the south and the east, and could make sailing in the harbour less conducive to sail training.

A number of submissions stated that vehicular access to the harbour is essential for the continued operation of watersports in the area - for the movement of equipment that has no alternative to come by road, such as boats, RIBs, Safety Equipment, Event Infrastructure.



MENTIONED IN  
**3%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.4 MARINA QUARTER

Submissions welcomed the proposed 'Pocket Park' as an additional public open amenity. Some queried when it would be developed and whether it is subject to planning approval/permission. Others queried whether the Green and cycle track would be activated simultaneously or would one precede the other. There was a suggestion to put in car parking – either adjacent or underneath the green.

Some expressed concern about the integration of the proposed **linear park** and impacts on the existing Protected Terraces on Crofton Road. It was queried whether the linear park could be accommodated without increases in the height of the boundary walls along the rail line. A submission noted that the elevated Linear Park over the Railway Line would require early engagement with the Third-Party Co-ordinator ([3rdpartyapprovals@irishrail.ie](mailto:3rdpartyapprovals@irishrail.ie)) to discuss the proposal in further detail.

A submission highlighted previous reports from the public and survey work carried out in connection with a planning application in 2015 for a new cruise ship berth in the harbour and for a foreshore licence application to install fenders on the Carlisle Pier in 2022, and various environmental considerations contained within.





MENTIONED IN  
**4.5%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.5 LEISURE QUARTER

Submissions welcomed the proposed **Warehouses** (Sailing Clubs, Workshops and Storage) but was noted that, while the Masterplan provides for space at the envisaged National Watersports Square for rigging up, launching and recovering boats, it appears to make no provision for on-land storage space. It was suggested that the National Watersports Square as shown on the plan would displace the boats being stored during summer and winter and would remove car parking spaces.

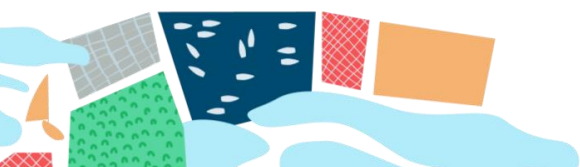
Some submitted that the proposed Floating Watersports Centre would result in loss of low-cost moorings currently there.

Many welcomed the proposed **mobility bridge** in the coal harbour area as a solution to the problem of the narrow road connecting the Gut with Irish Lights which is a challenge for cyclists and pedestrians. Some questioned the detail of the mobility bridge and whether it would be an impediment to water users in an already crowded area.

Others were concerned that the mobility bridge passing on the seaward side of the DMYC building and yard in the southwest corner of the harbour would obstruct access to the DMYC clubhouse for carrying out repairs to the top of masts, access to the DMYC mast crane, and would prevent use of the existing DMYC slipway.

Others submitted that the Mobility Bridge would be inadequate as a means of improving vehicular access for emergency services to the West Pier and the existing buildings located there (sailing school, motor yacht club, workshops, pumping station, sea scouts).

There was a proposal to develop a specific Spa/Sauna area in the Leisure quarter.





MENTIONED IN  
**23%**  
OF SUBMISSIONS

## 4.6 WEST PIER & THE GUT

### West Pier

Many submissions were positive about proposals in the Draft Masterplan for the West Pier.

A common sentiment expressed was people's affection for the more naturalistic 'wild' nature of the west pier and a desire to preserve this.

It was proposed that the **West Pier Boardwalk** and **Moorings** be designed and placed in such a way that they do not impede the fairway, particularly between the end of the Coal Harbour wall and the West Pier.

Some expressed concern that the proposed boardwalk running the length of the West Pier from the corner at the causeway up to the West Bight breakwater could limit access slipway and boatyard of the Motor Yacht Club.

There were a number of submissions in relation to swing moorings highlighting that they are cheaper and more convenient than berthing on a pontoon.

Some submissions expressed a fear that **West Pier Community Cabins** and Boardwalk would alter the current character of the West Pier. While welcoming community access to the cabins, it was queried who would have access to them, how they would be accessed, and their purpose.

There was some concern that vehicle access to the West Pier could detract from what the public enjoy most about the pier.

It was suggested that the Masterplan label the existing buildings and organisations on the West Pier including the DMYC, The Powerboat School, the Sea Scouts, and the INSS.

