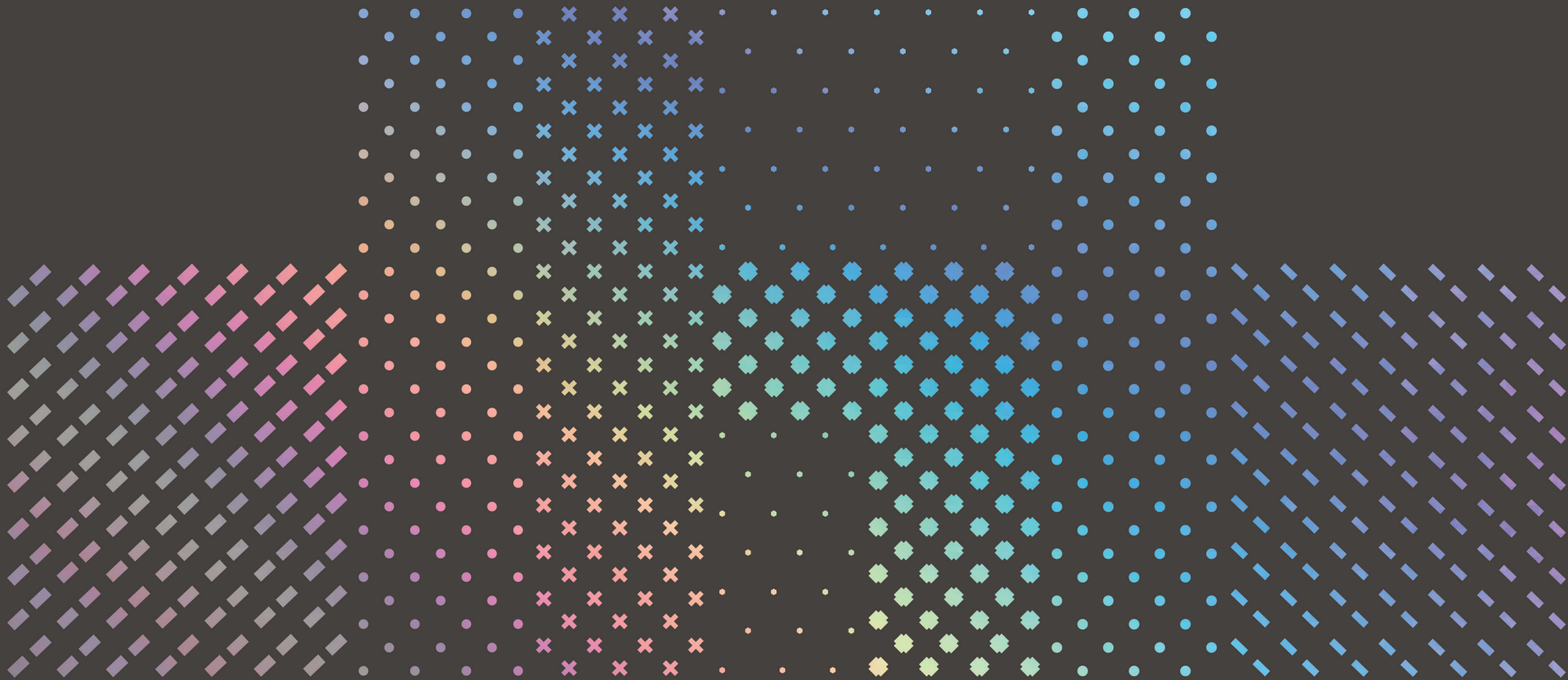


South Dublin County Council
Lucan Public Realm - Part 8 Public Consultation
Liffey Promenade & Demesne Park Entrance

D-01 Project Descriptions &
Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

