

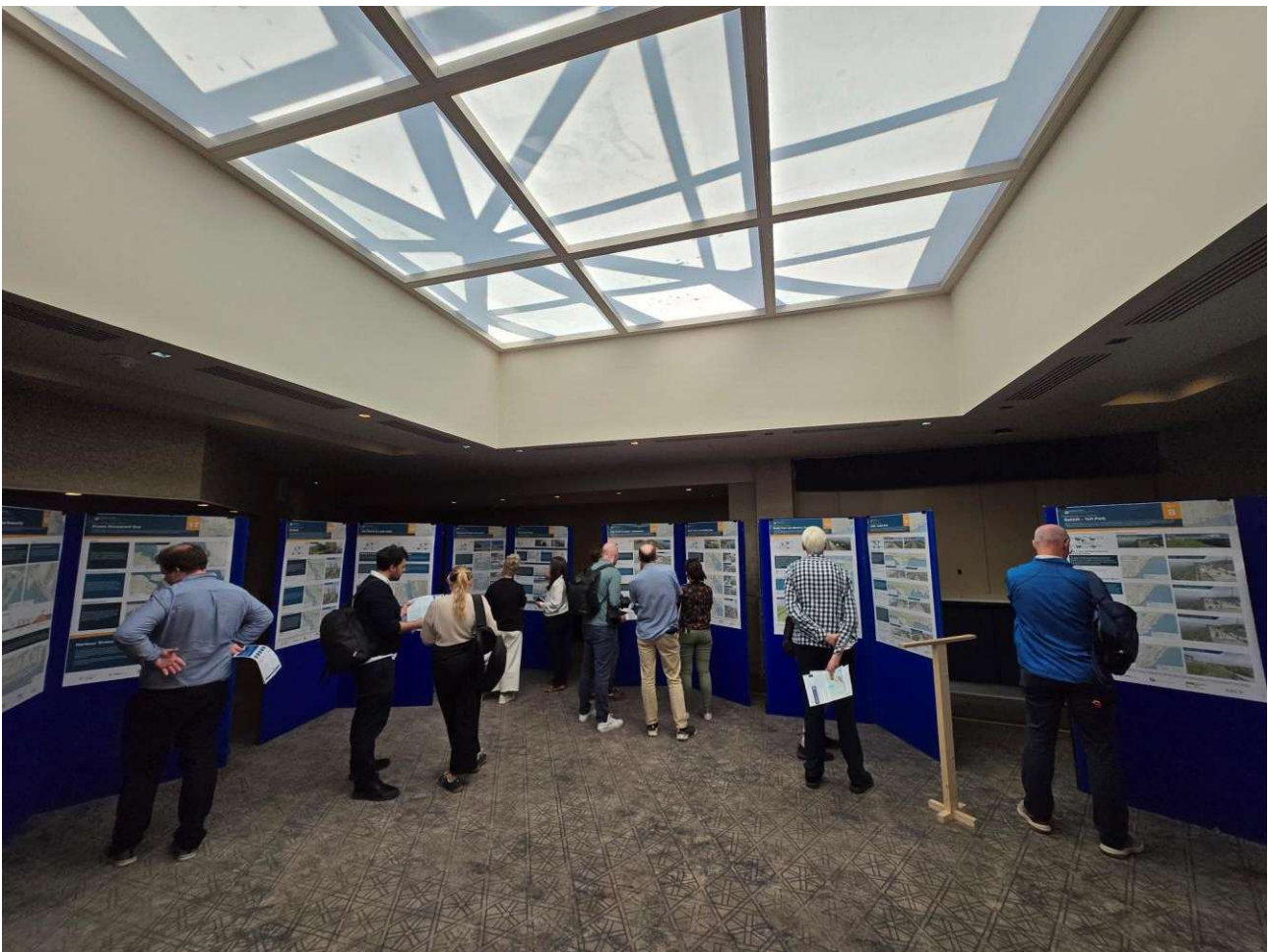
Galway City Council

Coirib Go Cósta - Galway City Flood Relief Scheme

Public Engagement Day No.2 Summary Report

Reference:

Draft 1 | 12 August 2025



This report takes into account the particular instructions and requirements of our client. It is not intended for and should not be relied upon by any third party and no responsibility is undertaken to any third party.

Job number 279365-00

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1. Introduction

The OPW has carried out the Western Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Study for the Corrib River Basin. Galway City was included as an Area for Further Assessment (AFA) and concluded that a Flood Relief Scheme (FRS) would be viable and effective for the community.

