

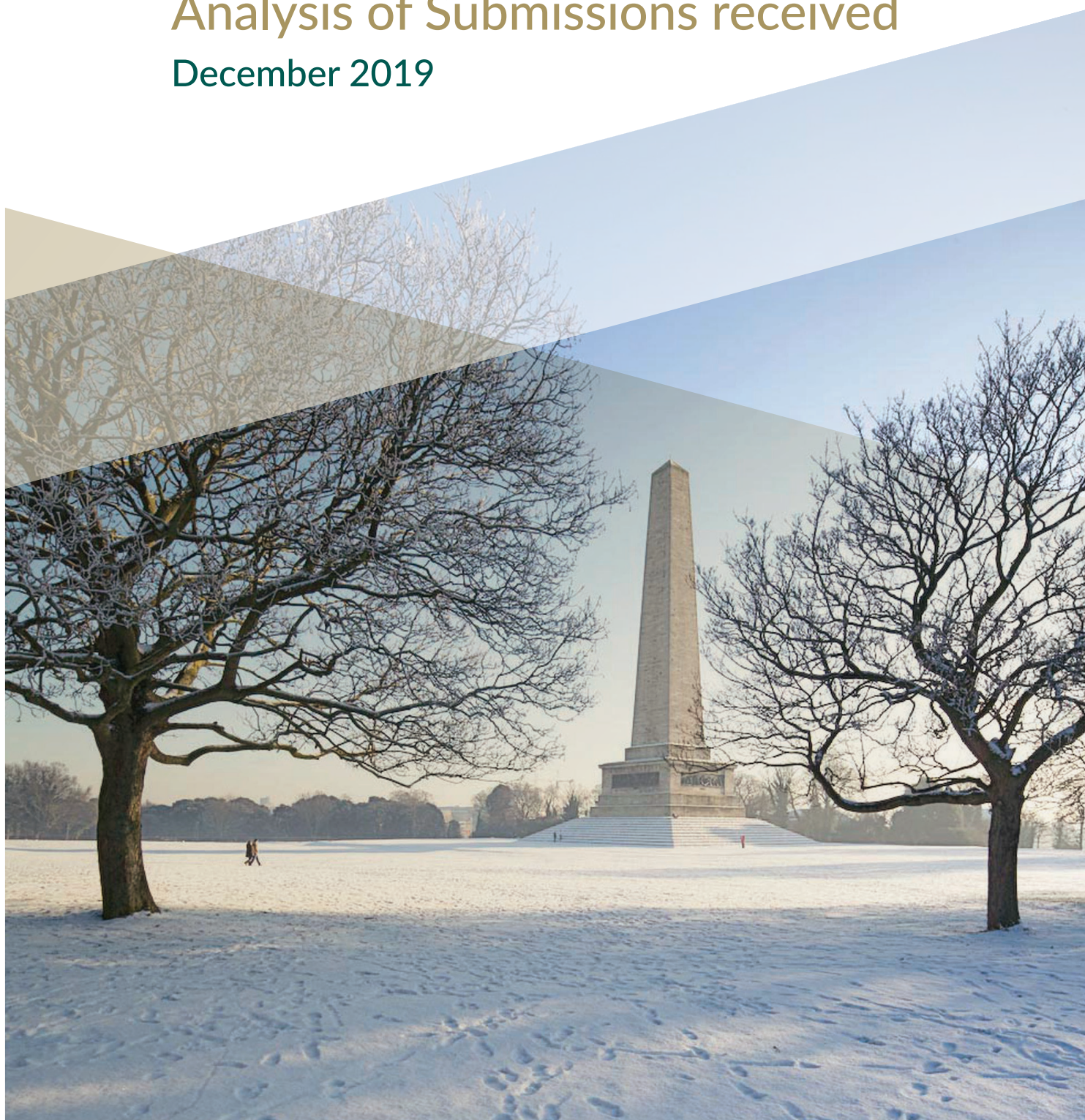


**OPW** Oifig na  
nOibreacha Poiblí  
Office of Public Works

# **Draft Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review**

**Analysis of Submissions received**

**December 2019**





# Foreword

The Phoenix Park plays a significant part in the imagination and history of almost every Irish person. Countless generations of people have fond memories of visiting this much loved place, while trying to catch a glimpse of the fallow deer or the Wellington Testimonial. For others the Park has offered a vital escape from the challenges of city life, a great open space on the doorstep to be enjoyed as often and as freely as time allows. The Phoenix Park is often referred to as Dublin's 'Green Lung' as it offers everyone an opportunity to engage with nature and the outdoors right in the heart of our capital city. All of us, regardless of our access or proximity to the Park, as citizens have a stake in its future.

