

Fingal County Council
Swords Cultural Quarter, Swords, Co. Dublin



Car Parking Strategy Report

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MHL & Associates Ltd.
Consulting Engineers



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1 INTRODUCTION

MHL Consulting Engineers are providing Specialist Road Design and Transport Engineering services as part of the Integrated Design Team who are tasked with the delivery of the Swords Cultural Quarter (SCQ) project in Swords, County Dublin. Swords is one of the larger towns in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA). It is 15km north of Dublin City and has a population of c 40,000. See Figure 1 below, a Site Location Map. Swords is just 2km to the north of Dublin Airport and is very well serviced with roads infrastructure and public transport infrastructure.

This report outlines the findings of the additional parking study requested. A synopsis of the key points can be found in the accompanying Transport & Parking Strategy Executive Summary Report (doc. Ref. SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00001). Figure 2 shows the town of Swords outlined in blue with the SCQ site outlined in red.

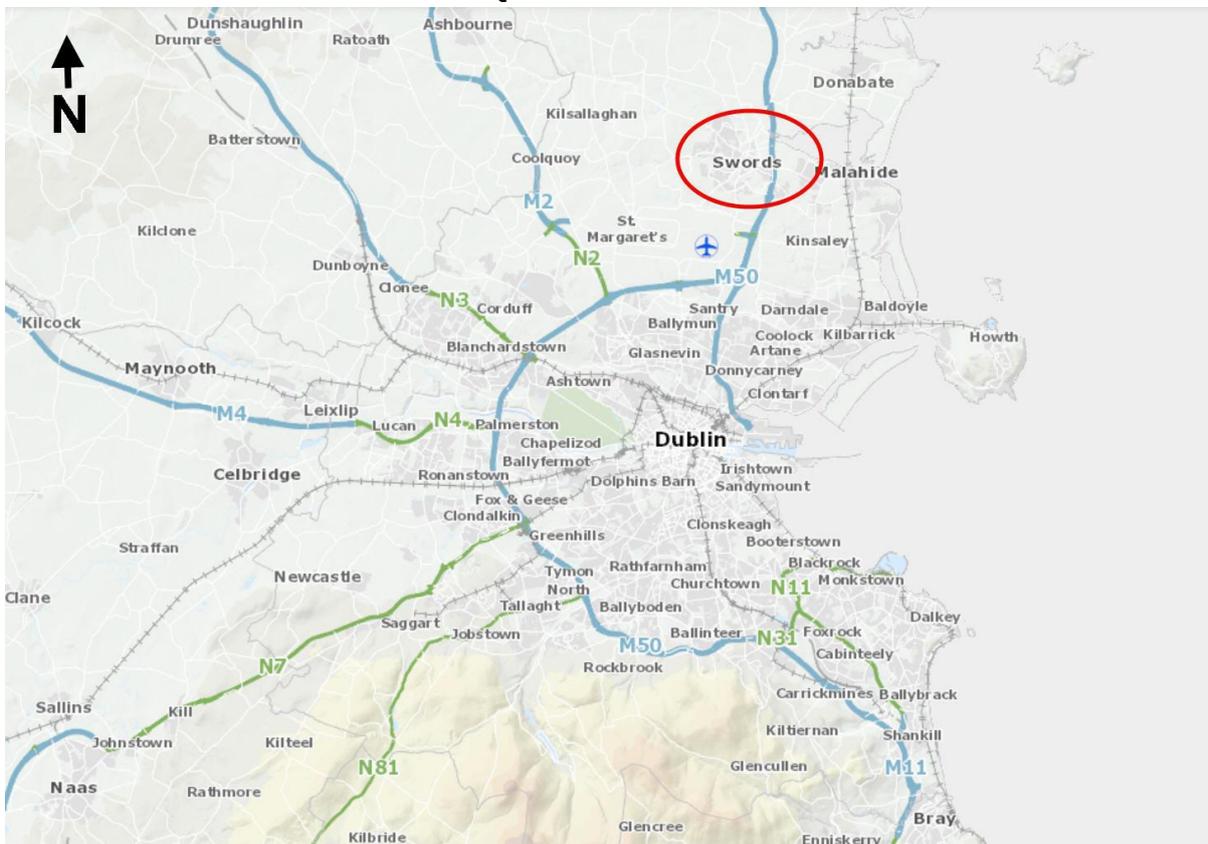


Figure 1 Development Site Location Map, Swords, County Dublin

By delivering the Swords Cultural Quarter, FCC seek to energise the historic town centre area of Swords in order to create a new sense of place with buildings & spaces for both cultural & economic activity for all its citizens. It is intended that the area will provide a new Public Realm & Civic Space, a new Cultural Centre encompassing a District Library, Arts Venue and Performance venue, a centre for creativity & innovation and a meeting point for the citizens.

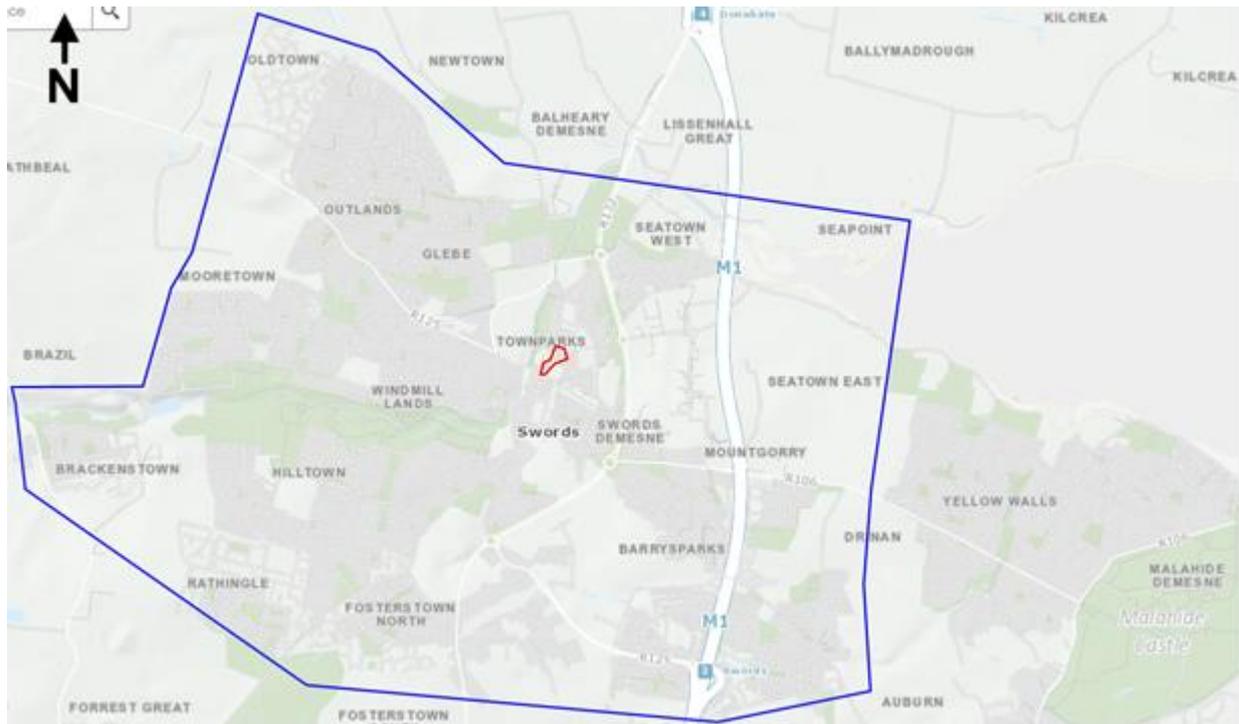


Figure 2: Swords Cultural Quarter Site outlined in Red with Swords Town Built Environment Extents outlined in Blue

2 EXISTING CONDITIONS

Swords has a busy vibrant town centre environment, which can be congested with car traffic during peak hours on working days. Swords Main Street is a busy public transport corridor connecting the wider swords and Fingal area to Swords Town Centre and onwards to Dublin City Centre. The main street has lost its historic civic function as a meeting place, a market town and an event space and is cluttered with cars, street signage and other obstructions. The trafficked road carriageway is quite wide and so too are the treelined footpaths.

The site is located within Swords Town Centre, Co. Dublin, in proximity to Fingal County Hall and Swords Castle. The site boundary encompasses the junction of North Street, Seatown Road, Bridge Street and Main Street, Fingal County Council Executive car park, St. Michael’s House, Seatown Road, Fingal County Hall external public space and vacant plots at No.’s 1 -7,13,15 North Street adjacent to Swords Castle and on either side of the Court House as well as No.17 North Street, an existing single storey commercial building opposite the Court House that is to be acquired and demolished. See Figure 3 below which outlines the site area extents on an aerial photographic image of the town centre.