Galway City Council, acting as Agents for the OPW, has commissioned Arup to develop a FRS for Galway City. The scheme is called “Coirib go Cósta – the Galway City Flood Relief Scheme”

The scheme objective is to assess and develop a FRS that is technically, socially, environmentally, aesthetically and economically acceptable, to alleviate the risk of flooding in Galway City.

The overall scheme will consist of flood alleviation measures as required across the scheme area which includes the River Corrib and its tributaries/canals and offtakes from Lough Corrib to the sea and along the coast from west Salthill to Ballyloughane, including the area of the docks. The scheme will offer the required standard of protection against fluvial and coastal (i.e. tidal and wave overtopping) flooding.

This report provides details and analysis of the second Public Engagement Day (PED) held on 17th and 18th June 2025. The aim was to inform the public and stakeholders of the progress made since the project commenced, and to outline a suite of potential options to alleviate flooding in the Galway FRS Area.

2. Public Engagement Day Arrangements

2.1 Public Engagement Day – Presentation of Viable Options

A PED was held over two days: on 17th June 2025 at the Galway Bay Hotel, Salthill, and on 18th June 2025 at the Harbour Hotel, Galway Docks, with both events running from 3pm to 8pm.

The purpose of the PED was to present a suite of potential options to the general public and to seek feedback in order to identify a preferred scheme. The objectives of the Public Engagement Day were to:

- Provide an update on progress to date
- Outline the present day flood extents based on hydraulic model results
- Provide information and an opportunity to comment on the potential scheme options
- Respond directly to queries
- Obtain other information relevant to the Scheme
- Outline the next steps of the Scheme

The PED was attended and staffed by members of Arup’s engineering team, representatives of the Office of Public Works and Galway City Council, as well as landscape architects from Brady Shipman Martin. Scheme representatives were available to answer questions from the members of the public who attended, to explain the potential options presented, and to accept feedback and information from the attendees. All material was presented in English and Irish and a fluent Irish speaker was available on both days to answer any questions from the public in Irish.

2.2 Presentation to Councillors

On the morning of 17 June 2025, the first day of the PEDs, a presentation was given to elected Galway City Council Members and Local TDs/Senators ahead of the public consultation at the Galway Bay Hotel.

2.3 Advertising of the Public Engagement Day

The project team prepared a publicity brochure, posters, and letters to stakeholders, newspaper and radio advertisements. Advertising of the PED was undertaken in the local printed press and on local radio shows in the week preceding the event. The event was also publicised through the project website and Galway City Council social media platforms. Invitations were sent to stakeholders and individuals who attended previous consultation days via email. Signs advertising the event were placed around the city on the day of the event.

An article was published by the local press prior to the PED:

- [Galway City Tribune](#), 13/06/2025

3. Public Engagement Day Materials

3.1 PED 2 Brochure

A PED brochure was produced for the scheme. This brochure outlined the PED details, the level of protection the scheme will defend to, the number of properties defended and a high-level estimated cost of the scheme. It included a map showing the present-day flood extent of the Galway City FRS area and listed the potentially viable options that would be on display at the PED. A copy of the brochure is attached in .

3.2 PED 2 Posters

The following posters were exhibited at the PED:

1. Boards Overview
2. Welcome and Introduction
3. Overview of the Scheme & Project Area
4. Get Involved, Have Your Say
5. What Happens Next
6. Predictive Fluvial Flood Extent Map
7. Predictive Coastal Flood Extent Map
8. Upper Salthill
9. Salthill – Toft Park
10. Salthill – Grattan Road
11. South Park and Nimmo’s Pier
12. Raven Terrace and Claddagh Quay
13. City Centre & Docks – Fishmarket
14. City Centre & Docks
15. City Centre & Docks – Inner Docks
16. City Centre & Lough Atalia

17. Terryland
18. Areas Screened Out
19. Options Screened Out
20. Preliminary Technical Assessment of the Flood Defences (1/2)
21. Preliminary Technical Assessment of the Flood (2/2)

Copies of the posters are included in Appendix B.

3.3 PED 2 Questionnaire

A questionnaire with pre-printed questions was provided to each attendee, in addition to the information brochure. It provided an opportunity for members of the public to express their views on the potentially viable options presented at the PED, in addition to other comments they may have had relating the scheme. A copy of the blank questionnaire is attached in Appendix C.

The return date for receipt of completed questionnaires was the 18 July 2025.

Information in addition to the questionnaires was also accepted on the day of the event or subsequently by post/ email.

For those who could not attend in person, the questionnaire was also made available online via the Virtual Engagement Room, accessible through the project website homepage for the duration of the public engagement period.

3.4 PED 2 Props

A life size prop was displayed demonstrating the likely maximum flood defence height (1.1m), this was used to illustrate the defence height to attendees.