When the Phoenix Park was created it was of equal size to the city and still today it is considered one of the largest walled urban Parks in Europe. Though sanctioned as a Deer Park in 1662 by King Charles II, the Park that we know and love today is very much based on the design set out by Decimus Burton at the behest of Viscount Duncannon, Chief Commissioner in 1833. His task was to make recommendations for "improving areas of the Park already available to the public for recreational use, having regard to the circumstance that it is the only Park that the residents of Dublin have free access for healthful exercise...."

As Dublin City has grown and changed in the intervening years so have the visitor numbers and the public pressures on the Park. As both visitor numbers and population growth continue to increase in the years ahead, the pressures on the Park's facilities and biodiversity will be tested further, unless we manage the changes needed in a positive fashion. The OPW, as the body charged with managing the Park on behalf of the State and the Public, recognise that the fundamental challenge is to maintain the historic integrity of the Park in the face of increasing pressures and the need to balance these conflicting demands. The Phoenix Park is a valued and finite resource and as we undertake the process of planning for the Park's future your observations, comments and suggestions are welcomed and will inform our evolving view of how we can best enhance the facilities in the Park in the future.

**John McMahon**

OPW Commissioner



# Content

Foreword	3
1. Executive Summary	6
2. Introduction	9
3. Key Findings and OPW Comment	10
4. Conclusion and Next Steps	27
Annex: BSM Report and Detailed Analysis of Submissions	29

This report has been compiled by the National Historic Properties Section of the OPW. The statistical analysis of the submissions was prepared by Brady Shipman Martin.

# 1. Executive Summary

The findings from an independent Behaviour & Attitude Survey in 2017 concluded that the Visitor satisfaction with the Park was exceptionally high (scored 9.15 average with 45% giving a 10/10). The visitor was motivated by outdoor activities, fresh air and pace of life. The Phoenix Café and Victorian Kitchen Walled Garden were draws for the visitor centre complex.

However, the public facilities scored poorly, along with the majority of users being poorly informed of the various attractions within the Park. The toilets at the visitor centre have to be restricted during large events as they cannot cope with high usage. The Interpretative centre facilities are over thirty years old and the Café cannot cope with the demand. Universal access facilities need to be significantly upgraded throughout the park. Its visibility with international visitors to Ireland was also very low.

Based on these findings a full review of the Park's capacity to meet the requirements of visitors, both now and into the future, was undertaken. The Draft Phoenix Park Strategic Review of Visitor Experience was put on public display at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre in March 2019 and the public were invited to offer feedback on its contents. It was hoped that through this non-statutory process we would hear what local communities, stakeholders and other interested individuals or groups had to say about the draft proposals for enhancing the visitor experience in the Park in the future. The draft review received considerable attention from the public, media and elected representatives. OPW thanks all those who engaged with the documentation and provided their valuable opinions and insights for our consideration.

A high proportion of submissions expressed a desire for the Park to be left largely untouched and for the essential character of the Park to be preserved. This is consistent with and endorses the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011.

The Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011 set out the guiding principles for the long term conservation vision for the Park and it is important to emphasise that any proposed future conservation projects or enhancements to facilities will only be advanced in reference to these. This is to ensure that the essential character of the Park is maintained

for the future. Additionally, only proposals that are consistent with existing management practices and seek to support existing policy in relation to the management and operations of the Park will be considered.