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dhbarchitects



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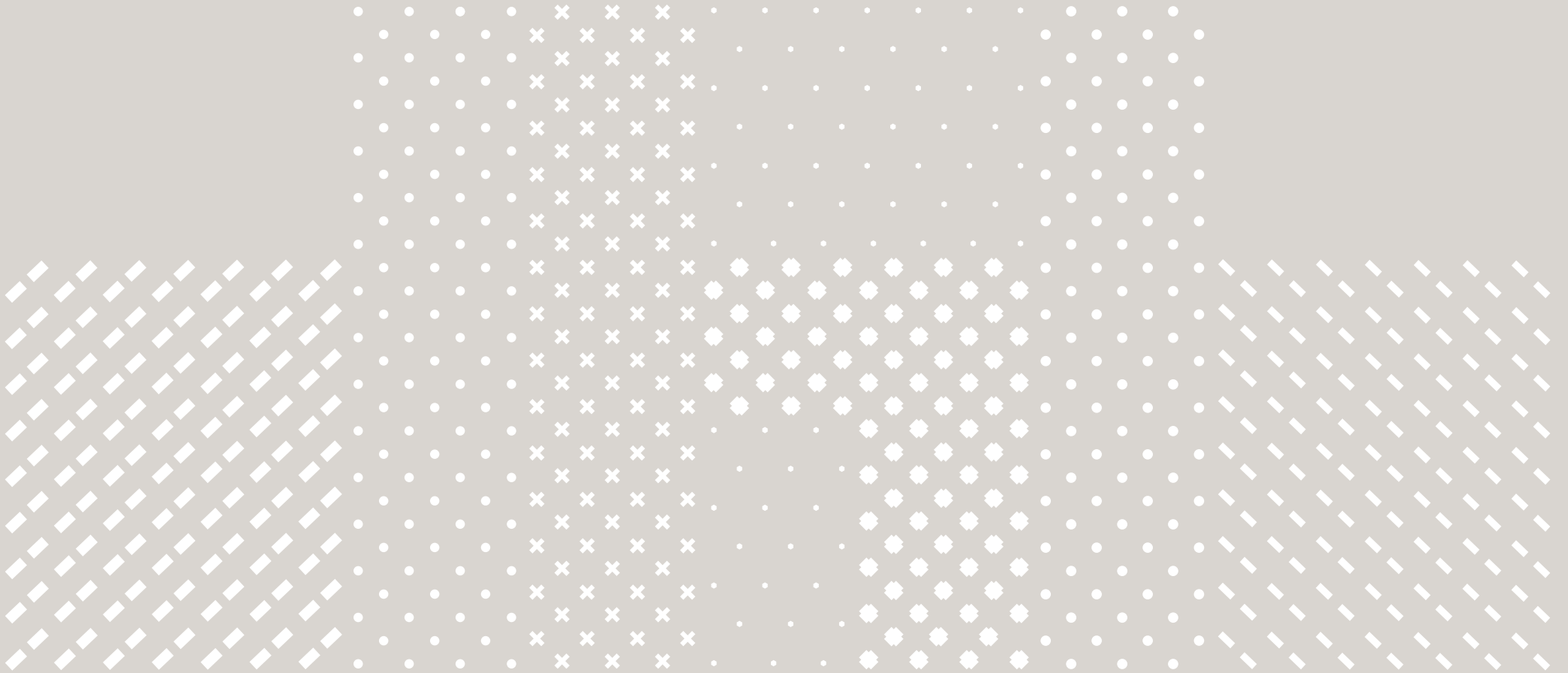
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SECTION A

Project Descriptions



A1. Liffey Promenade



Fig.3

A1.1. Extent of the works:

The site area extends from Lucan Bridge to the east to the steps and landing at the end of Watery Lane on the western end, and from the Liffey edge to the site boundary on the southern side, including the access route to the river edge from the rear of the Mall properties. It includes a related but separate area at the junction of Watery Lane and the Mall/Main Street.

No changes are proposed to the existing promenade pathway and river edge steps. Most of the changes being proposed relate to additional landscaping and planting apart from the addition of a new external stairway from the Bridge to the river level. The works for this stairway and for the Watery Lane junction have already been approved under a previous Part 8 and therefore do not form part of this assessment.

