

 **Lauren Griffin**

From: Lauren Griffin
Sent: Monday 11 November 2024 11:58
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: ABP - 320938 - 24 - Objection Letter

A Chara,

The Board acknowledges receipt of your email, official correspondence will issue in due course.

Kind regards,

Lauren

From: Clare Nally - [REDACTED]
Sent: Sunday 10 November 2024 21:37
To: LAPS <laps@pleanala.ie>
Subject: ABP - 320938 - 24 - Objection Letter

Caution: This is an **External Email** and may have malicious content. Please take care when clicking links or opening attachments. When in doubt, contact the ICT Helpdesk.

To Whom It May Concern,

Please find attached my letter of objection to the Woodquay Park Enhancement by Galway City Council (GCC), Ref. No: ABP - 320938 - 24.

Should you have any issues opening this document please let me know.

Many thanks,
Clare

Clare Nally
17 Corrib Terrace
Woodquay,
Galway

10th November 2024

An Bord Pleanála,
64, Marlborough Street,
Dublin 1

Ref. No: ABP - 320938 - 24
Woodquay Park Enhancement by Galway City Council (GCC)

I am writing to express my strong objection to the Galway City Council's current plan to transform the park in Woodquay into a plaza.

I have deep roots in this community, having grown up at 17 Corrib Terrace, the last house on the row facing the park. This home was built by my great-great-grandfather, anchoring generations of my family in Woodquay. I still live in Woodquay, around the corner from my home house in 2 Court Avenue, Woodquay.

I am terribly disappointed with the proposed plan, and feel the council have no foresight as to what is best for the community. What we need is nature not more hard surfaces. We need areas that bring community together, not keep them apart.

The Woodquay residents have been hoodwinked by the Council. The residents came together in good faith and proposed a beautiful plan to the council that centred nature and community. The residents plan was designed by Mary Reynolds, the renowned Irish garden designer and the first Irish gold medalist at the Chelsea Flower Show. Reynolds has also designed for the prestigious Royal Botanic Gardens at Kew. It is so disappointing, and as typical as ever, that the Irish cannot see the value in their own talent which is recognised abroad. And instead the GCC would prefer to use a British company, with no ties the Woodquay, the community or Irish heritage to design a cold concrete plaza, full of hard surface, with some token green, instead of a park.

The council acted in poor faith by leading residents to believe that Mary Reynolds' design would be implemented, even leveraging her plan to secure specific funding for the development. Then last minute, GCC threw the Residents plan under the bus, and have tried to keep the residents in the dark, not openly sharing information with them since. Despite this, the council continued to use Mary Reynolds design in their promotional material despite knowing they are not using it. This approach is also contrary to the stipulations in the 'Instructions to Tenderers,' which states "All services shall be in line with the Galway City Council application to Fáilte Ireland, the letter of offer from Fáilte Ireland and the original proposal developed by the resident association of Woodquay for the redevelopment of the park".

Despite the project brief's emphasis on stakeholder engagement (1.11.2) that "Effective communication will be central to this project". As a Woodquay resident, engagement and communication was low, unforthcoming and confusing at best.

The Council's current plan evokes the design of Eyre Square, which is known for its extensive hard surfaces. A grey, uninviting space. Eyre Square does not feel like a safe, clean inviting space for the cities residents. I asked 4 friends (who are all parents of young children) if they used Eyre Square. Here are responses from each one:

- 'I've always avoided it, its very dirty and the playground is crap'
- 'I don't bring the kids there, as the last time I did there was broken glass everywhere'
- 'The last time I went there was a man toileting in the corner'
- 'I don't bring the kids there as other places are cleaner and more kid friendly'

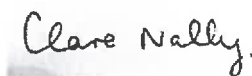
Please help prevent this happening in Woodquay by rejecting the councils plan.

One of my issues with city planning is the lack of consideration to maintenance and after care. With this in mind, the 'rill' down the centre of the councils plan, will be a disaster. Full of rubbish, stagnant, ill maintained, attraction for pests etc.

Additionally, the removal of the park railings poses serious safety concerns. The current railings provide a vital barrier for children, protecting them from the busy surrounding roads frequented by cyclists, vehicles, and delivery drivers. Removing these railings would compromise child safety and potentially damage the hedge that relies on them for support. Contrary to the Council's claim, these railings are in good condition, having been replaced just a few years ago.

I urge you to reject the current plan and support the community-backed proposal that prioritises nature, safety, and local heritage. Let us preserve and enhance Woodquay for the people who call it home.

Sincerely,



Clare Nally