

Clifden Regeneration Meeting

Clifden Station House Theatre

Thursday 7th July 2022

Harbour Park Area

“Playground is not on the design and should be included in the park”

Lavinna O Malley

“Playground should stay, cost of moving would cost too much. Flooding problem in area has been somewhat resolved. Money for playground should be used elsewhere”

Stephen Foyle – Foyle’s Hotel

“Concerns of obesity in children, in years to come. Box jumps & skate area not needed. Event area is needed but should be bigger. There is a need for fitness area”

Jonathan Daly – O’Dalaigh Jewellers

“Frist priority has to be protection from flooding before consideration given to design”

Alan Shattock

“Plans 40 years ago for developing boating marina / access to Clifden pier. Concepts developed for area should have an eye to future plans to developing a marina type. Too silted up and shallow at the moment but that can be fixed. Coal & steel imported at pier as late as 40s. Re claim front of the sewage treatment plant.”

Declan Mannion – Mannions Bar

“Running track id vital, park run un most towns and it’s a huge opportunity on a Saturday morning for tourists and for locals to generate a crowd. In Westport every Saturday morning hundreds take part in runs, feeds into local economy – going for tea’s, coffee’s after run. Also think stage area is vital aswell no matter how big it is, the covered stage area is a really important area”

David Keogh – Alcock & Brown Hotel

“Clifden Tidy Towns feel its very important for native greenery that is sustainable”

Nuala Cashin – Clifden Tidy Towns

Beach Road / Quay Area

Loves the look of seating and redevelopment. Big difference in level of road which slopes down to the top of the Quay Wall, if concepts put into action you would roll off into the water, more than just a concept needs to be put into this to see how to solve the problem!

Barbara Ann McCabe – Clifden Bridal Brewery

“I’m involved in Clifden Boat club, area of town great interest to boat users, long running problem that quay area dries out at low tide. Idea of making it look pretty absolutely fantastic, delighted to see that. Added to this is having some nice boats that are tied up against these walls. If the area at the end of the quay opposite the apartments could be dredged even by 5 or 6 feet it would allow for a lot more boats to come in and tie up along wall, great addition to the area. As plan goes forward make area more usable for people to use the pier and not just a walking area but a proper pier which requires mooring space, mooring spaces that are there are in bad shape. Would like to see more mooring space, bollard are a great idea but are purely cosmetic not suitable for tying boats against, from experience they will turn over if any weight goes on them. They need to be properly done, serious thought needs to go into moorings.

Donal O Scanlon

Retain asphalt, granite paving looks lovely when first put down, weeds grow between paving and problems with cigarette butts. Retain asphalt is what Clifden Tidy Town committee wants”

Nuala Cashin – Clifden Tidy Towns

A showing of hands clearly showed in favour of keeping asphalt

“I second vote on asphalt surface. Spending all money on quay itself is not wise money should be spent on the bay and making that attractive. Quay has beauty in it but when tide goes out its ugly”

Stephen Foyle – Foyle’s Hotel

“Asphalt a better idea, safe, very risky with granite paving as it has been proved with granite around the square. The pier needs to be made safer, ladders down to access the boats because you can’t access the boats now on numerous occasions people have fallen off ladders that are half put there, runs are missing, if there is going to be an improvement on the top of the harbour we should provide access to boats also”

Shane O Grady – Guys Bar

“Vote for asphalt, loves view of granite but going there with a wheelchair or with a baby trolley you will be shaken through”

Maira

“Beauty of harbour would be great. There is no harbour master, regulations need to be built into concept of who uses and maintains area. If we are going to invest a lot of public money definitely needs to be control of the area regards a harbour master nobody there are the moment to control area. Danger is a large vessel could be left there and left to rot like we see in other harbours around the area. Very important this doesn't happen in Clifden”

Declan Mannion – Mannions Bar

“Just on the keeping of the grass and all that, surely everywhere is going to be managed the grass, the park area and the beach road. Is that not all part of the management scheme? Is someone going to be taking care of all the areas? Are they all going to be made pretty and just left? Who is going to be taking care of them all?”