In terms of access, some noted that there is currently limited access for people with mobility issues to the West Pier and that there might be opportunity to partially pave a strip of either the upper or lower West Pier in order to allow wheelchair users to visit.

The need for toilet facilities was highlighted in a number of submissions.

Numerous submissions related to the need for parking around the West Pier with sailors, kayakers, divers needing to bring bulky accessories and equipment to waterside.

It was submitted that the plan should also include the refurbishment of the lighthouse keepers house at the end of the west pier.

There was a submission to build a fishing jetty on the back of the west pier for the less able-bodied.



## The Gut

There was a lot of support expressed for proposals in the Draft Masterplan for the Gut area, particularly the **Education Facility** and the **Nature Park** at the back of West Pier. Submissions welcomed its potential to play a role from an educational and a recreational amenity. Respondents felt that more people would be encouraged to explore the West side of the harbour.

Some did question the need for nature park/islands whereas other felt it should be the first thing built.

Environmental considerations were raised, noting that the outer side of the West Pier of the harbour and the intertidal and open sea areas to its northwest are included in the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA) meaning that there should be no adverse effects on the Qualifying Interests (QIs) or Special conservation Interests (SCIs) for which this European site is designated to protect. It was highlighted that the QIs/SCIs for the South Dublin Bay and River Tolka Estuary are Wetlands and waterbirds, light-bellied brent goose, black-headed gull, three tern species and eight wader species. It was stated that development such as this in the marine environment of the Dublin Bay Biosphere will require detailed environmental assessments. Proposed islands off the West Pier need to be subject to an intensive marine study.

Some were not satisfied that the proposals for The Gut area make the best use of these brownfield lands. It was submitted that these lands to the west of the West Pier constitute the one area adjoining the Harbour with no structures of heritage value, thereby providing an opportunity for something more beneficial than proposed in the Draft Masterplan. It was stated that some of the lands at this location are privately owned and are used for business purposes, with current activities on these

lands providing useful services to the community not easily found elsewhere in the area. It was suggested that the proposed Nature and Education Centre could be located on the grassland area already within the public domain. Alternatively, if located on the commercial lands, zoned for many years for some form of commercial development, it would be more sustainable to incorporate other uses, along with the proposed Nature and Education Centre. Such uses could include cafes, restaurant, a small amount of harbour related retail and possibly some residential use. Provision could also be retained for existing harbour related uses.

Submissions highlighted concerns in relation to the number of big storms over the last 5-10 years which have caused considerable damage to both the piers and wall along Salthill DART station and that the Nature Park islands could be washed away.

Others suggested that ambitions for the Gut area would be constrained unless access improvements are implemented. Suggestions included widening the stop/go causeway to the West Pier or constructing a bridge over the Dart line to enable one-way traffic flow, or the traffic light controlled system previously in place should be reinstated.

Some submitted that the West Pier Nature Park would greatly reduce the useable water area for wing foiling and windsurfers in some wind directions.

Others suggested that the skatepark's success should be built on within a Master Plan, that the area behind the West Pier should be a locus of amenities for young adults and teenagers including skatepark, basketball courts etc.

A submission asked whether the water treatment plant in the recreation quarter could be relocated or moved underground to create wide open space for recreation.



## 4.7 WATER SPACE

Moorings at both the East and West Piers were frequently mentioned with submissions expressing a desire that existing swing moorings remain unchanged. There was acknowledgment by some of the potential to replace them with equal or improved facilities at similar cost. Some survey participants expressed a hope for additional publicly available moorings in the Harbour.

There was some concern raised around potential change to fairways and open water space, particularly in reference to the proposed Nature Park at the back of the West Pier, the Pavilion Garden Pool and the Lookout Tower at the end of St Michael's Pier. It was emphasised that safe navigation of waterways must remain of high priority.

Some respondents expressed concern around the perceived prioritisation of on-land activities over water based, and that the potentially the plan considers visitors over current residents and Harbour users.

Many submissions expressed hopes that the needs of those requiring direct vehicular access to the water, particularly for the transport of boats and equipment, would not be overlooked. Many hoped there would be consideration given too to storage and other practical amenities close to the water.