A1.2 Nature of the works:

1. The construction of a set of landscaped steps, retaining walls and railings from the current access point at bridge level to the end of the bridge wall at river level. The stairway is configured as a series of short flights with landings along its lower half followed by a longer flight and dog-leg return for the upper half. Retaining walls and seating are clad in black limestone and the steps and landings are concrete with a resinbond finish (as per Part 8 drawing 01 by SDCC/2015).
2. New concrete paving to the footpath ends and carriageway at the entrance to Watery Lane, and a new tree on its western side (as per Part 8 drawing 01 by SDCC/2015).
3. Some modifications to the steps at the western end of the Promenade will be

made to form a series of seats facing the weir. These seats will be finished in black marble, just like the seats along the steps at the Bridge end.

4. The relandscaping of the area between the existing promenade path and the southern boundary. All existing trees are being retained and approx. 25 no. new trees and shrubs are being planted along this edge. These are native deciduous varieties such as Elm, Birch and Alder, in keeping with existing and traditional species found in this Liffey Valley habitat.

5. A number of natural stone benches are proposed along the edge of the Promenade, sitting on a reinforced grass finish having a backdrop of wildflower meadow.

6. An adjustment of the arrival point of the access route beside the Promenade is proposed in order to allow the construction of the landscaped steps at their connection with the promenade path. Any connection between the bottom of these steps and the Promenade will be made

using the same materials and finish as the Promenade path.

7. One of the existing lighting poles is being moved a few metres to the east where it clashes with this redirected access path. It is proposed to add a series of service point pop-ups along the southern edge of the Promenade path to enable to space to function as an open-air market, or for organized community events, performances etc.

A1.3. Design rationale:

These proposals are an attempt to do as little as possible but just as much as is necessary to this popular amenity spot. The improved planting and landscaping will provide some inflection of the very artificial lines of the Promenade path while defining informal 'break-out' areas for small group gatherings or intimate conversation. These spaces still face out towards the Promenade and are quite visible from it as

well as from the Bridge so that overlooking discourages anti-social behaviour.

The provision of service points for seasonal markets or performances etc. aims to provide more flexibility of uses. There is sufficient width on the Promenade (approx. 6m) to accommodate the space for stalls.

A2. Demesne Park Entrance

A2.1. Extent of the works:

The site stretches from its connection with the footpath (from Lucan) at its eastern end to the demesne park access gates at the western end. It is bordered by the N4 slip road and its junction with the Lucan Road on its southern side and by the Demesne park boundary wall and woodland on its northern edge. It is worth adding that this boundary wall, in rubble stone, forms a continuous line from Lucan town centre to the demesne entrance although it is replaced with block and then block with stone facing from the point where it meets the Tobermaclugg stream (which is culverted under the site). A waste water pumping station is located along this boundary immediately to the west of this stream.

A2.2. Nature of the works:

1. Releveling of the landing/entrance area outside the pedestrian access gates to the Park to provide a continuous, consistent level across the works area (the level rises steadily from east to west). This landing area is to be paved in concrete paviers or similar.
2. Construction and installation of a box-section painted steel portal to mark this pedestrian entrance from the eastern approaches.
3. Construction of a circular paved area (diam. 17.5m approx.) at the widest point of the site (opposite N4 Underpass). A length of existing wall in plastered block which the circle intersects on the northern side is to be removed and replaced with a circular concrete wall and seat. A foundation is to be provided towards the centre of



Fig.4

the circular area for a piece of public art (to be commissioned separately to this Part 8).

4. Two lengths of existing wall, one of concrete block, at the circular paved area, the other in block with stone facing beside the existing pedestrian entrance are to be removed. Note the existing pedestrian entrance to the Park is being retained under these proposals.

5. Fabrication and installation of a painted steel railing the same height as the existing demesne wall, from the circular paved area as far as the pedestrian entrance.

6. The provision of masonry bench-seating to both paved areas.

7. The provision of landscaping to the N4 boundary consisting of shrubs and hedges, a pair of deciduous trees and an area of wildflower meadow.

8. The removal of existing tarmac surfacing and the resurfacing of the non-paved areas in a Ballylusk gravel or similar.

9. The installation of 3 no. removable bollards at the eastern end of the site, the installation of a series of bicycle stands at this location too.