Many submissions emphasised the importance of the Park as a green space and as a haven for biodiversity. The value of the Park as a 'green lung' for Dublin, as a critical green space at the heart of the city and as a haven for biodiversity underpins all OPW's work in conserving and managing the Park. The public's commitment to and concern for the preservation of the Park's biodiversity is warmly welcomed. It endorses conservation work undertaken to date to protect the variety of habitats throughout the Park including naturalised grasslands, woodlands and wetlands and ensuring this important haven for biodiversity is managed to the highest standards. We want to assure the Public that OPW is committed to preserving the green value of the Park, to conserving and cultivating the biodiversity of the Park, to sharing our learning and knowledge of the Park with others and to ensuring that the Park makes its contribution to climate change mitigation measures.

Some observations argued that the proposals in the draft review would result in over-development and commercialisation of the Park. With circa 10 million people using or visiting the Park each year, OPW must consider how it meets the needs, or not, of the ever-increasing user numbers in the Park. Our research shows that a high proportion of existing users find the facilities unsatisfactory to a greater or lesser extent. It is therefore not an option for OPW to do nothing in relation to the provision of adequate facilities such as toilets, water stations, café facilities, orientation information, education and learning.

OPW will be particularly cognisant of the public's desire to see green space maintained and for new



enhancements to be limited and in-keeping with the existing character of the Park.

Furthermore, OPW does not intend to over commercialise the Park in any way through the future enhancement of facilities. The public should be assured of this. OPW reiterates its commitment to sensitively managing and enhancing the Park in line with the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011. However, we must consider ways to improve the visitor experience in that context.

OPW notes the various submissions in relation to car usage in the Park. However, differing ideas were received in relation to car access, car parking and car usage throughout the Park. While some supported the reduction of car usage in the Park, some submissions suggested that commuter routes need to be maintained and more dedicated car parks should be provided to facilitate those who travel distances to visit the Park. A core recommendation of the draft review is that OPW should commission a mobility study to consider inter-relating issues to do with sustainable transport, traffic management, pedestrian and cycle mobility and mixed-mobility options and of course, public safety. OPW is committed to advancing this recommendation in order to better understand the conflicting challenges and demands around traffic management and access in the Park.

A number of submissions recorded strong objections to retail opportunities in the Park. These have been noted by OPW and the public should be assured that OPW does not intend to pursue development of high-street type retail within the Phoenix Park. However, the draft review examines other international exemplar parks, many of which have small retail offerings including artisan foods and crafts, specialist horticultural or garden supplies, books, postcards and artworks/prints which meet a market demand with users and visitors to their parks. The public should be assured that in considering any provision of space for sale of goods, OPW is considering a very narrow focus on artisan foods, crafts and art which might complement modern café/restaurant facilities that might be developed in the future.

OPW notes the public reservation about provision of increased car parking facilities in particular with

reference to the Bloom temporary car park location. The aforementioned mobility study will further inform OPW's thinking on how to provide for cars entering the Phoenix Park.

There was significant public support for the conservation and development of the Magazine Fort as a new military history visitor attraction within the Park. OPW has a long-standing commitment to seeing the Fort refurbished and to present it to the public as an engaging heritage site, rich in history to be discovered and explored. Reservations in relation to the character and scale of the proposals were noted but the public should be assured that OPW's conservation approach to heritage properties has always been and continues to be that the integrity of the historic structure and its heritage is paramount. There was also considerable support for the proposed Commemorative Bridge at Irish National War Memorial Gardens which would create pedestrian and cycle links between the Phoenix Park and the south of the Liffey to Kilmainham and Inchicore.

Reluctance was expressed in some submissions by the reference to the Phoenix Park as a 'tourism product.' Great parks in cities all over the world play a key role in the attractiveness of their cities to visitors. The Phoenix Park, although the largest enclosed Park in a city in Europe, is largely unknown internationally and very few overseas visitors are aware of this amazing resource before coming to Dublin. Improving the heritage offering in the Park and the quality of facilities will bring benefits to all those who use it and will help give this rare and much loved place the recognition it deserves.

OPW acknowledges that members of the public were not satisfied with the process of engagement. In particular the Public expressed concern with the lack of access to the draft review document online. Please note that this was not a development plan or statutory document in any form and as such this was not intended to be a formal consultation process. The executive summary and associated exhibition at the Visitor Centre were developed in order to assist the public to consider the core recommendations of the draft review. However we fully accept the public's frustration at not being able to access the complete document online.