3.5 Project Website

A dedicated scheme website (www.coiribgocosta.ie) has been created to provide a central location for information regarding the scheme.

The website includes all relevant information regarding the project including newsletters, brochure, posters and questionnaire. A link to the Virtual Engagement Room was made available through the website homepage for the duration of the public engagement period.

3.6 Virtual room

A Virtual Public Engagement Room is available on the project website, accessible via the [Public Engagement - Day No. 2](#) link, and includes all relevant information such as:

- Information posters
- Interactive web-mapper
- Brochure
- Questionnaire

All website content is available in both Irish and English.

According to the virtual room analytics, the platform recorded a total of 1,493 page views from 704 unique users. Of these, 828 originated from using the direct URL or QR code, 430 were accessed via the project website, and the remaining 235 were reached through social media channels, including Facebook, Reddit, LinkedIn, and Instagram, as well as google search.

4. Public Engagement Day Outcome

4.1 Number of Attendees

Members of the public visiting the exhibition were invited to sign a visitors' list to enable a record of the number of attendees to be maintained. On 17th June, 31 people attended, with a further 47 attendees on the second day, 18th June.

4.2 Public Response

It was considered that visitors to the PED had, in the main, a good understanding of the proposals as presented at the exhibition. Feedback was generally positive. Most of those that attended had a particular interest in properties or lands in the study area and outlined the extent to which their properties had been affected by previous flood events. In all cases, public attendees were greeted by a member of the Project Team and the vast majority of attendees accepted an offer to be personally brought through the material presented.

There were a number of common concerns the public raised as outlined below. Clarifications were also sought on the proposed options at particular locations across the study area. Most of these were reflected in the questionnaires and other submissions

4.2.1 Common concerns raised at the PED

The reoccurring concerns of public interest discussed with project representatives during the PED are summarised below:

- Concerns regarding the effectiveness of the proposed defences
- Concerns regarding GCC response and management
 - Concern that demountable barriers will be left in place most of the year and poorly managed
 - Concerned that they will have to continue sandbagging their houses
- Long delays before the FRS is constructed
 - Potential legal issues with planning applications that could stall the project
 - Uncertainty around how the scheme will coordinate with other projects like the Harbour Masterplan
- Risk of losing the unique character and feel of different areas
 - Impact on sea views
 - Restrictions to public access to certain areas due to flood walls
 - Loss of seating areas, replacing them with high walls
 - Reduced enjoyment of the promenade
- Risk of increased anti-social behaviour in areas near flood walls
- Environmental and ecosystem impacts
- Impacts to landowners and compensation
- Disruption to business operations / hobbies
 - E.g. impact to mooring
- Impacts to roads
 - Mixed feedback on the proposed one-way road system in Claddagh

- Mixed feedback on allowing roads to flood; some people prefer keeping the roads protected; some understand the benefit of reducing heights of the walls
- Concern that the scheme prioritises the protection of car parks instead of reimagining the space for the public
- Concern that the scheme is not considered an opportunity to enhance the city’s public realm
- Lack of integration with the traffic management plan, especially for cycleways and footpaths, and therefore not promoting active travel
- Poor design could lead to public disengagement from Galway’s waterways
- Need to address how options will impact surface drainage and runoff
 - Fear that underground drainage and sewage issues won’t be addressed, causing water to be trapped behind walls
- Structural stability of the quays where walls are proposed
- Lack of clear communication around the scheme’s climate change adaptability
- There is a belief that protecting the east side of the river could increase flood risk on the west side
- Concerns whether alternative solutions such as the offshore breakwater had been considered sufficiently
- Concerns about the materials used and whether glass will resist the impacts of waves.

4.2.2 Returned Questionnaires

By 18 July 2025 (the closing date for receipt of comments), a total of 11 paper feedback forms and 24 online responses were returned, a total of 35 responses.

4.3 Analysis of Questionnaires

A total of 35 completed questionnaires were received.

Outlined below is a summary of the information provided in the questionnaires.

4.3.1 Question 1 (Personal Information)

Question 1 was in relation to personal information including name, address, contact number and email address.

