

Appendix G

Emerging Preferred Option
Public Information Day

G1 Additional PID information

The Public Information Day (PID) was held on 20 December 2017, as a twin venue event and was held in the following venues:

- 11am – 3pm: – City Hall, Merchant's Quay, Limerick;
- 5pm – 8pm: – King's Island Community Centre, Limerick.

The principal aims of the PID was (i) to present the emerging preferred option to attendees; and (ii) to listen to the views of those living and working in the vicinity of the scheme. The reasons behind the choice of options and alternatives considered were discussed with attendees. Constraints related to both the preferred and alternative options were presented. The timeline for the project was also presented.

The target audience for the PID was all interested parties, including local politicians and the main focus of the PID was the Island residents and business owners. This included those whose properties both have and have not flooded. Furthermore, the views of non-residents were sought due to the proximity of Verdant Place to King John's Castle, a key landmark and tourist attraction of Limerick City.

The format of the PID event was as follows:

- Drop-in type format;
- Information stands and posters around the room;
- Registration of all who attended;
- One-to-one or small group discussions;
- Notes taken to record conversations and observations;
- Questionnaires also available for completion on site, or later return.

G1.1 Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG)

The PID followed a meeting of the SAG on 15 December 2017, to which local County Councillors and other stakeholders had been invited. The emerging preferred option was presented to the SAG. A number of comments were received from the SAG and they requested this be made known to the attendees at the PID. Accordingly, a poster with the following points was prepared and displayed at the PID:

- Outer walkway to be retained and the use of the inner embankment will be reviewed with a view to including walkway, or for flood defence only;
- Confirmed that access for fishing and boats is being provided;
- A continuous walk (Slí Na Sláinte) around the island which may need traffic management at Sir Harry's Mall;

- If the pitch at Star Rovers is to be relocated, works to be timed for the off-season and improvement to surface provided;
- Resident and user safety around embankments and walls remains paramount, including provision of additional CCTV and lighting. Screening to be carefully planned.

G1.2 Promotion Strategies for the Public Information Day

A variety of means of promoting/advertising the workshop were used to increase awareness of the day and aim to maximise attendance, as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6: PID Event Promotion Strategies

Promotion means	Comment
Publicity through SAG	A Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting was held in prior to the PID. Local Councillors and members of residents' associations are represented on the SAG and were encouraged to promote the event.
Social Media	The event was publicised through the Facebook page and on the website. Through the Twitter feed a number of local councillors and other organisations also promoted the workshop. Limerick City and Council publicised the event on their website and Twitter.
Press release	A press release was issued to the following outlets and individuals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limerick's Live95fm • Limerick Leader • Limerick Post • Limerick Life • RTE • TV3 • Avondhu Press (Weekly and Vale Observer) • Limerick Voice • Spin South West • West Limerick 102fm • East Limerick Community Radio • Wired FM • Irish Examiner • Freelance Journalist who writes for Irish Independent, Irish Times, Irish Sun, Irish Star, Irish Mirror, Daily Mail, The Times Ireland • Limerick Public Participation Network • Various photographers • I Love Limerick • All Staff in the Council • All Councillors

Promotion means	Comment
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Oireachtas Members
Posters	<p>A4 posters were distributed to businesses, as shown in the list below (also additional business based on suitability when walking the site).</p> <p>King's Island</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The St. Mary's Credit Union The butchers opposite the credit union MACE shop on Nicholas Street Chip shop on Nicholas Street St Mary's community centre Crèche next to the community centre. The post office King's Island Primary Care Centre <p>George's Quay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Absolute Hotel Gael Coláiste Barrington's Hospital Locke Bar <p>Charlotte's Quay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library Chemist on Charlotte's Quay <p>Corbally</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corbally Road filling stations – Topaz Supervalu <p>O'Callaghan's Strand</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Curragower Pub JJ Bowles Pub <p>Merchant's Quay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> City Hall Potato Market Curragower Boat Club
Leaflet drop	<p>Up to 700 invitation leaflets were distributed to individual residences and business on King's Island. These were printed by JBA, but distributed by staff of St. Mary's Aid, for which their assistance is appreciated.</p> <p>It emerged on the day that additional leaflets were also distributed by members of the Labour and Sinn Fein parties.</p>
Word of mouth	Prior to the event community representatives spread details of the event and invited attendees.
Email	An email was sent to those who had provided a contact at previous consultation events.

