

Ferrybank locals are heard loud and clear

Darragh Murphy

A masterplan for the development of a largescale community park at the former Clover Centre site in Ferrybank has been unveiled to the public via a consultation meeting that was held last week.

The new community park, if approved, will consist of a multi-use playing pitch with spectator areas. The pitch will have a grass surface with the future option of being an all-weather surface. The pitch is designed for general training play, athletics, hurling/camogie, football, soccer and hockey.

Also included in the plans is an enclosed dog park, a community use building, padel court, ball wall and a walking/jogging path around the pitch.

Facilities for the Men's and Women's Shed organisations will also be provided at the site.

BACKLASH

The project has been subject to multiple public consultation meetings in the past 12 months.

Original plans which were presented to the public at those meetings did not include a full-sized playing pitch, much



Proposed masterplan for the former Clover site

to the dismay of local schools and sports clubs, who say there is a dire need for new pitches in the area.

Following those meetings, the initial plans presented to the public were drastically redesigned, and a playing pitch is now included.

To facilitate the inclusion of the pitch, some items contained in the original plans have been removed. These include a

biodiversity pond, play area, multi-use games area, quiet corner, exercise equipment zone and outdoor performance structure (bandstand).

FINAL CONSULTATION

A much smaller crowd attended the final consultation meeting held last Wednesday compared to previous meetings.

Those who did attend, were strongly in favour of the revised set of plans

presented to them.

Cllr Tomas Breathnach told the Waterford News & Star that the reaction from attendees on the evening was positive.

"I think people appreciate the fact that the full-size pitch is there now," he said.

"People are happy that their contributions at previous meetings were listened to, that changes were made, and that the new plans are more in

keeping with what their concept for the facility is.

"There are a lot of positive things happening in Ferrybank, and I think the people of Ferrybank are embracing those changes," he added.

Cllr Ger Frisby added that he's delighted the Council engaged with the public.

"By doing that, flaws that were in the original plan were revealed," he said.

"Everyone seems to be very, very happy. From the school, the sports clubs and other community groups, everyone seems to be fitting into it. It's a plan for everyone."

Principal of Abbey Community College, Michelle Jefford said: "We are delighted with the process so far, so hopefully now it'll get through."

Nicky Heffernan of Ferrybank GAA Club said similar, commenting that the addition of a full-size playing pitch is much welcome, especially when considering the dire need for extra facilities in the area to facilitate the growth of camogie.

Cllr Fidelis Doherty said: "The message was very clear at the meetings; a full-size playing pitch and nothing less."

"So there's a great sense of positivity tonight, and people are pleased that they were listened to."

FORMER GLORY RESTORED

At its peak during the 1970s, the Clover factory hired approximately 1,500 workers.

Playing fields and a clubhouse were developed at the site in 1979, paid for by voluntary contributions from the

workers of Clover Meats.

Over the decades, the site hosted hurling, soccer and athletics events, factory leagues, community sporting competitions, dances and concerts.

The centre closed in 2020, and the site was formally transferred into the ownership of Kilkenny County Council on the condition that it be redeveloped into a recreational site for the community.

Former Clover worker Sammy O'Reilly said the former glory of the site may now be restored.

"It was a fantastic place. We had a big soccer tournament every year, lots of hurling, rugby too. There was loads of sport there. It was a fantastic amenity for the local area."

"Ferrybank was much smaller back then. It's not the old Ferrybank anymore, so we need all the facilities we can get. The clubs and school badly need new fields for sport."

"The first plan didn't include a full-size pitch, and 100% of the ex-workers objected to that. We've got it now and we're happy."

Funded by the Local Democracy Scheme



An Roinn Aeráide,
Fuinnimh agus Comhshaoil
Department of Climate,
Energy and the Environment

PUBLIC NOTICE

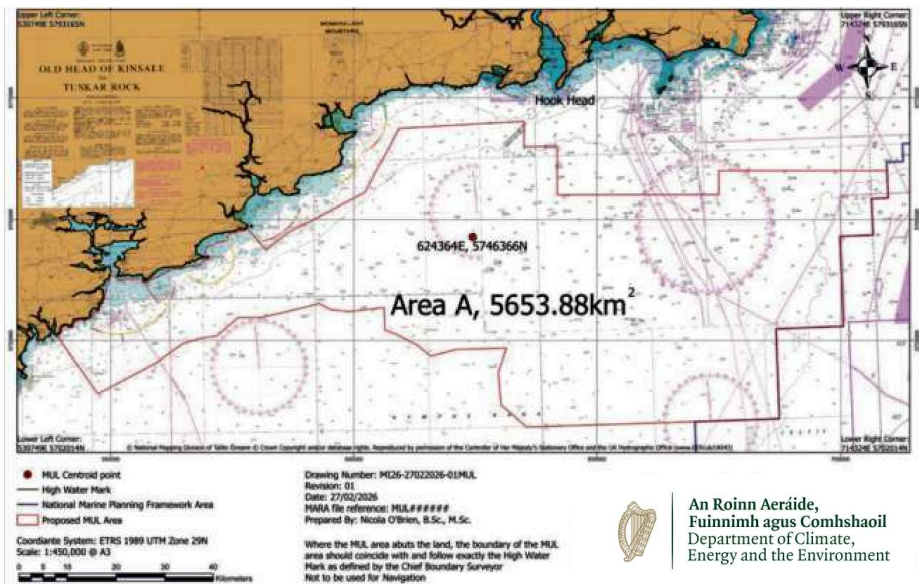
THE MARITIME AREA PLANNING ACT 2021 AND THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (BIRDS AND NATURAL HABITATS) REGULATIONS 2011

INVITATION FOR PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS ON AN APPLICATION FOR A MARITIME USAGE LICENCE AND AN APPROPRIATE ASSESSMENT

Department of Climate, Energy and Environment has submitted an application to the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority ("MARA") for a maritime usage licence under Section 117 of the Maritime Area Planning Act 2021 to undertake geophysical, geotechnical, metocean and biological surveys in the South Coast DMAP to inform future offshore renewable energy development. The duration requested in the licence application is for a period of 5 years.

A related Natura Impact Statement has been submitted with the above licence application. The licence application and the Natura Impact Statement are available for inspection on MARA's website <https://www.maritimeregulator.ie/application/mul260021> and at the following address by appointment- Maritime Area Regulatory Authority, 2nd Floor, Menapia House, Drinagh Business Park, Drinagh, Wexford, Y35 RF29.

Members of the public who wish to make a submission in writing to MARA on the licence application and the Natura Impact Statement may do so quoting MUL260021 by:



Email: licence@mara.gov.ie

OR

Post: Maritime Usage Licensing,
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority,
2nd Floor, Menapia House,
Drinagh Business Park, Drinagh,
Wexford, Y35 RF29.

The closing date and time for a written submission to be received by MARA is 17.30 on 23/07/2026.

MARA will then, as soon as practicable, carry out the appropriate assessment determination in accordance with Regulation 42 of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations 2011. After the determination, MARA will either grant, part grant or refuse the licence application.

Dated this Wednesday 24 June, 2026.

Signed: Representative of Department of Climate, Energy and Environment