Many observers expressed reservations in relation to the scale of the proposed new Visitor hub at Ashtown. The challenge for the OPW is to provide facilities for 1.7million people who visit the complex each year where current facilities are not up to standard. OPW will review the proposals for the Visitor Centre with reference to these observations and will carefully consider how to provide the toilets, water stations, café, interpretation and learning spaces that are required by regular users of Ashtown Demesne.

We will listen very carefully to what you, the public, local communities and our stakeholders have to say. The submissions will influence and inform our evolving view of how we can best enhance the facilities in the Park in the future.

OPW seeks to realise the Phoenix Park's potential as one of the great parks of the world by undertaking conservation works and appropriate upgrades to facilities to enhance the Park's attractiveness. Such enhancements will be to the benefit of all users local, national and international and will be subject to statutory planning permission and availability of adequate funding. The following actions have been prioritised for the short-medium term:

1. Finalise a Conservation and Restoration Plan for the Magazine Fort to preserve this unique element of the Park's heritage. This will create a new military history experience complete with ramparts walk, modest visitor facilities and modern interpretation.
2. Commission a detailed Transport and Mobility Study to review vehicular usage, cycling and pedestrian facilities and issues, parking provision, traffic calming, public transport links, sustainable transport options and explore solutions to existing mobility challenges in the Phoenix Park.
3. Develop appropriate plans for the enhancement of the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre Complex including the provision of a welcome and orientation hub, restaurant/café facilities, a Science & Learning centre, improved toilet facilities and associated parking provision for buses, cars and cyclists within the boundaries of Ashtown Demesne.



## 2. Introduction

Today, The Phoenix Park extends to over 700 hectares and represents a unique natural and cultural landscape that is both a historic park and a city park. It provides a setting for a range of activities and amenities and acts as a location for a number of important public institutions and residences. The Park has the latent potential to be one of the great park 'attractions' of the world with its wonderful mix of outdoor activity options, major historic sites, rich biodiversity and established visitor sites such as Dublin Zoo.

In 2017, OPW formed a strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland to jointly develop and advance a programme of capital investment in Ireland's heritage portfolio. The core focus is on enhancing visitor facilities and experience while investing in new interpretation, which play a key role in attracting visitors from overseas to Ireland. These improved visitor facilities benefit all users. Through this strategic partnership, OPW hopes to realise investment in the Park which recognises the importance of this heritage site, conserves and preserves it for future generations while delivering improved visitor facilities and experiences for citizens and overseas tourists alike.

Project Ireland 2040 identifies Phoenix Park Investment Strategy as a key deliverable within The National Planning Framework to 2040 and the National Development Plan 2018 -2027.

In 2018, Fáilte Ireland and OPW commissioned a strategic review and plan for the future enhancement of the visitor experience at the Phoenix Park. Following a competitive process, Denis Byrne Architects was engaged to undertake the visitor experience review. Working with Brady Shipman Martin, Tandem Design and Lumsden Design, the team undertook a holistic review of the Phoenix Park considering everything from wayfinding to environmental issues, linkages with the city to enhancing visitor facilities throughout the Park.

The Draft Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review examined five distinct zones in the Phoenix Park and considered themes of welcome, history and heritage, activity and wellbeing, identity, biodiversity and connectivity with the city to assess the current and future potential visitor experience at the Park. The draft Review, which was on display at the Park Visitor

Centre for ten weeks from 19th March to 31st May 2019, did not constitute or describe itself as a formal or statutory planning document.

The Review set out 29 distinct recommendations for the Park including the provision of new visitor reception facilities, improved way finding and orientation, increased crossing points and a traffic calming plan to inform OPW's short, medium and long-term planning for the enhancement of the Park. OPW invited the public, local stakeholders, public representatives and all with an interest in the future of the Phoenix Park to consider the draft review and offer their opinions and observations for our consideration.

The following report provides an analysis of the submissions received, offers OPW's commentary to those invaluable submissions and proposes a series of actions or next steps towards the enhancement of the visitor experience in the Phoenix Park.