G1.3 Description of PID Event

Five members of the project team were present at each venue. Representation included project director, two project managers, environmental lead and project engineer.

The St Mary's Aid Estates Manager was also present at the community centre to welcome attendees, assist with signing in and to provide introductions to the project team.

In addition to a sign-in sheet, the following materials were available on the day:

- Copy of the newsletter and questionnaire - handed to each attendee on arrival
- JBA modelled tidal flood extent map for the Island
- Series of posters which covered the following topics:
 - Introduction to the project, including background, programme, statutory stages and opportunities for further involvement
 - Background to the ecological, archaeological and heritage challenges specific to the scheme, including details of the Appropriate Assessment process
 - Outline of the emerging preferred option, including overview of the cost benefit ratio
 - An overview, by area, of the emerging preferred option. The areas presented were: Verdant Place, St. Mary's Park (north of the Island), Sir Harry's Mall,
 - George's Quay and City Hall, Court House and surrounding area.
 - Copies of the posters were subsequently uploaded to the website and are provided in Appendix C.
- A video fly-through of the emerging preferred scheme, running on a loop on a 65" monitor.
- Project team briefing pack, including prompts on the flood history and elements of the scheme, key messages and FAQs
- Notes pages for the project team to complete during or immediately after conversations with attendees.

Attendance was split between the two venues, with 52 signing in at the community centre, 33 at Merchant's Quay and four councillors who attended both venues. There was good representation of all community groups and King's Island residents at the community centre. A small number of people attended from Corbally, Meelick and Limerick City. 37 people signed in with no address; a review of names and email addresses indicates that a number of these were from local businesses, were council staff or councillors.

G1.4 Feedback Received

The feedback from the project team following the event was largely positive, with the majority of attendees pleased that the scheme was being progressed, and an overwhelming feeling of relief that the fear associated with high tides would recede. However, many of the attendees also had comments or requested clarification on specific elements of the project. Some of these points related to detailed design elements and items such as contractors haul roads and working hours, whilst others pertained to more fundamental aspects, such as the route and form of the embankment around sections of the island.

As is the nature of feedback in written form, attendees and note-takers focused primarily on the areas requiring clarification or where an alternative design was requested, and less on the positive aspects of the scheme. It is for this reason that the following sections of the report focus on comments that may appear critical of the scheme, although the reception of the scheme was largely positive.

33 questionnaires were returned. A summary of responses received is provided in the following sections.

G1.4.1 Question 1

We have shown you the emerging preferred option for providing flood relief to King's Island. Please use the boxes below to indicate your opinion on the various elements of the option.