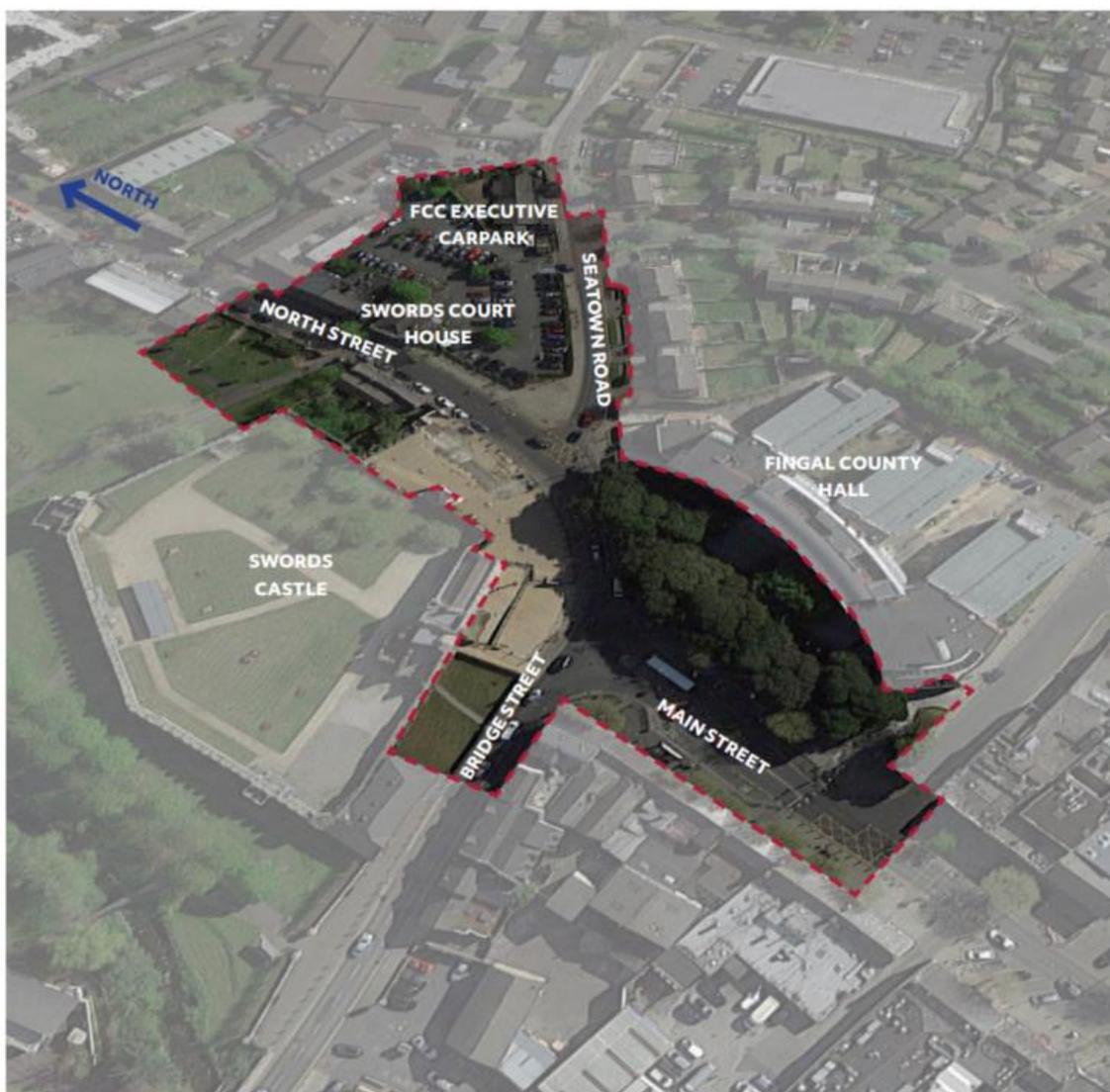


Figure 3 Proposed Swords Cultural Quarter Site Outlined in Red on Aerial Photograph



Figure 4 Photos of Site Extents on Main Street to front of Swords Castle

The photos in Figure 4 above are of Main Street/Bridge Street/North Street signal controlled T-junction in front of (south of) Swords Castle. The street environment is unwelcoming for cyclists and pedestrians with two long bus bays on either side of the road adjacent to the busy vehicular carriageway on Main Street in front of Fingal County Hall. These bus bays cater for several bus routes travelling north and south through the town centre. The combination of bus bays and traffic lanes results in an effective 4 lane urban carriageway along this stretch of Main Street with the majority of the street space dedicated to vehicular traffic.

Figure 5 on the next page shows photos of the narrow Bridge Street from the west curving around the front (south) and east of Swords Castle to where it becomes North Street. Seatown Road spurs off North Street in an easterly direction towards Malahide, the R132 Swords Bypass and the M1 Dublin to Belfast motorway. Fingal County Hall lies at the northern end of Main Street, just south of the Seatown Road junction. The FCC executive car park is located across the Seatown Road from County Hall, at the southern end of North Street. Figure 6 shows photos of North Street with the Courthouse and the Executive car park to its south. The SCQ main building will be situated on the site of the current FCC Executive car park. The construction of the new SCQ building will result in the loss of the existing FCC Executive car park.

Any new development proposal should have regard to the existing situation and all such proposals should include the provision of a high level of sustainable transport options and ambitious targets should be set with regards to the promotion of active travel modes as part of the scheme design as well as the promotion of public transport use/uptake.

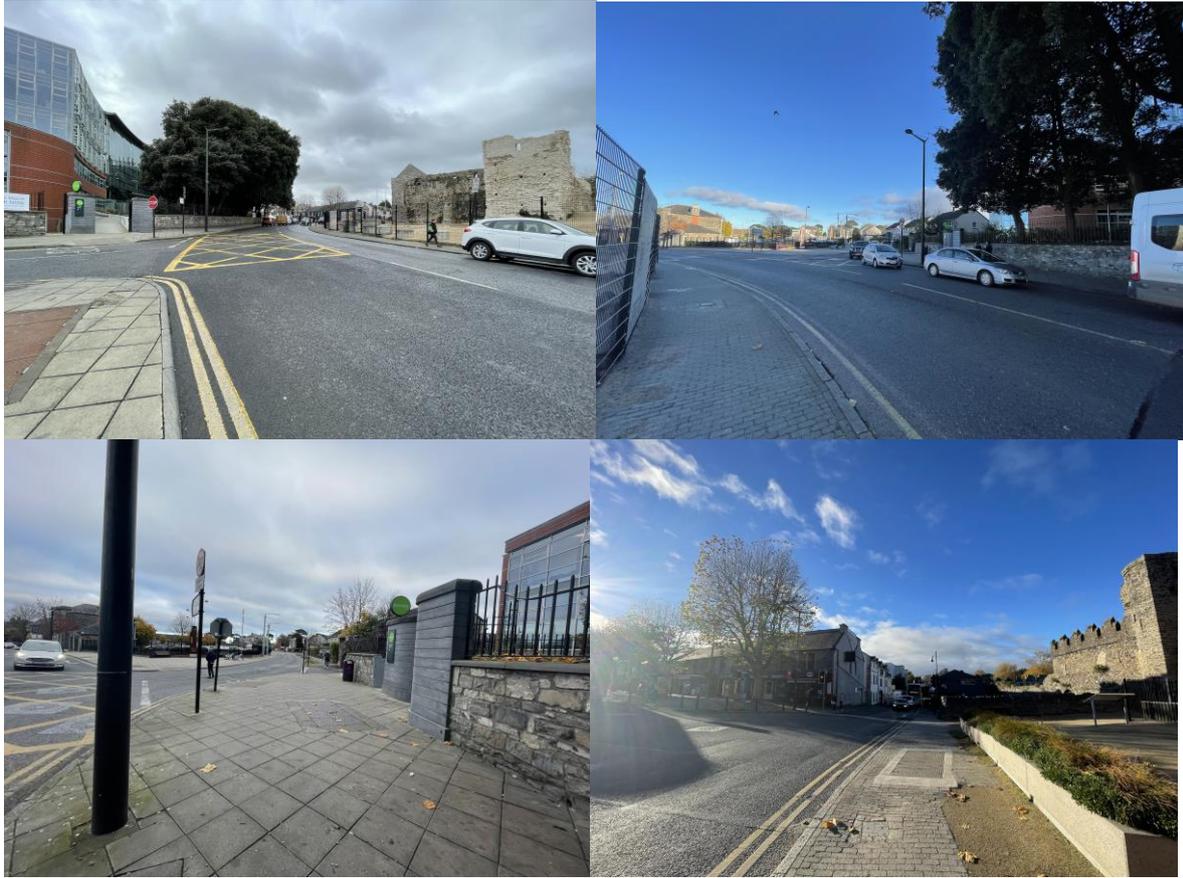


Figure 5 Photos of Site Extents – Bridge Street to Seatown Road



Figure 6 Photos of Site Extents – North Street, Court House & FCC Executive Car Park

3 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Fingal County Council is proposing the creation of a new Cultural Quarter, Swords Civic and Cultural Centre (SCQ), on lands in Swords Town Centre.

The site consists of lands at Swords Castle, North Street, Existing Fingal County Council Carpark on Seatown Road and existing public realm along Seatown Road, Main Street, Bridge Street and to the front of Fingal County Hall. The proposed application includes for the existing Protected Structure of Swords Court House. The proposed development will comprise of the construction of the Swords Civic and Cultural Building, located on the existing Fingal County Council car park site, ranging in height from 2-4 storeys. The proposed Swords Civic and Cultural Building will include for 165 seated theatre, an art gallery, café/theatre bar, exhibition spaces, workshop rooms, meeting rooms, public library, offices and associated facilities. The proposed scheme also includes for works to the public realm and alterations to existing road layouts for North Street, Seatown Road, Main Street and Bridge Street, including for public realm/ landscape schemes to the east of Swords Castle and west of existing Fingal County Hall.