Fiona Shanahan

Town Centre Plans

“Lowrys Bar to Noreen Caseys, Noreen Caseys to Foyles Hotel to Bank of Ireland completely no parking. Opposite Paddy Powers no parking, Emer Joyces AIB right down to Kingstown House no parking, down to McGraths bar no parking, around Stanley corner no parking and opposite entrance to Mannions Bar all no parking. This is absolutely ludicrous what are they doing taking the heart away from Clifden, ruining the soul of the town. People love to see people around the town, the square is going to be dead completely. Galway County Council or the planners take no consideration. The post office is now in the square where do people go to collect pensions where will they park their cars. The elderly people have to come, its ok to say park in the car park but if it is wet raining they cant go there. The practicality of this is totally wrong, the town is perfect as it is, what it needs is a make over but not a change over, needs new furniture, paving, better footpaths, better street lighting and make the town more accessible to everybody but taking the parking away.. why do we want a 3 meter wide cycle land around Clifden, it's a one way traffic system, if the cars go around one way what cant the bikes go around one way. Its ludicrous what they are doing here.. what they are doing is they are killing Clifden”

Gerard King

“Its important to remember Clifden will always be a seasonal town, its great in July and August what the place is full of tourists and looks great and that plan in my view would be lovely if it could be there for 9 weeks in July & August but what makes Clifden magical especially in the winter months the fact that SuperValu is in the square in Clifden it keeps the town alive and vibrant. A big part of what I do in the Abbey Glen is that people can walk down town, walk into town that is busy with lovely coffee shops, lovely galleries, lovely shops, lovely place to go. Its all part of the overall visitors

experience and we all need to support each other. The Abbey Glen needs a busy vibrant town on its doorstep not just in July and August but all year round and what make the town work in the winter months is the fact that there is life in the town and a lot of towns in the country have their big supermarkets outside the town so we are very lucky that the main shop is in town, is beside the post office and beside the square, that's what make Clifden special and like what Gerard King said we should look after and preserve what we have cause it works"

Brian Hughes – Abbey Glen Castle Hotel

"Want an opinion about businesses needing the tourists to continue what they do, spending money in shops. If car parking is cut down no people will come because they have no parking. We have a lot of complaints in the shop with people saying they don't have available parking and they don't know where to park. They don't know how to come into our town to spend their money because there is no parking around the town"

Dr. Szilvia Toth – Aran Woollen Store

"For July and August it takes along time to go around the town and you have diagonal parking, if you get people to parallel park in my opinion it takes 3 times as long for them to do that as they would. So how long will it take a person to drive around the town for July & August. Also where are you putting the other 150 cars that you have taken off the street."

Eileen Joyce

"Option 1 the design of the cycle track was they wanted people to go from Roundstone to Westport without having to get off their bikes, which misses the concept of a one way street, this is a 30km zone, no need to separate out bicycle traffic from motor traffic in the town, that to me is a nonsense idea, if you look at the design its designed so you don't have to get off you bike, which is crazy they shouldn't have that concept there, another thing if you look at street some of the streets are North Facing some are South Facing, they are widening the dark side of the street which makes no sense whatsoever. Not opposed to reducing some parking there is definitely an issue with businesses suing parking for their own use, maybe we should be forced to vacate the parking spots for customers of the business that we need, some of the dramatic changes are only suitable to July and August so perhaps there is a temporary solution, its definitely not needed in November/December"

Declan Mannion – Mannions Bar

"Without parking solution to resolve the removal of parking we really should not be making changes to the town, I agree with Gerard there are lots of other things we could do to improve the town. Simple thing that could be fixed both the Greenway and the Secondary school should be linked with a proper cycle route into the town. Clear problem that exists presently anyone cycling from school at the bottom where the bridge is they have to go on the footpath on a very dangerous road. It would also link the Greenway aswell, that wouldn't take a whole pile of money to fix"

Stephen Foyle – Foyles Hotel

“All 3 concepts the conception designs need to show loading bays for all the businesses in town to receive their deliveries, at the moment with the higher level of parking we enjoy today it is still very challenging to find loading bay space to deliver to businesses in the town and if there is a 50% reduction in parking spaces, do not allow for loading bays this will be a further reduction in car parking with loading bays superimposed on top and second the lack of parking on bridge street would change the feel of the town not having the full loop and the full visibility of the town. 2 way cycle path instead of a 1 one way would definitely be a detriment to the town. To retain the looping of the town would really help have a balance to the business opportunities of all the streets”

Barbara Ann McCabe – Bridewell Brewery

“Experience with parking and town development years ago when we did the square, the cobble stone is totally impracticable, we can see cars driving into the curb on main street (Foyles Hotel and all that) that’s called herringbone parking, if you increase the angle of this parking so it may be wider to drive into and out of it, it will prevent long waits for people to park their car, it will also widen road. Parallel parking will hold up the whole town, change the angle of the herringbone parking. Cobble stones and granite is very slippy, a man fell on it only last week many other people have fallen including myself. When they are wet they are so dangerous. If the town planners of Galway County Council get their ideas right do stuff that’s practical and most importantly that is cleanable, you cant sweep the granite you get out the power washer to clean it, not practical! Traffic systems going in at the moment amber lighting throughout the town the town is going to look like a disco with all the flashing lights right through the winter when there are no cross but it’s a necessity for pedestrians crossing. Option 1,2 and 3 are not options in my book, think we need to go back to the drawing board and come up with someone that the people of Clifden want not what’s practical from a traffic flow situation. We are a small tourist town in the west of Ireland, May June and July to September when the town is ful, a winters night you can quite easily park a double decker bus length ways in the town.