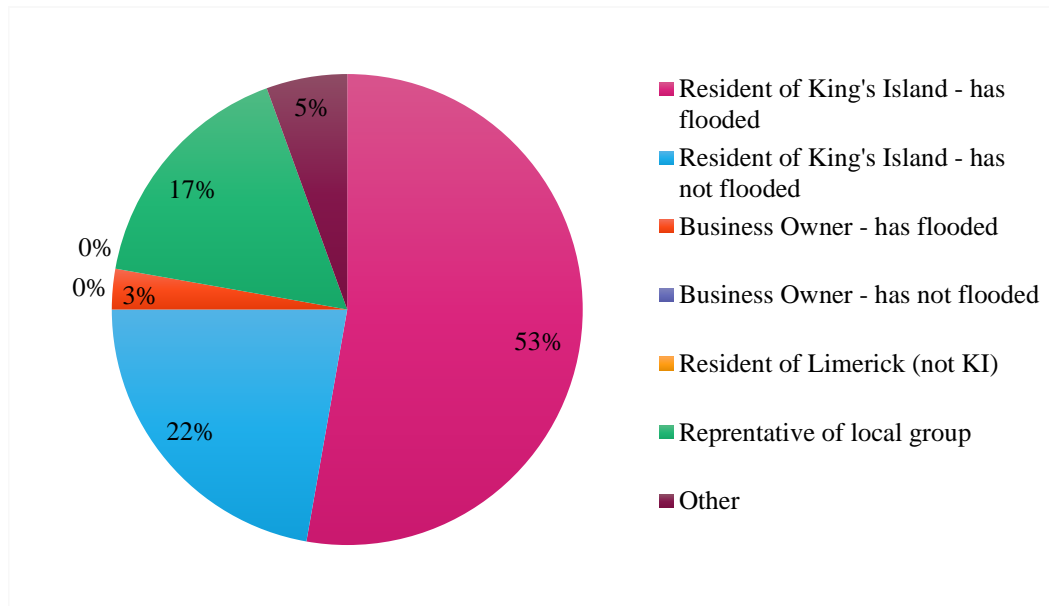
Table 7: Elements of the option

Element of Emerging Preferred Option	Against	Neither against or support	Support	Unsure	Please give an explanation for your answer (the list below is a synopsis of answers provided)
Wall behind crèche and north-west embankment from Verdant Place to the handball alley (Area A2 and A3)	14		13	1	<p>Support</p> <p>Provides protection from flooding Boat slip to be put in place Walk to be retained and like the improvements. Suggested it will be windy on top so small parapet wall proposed</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Why not build on old wall around the bank? Too near to houses and will result in loss of privacy and increase antisocial behaviour It is a historical place of note, built in the 1840s</p>

Element of Emerging Preferred Option	Against	Neither against or support	Support	Unsure	Please give an explanation for your answer (the list below is a synopsis of answers provided)
					Too much land take and loss of green area
Embankment around St. Mary's Park and the SAC – Inner alignment with outer walkway (Area A4)	13		9	7	<p>Support</p> <p>Walk to be retained and like the improvements.</p> <p>Would rather look at bank than the current boarded up houses</p> <p>Provides flood protection</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Too near to houses and will result in loss of privacy and increase antisocial behaviour</p> <p>Unsure</p> <p>Back bank lost</p> <p>Inner embankment needed, but outer embankment suits a riverside walk</p> <p>Impact of antisocial behaviour balanced against flood protection / SAC</p>
Embankments from Star Rovers and Assumpta Park to Athlunkard Boat Club and walls behind the Boat Club (Area A5 and A6)	15		15		<p>Support</p> <p>Provided pitches are undisturbed</p> <p>Will prevent flooding</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Interference with Star Rovers pitches</p> <p>Perceived increase in flood risk to Corbally</p> <p>Want to see a return to the previous situation</p> <p>Loss of privacy and increase antisocial behaviour</p>
Combination of wall raising and replacement from Sir Harry's Mall, along George's Quay, around Merchant's Quay and to King John's Castle (Areas A7 to A10 and B1 to B3)	3	1	18	1	<p>Support</p> <p>Prevents flooding</p> <p>Against</p> <p>Will block view of river</p>

G1.4.2 Question 2

Figure 13: Graph showing responses to Question 2



As can be seen in the graph above, 75% of the respondents were resident of King's Island, with over 50% having experienced flooding. Only 3% of attendees were business owners, and none of them reported having been flooded. No-one living outside King's Island completed a questionnaire. The groups represented included residents' committees, over 55s club and Star Rovers.