The objectives of this ambitious project are to radically alter the public realm in the Swords Cultural Quarter to create a pedestrian dominated environment, while allowing vehicular traffic to move through the area. This ambition leads to a radical realtering of the existing traffic and parking arrangements in the vicinity of the County Hall, Swords Castle, and the Swords Cultural Centre Site. It is proposed that the on-street parking within the extents of the site boundary be removed, and parking provided solely for accessible parking needs, and set down / taxi rank. The analysis undertaken as part of this report provides evidence that this can be successfully managed, without adverse impact to overall parking provision and levels of congestion within the Town Centre. However, the transport needs of the proposed development's end users must be considered and addressed. See Figure 7 below which shows an initial concept plan for the proposed SCQ development.



Figure 7: Swords Cultural Quarter – Proposed Scheme

4 EXISTING PARKING CONDITIONS

Swords has significant parking provision in the town centre to serve the multitude of needs and land uses of a County Town. In addition to the provision of on-street parking (accommodating 248 cars and shown on Figure 9) there are several public car parks in the town centre. Figure 8 below shows the main car parks available to the public in the town centre. The SCQ site is outlined in red. These car parks are a combination of privately owned car parks for general public use which are colour coded purple and privately owned commercial car parks intended for customer use, which are colour coded brown. The only state-owned public parking is the on-street car parking. The FCC staff car parks (Exec. Carpark at North Street, Seatown Road carpark and rear of County Hall) are also state-owned but are not available to the public for general use. The privately owned car parks for local business use (colour coded brown) are the Castle Shopping Centre (90 surface spaces), the Carnegie Court Hotel, North St. (48 spaces), UMAMI, Main St. (22 surface spaces), Aldi, Seatown Rd. (82 spaces), Lidl, Rathbeale Rd. (70 spaces) and Dunnes Stores Rathbeale Rd.(260 spaces). The privately owned commercial car parks for general public use (colour coded purple) are Forster’s Way (which accommodates 145 surface spaces), Swords Plaza (350 spaces over 2 levels underground), Euro Car Park, 66 Main St. (42 surface spaces to rear of Swords Dental), Swords Glebe (40 surface spaces along Church Road), Old Schoolhouse (15 surface spaces off Church Road), Swords Central (320 spaces in a multi-storey car park on Main St.), Forest Road (30 surface spaces) and The Pavilions (2011 car spaces in multi-storey and multiple surface car parks accessed from Malahide Road and the Swords bypass as well as pedestrian access to Main Street through Sword Central shopping centre).

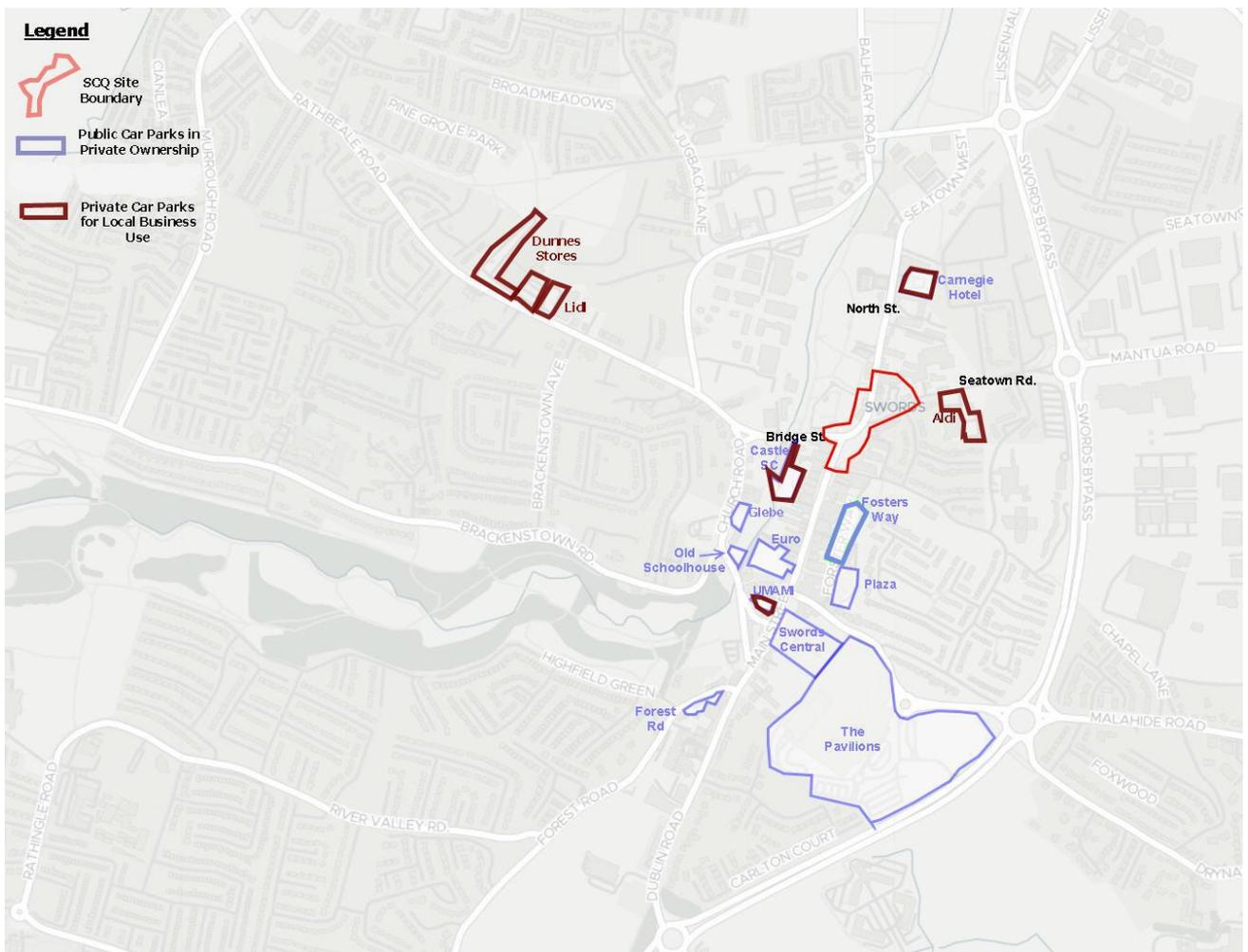


Figure 8: : Map Extract showing Swords Town Centre Car Parks

There are also many privately owned car parks relating to business and community use premises with car parking provision for staff and visitors only. Such car parks include Fingal County Council, Fingal Community School, Senior Citizens' House, Allied Irish Bank, Bank of Ireland, Carechoice Swords, the Credit Union, Healthcare Services buildings, An Garda Síochána, An Post plus many more retail and commercial premises. A number of these private car parks in close proximity of the SCQ site are shown on Figure 9 below.

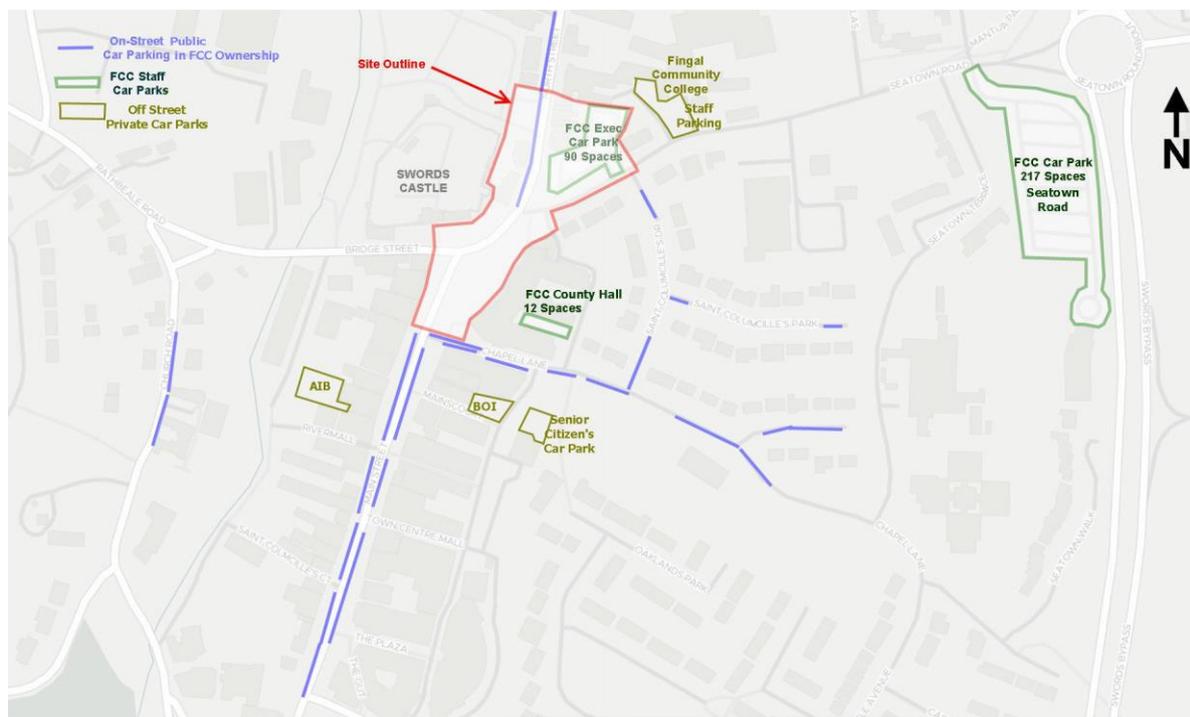


Figure 9: Map of Swords Town Centre On-Street Car Parking Locations, FCC Staff Car Park Locations and nearby Private Car Parks

Table 4.1 in the next page provides some details on the various commercial car parks for general public use in Sword Town centre as outlined above. Private or state-owned car parks not intended for general public use have not been included in the breakdown in Table 4.1.