## 4.8 ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE ACTION AND BIODIVERSITY

Preservation of the natural landscape and ecological environment was identified as a priority by many respondents. Submissions referenced bird life, marine and land-based plant life and water quality.

Many submissions expressed enthusiasm for the environmental, climate action and biodiversity interventions proposed in the plan, including the Gut area. While the proposed Nature Park by the West Pier generated enthusiasm and support, there were some concerns about its impact on the Dublin Bay SPA. Some respondents expressed a hope that the area be "left alone", while some saw it as an enhancement to an ecologically important area.

The ideas of pocket parks and more green spaces were liked by many, some seeing them as a desired counterpoint to the large amounts of concrete.

There was concern expressed around future sea level rise and the provision for potential change within the plans, especially with regard to the Cycle Path planned for the East Pier. Tidal range and tidal patterns were referenced, with hopes that both with be considered as a priority for future planning and safeguarding.

Cleanliness of the water was referenced most often in relation to swimming or water-based leisure activities, with many participants expressing hopes that water quality and pollution would be addressed as part of future planning.



## 4.9 HERITAGE & CONSERVATION

The historic and cultural heritage of Dún Laoghaire is of huge importance to residents and visitors alike, with many submissions reporting personal stories, family histories and feelings of connectedness to the Harbour. Submissions noted that the Maritime heritage is imbued throughout the built, natural and social environment of the area. Some survey respondents expressed a desire to preserve the nature of the Harbour as a working port, though more largely the hopes were to preserve the maritime heritage while also adding to and enhancing the useability for the wider public via access for individuals and clubs.

Respondents expressed hopes that any interventions to the built environment would be sensitively applied and would not overpower existing historically important sites and features. In particular, it was submitted that the urban townscape must be considered an integral part of the Harbour's significance, and any new buildings should be complimentary. It was suggested that views to the sea are to be considered a part of the urban character of the town and should be conserved; some concern was expressed about the potential for newer buildings to obscure the views. The Victorian character of Dún Laoghaire was noted as being nationally unique and that it should be preserved. A number of features were referred to, including both East and West Pier, the Lighthouses, Carlisle Pier and the promenade.

Designation of Dún Laoghaire as a UNESCO World Heritage Site was suggested as a means to cement the Harbour as a culturally important heritage district. There was enthusiasm for plans for dedicated cultural spaces and features such as a heritage centre, memorial sites and commemorative interventions. The history of the Harbour as a site of emigration and connections to the

wider Irish diaspora was noted in a number of submissions.

A number of submissions were made highlighting the need to consider the historical importance of existing clubs, groups and organisations, who use the Harbour daily but are also considered to be part of the “fabric” of the area.

Some concern was expressed around the possible prioritisation of commercial and privatised spaces which could detract from the current “accessible to all” nature of the Harbour. This was considered by some to be as much part of the heritage of the area as the physical features.





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## 4.10 TRANSPORT & ACCESSIBILITY

Ensuring access for harbour users engaged in both land-based and water-based activities was a frequent theme in the Draft Masterplan submissions. For many recreational watersports, access to the water's edge is important, given the need for year-round transport of heavy gear and equipment by car or trailer.

Current Harbour users expressed concern about a potential lessening of vehicular access for leisure or commercial activity. A number of submissions were from people who drive to the Harbour to walk with elderly parents or young children.

Also seen as important was the availability of accessible parking, for day-to-day activities and particularly during the busy weekends. Provision for parking of vehicles and boat trailers during large events that take place periodically during the year was seen as a particular challenge. There were a number of calls for increased access for minibuses and larger vehicles in proximity to existing and proposed amenities.

In meetings with key stakeholders, feedback emphasised the importance of embedding Universal Design principles in the planning and design process. Safety measures, particularly around the water's edge and within larger open spaces were considered important to the design. It was suggested that accessible wayfinding, tactile features, and audio-visual assistance should be incorporated throughout the project.

Stakeholders also underlined the need for design consistency across developments, so that different elements of the Masterplan come together as a coherent and accessible whole.

Submissions noted that swimming facilities like the Harbour Pool should include features such as hoists and ramps to provide inclusive access for people of differing abilities.





THANK YOU