### 3. High-level Finding and Key Observations

OPW welcomes the diverse range of observations, comments and suggestions which were submitted during a 10-week period which ran from 19th March to 31st of May 2019. It is a testament to the Park that the Public was so engaged with the process and so intent on making sure their voices were heard. We wish to thank all those who took the time to write, to email and visit the exhibition at the Visitor Centre in order to provide us with their valuable insights on the draft review of visitor experience and the future proposals contained therein.

This process has impacted significantly on the evolution of OPW's approach to planning for the future enhancement of the Park. In this chapter, we set out some additional detail on the key observations recorded in submissions and seek to contextualise these with reference to the overall volume of submissions received. OPW would like to offer a perspective or response to the observations.

The following topics occurred widely and many submissions addressed multiple themes and issues. The percentages represent the proportion of the total submissions received that refer to each individual theme or issue.

**Retain Character of the Park in its current, informal and semi-wild state while meeting the needs of visitors.**

**26%**

### Public Observations

Many were concerned that interventions could damage its essential character and should be left in its existing condition.

The most consistently raised themes within Observations stated that the Park should be left in its existing and informal condition. Some considered this as semi-wild state.

Many did not want change and related this to the recent international award that Phoenix Park received.

### OPW Comment

OPW welcomes the public's strong desire to see the essential character of the Park unaltered and for it to be 'left as it is' in so far as possible. This is consistent with the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011 which sets out a long-term vision for the conservation and preservation of the Park.

OPW is committed to continuing to manage the Park in line with that Plan and in line with existing management practices that the public clearly wish to see maintained. Any proposed future conservation projects or enhancements to facilities will therefore only be advanced with reference to the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan to ensure the essential character of the Park is maintained. Such proposals will only be considered if they are consistent with existing management practices and seek to support existing policy in relation to the management and operations of the Park.

## Importance of the Park as a green space for natural heritage, biodiversity and climate change mitigation

19%

### Public Observations

Many submissions emphasised the importance of the Park as a green space, as a haven for biodiversity, and that its role in climate change considerations were not sufficiently considered in the Plan.

It was argued the proposals must not diminish the natural heritage of the Park through loss of greenspace and disruption to wildlife.

Division of Park into 'quarters' was considered inappropriate as biodiversity should relate to entire Park and this was seen as a relegation.

### OPW Comment

The value of the Park as a 'green lung' for Dublin, as a critical green space at the heart of the city and as a haven for biodiversity is central to OPW's understanding of the Park and underpins all of our work in conserving and managing the Park.

The public's commitment to and concern for preservation of the Park's biodiversity is warmly welcomed. It is consistent with OPW's work to date in conserving the various habitats throughout the Park including naturalised grasslands, woodlands and wetlands and our work in ensuring this haven for biodiversity is managed to the highest standards. The Victorian Walled Garden at Ashtown Demesne was awarded the first ever All-Ireland Pollinator Award and OPW has won many other awards relating to the management of the flora and fauna of the Park. The public should therefore be assured that OPW is committed to preserving the green value of the Park, to conserving and cultivating the biodiversity of the Park, to sharing our learning and knowledge of the Park with others and to ensuring that the Park makes its contribution to climate change mitigation measures.

However, with circa 10 million people using or visiting the Park each year, OPW must consider how it meets the needs, or not, of the ever-increasing user numbers in the Park. OPW's own customer research (conducted in late 2017) shows that 45% of existing users, of which 95% are local, find the facilities unsatisfactory. 33% of local and 67% of overseas visitors are unaware or poorly understand the geography of the Park and all it has to offer. It is therefore not an option for OPW to do nothing in relation to the provision of adequate facilities such as toilets, water stations, café facilities, orientation information, education and learning.

OPW is therefore cognisant of the Public's concern for the preservation of the biodiversity and green spaces of the Park and will ensure that the value of the green space of the Park is given priority when considering how best to enhance facilities for users in the future. The proposals around 'quarters' in the Park is conceptually quite strong in terms of orientation and communication to visitors of the different experiences in different areas of the Park. It was never proposed that the Park would be 'divided' in any physical sense and OPW has no plans to do so. The idea of articulating zones in the form of maps or guidebooks does have merit for improved orientation and to help visitors to explore the totality of the Park.