G1.4.3 Question 3

- This was a free text space, and the following responses were received (reproduced verbatim):
- The emerging/preferred option is unambitious - probably so that it can be done cheaply. An integrated flood defence and public amenity.
- Raised limestone walls must retain original carved capping. No sign of access to limestone steps adjacent to Matthew Bridge in design, access must be retained. Clear gap in defences at site of Curragower boat club. LC+CC plan to knock Potato Market, this has not been accounted for. Clear gap in design at NW and SW towers of King Johns Castle (SMR).
- Devastated at time of flood, only for friends and neighbours lost a lot. Still to this day Winter checking tides, fill a suitcase and send it to my daughters to service us at least we would have clothes. Don't feel preferred option has people in St. Mary's Park included and thought given them, also trees on bank being cut as is.
- The sooner it would be done the better.
- In 2014 my home was destroyed and I cannot get insurance because I cannot afford it.
- My Sister's on Oliver Plunkett St. were flooded and left with nothing.

- I feel vulnerable living in the community, knowing there's a high risk of flooding and possible damage to my house.
- It was a devastating experience for me but if we can learn from it and not make the same mistakes and determine to cause.
- My family and friends were left with no homes because of flooding.
- It took its toll on my house but only day by day we are getting back to what we worked for and can't even get insurance and now ye want to wreck all this of us again. It isn't on, no way.
- Flooded when the canal gates were not opened in 2015. When the Shannon floods water comes to within 5m of my property. Not carrying out any works on the bank opposite the Athunkard boat club will cause significant flooding in College + Richmond Park.
- Corbally: Cooneys Garage forecourt needs protection.
- The Shannon will always flood, I agree with the proposed flood defences as a mitigating process - SAC and cultural + archeological medieval town must be retained and access to river must be allowed for.
- Old resident of Oliver Plunkett St. Nothing been done since flood.
- We weren't flooded in the house but were blocked in for a couple of days. Walked up through flood in waders to get to the shops.
- I was one of the houses that was flooded and up to now every time there is a high tide my kids are scared of their lives, today we are still very traumatised.
- My house in Assumpta Park was flooded, I got no compensation and my insurance went up.
- My house was wrecked and no one cared. Claimed from my insurance and now it's going up every year. And everytime there is a weather warning we cant sleep, it's a horrible way to live. House insurance with no storm or flood cover.
- Feeling of isolation when flooded. City council very slow to react.
- Old resident of Oliver Plunkett St. Nothing been done since flood.

G1.4.4 Question 4

Please indicate how frequently you access the island for the following

Table 8: Responses to Question 4

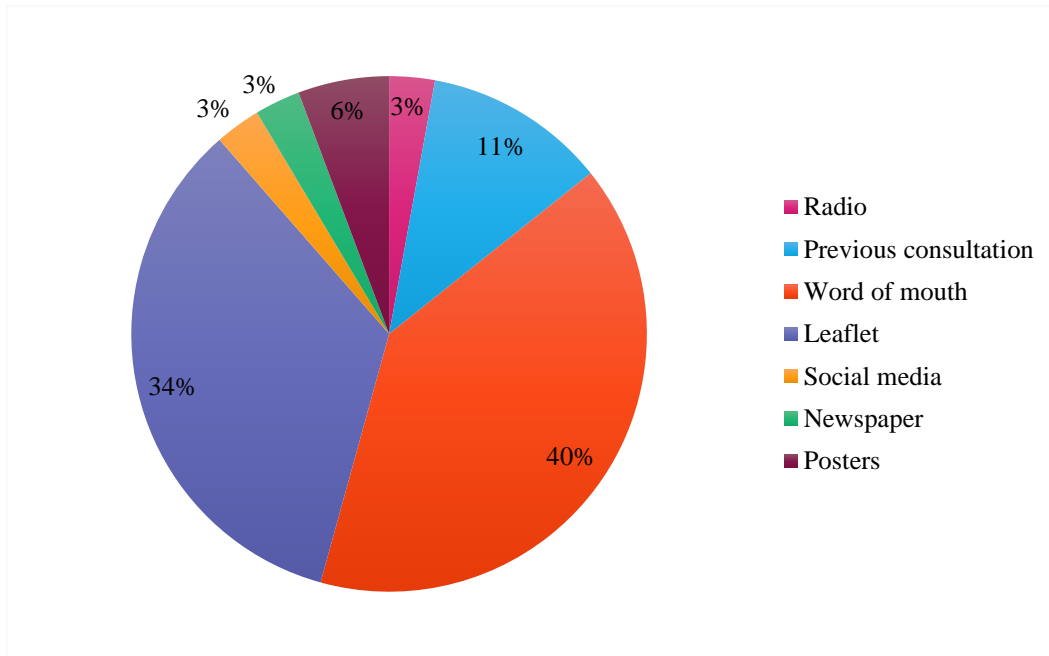
Activity	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Other
Walking	21	5		1		
Running						
Swimming				2		
Fishing		3				
Boating		1	1	1		