A2.3. Design rationale:

The design intention here is to create a sense of place in contrast to the relative anonymity of the current receiving environment, as well as a wayfinding point that marks both the Demesne Park entrance and the western 'gateway' to Lucan village. A new portal to mark the entrance to the park is being proposed, approx. 7m wide and 4.7m high. The ad-hoc car park currently occupying the site is being moved across the Lucan Road (as a separate Part 8 application) so that pedestrian, cycle and canoe/kayak users will have unrestricted access to the Park entrance. A set-down area for club vans and trailers is provided at the eastern end of the site. Maintenance and emergency vehicle access is provided by

means of a line of removable bollards and by the clear dimensions of the steel portal (4.5 x 4.5m).

The demesne wall which is such an important link to Lucan village centre becomes a visual barrier to as one approaches the entrance. It also serves to hide occasional anti-social behaviour around the Tobarmaclogg bridge and water treatment plant within the Park area below. By removing portions of the wall here the intention is to make park users feel safe as they approach it by providing overlooking of the woodland from the entrance approaches. This is achieved by removing the wall where the circular plaza cuts into it and by replacing it from the entrance portal onwards by means of a metal lath fence which provides good visibility into the woodland. This metal fence is used to screen the existing surfaces of wall to the treatment plant area where it is not proposed to open up the views. In this way the same element as a fence or as

a screen will provide a sense of unity and continuity to this boundary.

This circular plaza will be framed by a pair of trees facing the N4 Underpass (R835) and is intended to accommodate a piece of public art. It will act as a staging point for groups of cyclists, walkers and river users. Car parking is available across the road and accessed via a controlled crossing. A dense band of vegetation consisting of Hydrangea, Cherry Laurel and Wild Plum screens the site area from the slip road.



Fig.5

SECTION B

Architectural Heritage Impact Assessment

The impacts of the proposals are considered in the context of the character appraisals above and on the fabric, or tangible elements, and on the setting, or intangible elements, of the place.



B1.1 Liffey Promenade Character Appraisal



Fig.8

B1.1.1. Description summary:

The space is defined by the open water of the Liffey to its north with its views to the weir and far bank, by the imposing scale of the Lucan bridge wall to its east, by a rising green embankment to the south and by an open-ended view to the west, with a presence of the Town's edge at the end of Watery lane. The space's material qualities are largely defined by the nature of the hard-landscaped promenade surface which forms a broad walkway with continuous steps along the Liffey's edge. It links the public steps at the Lucan bridge descent with the ramp and steps from the Watery Lane entrance. An unmetalled access route (for SDCC maintenance purposes only) descends from the car park on the high ground behind Main Street/The Mall.

B1.1.2. Tangible qualities:

The space has an amphitheatrical form, located between the natural rise of the land towards Main Street and the open expanse of the Liffey.

The presence of Lucan bridge is the predominant element of place when looking eastwards, while the westward view presents a more natural backdrop of heavily wooded river bank.

There is a predominance of metalled surface compared to grassed and planted areas.

It provides a direct connection to nature via the water's edge and occasions for interaction with and experiencing flora and fauna, particularly wild birds.

B1.1.3. Intangible qualities

There is a sense of contrast between the man-made and the natural which is one of the defining qualities of this space. In that sense it is recognisably 'picturesque', containing both 'beautiful' and 'sublime' elements.

There is a sense that this space represents the edge of the Town, in the territorial sense.

There is a sense that it is a semi-private space for the secret enjoyment of the initiated.

