

Introduction.

This scheme proposes works at the Dun Laoghaire Baths site to provide for the continuing public use of the area. The scheme proposes the retention and securing of the existing Baths Pavilion for use as artist workspaces, a gallery café and for the provision of public toilet facilities. It also proposes the removal of dilapidated structures to the rear of the Pavilion to permit the creation of a new route and landscaping that will connect the walkway at Newtownsmith to both the East Pier and the Peoples Park. Finally it also proposes the infilling of the existing saltwater pools and creating new enhanced facilities for swimming and greater access to the water's edge by means of a short jetty.

Following an application for consent under the Foreshore Act 1933 (as amended) made in December 2012, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council has now been advised by the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government to make available for inspection a copy of maps, reports, plans and drawings at the Dun Laoghaire Garda Station at Corrig Avenue, Dun Laoghaire. These will be available for inspection for 21 working days. Submissions and representations in respect of a grant of the licence can be made in writing within 21 working days from the publication of notice to the Foreshore Unit of the Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government, Newtown Road, Wexford, Co Wexford or at foreshore@environ.ie. Objections and representations received will then be forwarded to the Council for comment prior to any decision being made by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government.

If consent is given, then a Part 8 application for the proposed works at the Baths, will be made by the Local Authority, in accordance with Section 179 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), and the Planning and Development Regulations, 2001 - 2012.



Figure 1. Aerial View of proposed scheme

Site Appraisal and Development Strategy.

The original Baths east of the East Pier were constructed in 1843 by John Crosthwaite and named the Royal Victoria baths. In 1896 Kingston Urban District Council purchased the baths site. The firm Alexander Fraser was engaged to build the new baths on today's site. In June 1908 the works were completed and are largely what is in existence today. The baths were improved and extended in the 1930s and were in use in various forms until they were closed in the early 1990s.

The site is highly visible from Sandycove, Newtownsmith and the East Pier and offers the potential to connect the walkway at Newtownsmith to both the East Pier and the Peoples Park. The site however is located on a slope with a north easterly aspect and receives limited sunshine and can feel exposed when windy or when seas are rough. Its location on high ground enjoys panoramic views over Scotsman's Bay. Historically this had led to the site being developed as a military Battery associated with the now demolished Martello Tower in the Peoples Park. Preliminary investigations indicate however, that although fragments and masonry work survive, the Battery complex was dismantled and incorporated into the Baths Complex.

The development strategy for the Baths site seeks to:

- Secure the existing Baths Pavilion and site which is presently closed to the public.
- Remove dilapidated structures to permit the creation of a new route and associated landscaping to connect the walkway at Newtownsmith to both the East Pier and the Peoples Park.
- Create enhanced facilities for swimming and access to the water.

Design Proposal.

Retention and securing of the existing Baths Pavilion.

The existing Baths Pavilion together with a smaller outbuilding will be retained, weathered and secured while the remaining dilapidated outbuildings to the rear and side of the Pavilion will be removed. It is proposed to fit out the Pavilion to accommodate studio space for artists and to provide gallery and café facilities. The original Baths entrance along Windsor Terrace will be restored to provide access. An outdoor 'café terrace' linked to the new café will provide an attractive sitting area for viewing, eating and relaxing. It is also proposed to create new public toilet facilities at street level which will also be accessible for wheelchair users. Footpaths along Windsor Terrace will be upgraded and new street trees planted. These uses and improvements will create new life and provide enhanced public facilities which, along with the adjoining Peoples Park and the recently completed Metals Project Phase 1 will reinforce the established walking routes along Newtownsmith and the Queens Road.



Figure 2. Views of the new route to connect the East Pier with Newtownsmith.

A new route to connect the East Pier with Newtownsmith.

As part of these works the removal of dilapidated structures will facilitate the creation of a new pedestrian route to connect the walkway at Newtownsmith with the East Pier. This walkway will be at a level that will create a safe and secure walk offering panoramic views over Scotsman's Bay. The form of this walk will reflect the original rocky shoreline and the historic alignment of the old gun battery that was originally located on this site. The walkway will incorporate sitting and viewing points to emphasise the relationship of this site with the Martello Tower at Sandycove and the lighthouse on the East Pier.

The land adjoining this walk will be re-graded to create grassed areas which will thematically link the Park at Newtownsmith to the Maritime Gardens which lead to the East Pier. The scheme also proposes the refurbishment of the small historic gazebo situated along this route. The removal of the dilapidated buildings and the re-grading of the land will both permit a greater level of sunlight to fall on the path and will create a pleasant and well supervised area for walking.



Figure 3. Views of the restored bandstand new route to connect the East Pier with Newtownsmith and 'café terrace'.

New swimming facilities

A new jetty and an area for changing will be created to provide enhanced access to the water for swimmers and to provide a landing point for kayaks and canoes. This jetty will be linked by new steps to the 'cafe terrace' at the Baths Pavilion and to the pedestrian crossing point leading to the Peoples Park. The jetty will also be linked to the upgraded paths which will provide access to the East Pier. It is proposed that the existing salt water pools will be in-filled and access maintained to the water. The feasibility of jet water fountains in this area will also be investigated.

As part of the works at the Dun Laoghaire Baths it is also planned to extend the existing stormwater overflow at Newtownsmith Green (directly adjacent the Baths) out to sea by a distance of approx. 50m. This overflow typically operates 5 times per year each time for approximately 60 minutes and is designed to provide significant flood protection to nearby Glasthule village during periods of severe rainfall. The extension of this overflow will involve the construction of a new buried outfall pipe which will move spill material (primarily surface water that has entered the combined system during periods of rainfall) away from the foreshore. Because this pipe is buried it will not be visible during the low spring tides and is designed in accordance with the requirements of the Department of the Environment's 'Procedures and Criteria in relation to Storm Water Overflows'. These measures will significantly enhance the area for swimmers.



Figure 4. Views of the works from the proposed new jetty