The on-street parking in Swords is meter pay at a rate of €1.20 per hour. On-street parking is provided on Main Street, North Street, Chapel Lane, Church Road, Colmcille's Drive, Colmcille's Crescent, Colmcille's Park, Castle Avenue and Longlands. There are approximately 250 car parking spaces provided on-street along these streets. These streets surround the SCQ development site and the development itself will result in the removal of 12 of these spaces on North Street adjacent to the Castle. Figure 9 above shows the location of the on-street car parking along with the location of parking facilities provided for Fingal County Council (FCC) staff. Fingal County Council's County Hall is located at the south east corner of the junction of Main Street and Seatown Road. FCC have an Executive car park which is a surface car park located within the proposed development site to the north east corner of the Seatown Road/North Street junction. There are 90 spaces provided in the FCC Executive Car Park. The County Hall itself has approximately 12 spaces located in a courtyard to the rear of the building. These spaces are reserved parking including universal accessible spaces and EV charging points. There is another FCC car park located on the Seatown Road adjacent to the Seatown Roundabout some 400m to the east of the County Hall. There are 217 car park spaces at this surface car park. The 90 spaces at the FCC Executive Car Park will be displaced by the proposed development.

The provision of car parking in Swords Town centre has been summarised in Table 4.1 below.

Car Park	Quantum of Spaces	Hours of Operation	Monetary Charge	Ownership
On-Street Car Parking				
Main Street	60	08:00-18:00, Mon-Sat.	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
North Street	59	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
Chapel Lane	58	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
Church Road	7	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
Colmcille's Drive, Park & Crescent	31	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
Castle Avenue	9	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
Longlands	24	08:00-18:00 Mon-Sat	€1.20/hour	Public Ownership
TOTAL ON-STREET	248	Available Overnight	Free 18:00-08:00	
Car Parks				
Forster's Way	145	24Hours, 7 Days	€2.50/hour, €6,50/d	Private Ownership
Castle Shopping Centre, Bridge St.	90	08:00-18:00	Free 1 st Hour, €2 for 2 nd Hour, €5/hour thereafter	Private Commercial Ownership
Swords Plaza, Forster Way, Malahide Rd.	350	06:00-0:00, 7 Days	€1.70/hour	Private Commercial Ownership
Euro Car Park, 66 Main St.	42	24Hour, 7 Day	€2.00/hour	Private Ownership
Swords Glebe, Church Rd.	40	24Hour, 7 Day	€1.20/hour	Private Ownership
Old School House, Church Rd.	15	24Hour, 7 Day	€1.20/hour	Private Commercial Ownership
UMAMI, 76 Main St.	22	10:00-20:00 7 Days	€1.20/hour	Private Ownership
Swords Central Main St.	320	24Hour, 7 Day	€1.80/hour	Private Ownership
Forest Road	30	24Hour, 7 Day	€1.20/hour	Private
Carnegie Court Hotel, North Street	48		€1/hour	Private Commercial Ownership
The Pavilions, Malahide Road	2,011	24 Hours, 7 Days	2 hours Free, 3 rd €1	Private Commercial Ownership
TOTAL Car Parks	3,113	Mostly 24/7	Overnight charges	
TOTAL	3,361			

Table 4.1: Swords Town Centre – Existing Car Parking Provision

All of the 248 number on-street parking spaces are free from 18:00 hours in the evening to 8:00 hours in the morning. A day time rate of €1.20 per hour applies between 8:00 and 18:00 hours.

Some of the off street car parks are closed at night such as the Castle Shopping Centre, 6.00pm closing, the Swords Plaza, 12.00 midnight closing and UMAMI, which closes at 8.00pm. The remainder (2,651 spaces) are open 24 hours a day. All of these car parks are open 7 days a week.

4.1 FCC Displaced Parking Provision due to Development Proposal

Given that the proposed development site is on the current site of FCC's Executive Car Park, this car park will need to be relocated and the relocated parking provision should be reduced to encourage sustainable transport modes amongst FCC staff. 90 car parking spaces will be lost at this location permanently.

The displaced parking for FCC staff, arising from removal of the existing executive car park, is to be dealt with through a lease arrangement. Please refer to Appendix A for further information.

It is recommended that FCC should consider preparing a Mobility Management Plan for its workforce, which would encourage and support active travel, public transport use and car pool/car share use. Refer to sections 6.1 and 6.2 of the Travel Plan (document reference SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 – Travel Plan) for this development proposal for further information on the scope and role of the Mobility Manager, which is a key recommendation in the implementation of a Mobility Management or Travel Plan.

Final numbers and locations for leased spaces is subject to findings of a Mobility Management Plan (to be undertaken by FCC) and to final decisions made for practices on remote working.

5 PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PARKING STRATEGY

Under the **Fingal Development Plan 2017 - 2023**, Swords is designated as a Level 02 Town Centre (County Town). The reduction and elimination of parking spaces aligns with an established trend to limit parking in town and city centres. From a sustainable travel perspective, limiting vehicular parking spaces serves to force end users to adopt alternative travel modes, different to the single-occupant private car. This will reduce the impact of the development on the surrounding road network. This strategy supports national transport policy and aligns with the objectives of the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029.

The delivery of the Swords Cultural Quarter in the heart of Swords seeks to invigorate the town centre with a new cultural destination. Given the proposed central location at the intersection of key routes, and the future delivery of significant public transport improvements combined with town centre public realm interventions, the consideration of accessibility for all is an important challenge. It is considered within the context of FCC objectives for Swords Town Centre, that limiting the provision of new car parking spaces for this new cultural quarter is both achievable and necessary. Equally, encouraging and facilitating broad community use of the SCQ is key, and the provision of limited parking should be considered.

The Fingal Development Plan 2017 – 2023 as well as the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023 – 2029 were consulted to obtain car parking, wheelchair parking and bicycle parking standards required for the development. The current Fingal County Council Development Plan 2017-2023 is the document under which planning application for this development will be assessed.

5.1 Car Parking Standards

As per the Fingal County Development Plan 2017-2023 the following car parking standards apply to Theatre, Library uses etc. These are indicated as 'Norm' standards ie. not a maximum requirement but typically normal requirements which also note that complementary uses will be encouraged (ie. acknowledging the potential for cross-use of these spaces by other land uses). See extract from Table 12.8 of the FDP below in Table 5.1 below.

Land Use	Criterion	Proposed	Notes	Category	Norm or Max
Auditorium, Theatre, Cinema, Stadium	Seat	1 per 3	Complementary uses will be encouraged	Leisure	Norm
Library	GFA	1 per 20	Complementary uses will be encouraged	Leisure	Norm

Table 5. 1: Extract from Table 12.8 Current FDP – Car Parking Standards

Fingal County Council published the Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 (FDP) on 24th February 2022. The new Draft FDP contains revised development management standards which contain car parking standards for new developments. The proposed SCQ

development is in the town centre of Swords, which carries Major Town Centre land zoning status and is therefore classified as Zone 1 car parking zone. Table 5.2 is an extract from the Draft FDP Table 14.19 "Car Parking Standards". The applicable standards are Library, Auditorium, Theatre and Community Centre.

Community				
Community Centers	1 per 100 m ²	Max	1 per 50 m ²	Norm
Library	1 per 40 m ²	Max	1 per 20 m ²	Norm
Leisure: Pubs, Restaurants, Hotels and Conferencing				
Auditorium, Theatre, Cinema, Stadium	1 per 10 seats	Norm*	1 per 3 seats	Norm*

Table 5.2: Extract from Table 14:19 Draft FDP 2023-2029 Car Parking Standards

The proposed SCQ development includes a 2,800 sq.m Library building with an additional floor area of 900 sq.m of Art Gallery and a 165 seat theatre venue. The parking requirements based on both the **current development plan** and the draft development plan are outlined below in Table 5.3.

	Current Development Plan		Draft Development Plan	
	Parking Standards	Parking Numbers	Parking Standards	Parking Numbers
Library	1 per 20m ²	140	1 per 40m ²	70
Art Gallery	1 per 50m ²	18	1 per 100m ²	9
Theatre	1 per 3 seats	55	1 per 10 seats	17
Total	-	213	-	96

Table 5.3: Parking requirements based on County Development Plans

The overall requirement based on the **current FDP 2017-2023** is **213 car park spaces**. This is the "parking requirement" of the SCQ building, however complimentary uses are to be encouraged which would reduce this requirement.