Gerard King

“Plans are all well and good but removing that number of cars from town, the public carpark here next door which has 55 car parking spaces, would it not be has it been considered to do a multi storey there which would treble the amount of, cause there appears to be no plan to replace where people can park. So that car park is basically are ground zero level so not I’m not sure has it been considered to do multi storey there and treble the car parking, just a point!”

Dave Beecher – Connemara Golf Club

“I think it would be a good idea if we were to learn from other towns when we have the best supposedly in the country not far off Westport look what they have done there. Now I know of course there is a lot more parking internally and space to do it. The idea of a multi story car park has to be considered as the existing one is quite sunken so it would take at least one or two more layers without interfering with the line of view from the apartments, something does have to be considered to replace the amount of car parking spaces that will be taken”

Alan Shattock

"I just want to echo the comments of nearly every speaker here which is commercial viability of the town relies on people coming into it. There is a parking issue, the overall plan is fantastic, down by the pier all of that sounds fantastic. This is a major major problem and the question I have the view I have is the parking should not be touched unless they have more parking quite frankly. We have the council imagined were the 120 cars that are now not going to have a space, where have they imagined they are going does anyone have, does anyone know where they are, are people being bused in.. where are they going because they are not going anywhere, we have a major problem"

John Nagle – 12 Pins

"I'm personally speaking I have a camper van and the last time last year I've experienced visiting around Ireland in a campervan and seeing what other towns are doing I don't know about you but I think we've all noticed the increased number of motorhomes parked in the streets. They need a car park now and it's only going to increase even more, they take up a lot of space and as a camper van owner I know that I decide where to go in Ireland based on the facilities that they've got for a camper van. We've got great campsites here in Clifden and just outside but a lot of motorhome owners come into town and they want to park they want to use the facilities they want to dispose of their rubbish and they need to refuel the water and sometimes they need to hook up, now we've got camp sites for that and that's great but I think that we are always going to see a number of motorhomes who want to wild camp so I think we need a facility for camper vans to park in town that they're not taking up valuable key parking spaces on the Main St and have somewhere that they can dispose of their rubbish, they will be quite happy to pay for that facility so there are places like Castletown Bear and Bantry in Kerry that do have amazing setups by the marinas that they charge for these services and they're really utilized and people decide to go to those towns purely because of those services so I think now that we've got the opportunity to regenerate Clifton I think we need to be forward thinking and see that this is an area that's going to increase and also the cycling and health and everything so I think now is the time that we need to think about those issues too"

Sharon Griffin -OhhByGum

"I think that I can speak for all or us, well I hope I can when I say that the three options there's only one option that allows parking on the right side of the Main Street, on the right side of the Main Street you've got two pharmacies a butchers a hairdressers and a supermarket, all these things they're quick in and out, the second option and the third option both the parking is on the left side of the street so everybody who wants to pop in is going to have to crossover that road not to mention that the cycle lane on the second concept I believe runs along the right side of the road instead of the left side of the road and then they're going to have to crossover the road it's going to stop the traffic again it just it doesn't make sense so as far as I'm concerned neither of them neither to none of them, obviously everyone is kind of saying this but there's no option with parking being on the right side so if anything there should be a concept that's brought forward with the parking being on the right side as opposed to the left and absolutely I agree to scrap the cycle lanes"

Aine Delahunty

"We have lots of good and bad options about this and I want to say good as well. I never heard of the multi storey parking position. What if we start thinking about building this multi storey parking just to somehow solve the problem we have with parking around the town"

Dr. Szilua Toth – Aran Woollen Store

"I just see that every option of the plan thats coming up there is affecting my business massively with parking on the right hand side on Main Street. As Aine said there about two pharmacies the supermarket, it's not just the paper bag you're carrying out of the supermarket there there's washing machines dryers you have older people going to the pharmacies with disability badges where is their parking it's just pop in pop out even for us on loading vans we are a wholesale business from the Main Street it's 5-10 times a day you have to pull up to load to unload it'll be completely taken away it'll be just closure straight away so I can't see any of these plans benefit any business in the town. If you don't have the parking you won't have the people, they're not going to be walking up in the rain the cold doesn't matter if it's only for the summer months as John said you're trying to keep the town open all year round we have seen with the last few years even before covered you have businesses closing for the winter months they're open for the summer take the cream and go, any business could do that but if you're trying to provide for the community it's the capital Connemara it's not just a tourist town also a lot of the money that comes into the town is local money so that's just my thoughts on it"