4.3.2 Question 2 (PED advertisement)

The breakdown of the responses to Question 2: “How did you hear about today’s Public Engagement Day?” are detailed below;

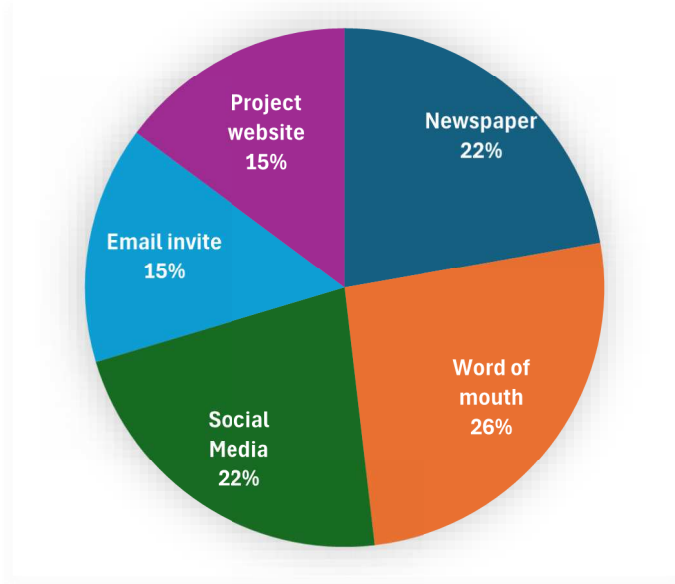


Figure 1 Q2 Breakdown - How did you hear about today's Public Engagement Day?

4.3.3 Question 3 (Type of stakeholder)

The breakdown of the responses to Question 3 "What type of stakeholder are you?" are detailed below:

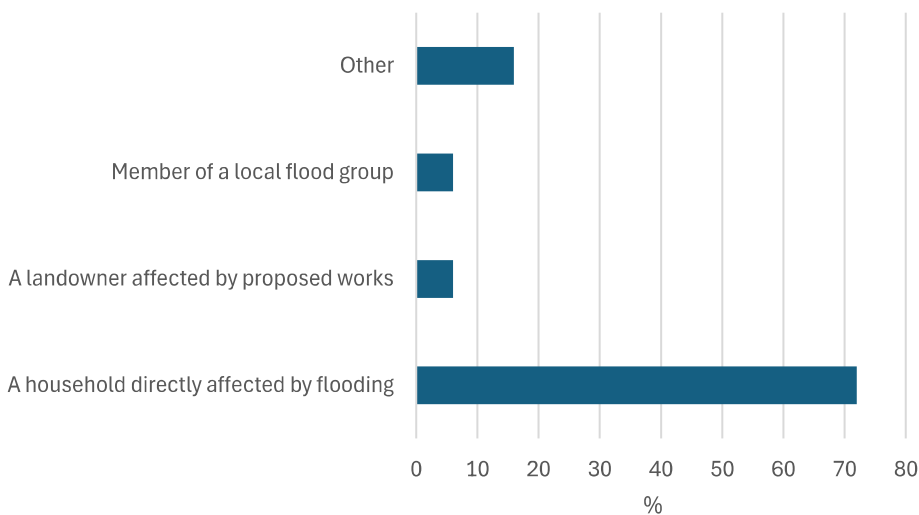


Figure 2 Q3 Breakdown - What type of stakeholder are you?

The "Other" category includes stakeholders from Active Travel GCC, Management members of Galway University, representatives involved in Masterplan Projects for affected areas, GCC Engineers (Recreation & Amenity Capital Projects), and members of the Claddagh Residents Association.

4.3.4 Question 4 (Area of interest)

The breakdown of the responses to Question 4: "What part of the scheme area have you a particular interest in?" are detailed below. Stakeholders were invited to select up to three places.

Claddagh Quay and South Park was the most selected area of interest, with 26% of stakeholders indicating it as their top priority, followed by City Centre and Docks (20%) and Salthill (20%). For further detail on the areas of interest, refer to Figure 3.