The requirement under the draft FDP 2023-2029 car parking standards is **96 car park spaces**. This is the "parking requirement" of the SCQ building in accordance with the Draft FDP, which is the Plan which will be in place by the time the development will be completed. Again complimentary uses would reduce this requirement.

5.2 Complimentary Uses: Parking Demand Reduction based on Multi-use Development

The hours of operation of the library would be different from the theatre. The overall parking requirement as calculated from the FCC Development Plan does not account for co-located activities that can share parking provision over the course of the day.

The FCC County Librarian has issued data on the proposed operation of the library. It is envisioned that the library will be open from 9.45am to 8pm daily with events beginning at various times throughout the day. The earliest events would begin at 10.30am and

the latest events would begin at 6pm. However, the majority of events and activities would begin at off peak times between 10am and 3pm.

Assuming that additional parking for the theatre would not be required over and above the parking provided for the Library due to differing hours of operation then the “reduced parking requirements” of the new SCQ building is **79 car park** spaces rather than 96 spaces under the draft FDP and **158 spaces** rather than 213 spaces in accordance with the current FDP.

5.3 Parking Demand Reduction based on Proximity to Existing Car Parks

Section 4 of this report outlines the availability of existing car parking in Swords town centre, and in particular the graphics in Figures 8 and 9. Table 4.1 outlines that there are 3,361 car parking spaces in Swords town centre. Figure 10 below is an isochrone map of Swords Town Centre indicating the walking times in bands of 5 minutes from the SCQ site. A significant proportion (1,265) of the 3361 town centre parking spaces are within the 5 to 10 minutes walk band. All are within the 15 to 20 minute walking band.

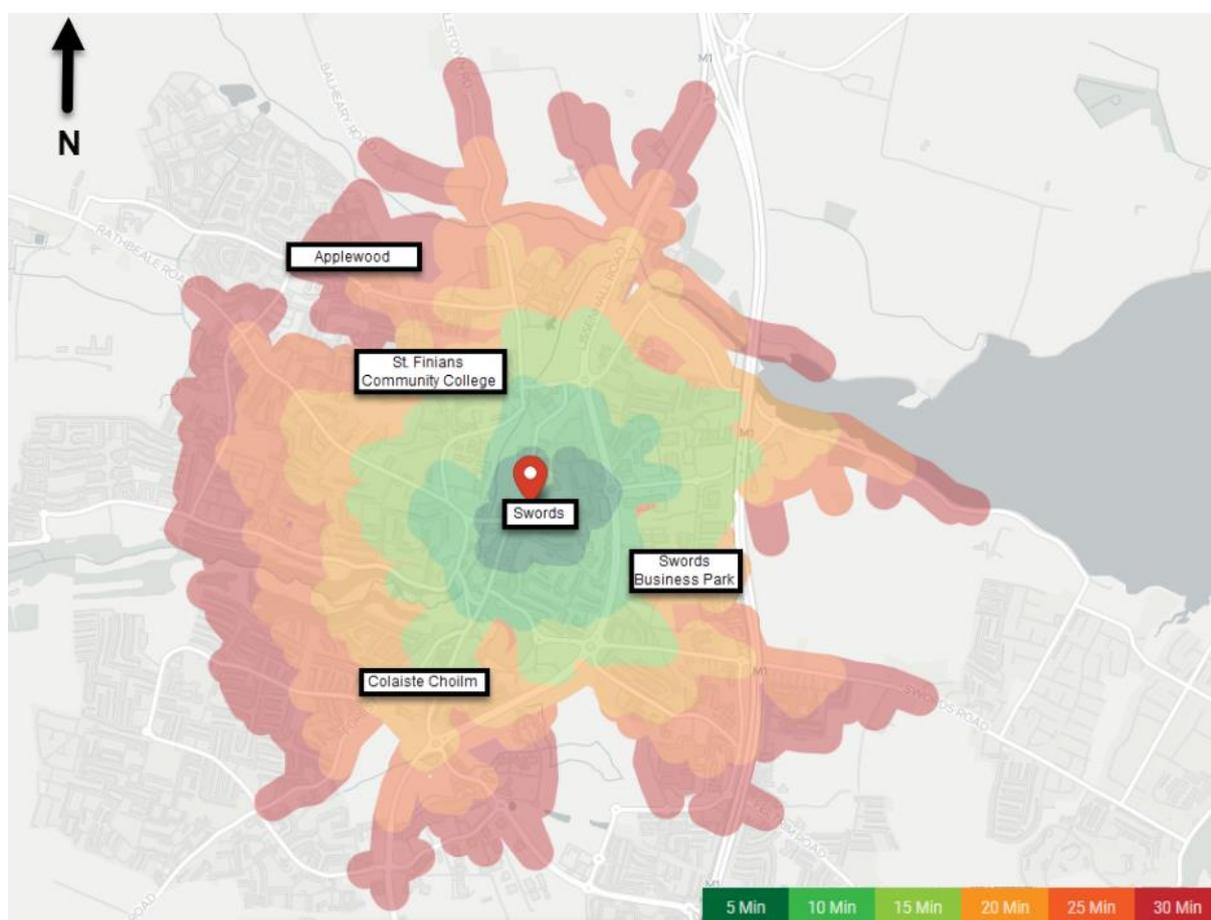


Fig 10: Proposed SCQ Development: Walking distance Travel Time Bands to local area

5.4 Estimated Car Parking Demand based on Similar Development Type

FCC have released some data from the Blanchardstown library which is reputed to be of a similar scale to the SCQ library. Table 5.4 below is an extract from the entry/exit visitor logs recorded at the Blanchardstown Library for the month of January 2022. The people counters are for both entries and exits. The hours are recorded from 07.00 to 21.00. It appears that the very low numbers from 7.00-8.00 in the morning and 20.00 to 21.00 in the evening are staff numbers arriving before hours of business and leaving

after the library closes. It is planned that the proposed Library would operate from 9.45am to 8.00pm. From Table 5.4 it is apparent that the highest occupancy of the library is Tuesdays between 10.00 and 18.00 when visitors entering and leaving exceed 100 people and reach a maximum of 201 entering/leaving between 11.00 and 12.00 noon. The library is at almost one third of this occupancy for the remainder of the week. Occupancy trails off from 50% of its peak to 10% between 18:00 and 20:00. Therefore it can be concluded that car park uptake would be low after 18:00 for the library use. The theatre on the other hand would be expected to have the majority of it's activities after 18:00 and before 23:00 hours. The art gallery is likely to have similar hours of operation to the library, with some events potentially at evenings and weekends. These events would be coordinated and programmed not to conflict with theatre events.

Weekday	07:00-08:00	08:00-09:00	09:00-10:00	10:00-11:00	11:00-12:00	12:00-13:00	13:00-14:00	14:00-15:00	15:00-16:00	16:00-17:00	17:00-18:00	18:00-19:00	19:00-20:00	20:00-21:00	Total
1 - Monday	2	15	24	51	79	52	48	55	81	85	57	61	36	2	648
2 - Tuesday	8	7	38	129	201	148	134	166	190	165	102	79	76	4	1447
3 - Wednesday	3	12	22	45	85	69	73	67	60	48	28	32	31		575
4 - Thursday	5	4	15	52	60	46	42	62	67	67	62	30	27	1	540
5 - Friday	2	8	29	45	41	38	40	41	65	53	12	2			376
6 - Saturday		2	15	57	70	51	42	63	50	53					403
7 - Sunday									1	1					2
Total	20	48	143	379	536	404	379	454	514	472	261	204	170	7	3991

Table 5.4: January 2022 Visitor Log for Blanchardstown Library

In addition to the above data MHL used the TRICS database programme to calculate trip generation rates and hence resultant parking demand for the proposed development. TRICS is a well-established UK and Irish national database which holds in excess of 2,100 site locations and 7,000 travel survey counts with over 98 separate land use sub-categories. MHL are one of over 300 worldwide licensed TRICS User member organisations. Similar land use and site locations can be interrogated to provide predicted multi-modal trip generation figures for varying development types based typically on gross floor areas of the fully occupied development proposal. Full details of the TRICS generated trip forecasts for the SCQ development are outlined in section 4.1 of the Traffic & Transport Assessment (document Reference SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00003 - TTA) and are summarised in section 7.3 of this report. The TRICS programme calculations will deliver an overall trip generation for the development, over a typical week, broken down to days and hours. The trip generation figure is further broken down into the predicted modal share split for the proposed development in order to calculate the proportion of trips which are split into public transport use, pedestrian mode, cycle mode, car share mode and finally car driver mode. This car driver mode figure will be the basis for predicting the amount of car generated trips and hence resultant parking demand of the development. The travel mode split will be derived from the target modal share of the development proposal, which in turn is based on the existing modal split of traffic that would be attracted to the development and a targeted modal split based on the development Travel Plan (document ref. SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 - Travel Plan). The existing modal share is taken from the CSO population census data (see section 6.1)

and the target is based on reasonable assumptions for improved modal shift to more sustainable transport modes following current government and local authority active travel policies, ongoing and future improvements to sustainable travel and active travel infrastructure (see section 6.2) and the implementation of the proposed Travel Plan (see section 6.3) which will promote development end users to use active and sustainable travel modes.