B1.2. Liffey Promenade Impacts

Changes to or impacts on fabric and setting as a result of the proposed works:

- Works for the construction of landscaped stairway from the bridge to river level: These works have been granted permission under a previous Part 8 and are not being assessed as part of these proposals. (Note that these proposals have been carefully considered in the context of this stairway design and are in harmony with its palette of materials and planting).
- Works to modify the existing steps at the Watery Lane end of the site consisting of the addition of three tiers of masonry seating with limestone cladding(facing the Weir). **Impacts:** some minor alteration of existing steps (which are not historic fabric); little or no changes to the setting given the small, localized scale of this intervention.
- Addition of underground electrical services, a mini-pillar and a number of low-voltage power sockets in flood-proof boxes along the southern edge of the promenade path (for seasonal markets use). **Impacts:** temporary disruption only with no loss of fabric: little to no impacts on setting.
- Landscaping works consisting of tree planting to the southern bank of the site, new reinforced grass paths with natural stone benches and wildflower meadow areas and the modification of the end of the gravelled access route to the river from above the site. **Impacts:** No impacts on fabric; positive impacts on setting due to reinforcing of the existing natural attributes of the site.
- Note that the preeminent element of fabric and setting on the site, Lucan bridge, an important protected structure of national importance, is not impacted by these works, nor do they alter its setting in any appreciable way.



Fig.9

B2.1. Demesne Park Entrance Character Appraisal



Fig.10

B2.1.1 Description Summary

The space consists of a residual area between the N4 slip road and the former estate boundary wall. It is entered off the Lucan Road just before the N4 underpass via a vehicle height restrictor and there is an ad-hoc parking area, generally along the low boundary wall to the slip road, as well as some places at the end before the gates on a asphalted area overlooking the Liffey and bounded by a stone wall. The estate boundary wall continues along most of the northern edge and the ground behind it which is wooded descends steeply towards a path along the River's edge. Part of the boundary wall conceals a water treatment plant with metal gates and the stream which culverted from the Doddsborough road direction passes under the site and exits in the Liffey at this point.

B2.1.2 Tangible qualities:

The place presents a clear contrast between the asphalted surface of the parking area and the predominant presence of trees above the line of the boundary wall. Where the pedestrian entrance occurs there is a view of the River through the trees below.

Noise from the adjacent N4 is a predominant presence.

The asphalted surface of the parking area is undifferentiated with no marking to show parking spaces or pedestrian routes.

B2.1.3 Intangible qualities:

There is a sense that this is a route rather than a destination, a place to leave a car while walking in through the park below.

There is a sense of stark contrast between the 'world of traffic' outside the boundary wall, and the 'world of nature' on the other side of it. Once in the woods the traffic noise is much less noticeable

Demesne Park Entrance Architectural Impacts

Changes to or impacts on fabric and setting as a result of the proposed works:

- Removal of approx. 10m of block wall and approx. 15m of block-with stone-facing wall along the Demesne boundary and its replacement with an open steel-lath fence (to allow greater visibility into the woodland at the park entrance point). **Impacts:** No impact on historic fabric (the historic rubble stone demesne boundary wall ends about 50m eastwards along the Lucan Road); the setting will change in these areas to make the woodland more visible and provide a more reassuring visual connection between the park and entrance areas.
- Demolition and removal of existing tarmacadam surfaces and the excavation and preparation of the base for the addition of a Ballylusk (or similar) compacted gravel surface finish

and two areas of paving (to match Main Street paving materials palette), one at the entrance to the site, the other at the existing pedestrian entrance to the park.

Impacts: No impacts on built or historic fabric; enhancement of setting (materials and colours in keeping with natural setting).

- Construction and installation of a steel box-section portal (with its foundations) to mark the location of the pedestrian entrance. **Impacts:** No impacts on existing fabric; this element is an addition to the existing setting.

• Addition of natural stone benches to both paved areas, addition of bicycle stands to entrance end of site. **Impacts:** No impacts on existing fabric: minor changes to existing setting through the addition of a limited number of small elements.

- Addition of low-voltage electrical supply and ducting to provide subdued 'presence' lighting to the steel portal.

Impacts: No impacts on existing fabric; no additional impacts on setting. Note that this will be very low-intensity LED lighting on a movement sensor solely to delineate the limits of the portal at nighttime.

- Landscaping consisting of the planting of shrubs, hedging, an area of wildflower and two trees along the edge of the footpath to the N4 slip road. **Impacts:** No impacts on fabric; enhancement of setting due to additional planting.