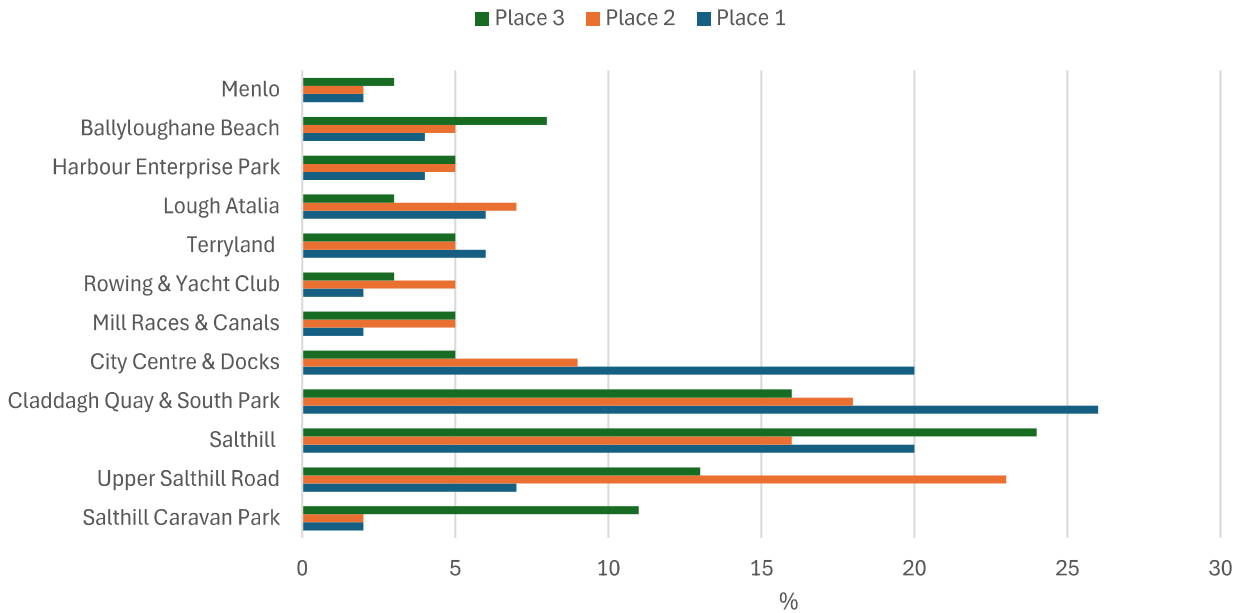


Figure 3 Q4 Breakdown - What part of the scheme area have you a particular interest in?

4.3.5 Question 5 (Reason for area selection)

For Question 5: “Reason for selecting these areas? (select all that apply),” stakeholders were asked to select all relevant reasons for each location of interest. The breakdown of responses is provided below.