Laurence McGonagle – Morans Butchers

"Honestly just looking and I know its summer so parking is a problem. I don't see any of these options working and I don't see what's wrong with Clifden. If we need to do anything it is introduce more parking not take it away why not incorporate it into the park down on Beach Road like the camping that Sharon was saying we're a couple of caravans and mobile homes can pull up there, get their water and change over, add more car park and it looks like there's only 20 spaces allowed down there, most of those will be taken up by families going down to the playground anyway so why not add more in there and yes have the cycle lane and have it down there but I don't think you need a cycle in town of Clifton at all, people are going out of town for cycling coming back it's not a pass through we shouldn't be encouraging people to pass through they need to keep them in the town"

Fiona Shanahan

"A question on whatever option is selected is that we make sure that we include enough our new EV and charging points for cars as we go forward so that it is a more forward-looking plan. More ev's are on the road so I think around the town right now we have got two locations and it is a kind of a pinch point so I think it's something that needs to be discussed. One other point when is on Bridge Street in front of the furniture shop I have a little house on that side of the street and although it is a pain when the cars are parked there they do provide traffic calming because when they are not there the cars go right up onto the footpath because it's at the same level as the road and you can open up that door sometime and you're lucky that you don't get side swiped by some van or car that is making its way out so I think the road level if the parking is removed there I think that that the street level needs to be adjusted so that you're not going to get cars up onto the footpath and in conjunction with that during the winter months I've noticed that that stretch of road going in and out

to school on the school runs in the morning is a real problem area around those times and I think it's a huge pinch point it's an accident waiting to happen around both of those bends so as part of a wider plan around traffic movement that should be addressed"

James O Toole

"Following up on the point the gentleman mentioned about the EV increase there's been a quadruple increase in electric cars in the last two years. It's going to go on exponentially soon and therefore I think the ESB will have to be consulted about provision of high power charging points on their logical place for that would be a multi storey car park where you've got hub that wherever you bringing high power cable to attach to be able to charge dozens of them all at the same time. It can be a problem in some towns already so it is an issue that must be addressed in this plan, where that hub will be"

Alan Shattock

"Just a very small point of awareness for options 2 and 3 with echelon parking they are reverse in drive out spaces which would be a huge change of behavior needed for everyone using those spots. I asked at the meeting the last day and it was put forward that way for safety reasons but it would be a huge change to go reversing and drivers"

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"We're developing an astroturf pitch that would be available for all sports of the pitch on hospital Rd. There would be an additional 100 car parking spaces laid out there as well so there may be an option there in relation to townspeople possibly using that but it'll be 100 additional car parking spaces removed from the town. I think this was created by consultants with the best intentions in the world but they don't acknowledge the practicalities of living in Clifton for example where are we going for the bus for example you're looking at the resident permits there I see Bridge Street is going to be reduced from two resident permits to zero so you're possibly taking away the right to park from a resident or two of them on the whole of bridge St, possibly one of those people may be suffering from a disability or whatever so I think there's the biggest question that I would ask about and 1,2 or 3 is what's the justification for it. It seems to me that the balance convenience at rest with a status quo and improved status quo as distinct from any of those options the town is very beautiful the town is very well kept, premises are very well maintained. If you go into towns in the Midlands or in other parts of Ireland they're not as well maintained the only thing that I can see advantageous to either 1, 2 or 3 is possibly improving the appearance but I think that the loss of residence permits, no provision for buses, no recognition of the seasonality of the town, no recognition of the difference in the town between the seasonal summer months and the non seasonal months and no provision for replacement car parking spaces it doesn't seem to me to warrant a change in the status quo"

JJ Mannion – Mannion Solicitors

"I think anything that you do to reduce the existing parking is just madness I can't understand for the life of me of how you can, where are you going to put all these people and how in the middle of

winter when tourists are gone the town is still busy, the thoughts of parking the car out in the Galway Road we don't know? Don't tell us where they're going to go as it seems to me absolute madness”