Activity	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Never	Other
Other (please specify)	3 (non-specified)	1 -Football	1 - Community activities	1 - Riverpath volunteer		

G1.4.5 Question 5

How did you hear about today?

Figure 14: Graph showing responses to Question 5



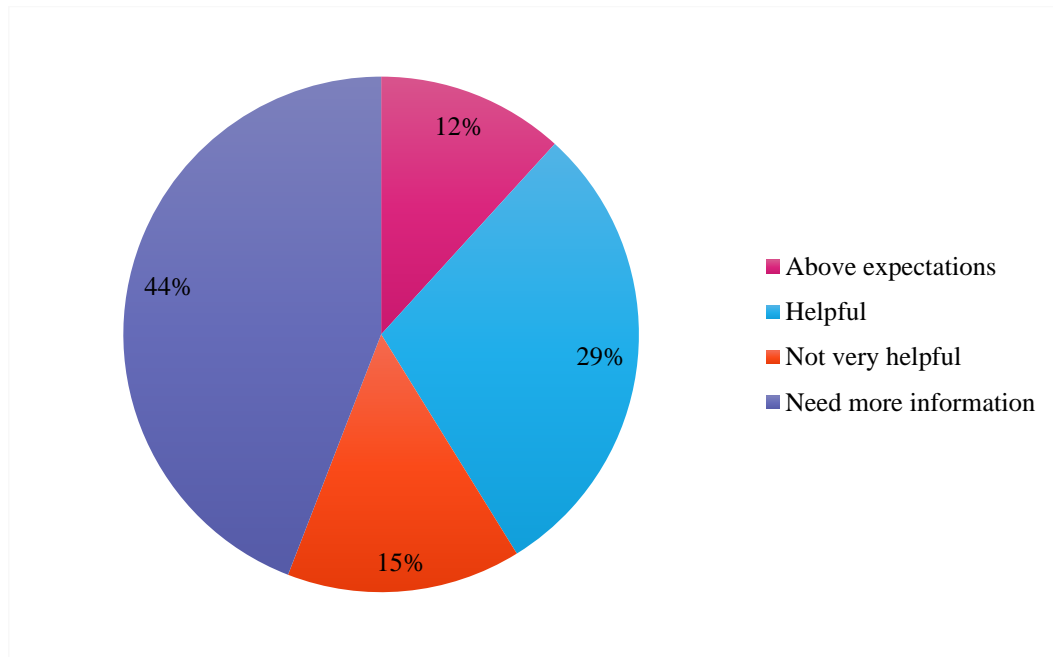
It should be noted that some respondents indicated more than one source of information. Most of the respondents learned about the event through word of mouth and/or leaflets through the door. A small number were made aware through other sources, such as newspapers, radio and social media. However, these communication means are still valid as the respondents represent only a small proportion of the attendees.

G1.4.6 Question 6

How useful have you found this event in understanding the project and how you can feed into the process?