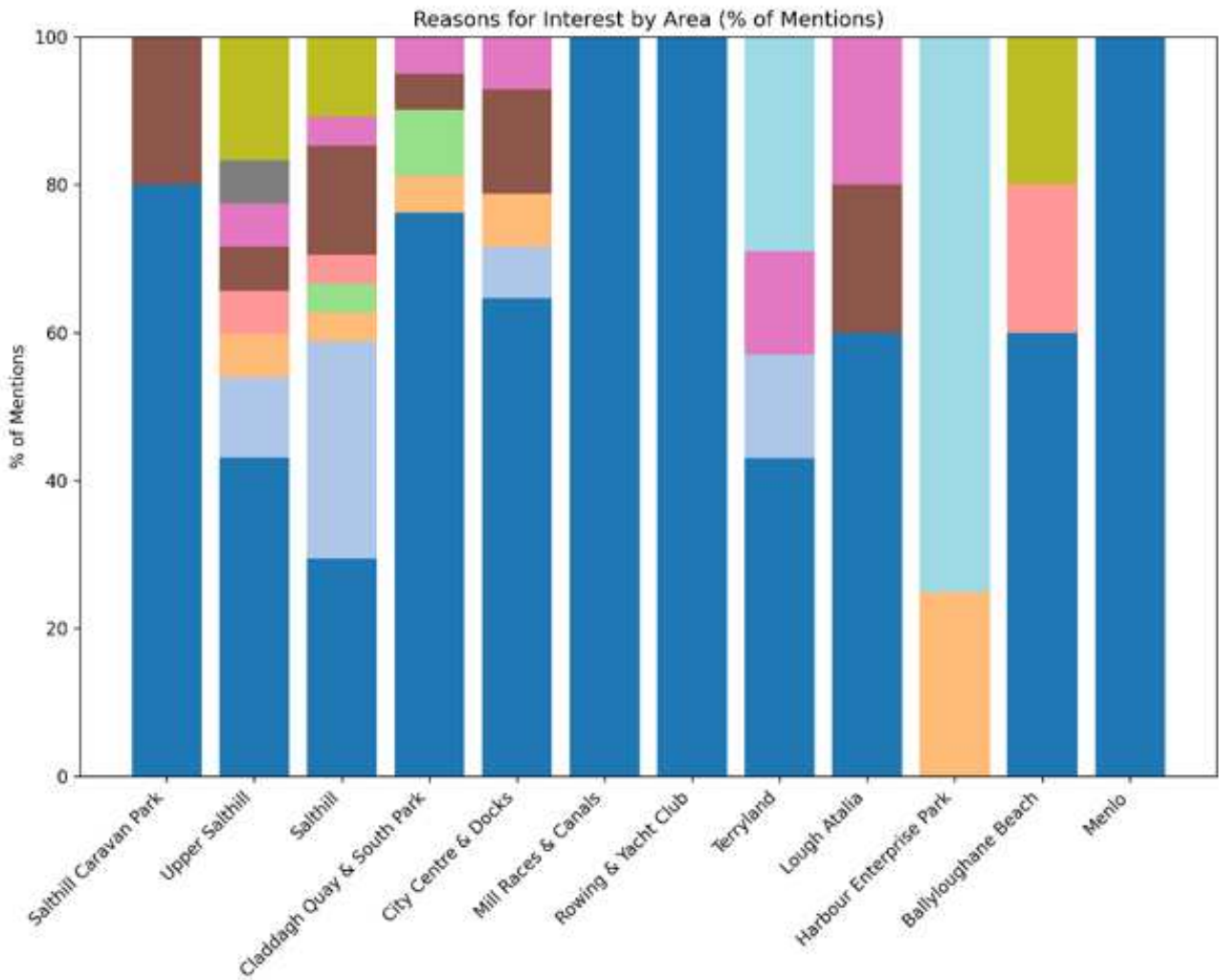


Figure 4 Q5 breakdown - Reason for selecting these areas?

Most areas were selected because respondents live there. For more details on the reasons for each area, see Figure 4.

4.3.6 Question 6 (Aspects to protect from flooding)

Below is a list summarising the responses to Question 6: “What do you consider to be the most important aspects of the area to protect from flooding?”

- Residential properties
- Roads
- Businesses

- Public realm
- The promenade
- Historical buildings
- University buildings
- Leisure and Sports facilities
- Waterways around Galway
- Ecosystems

4.3.7 Question 7 (Potential negative impacts of the FRS)

Below is a list summarising the responses to Question 7: “Are there things you feel the construction of a flood scheme could negatively affect?” This list reflects the general concerns raised by members of the public:

- Concerns regarding the effectiveness of the proposed defences
 - There is a belief that protecting the east side of the river could increase flood risk on the west side.
- Risk of losing the unique character and feel of different areas.
 - Impact on sea views
 - Restrictions to public access to certain areas due to flood walls
 - Loss of seating areas, replacing them with high walls.
 - Reduced enjoyment of the promenade.
 - Reduced tourism
- Mixed feedback on the removal of car parking space
 - There is a concern that the scheme will prioritise the protection of car parks instead of reimagining the space for the public.
 - On the other hand, there is a worry that the removal of parking spaces would negatively impact businesses and visitors to the area
- Concern that demountable barriers will be left in place most of the year and poorly managed.
- Risk of increased anti-social behaviour in areas near flood walls.
- Poor design could lead to public disengagement from Galway’s waterways.
- Concerns about the impact of the scheme to surface water drainage. There is a fear that underground drainage and sewage issues won’t be addressed, causing water to be trapped behind walls.
- Impacts to roads
 - Worries about the scheme reducing road access
 - Mixed feedback on the proposed one-way road system in Claddagh and that there will be a negative impact to traffic flow
 - Mixed feedback on allowing roads to flood; some people prefer keeping the roads protected; some understand the benefit on reducing heights of the walls if the roads are allowed to flood
- Negative environmental and ecosystem impacts
- Disruption to business operations / hobbies

- E.g. impact to mooring
- Impacts to landowners not receiving enough compensation
- Lack of integration of the scheme with the traffic management plan, especially for cycleways and footpaths and therefore not promoting active travel.

4.3.8 Question 8 (Additional scheme benefits for Galway city)

The breakdown of the responses to Question 8: “Do you think there are other ways the scheme could benefit Galway city?” are detailed below. Respondents identified a range of potential benefits of the scheme, in addition to protection from fluvial and coastal flooding.

- The scheme offers an opportunity to reimagine the space of the city — e.g. flood walls could serve as seating areas or public amenities.
- The scheme could give employment
- The scheme could make the city more attractive to tourists
- The scheme could integrate with the city’s traffic management plan, by incorporating cycleways and walking paths to promote active travel.
- Improvements to the existing quay walls which are in poor condition.
- Addressing underground water and sewage pipe issues as part of wider upgrades.
- It is hoped that insurance companies will offer flood cover again if permanent defences are put in place in the city centre, Docks, and Salthill.
- Increased visitor/tourists confidence in the city, benefiting local businesses.
- Long-term savings by avoiding flood damage and emergency response costs.

4.3.9 Question 9 (Comments on proposed options)

In answer to Question 9: “Please provide any comments you may have on the proposed options presented. Please reference Area and Options Number.” respondents expressed a preference for specific options, and the analysis of these responses is outlined below, along with a summary of their general comments.

In Figure 5 “Positive” indicates support of a respondent for an option, while “Negative” reflects opposition. Options with no votes were not mentioned in the questionnaire responses.