Shane Joyce - Engineer

“I seem to be going completely counter to the flow here.. I think that the idea of improving the town and in terms of reducing the parking is could be beneficial but I think the first consideration has got to be providing parking on either side that would not only take the car spaces that you proposed taking away but even add more to it so I think before you go to do anything with the town you need to provide alternate parking. But then there's great potential I mean a lot of towns around the country have changed they have gone more pedestrianised in certain areas and it seems to be working, it's something that we have to get used to it's a new idea for people. In the winter time there are less cars that need parking so I think that probably the proposed parks would be sufficient for the winter time traffic. In summer time is when we need more parking and that would be parking that you could provide on either side in multi level car parks. I think that's probably essential but I don't think you can do any of this without providing really good adequate parking that will bring more people to the town if anything”

Anne Merrin – Whitethorn Gallery

“Just to echo what Anne said I think there is streetscape work we can do I think David Beecher and John mentioned that you can see it there the free car park which was the old playground, that needs to be redeveloped we may have to concede that becomes paid parking if it is to be redeveloped but I think that is a price worth paying to merge streetscape and stuff like that. I was just talking to father James and he has 60 car parking spaces at the church which is you know very unused. There are options I don't think we should set our face completely against not sacrificing any car parking space but I think we do need to replace, first I don't think the net number should come down so if we want to take 40 care of parking spaces from within the town perimeter in some way they definitely need to be replaced and if we have to we have to concede that that becomes paid as opposed to free car park I think we should be open minded too because there's a lot of good ideas in the streetscape that could actually be very beneficial to the town. Finally, the parallel parking has to go a lot of our tourists you know and for those of you that hired cars overseas you're driving at the steering wheel has already changed and it's difficult to know, they're not going to be able to parallel park it'll take an age to get around the town”

Declan Mannion – Mannions Bar

“I'm in favor personally of reverse in parking so I would I also think the space need to widen. The space are too tight in Clifton regardless if you're driving it forward or reversing with the angle sometimes everyone just too slow going in going out, there's just pinch points in the town like outside Mannion's bar there's always trucks unloading there, there is one or two loading bay added in but that's a pinch point they're outside Mannion's and up around there we say outside Millars if there's another load Bay off that side that would be restricted from 8 to 12 that trucks could unload there cause it's not very often there's only a few spots like doesn't matter by Stanley's you can pack all the trucks you want down there is to get past and also just on the disabled parking Clifden theres one

outside Foyle's you would want a 4 wheel drive to get out of it, the one outside the old Humpty's they are on hills, they should be on flat ground for disabled people like it makes no sense"

Kevin Keogh -

"I just would like to say there's 23 spaces car parking spaces down where we are which equates to nothing really because Bridge Street is like a town itself, for the car park I think is a multistory carpark is the only answer and what people aren't thinking about families visiting cities with kids a rooftop playground above multi Storey carpark I think it would be a great idea it would be a huge benefit to all the hotels and families visiting Clifden. On top of that I think the carpark that's there needs to be highlighted, I recently met residents of Clifden and who have been here two years who've only recently found it and access to the town from the carpark it needs to be highlighted. I'm in business and very little people know about carpark and I still find customers walking 200 meters to the carpark which is 25 meters away. I think the chamber and whoever is invested in it should we really get a design team on board and look at the options of an outdoor rooftop playground"

Michael Carey – McGraths Bar

"The one way system back by the town hall has this advantages and disadvantages. The one disadvantage was if I wanted to go to the pier, which I did for 50 years every morning in the summer I had to go around the town I live on the sky road, a lot of people from the Westport road, sky road if they want to access the town hall, the playground they have to go around the town. I've often spent a half an hour in the morning, with fisherman waiting on the pier for me trying to just get around the town so I mean that would certainly reduce congestion on the town if there was maybe to reintroducing the two way system back by the town hall or else have a little mini roundabout at the bottom of Churchill which would allow cars coming down turn right back by the Alcock and Brown, which I done one more in myself and got 3 penalty points. All cars from the sky road from the Westport Rd that want to go to the playground the beach area all have to go around the town. The town is very, can be very congested you can imagine people trying to reverse out and taking their time you could spend 10 minutes every morning and sometimes it be half an hour just to get around the town. If that part could be something to be reintroduced, whether it many roundabout maybe at the bottom there or maybe somebody has some suggestion about reintroducing two way system back by the hall, that may not be practical but at least cars then from it Westport road can access the town hall the beach road without having to go around the town. There must be 50 or 60 cars in the mornings going around the town there's no need. I know I diversified abit that's just that's my point"

John Ryan – Ran a Charter boat out of Clifden

"Talking to a Swedish lady where they are using outdoor dining and she says that in Sweden they open for I think about four months of the summer months to facilitate outside dining, just wondering did the council ever consider doing this on a seasonal basis and taking it for four months and then allowing it when the weather gets wet and miserable during the winter allow access to the cars back in again I'm just wondering was it an option or was it considered"

Shane O Grady – Guys Bar