## Against the overdevelopment and commercialisation of the Park

19%

### Public Observations

Observations argued that the proposals would result in the over development and commercialisation of the Park. In particular, responses related to the amount of new build and loss of greenspace.

While some welcomed a modest visitor centre or the refurbishment of Ashtown Demesne, the majority were against a large visitor's centre, which would impact the character of the Park with 'Statement architecture'. Proposals for a retail hall and visitors centre at the Park were objected too.

### OPW Comment

OPW notes public observations in respect of a potential over development of the Park if OPW were to follow some of the international case studies and exemplars that were referenced in the Draft Review document.

It is important to recognise that the document was first and foremost a review of existing visitor experience. Secondly, it referenced international exemplars of great city parks with excellent user facilities that could inform how OPW might seek to meet user's needs in the future. It did not set out a development plan for the Phoenix Park, it is not a development document in any form, but rather it proposed ideas for consideration as to how the needs of visitors to the Park could be met in ways which are consistent with the conservation of a historic Park.

With reference to these particular observations, OPW will now be particularly cognisant of the public's desire to see green space maintained and for new enhancements to be in-keeping with the existing character of the Park.

Furthermore, OPW does not intend to commercialise the Park in any way through the future enhancement of facilities. The public should be assured of this and OPW reiterates its commitment to sensitively managing and enhancing the Park in line with the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011. However, as stated above, circa 10 million people use the Park each year and 1.2 million people visit the Zoo. The existing facilities are no longer adequate for current users and are certainly not future-proofed to meet the needs of Dublin's growing population. OPW recognises the increasing importance of parks and green spaces for citizens' health and well-being and as important amenities and attractions for visitors. Therefore, OPW must consider ways to improve visitor facilities, at Ashtown Demesne in particular, through provision of appropriate visitor welcome and orientation, learning and education, toilets and café facilities.

OPW notes the concern in respect of 'statement architecture' and objections to retail facilities at a possible new welcome hub at Ashtown. OPW will therefore further consider how user's needs can be met through enhanced facilities at Ashtown that are focused on provision of information, orientation, science and learning opportunities but which must also include adequate café/restaurant facilities, toilets and some increased capacity for parking, in particular for sustainable transport options.

## Support the reduction of car usage and improved traffic management

14%

### Public Observations

Many observers considered there to be too much traffic in the Park. Measures to reduce vehicular access, enforce speed limits, improve traffic management for safety and car usage within the Park were supported. Additionally many people did not think proposals went far enough and car use in the Park should be phased out entirely.

### OPW Comment

OPW notes the submissions in relation to car usage in the Park. However, it must be noted that conflicting ideas were received in relation to car access, car parking and car usage throughout the Park. While 14.5% of submissions supported the reduction of car usage in the Park, some submissions suggested that commuter routes need to be maintained and more dedicated car parks should be provided to facilitate those who travel distances to visit the Park.

It should be noted that as part of the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan, a policy of reducing car usage in the Park has been pursued to date and the challenge for OPW now is to provide for management of whatever car levels are already coming to the Park, and will continue to come to the Park, in that operational context.

A core recommendation of the draft review is that OPW should commission a mobility study to consider inter-relating issues to do with transport, traffic management, pedestrian and cycle mobility, mixed-mobility options etc. OPW is committed to advancing this recommendation in order to better understand the conflicting challenges and demands around traffic management and access in the Park.



## Against further retail and café development

14%

### Public Observations

Many opposed additional expanded 'retail opportunities', stating it was out of character with the Park and unnecessary. Many stated that existing facilities were adequate however others stated an appropriate upgrade was acceptable. Some small scale café facilities could be acceptable provided the existing providers were supported and were in keeping with the Park.

### OPW Comment

The objections to retail opportunities have been noted by OPW and the public should be assured that OPW does not intend to pursue development of retail within the Phoenix Park.

The draft review examines other parks internationally, many of which have small retail offerings including artisan foods and crafts, specialist horticultural or garden supplies, books, postcards and artworks/prints, which meet a market demand with users and visitors to their parks. OPW has a number of such small retail offerings at heritage locations including Kilmainham Gaol and Castletown House.