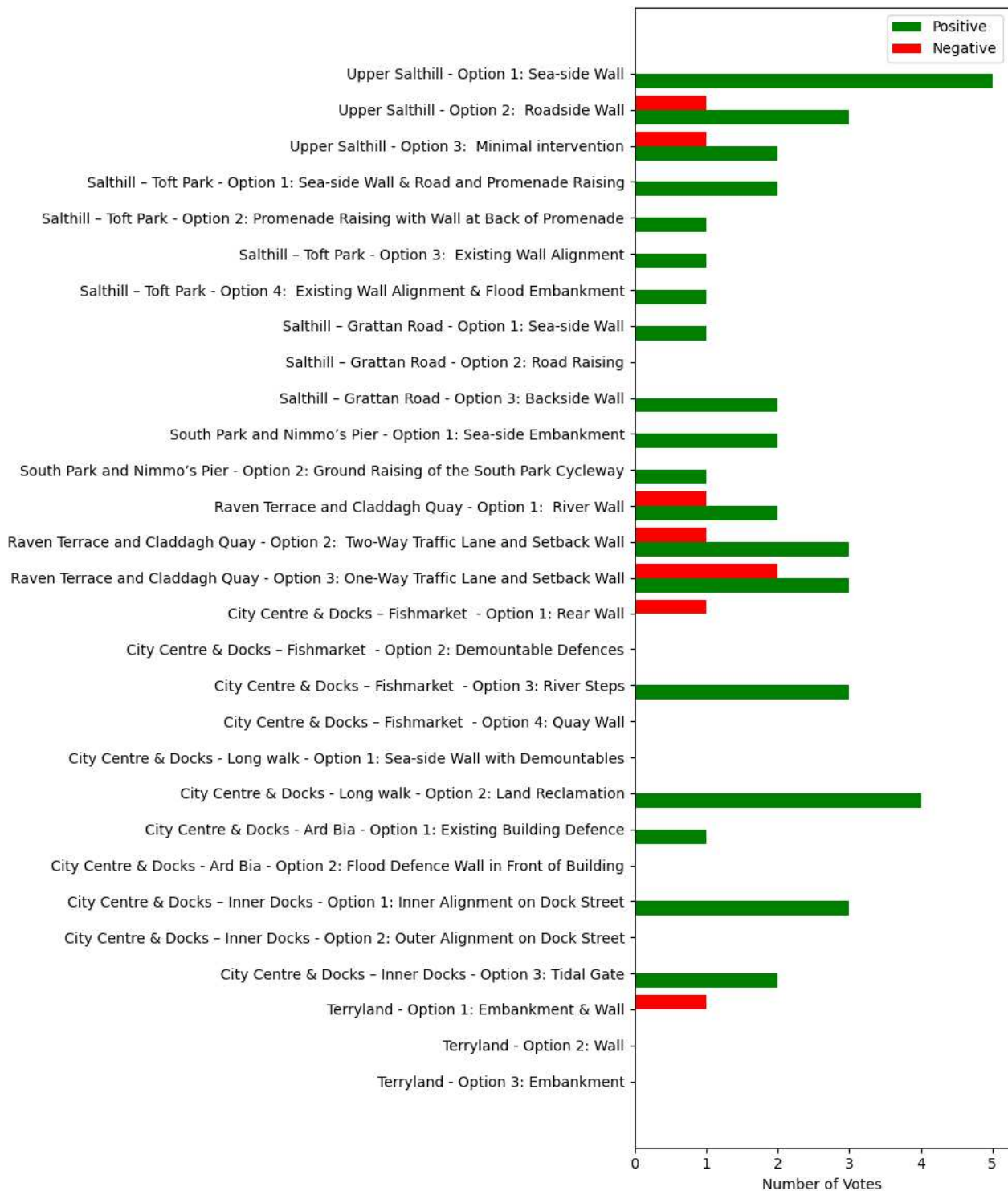


Figure 5 Q9 breakdown - Public preference of options presented

Below is a summary of general comments made by individual respondents about the proposed options:

- Respondents expressed concerns about losing seating areas in popular locations, such as in Option 1 for Raven Terrace and Claddagh Quay.
- A request was made to provide more riverside space for walking and seating along Long Walk.
- It was highlighted that the Fish Market area is frequently used by people to sit and socialise along the quay wall and that this feature should be retained in the final design.
- Mixed feedback on the proposed one-way traffic system in Claddagh.