5.5 Additional Car Parking for SCQ Events

Any additional car parking for theatre or cultural events which would be held after 6.00pm or at weekends would have the FCC Seatown Road car park available. There are 217 spaces available here at evenings and weekends, with an option to increase this to 235 with minimal road marking realignments. The car park is gated and manned during FCC hours of operation (ie. 8.30-5.00pm Monday to Friday). The security barrier could be raised and open to the public using the SCQ facilities at evenings and weekends. This information would be available on the SCQ web site and on all ticket information, in accordance with the Travel Plan for the SCQ. It is expected that this car park would be available free for all SCQ facility users and event attendees during evening and weekend use.

These existing car parking arrangements in addition to the proposed sustainable transport proposals to be implemented with the Travel Plan (MHL Ref. document SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 – Travel Plan) for the proposed development would be more than adequate to accommodate all of these cultural events. Given that a Bus Park and Ride facility is proposed at Lissenhall in the near future this will provide further additional sustainable transport options for patrons of the SCQ development.

In addition to events being held in the SCQ building itself, it is also envisaged that the public realm element of the proposed development would be used to host cultural events such as Christmas Markets, street carnivals and concerts etc. It is expected that these events would be generally held during off peak times for businesses at weekends, bank holidays etc. The existing town centre parking and public transportation services are deemed sufficient to accommodate such events as is the case with the current Christmas Market and the Festival of Fire which Fingal County Council host around Halloween break time.

6 TRAVEL DEMAND OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Existing Transport Modal Split

Data from the 2016 census was consulted to establish existing travel patterns in the area surrounding the proposed development. To gain an accurate representation of travel patterns in the local area, data from the statistical small areas surrounding the proposed development site were used. The relevant statistical small areas with the proposed development location highlighted can be seen below in Figure 11 below.

The 2016 census has also published data for 7,219 workplace zones. These workplace zones contain data for the daytime population of that area which includes everybody who works or studies in the area as well as people who do not work or study and thus are there during the day. It is this data that is important for establishing existing travel patterns of employees and visitors in the area. Each of the statistical small areas highlighted below contain associated workplace zones. The data from these zones was used to establish existing travel patterns of people commuting to work or school in the locality.

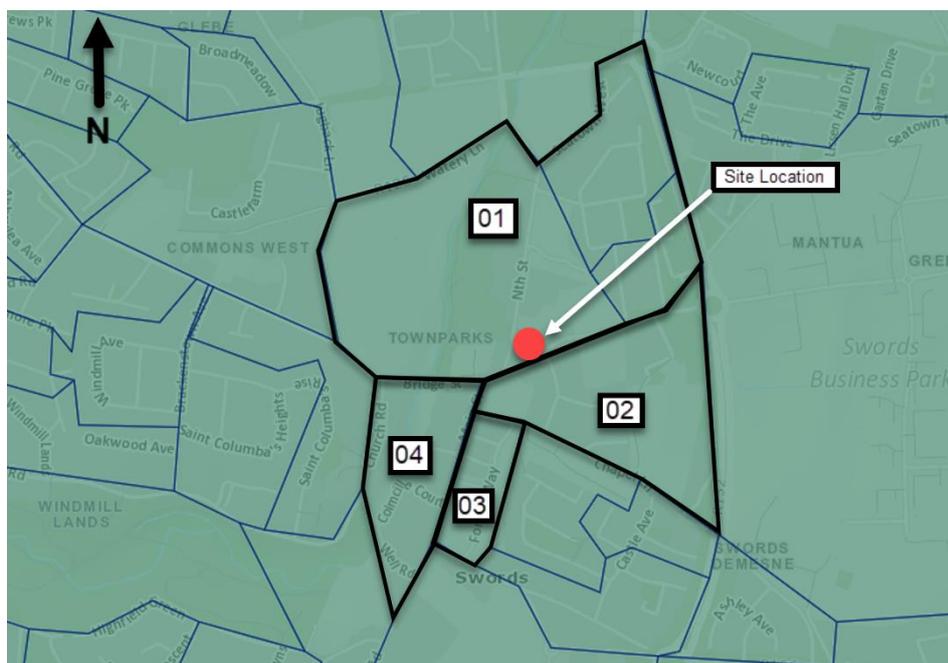


Figure 11: Workplace Zone Surrounding the Proposed Development

Commuter data from each of the workplace zones can be seen in Table 6.1 below. It can be seen that almost half of all journeys are made by car drivers and an additional 17% are made by car passengers. A significant number of journeys are made on foot (18% average) however, only 2% are made by bicycle on average. It was also established that 14% of people in the area use public transport to travel to school, work, or college.

Mode	WPZ 01	WPZ 02	WPZ 03	WPZ 04	Average
On foot	23%	21%	13%	13%	18%
Bicycle	2%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Bus,minibus or coach	22%	5%	13%	12%	13%
Train,DART or LUAS	0.5%	0%	1%	1%	1%
Motorcycle or scooter	0.5%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Car driver	34%	40%	62%	54%	47%
Car passenger	17%	30%	5%	17%	17%
Van	1%	3%	2%	1%	2%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 6. 1: Workplace Zones Commuter Data

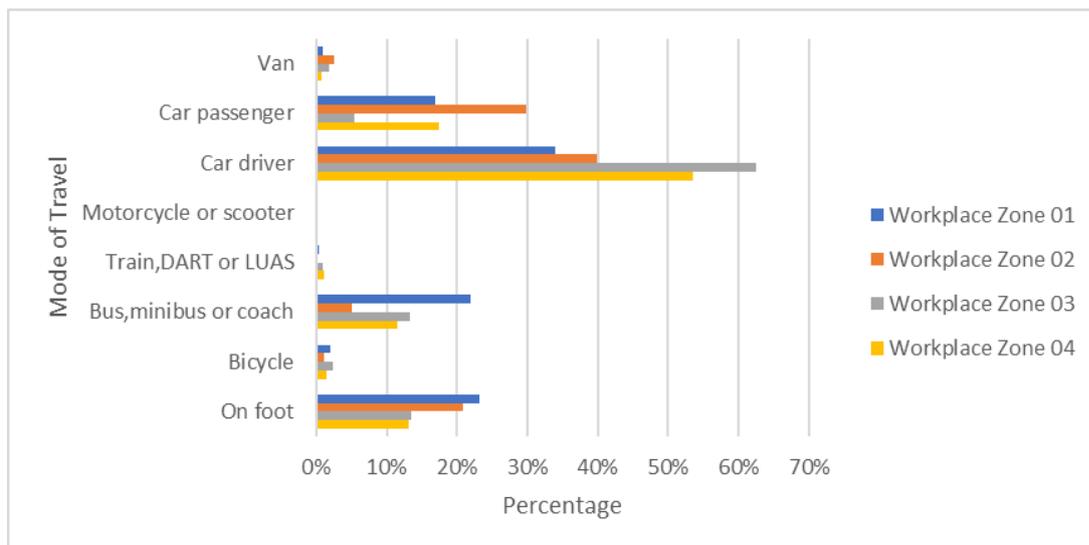


Figure 12: Graph of Workplace Zone Commuter Data

It can be seen that in Workplace Zone 1, where the proposed development is located, private car travel is less than each of the other zones. The uptake of active travel modes and public transport is also greatest in Workplace Zone 1. Workplace Zone 3 has the greatest percentage car use with 64% of commutes made by car drivers. This is logical given that the Forster Way public car park forms the nucleus of this zone. In Workplace Zone 2, where Fingal County Council headquarters are currently located, 40% of commutes are made by car drivers and an additional 30% are car passengers. The high proportion of car passengers is likely due to the primary school located within this zone and the high usage of car by FCC staff. FCC have stated that single occupier car use by staff is in the region of 90%. There is a very low uptake of public transport in this workplace zone with only 5% of commutes undertaken using public transport.

6.2 Proposed Sustainable Transport Interventions to Promote Modal Shift

In order to encourage more sustainable travel patterns by commuters of any urban population and promote a modal shift from private car use, a number of transport interventions are recommended to be implemented. These interventions should consist of the enhancement of transport provision in the area by redesigning the streets with improved pedestrian, cyclist and public transport facilities. This can be achieved on a larger area scale by government investment, as is being provided by the NTA in the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) with the proposed Metro Link project, the GDA Bus Connects Core Bus Corridors scheme and the GDA Cycle Network Plan (CNP). These interventions include active travel infrastructure provision and align with Fingal County Council's connectivity and movement transport policies. This promotion of more sustainable travel modes can be achieved at a local level by rededication of road space with options to provide improved facilities and increased priorities for more sustainable forms of travel other than private car use. In terms of an overall strategy for sustainable travel the priority of modal improvements should be

1. Pedestrians
2. Cyclists
3. Public Transport (Bus, Train and Taxi).

FCC are planning and designing various proposals to provide local improvements such as

- facilitating the CNP 2a/SW1 Cycle route along Main Street,

- facilitating the proposed high frequency BusConnects Core Bus Corridor (CBC) Routes A4 and 282 along Main Street and North Street with bus lanes and segregated cycle facilities,
- potentially removing all two-way traffic on Main Street to accommodate a bus gate (Ref. Systra's South Fingal Transport Study)
- removing and rearranging parking along Main Street to accommodate the above,
- providing pedestrian links to the future Metro Link which will run to the east of the town centre,

The scheme's public realm elements and street interface (roads & footpaths) are being designed to accommodate and compliment the above sustainable transport infrastructure proposals. Figure 13 below is an extract plan of the proposed public realm design which has been designed to provide sustainable transport including active travel alternatives. The design philosophy is included in the DMURS statement of consistency (MHL document reference SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00005 – DMURS SoC).