41% of respondents found the event useful, while 44% reported that they needed more information. In discussion with some of the residents at the Community Centre it was apparent that they had specific questions in relation to construction techniques, visual impacts and project timescales which were unanswered and which needed to be resolved before they could buy-into the scheme. This is reflected in the number of 'against' responses in question 1. Some of the respondents clarified that with more information they would probably support the scheme but based on what they knew currently they were against.

Figure 15: Graph showing responses to Question 6



G1.5 Project team notes

In addition to the questionnaires, members of the project team took notes of conversations with attendees on the day. These notes have been summarised by area in the following sections.

G1.5.1 A1 - Verdant Place Advanced Works

Access ladder at pump kiosk requested.

It was also questioned why a raised footpath is proposed at Harry's Mall, but was not included in Verdant Place.

G1.5.2 Area A2 and A3 - Wall behind crèche and north-west embankment from Verdant Place to the handball alley

As reflected in the questionnaires, concern was raised about the proximity of the embankment to the houses on Oliver Plunkett Street, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour, loss of privacy and loss of green space for children to play in. On the other hand, these same residents were some of the first on the island to flood in 2014 so fully recognise that something needed to be done.

One attendee commented that boating remained a popular activity, with boats being moored to the north-west of the island. Facilitating access is important.

G1.5.3 Area A4 - Embankment around St. Mary's Park and the SAC – Inner alignment with outer walkway

A non-islander commented that she uses the walkway but would be happy to walk along the inner alignment. The same sort of positive support was generally received from those living on King's Island but not in St. Mary's Park.

A number of residents, generally living on Munchin's Street, were totally opposed to the inner alignment, citing increased risk of vandalism and burglary, antisocial behaviour and loss of privacy.

One attendee highlighted the heritage of the embankment, and in particular the outer alignment, which has been part of the community for generations.

Another attendee thought the inner walkway would create a trap for dumping.

There has previously been a petition to upgrade the outer walkway.

There was a suggestion for lock gates near the ball alley to regulate flow.

Many people were happy to see the inner alignment, provided the outer walkway was maintained for recreation.

It was noted that trees currently block the view from the outer embankment, and upgrade/maintenance works are urgently needed. It was suggested that this should be a priority

There was confusion from one resident about the extent of the SAC; he thought it would cover the whole of the wetland area and refuted the accuracy of the boundary shown on the mapping.

G1.5.4 Area A5 and A6 - Embankments from Star Rovers and Assumpta Park to Athlunkard Boat Club and walls behind the Boat Club

A couple were concerned that the flow route from the top of the boat club would be completely closed off, whilst still maintaining access to the rear of their property on Athlunkard Road as they have a right of way. They were much reassured by the explanations provided.

Discussion with a representative of Star Rovers highlighted grave concerns about the loss of the two undersized pitches for under 9s. If the astro turf pitch is moved, there may also be problems with the alignment of the floodlights and also proximity of the pitch to the houses was raised as a potential issue. Apparently, this was a reason for selection of the current orientation. Reported that there are over 250 members, with the majority school boys, and the loss of facilities would be hugely detrimental to the community.

It was noted by one attendee that residents to the south of the pitches would object to the fence being removed and having cars close to their homes. However, another attendee thought this would be beneficial as the alleyway is currently closed off and subject to fly tipping, which may be reduced if the fence is taken down.

G1.5.5 Areas A7 to A10 and B1 to B3 - Combination of wall raising and replacement from Sir Harry's Mall, along George's Quay, around Merchant's Quay and to King John's Castle

Consideration to be given to the riverfront from Sarsfield Bridge to Thomond, including a boardwalk connecting St Mary's Park to the city centre. Walkway between O'Dwyers Bridge and the Absolute Hotel was also suggested and supported.

A couple of attendees commented on the importance of facilitating the public realm proposals for Limerick 2030 at the Potato Market.

One attendee talked about the importance of getting the stone finish on the wet-side of the wall right but had no issue with the more modern look on the dry side.