- Potential legal issues raised with Option 3: Embankment at Terryland, which is seen as likely to delay the project.
- Preference for allowing South Park to flood naturally rather than constructing major defences.
- There is a belief that protecting the east side of the river could increase flood risk on the west side
- Mixed feedback on allowing roads to flood; some people prefer keeping the roads protected; some understand the benefit of reducing heights of the walls
- A comment was made regarding wall heights, noting that even if a setback alignment behind the road is chosen (allowing for lower walls while maintaining the required standard of protection) there is still a preference to maximise the wall height at the back to provide the highest possible level of protection.
- Preference expressed for alignments closer to the sea where practical.
- Opposition to demountable defences, with concerns they will be left in place for long periods like current orange barriers.
- Request for clear communication of the adaptive capacity of each option to climate change and sea level rise, to enable informed decision-making.
- Concern that options requiring future increases in wall height due to climate change could become unacceptable (e.g. in South Park or Salthill).
- Request for additional information on tidal barrier modelling
- Opposition to Options 1, 2, and 3 for Claddagh Quay due to visual impact, loss of parking, and disruption to a historic area. Preference for demountable defences.
- A suggestion was made to ensure the protection of the existing toilets and the new APC building at Ladies Beach.
- A comment noted that there are plans to develop a pump track in Toft Park, which should be taken into consideration during the design phase.
- There was uncertainty regarding how cyclists will use the one-way road system in Claddagh, whether a dedicated cycle lane will be provided or if cyclists will be required to share the road with vehicles.
- It was suggested that tidal gate options in the Inner Dock area would offer the greatest flexibility for future development within the harbour.
- The area in Terryland proposed for an embankment is also being considered for recreational and amenity facilities to support future development under the LDA Dyke Road project. While the exact type of facility has not yet been determined, options may include a pump track, skatepark, playground, or sports court.

4.3.10 Question 10 (Additional comments)

A number of topics were raised by the public in response to Question 10: “Please let us know if you have any other comments”. The most common topics are listed below;

- Support for the Scheme - General appreciation for the project
- Requests to integrate flood defences with improvements to public realm
- Concerns about demountables
- Amenity and heritage protection: maintaining public seating, mooring access for boats, parking, the promenade and preserving social and heritage functions etc.
- Complains about the timeline of the project and calls for a clear plan for residents and businesses until the scheme is implemented.

- Frustration over limited public engagement opportunities and requests for better communication and ongoing involvement.
- The aquarium regularly experiences seawater ingress and there's a concern about impact on the businesses before defences are in place.
- The aquarium has a water intake pipe running beneath the car park, road, and promenade. This has to be considered during construction to avoid damage.
- A comment proposed extending the rock revetment between the aquarium and Seapoint further out to sea, as this area floods frequently and may require additional protection. A thicker barrier may be needed here to withstand wave impact.
- Concerns about access for people with physical disabilities after the scheme is implemented.

4.4 Other Submissions Received

In addition to the returned questionnaires, 9 email submissions from local residents and individuals were received following the PED. These included:

- Emails from six local residents of Ardoon Apartments, Upper Salthill:
 - Strongly supporting Option 1: Seaside Wall or Option 2: Roadside Wall.
 - Expressing concern that Option 3 is not protecting Ardoon Apartments, with floodwaters likely entering ground floor units.
 - Highlighting the absence of viable emergency access or egress except the main entrance, as the rear is blocked by a wall and embankment.
- Email from a local resident of South Park:
 - Sharing videos and photographs of personal flooding experience, including flooding of their property behind South Park.
 - Recommending inclusion of Rock Armour on the shore side of either Option 1 or 2 to break the waves and prevent flooding in South Park.
- Email from local resident of Menlo:
 - Requesting inclusion of the existing Menlo rainwater pump in the funding package for upgrades and noise reduction measures.
- Email from member of the public with general comments on the scheme:
 - Expressing scepticism about the reliability of climate change predictions.
 - Stating flood defences should result in no net loss of road space, considering Galway's traffic congestion.
 - Supporting preservation of parking spaces.
 - Recommending integration of flood defences with public amenity improvements and minimising visual impact, e.g., using rock armour as a foundation for new walkways or cycling infrastructure.
 - Requesting improvement of flood forecasting using artificial intelligence techniques.

The following 9 submissions with feedback were also received:

- Submission from received from the Lough Corrib Navigation Trustees
- Submission from Galway's Architectural Conservation Officer
- Submission from Galway's Roads Operations Authority

- Submission from Galway City Community Network
- Submission from Irish Fisheries
- Submission from the Land Development Agency
- Submission from Transport Infrastructure Ireland's (TII's)
- Submission from the Health and Safety Authority
- Submission from engineering consultants acting for Galway Harbour Company ("GHC")

4.5 Press Response

A number of articles were published by the local press after the PED:

- RTE, 17/06/2025
- Galway Advertiser, 19/06/2025

Appendix A

Brochure

A.1 Brochure (English)

A.2 Brochure (Irish)

Appendix B

Posters

B.1 Posters (English)

B.2 Posters (Irish)

Appendix C

Questionnaire

C.1 Questionnaire (English)

C.2 Questionnaire (Irish)