In addition a **Travel Plan** is being proposed to encourage further modal shift by promoting all existing available alternative modes such as highlighting availability of existing public transport services, promoting existing cycle facilities and providing cycle friendly infrastructure on the site, providing inclusive mobility and pedestrian facilities highlighting existing pedestrian linkage to available car parks in the town, linkage to rail and bus services, available taxi services, as well as promoting all future sustainable transport infrastructure as they come on stream.

The proposed Travel Plan will set out the proposed mobility management initiatives and measures to achieve modal split targets. As can be observed in Table 6.1, current sustainable transport levels in Zone 1 are 48%, with 52% travelling by car. The objective will be to increase the sustainable modes by decreasing the carbon emitting vehicular transport modes of travel. The proposed modal shift in the Travel Plan is from 48% to 70% for sustainable and active travel modes. This modal shift target is compatible with the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) Transport Strategy 2016 – 2035. The single greatest option to encourage this would be not to provide any parking for the end users of the SCQ development.

The preliminary Travel Plan has been produced by MHL (Refer to SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 – Travel Plan) with modal shift targets proposed for implementation. It will be the duty of the Swords Cultural Centre Management to implement a Travel Plan based on the preliminary "suggested" Travel Plan.

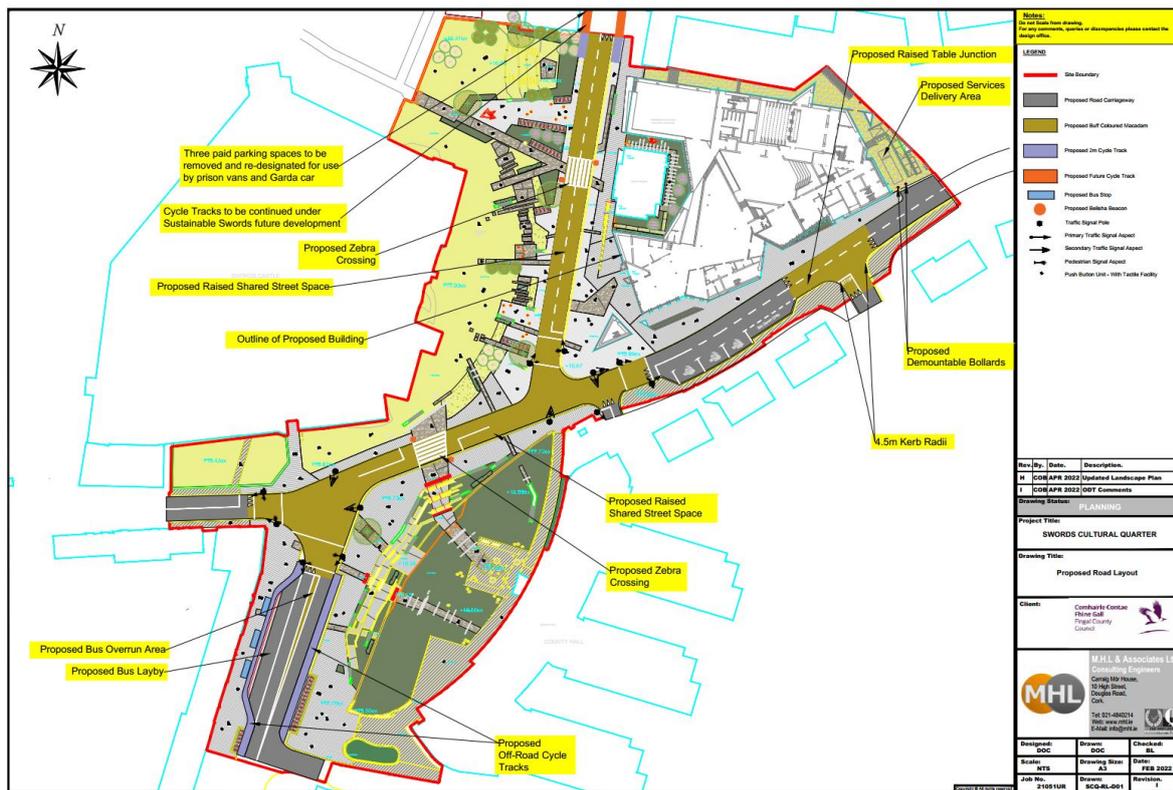


Figure 13: Proposed Street Layout designed for Sustainable Transport with Active Travel Prioritised

6.3 Proposed Travel Plan

A Travel Plan is best described as a package of measures put in place to encourage and support sustainable travel patterns amongst the end users of the proposed development. The aim is to reduce the demand and use of the private car and to highlight and facilitate the use of alternative modes of transport. The focus in this instance is on commuting staff and the visiting public with the following objectives:

- To inform the end user of alternative modes of travel available to them for their journeys.
- To promote healthier, stress-free and cheaper options of commuting for end users.
- To enhance the environment of the development, improve accessibility, and outline the advantages to end users of using sustainable transport solutions.
- To reduce car trip generation to and from the site thus reducing parking demand and traffic flow.
- To reduce single occupier car use and hence lower carbon emissions.

The Travel Plan will set out a modal shift target to be achieved. This modal shift target, while ambitious, is compatible with the GDA Transport Strategy 2016-2035. This target will be based on the current modal split pattern and the expected improvements and uptake of sustainable transport modes promoted by proposed transport infrastructure interventions, active travel infrastructure, and aided by the removal of car parking for end users. Please refer to the Travel Plan (SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 – Travel Plan) submitted as part of this application for more information.

While it is not expected to eradicate car use completely it is expected that car users will avail of the ample parking provision within Swords Town Centre.

7 PARKING DEMAND AND PROVISION FOR PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT

Parking provision for development proposals is controlled by the relevant planning authority. The planning authorities seek to limit the amount of new parking provided at developments by limiting the amount of parking to a published maximum provision of car parking. These car parking standards are published as part of the development management standards contained within the various County Development Plans. The principal objective of the application of car parking standards is to ensure that consideration is given to the accommodation of vehicles attracted to the site within the context of Government policy aimed at promoting modal shift to more sustainable forms of transport. **The current Fingal County Council Development Plan 2017-2023 is the document under which planning application for this development will be assessed.**

7.1 Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 Car Parking Standards

Land Use	Criterion	Proposed	Notes	Category	Norm or Max
Auditorium, Theatre, Cinema, Stadium	Seat	1 per 3	Complementary uses will be encouraged	Leisure	Norm
Library	GFA	1 per 20	Complementary uses will be encouraged	Leisure	Norm

Table 7. 1: Extract from Table 12.8 Current FDP – Car Parking Standards

The proposed SCQ development includes a 2,800 sq.m Library building with an additional floor area of 900 sq.m of Art Gallery and a 165 seat theatre venue.

The above parking standards would suggest the provision of 1 in 20 sq.m = 140 car park spaces for the Library, 1 in 50 sq.m (community use) = 18 car park spaces for the Art gallery and 1 per 3 seats = 55 car park spaces required for the Theatre.

This implies an overall requirement for **213 car park spaces** for the proposed development in accordance with the FDP 2017-2023. This is the **“parking requirement”** of the SCQ building in accordance with the Current FDP. This requirement is a norm and can be reduced by use of the “complimentary uses” clause. The complimentary uses clauses means a reduction in parking requirements is encouraged by sharing of spaces due to multiple use developments, where different development uses have different time demands on parking. This current development plan is at the end of its life cycle and the Swords CQ should be designed looking to the future rather than to the past.

As the building will be constructed during the life cycle of the next development plan then the car parking standards of the FDP 2023-2029 would be more applicable.

7.2 Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 Car Parking Standards

The car parking standards for the Draft FDP 2023-2029 have been addressed earlier in section 5. The above parking standards would suggest the provision of 1 in 40 sq.m = 70 car park spaces for the Library, 1 in 100 sq.m (community use) = 9 car park spaces for the Art gallery and 1 per 10 seats = 17 car park spaces required for the Theatre. This implies an overall requirement for **96 car park spaces** for the proposed development in accordance with the FDP 2023-2029. This is the **“parking requirement”** of the SCQ building in accordance with the Draft FDP. Again the complimentary uses clause would suggest that this requirement could be reduced as the library and art gallery use would compliment the theatre use.

This car parking requirement can be accommodated within the 1,265 public car parking spaces which are within 5 to 10 minutes walk of the development site. This has been highlighted in section 5 of this report.

