



MINISTER OF STATE
AODHÁN Ó RÍORDÁIN TD

Minister Alan Kelly TD
Custom House,
Dublin
Do1 W6X0

11 November 2015

Dear Minister Kelly,

Thank you for the attention in relation to this important matter.

Planning permission pursuant to the statutory Part 8 process was granted for the S2S Cycleway and Interim Flood Works project in Clontarf in 2013. The works comprise a new footpath/cycleway, and repairs/improvements to the existing flood defence wall along that section of the Clontarf seafront.

Since the building of this project commenced, residents and businesses in the local area have been contacting their representatives and expressing concern that the documentation provided via the part 8 process did not accurately or fairly represent the nature or scale of the development involved.

I have compared the documentation that accompanied the Part 8 scheme to the build that is currently ongoing on the Clontarf seafront, and I share residents' concerns. It appears to me that while accurate measurements were contained within the documentation in relation to wall heights, these measurements were not fairly reflected in the accompanying graphics. In particular, graphic 4.2 contained within the Part 8 application, on any fair assessment, would suggest that sea views are not impeded at any stage.

As most residents are not technical experts on flood defence heights (which are measured in ODM - not a unit familiar to most people), it is fair to assume that they will heavily rely on accompanying graphics such as this when making their assessment of any scheme. This also applies to local public representatives.

MINISTER OF STATE FOR NEW COMMUNITIES, CULTURE, EQUALITY AND DRUG STRATEGY

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I am extremely concerned that the existing Part 8 statutory requirements seem to allow a situation to develop whereby the actual build of a scheme differs so dramatically from the images contained within the application. It is in nobody's interests to allow this situation to continue unchecked.

I also have concerns in relation to the efficiency of the current Part 8 statutory notification requirements in terms of ensuring that residents are well informed of any impending large scale changes to their local environment. It would seem that the existing requirements of newspaper notifications, site notices and displays in libraries are no longer sufficient or appropriate in light of advances in new media and technologies over the past decade.

In my view, the Part 8 process needs to be reviewed and updated as a matter of urgency to prevent situations like the one presently unfolding in Clontarf from ever happening again, and an analysis made of how use of comprehensive 3D imaging, social media and other new technologies can be used to ensure that communities have an accurate and fair understanding of works being proposed in good time to make their objections or other comments known to the planning authority.

Yours etc,

Aodhán Ó Ríordáin T.D.
Labour Party, Dublin Bay North

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