Concern was raised by one attendee about the loss of trees on George's Quay, but most people did not comment on works in this area.

G1.5.6 Impacts away from the island

A couple of attendees raised concerns about flood waters being pushed elsewhere once the defences are in place, and the impact this may have on insurance.

A couple of Corbally residents commented that there was a gap in the defences at Cooney Forecourt, and although a wall had been built, it did not go far enough.

G1.6 General Comments

Some suggestions for the scheme generally were made, including:

- Seats on the embankment to be dedicated in the memory of people
- Risks of antisocial behaviour
- Importance of maintaining the roads during the works, even if they are being used for construction traffic
- Another suggestion was to take Thomond Weir away. This was made by a couple of people, concerned with making the river navigable again
- Linking the walkway to the Slí na Sláinte could be a benefit
- Suggested getting the community to form a charter for the embankment and to start making plans to allocate different areas to different groups
- Suggestion of markets on the embankment in the summer months to encourage non-residents to visit the island
- Promoting the SAC and its wildlife with photographs and awareness raising
- Social clause in the contactors contract and suggested training is started sooner rather than later - Safepass etc could be run at the community centre

- Fishing is carried out by the locals and although the numbers of fish caught vary from year to year, salmon are still caught in the rivers, as are eels, perch and trout
- Mink, rabbits and foxes are found on the embankment
- One resident is concerned about the decline in the number of wintering birds using the SAC, suggesting that the numbers of geese are down this year
- People raised the question about who would maintain the embankments
- One attendee sought confirmation that a pumping station would be included in the design

G1.7 Summary of Outcomes from Public Information Day

Attendance at the PID was good and reflected a wide level of interest in the scheme. The split venue worked well, with the display boards and video display providing good information on the scheme.

The feedback provided on the day, and in following conversations, was useful in developing the flood relief scheme. Most of the attendees were positive about the scheme, although some needed more information before they would be fully supportive of elements, for example in the vicinity of Oliver Plunket Street. Most were supportive of the inner alignment, provided the outer alignment would be maintained for walkway only.

The arrangements at Star Rovers were discussed by most of the project team with various attendees, and the consensus was that loss of amenity, either in size or number of pitches, would not be acceptable.

There was little comment on the walls running from Sir Harry's Mall to the castle, other than a general acceptance that they would provide the required flood defence.

There was a general theme of increased risks of anti-social behaviour and concern about lighting and security was discussed. This suggests wider problems than just associated with the scheme, but does point to the importance of engaging with An Garda Síochána to inform the design and access requirements.

The importance of community engagement through providing training and employment was also highlighted.

G1.8 Follow-up actions

All those who attended and who left an email address were added to the mailing register and an email thanking them for their attendance and providing a link to the project website was sent on 21/12/2017. This followed all posters and the video being uploaded to the website.

From the discussions a number of follow-up actions were identified, as follows:

Table 9: Feedback requiring actions

Actions recorded	Follow up carried out
One attendee requested dimensioned cross section be supplied of the embankment at Oliver Plunket Street	Alignment being further looked at here, so follow up will take place once redesign (if any) has happened
Requested hard copy of drawings	To be advised that hard copies will not be provided, but that all drawings are on the website.
Concern on pushing water onto other flood risk areas. Has the risk analysis been done? Requested more detail of hydraulic analysis. Is report on line?	This has been included in the Options Report and which is now available on-line.
One attendee would appreciate follow up meeting with LCCC (Kieran O'Gorman / Vincent Murray) and OPW etc.	Details provided to LCCC.
Asked for copy of video to be provided by email	Added to email list and post-PID email sent on 21/12/2017, including details of video being uploaded to website.
Will new KI flood defence mean increased flooding on Corbally side of the river? Please email response.	Included in the Options Report, which is now available on-line.
One attendee requested we supply section and elevation view from his property on Lee Estate (by email)	Alignment being further looked at here in conjunction with Star Rovers, so follow up will take place once redesign (if any) has happened.