7.3 Estimated Parking Demand based on Similar Developments & Multi-modal Travel

The actual parking demand for the proposed development is estimated from the expected vehicle demand generated by the proposed development. The vehicular trips for the proposed development have been calculated in section 4 of the Traffic & Transport Assessment (MHL reference doc. SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00003 – TTA). Section 4.1 outlines the expected trip generation rate based on the TRICS database for trip generation. TRICS is a well-established UK and Irish national database of traffic surveys. The proposed development trip rates for the library, theatre and art gallery are taken from similar sites in Irish town centres (Clonmel, Cork City, Derry City, Letterkenny & Sligo town) and Dublin city (Navan Road, Cabra West). Section 4.2 of the TTA outlines the existing modal splits and the proposed modal split targets in accordance with the Travel Plan (MHL doc. Ref. SCQ-ZZ-RP-MHL-CE-00004 – Travel Plan). The peak hour for the proposed development and the local road network is evening peak hour between 16:00 and 17:00 hours. With a modal share target of 20% for car drivers (reduced from the current 34%) it is estimated that the vehicular demand during the evening peak hour is 34 vehicular trips, consisting of 26 cars arriving and 9 departing. In the event that none of the 9 departures are included in the 26 arrivals then it can be assumed that they will overlap and therefore the peak occupancy at 16:00 to 17:00 hours is 34 cars. If we allow staff numbers of 30, then 20% car driver share would indicate 6 car drivers amongst the staff. This would indicate an estimated actual **parking demand of 40 car parking spaces** for the proposed development. 40 spaces will be allocated for the SCC building in total, with 38 no. car parking spaces in the FCC Seatown Road car park to be allocated to the SCC building and 3 no. accessible spaces to be located on Seatown Road, opposite the SCC building. The 38 no. spaces in the FCC Seatown Road car park will be branded with paint markings denoting 'Reserved for SCC'."

The FCC owned Seatown Road car park will be made available after work hours and at weekends for public use by visitors to the SCC building or to SCQ outdoor street events.

7.4 Parking Provision

It is proposed to provide minimal parking spaces for private vehicles as part of the development. In total it is proposed that only 3 No. universal accessible car parking spaces and a set down area for 2 cars are to be provided. The number of universal access spaces required has been calculated based on the current Fingal Development Plan as outlined in Chapter 3 of the Traffic and Transportation Assessment. It has been agreed that these parking spaces will be located along Seatown Road. In addition to this a small set down area is proposed along Seatown Road with space for approximately 2 cars. This set down area will be used as a pick-up/drop off point and taxi pull in area to reduce congestion along Seatown Road.

A common delivery area is proposed in the southeast corner of the site. This will ensure that delivery vehicles and refuse vehicles will move off street and will not impede traffic, cyclists or pedestrians in the area. There will be low level kerbs for vehicular access and demountable bollards to prevent public from parking in the services delivery area. Refuse vehicles and theatre delivery vans will have to reverse in and drive out so these deliveries should be overseen by a banksman. This will require a safety protocol and management by the Facilities Management company. Delivery times for catering, library or theatre deliveries will be restricted through management protocols to avoid Fingal Community College break times when pedestrian footfall at Seatown Road increases.

It is proposed to remove and re-designate three paid parking spaces on the west side of North Street for use by IPS vans and Garda cars, outside of the SCQ red line boundary. The design of segregated cycle tracks will be coordinated with the provision of on-street parking along North Street. See drawing No. SCQ-ZZ-L00-DR-MHL-CE-00001. It is proposed to provide 2 dedicated spaces for the Judge and Clerk of Court at a secure location adjacent to the SCQ site.

The current Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 requirements for bicycle parking is 30 spaces. The proposed Draft Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029 requirements for bicycle parking is 112 cycle spaces. It is proposed to provide 128 no. bicycle parking spaces in total for the SCQ development. 108 bicycle spaces are for visitors to the development site boundary. 66 no. bicycle parking spaces are proposed within the public realm along North Street adjoining the site, and a further 42 no. bicycle parking spaces are proposed on Main Street outside of County Hall. It is also proposed to provide 20 No. spaces for use by SCQ staff. This will include for the provision of smart mobility solutions. These additional spaces will be located in the northeast corner of the SCQ site.

Swords town centre has an abundance of car parking provision with **3,361** car parking spaces available. This consists of 248 on street car parking spaces and 3,113 car park spaces off street. All of these car parks are within 15 to 20 minutes walk of the SCQ development. There are 1,350 car parking spaces available within 10 to 15 minutes walk of the proposed development and there are **900** public car parking spaces within **5 minutes walk** of the development site. These spaces are in addition to the 38 no. spaces that will be allocated for the SCC building in the FCC Seatown Road car park and 3 no. accessible spaces to be located on Seatown Road, as outlined in Section 7.3.

The **theatre** on the other hand would be open for events at evenings and weekends (refer to section 5.1. Parking requirements are 55 spaces). There are 217 spaces available at the FCC Seatown Road at evenings and weekends. It is expected that this car park would be available free for all SCQ facility users and event attendees for evening and weekend use.

There would also be cultural events hosted by FCC and held in the open air on the public realm elements of the proposed development such as street carnivals, music and culture festivals, food markets etc. The existing town centre parking and public transportation services are deemed sufficient to accommodate such events as is the case with the current Christmas Market and the Festival of Fire.

8 PARKING STRATEGY CONCLUSION

One of the main objectives of the Swords Cultural Quarter (SCQ) project is to stimulate and achieve economic and social regeneration in the historic centre of Swords by the provision of a new Public Realm & Civic Space, a new Cultural Centre encompassing a District Library, Arts Venue and Performance venue encompassing a centre for creativity & innovation and a meeting point. The development would transform the area to create a distinct urban identity for Swords and a destination for citizens and visitors by strengthening the Castle attraction of the northern end of Main Street.

Given the town centre location of the development in the historic quarter and given the already ample provision of both on street and off street parking in Swords town centre plus current national policy on the limitation of provision and removal of excess car parking in urban areas due to sustainable planning and development concerns no parking is proposed to be provided with this proposed development.

There is a reduced need for capacity to accommodate FCC staff given the trend towards remote working and the proposals being drafted for legislation by the Government. Sustainable travel and modal shift is being encouraged within FCC to reduce car parking demand.

It is proposed to make the Seatown Road carpark available for public use after hours and on weekends during events in the SCQ building.

In addition the availability of 3,361 car parking spaces in the town centre, (that represents a car parking space for 8.5% of the population of Swords) is ample for such a development as the Swords Cultural Quarter as demonstrated through the analysis presented in the previous sections of this report.

The elimination of parking spaces aligns with an established trend to limit parking in urban environments. From a sustainable travel perspective, limiting vehicular parking spaces serves to force end users to adopt alternative travels modes, other than the single-occupant private car. This strategy supports national transport policy and aligns with the objectives of the Fingal Development Plan 2017-2023 and the GDA Transport Strategy 2015-2035.

The Swords Cultural Quarter project offers FCC and their Design Team a unique “carpe diem” opportunity to both address parking issues and lead the way in sustainable transport provision by promoting a Travel Plan for the proposed development that will allow the provision of dedicated car parking to be removed.

It can be compared to city centre tourist attractions such as museums, opera houses or art galleries, where no building specific car parks were ever provided or needed.

It is recommended that no new additional on-site car parking be included for the proposed development.

Appendix A contains information in relation to FCC’s commitment to leasing car parking spaces to replace lost car parking provision at the executive carpark on the site.

9 APPENDIX – LETTER OF COMMITMENT TO LEASE PARKING SPACES

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Malachy Bradley
Senior Planner
Planning & Strategic Infrastructure
Fingal County Council

3rd June 2022

RE: PART XI/002/22 - Swords Cultural Quarter- Long Term Parking Provision for Fingal Parking

Dear Malachy,

The proposed development of the Swords Cultural Quarter has a parking requirement for 40 spaces to cater for visitors to the building during the day, public carparking demand in evenings and weekends and will result in the loss of 90 spaces from the Council's executive car park at the junction of Seatown Road and North Street.

These requirements will be accommodated as follows –

- Alternative spaces to accommodate the displaced spaces will be provided through a lease agreement for underused existing carparking spaces within a short distance of Fingal County Hall. The leased agreement is currently being negotiated and will provide for up to 90 spaces.
- Parking requirements for the building during the day will be met through the provision of 3 universal access spaces to be provided adjacent to the proposed building at Seatown Road and the accommodation and designation of 38 parking spaces within the existing Seatown Road staff carpark located within a short walk from the development. These 38 spaces will be provided through a combination of existing and additional spaces within the existing car park.
- Public carparking demand in evenings and weekends will be catered for by extending the opening hours of the carpark to align with the opening hours of the Swords Cultural Quarter development thereby providing in excess of 200 spaces for use by the development.

Separately the Council will be undertaking a Mobility Management Plan, to be completed early in 2023 which is expected to impact on overall parking demand associated with Fingal County Hall into the future.

These actions have been agreed with Ms Emer O'Gorman, Director of People, Corporate & Digital Services and arrangements will be in place prior to the commencement of the development.

Yours Sincerely,

John Quinlivan
Director of Service
Economic Enterprise Tourism & Cultural Development



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