The public should be assured that in considering any provision of space for sale of goods, OPW is considering a very narrow focus on artisan foods, crafts, art which might complement modern café, restaurant facilities that might be developed in the future. Such facilities can be found at Kilmainham Gaol, at the GPO and all of the Royal Parks in London for example. OPW believes that a well-curated, small, specialist selection of materials for sale could be considered as part of any enhanced visitor welcome hub and café.

## Against additional car parking proposals

14%

### Public Observations

Many thought the proposal to provide more car Parking was excessive. In particular, to make the 'Bloom temporary car Park' permanent would only attract more traffic and would result in the loss of greenspace.

### OPW Comment

OPW notes the public reservation about provision of increased car parking facilities in particular with reference to the Bloom temporary car park location. The Mobility study referenced above will further inform OPW's thinking on how to balance the competing demands of Park users in a sustainable manner.

## Additional facilities

10%

### Public Observations

Additional facilities required, especially more toilets but also bins and water fountains.

### OPW Comment

These observations are consistent with the findings of research undertaken by OPW which found that users felt facilities were not adequate particularly in relation to toilets and water fountains. OPW is already engaged in a project to examine suitable locations for water fountains in the Park. Toilet facilities can only be improved as part of some development of visitor facilities and OPW will give consideration as to how best to improve such facilities. However, some proposals for additional facilities are not consistent with OPW's Conservation Management Plan for the Park or are not in-line with best practice management of green spaces. For example, provision of additional bins would create an increased environmental hazard for many of the fauna in the Park and international best-practice would show that users should be encouraged to adopt a 'Leave no trace' approach to visiting the Park i.e. users bring their rubbish home. This is the preferred management approach which is consistent with our overall objectives to conserve and maintain the character of the Park.

## Support Magazine Fort proposals

9%

### Public Observations

Many Observations supported the proposals for the Magazine Fort, such as creating a visitor attraction and restoring the ramparts.

However, these Observations considered that development should be in keeping with the character and the scale of the Park. In particular development should be limited to small scale café/facilities.

### OPW Comment

OPW welcomes the public's support for the conservation and development of the Magazine Fort as a new military history visitor attraction within the Park. OPW has long-standing commitment to seeing the Fort refurbished and to present it to the public as an engaging heritage site rich in history to be discovered and explored. OPW notes reservations in relation to the character and scale of the proposals but the public should be assured that OPW's conservation approach to heritage properties has always been and continues to be that the integrity of the historic structure and its heritage is paramount. OPW will need to provide visitor infrastructure in order to safely manage visitors to the Fort including ticketing, welcome facilities, toilets and small café however, this infrastructure will be planned within the existing footprint of the buildings and in line with how we have provided such facilities at our sensitive heritage sites nationwide.

## Sustainable Transport Proposals

9%

### Public Observations

Support sustainable transport proposals including public transport, electric shuttles, or improved access to train line or extension of Luas line.

### OPW Comment

OPW shares the public's interest in sustainable transport proposals and is keen to examine ways of providing increased sustainable transport to, in and around the Park. The Mobility study referenced above will consider how OPW can best meet the challenges of building sustainable transport options for users of and visitors to the Park.

## Cycling and pedestrian facilities

8%

### Public Observations

Observations welcomed improvements of pedestrian and cyclist facilities generally. This included surface improvement, additional paths, crossings, increased management for safety, additional Dublin Bike stations and rental locations.

### OPW Comment

OPW is keen to ensure the continued primacy of pedestrians and cyclists in the Park and welcomes the public's interest in and desire to see improved facilities, better surfaces, better safety and better accessibility for pedestrians and cyclists.

## Support the proposals for new pedestrian and cyclist connections with the Irish National War Memorial Gardens on the south bank of the Liffey

8%

### Public Observations

Many supported new proposals for pedestrian / cyclist bridge connecting the Irish National War Memorial Gardens. Many also requested a similar connection with Waterstown Park, or the renewal of Silver Bridge. However a funicular was considered excessive by some. Generally cycle paths arrangements could be better managed.

### OPW Comment

OPW welcomes the public's support for the new proposed Commemoration Bridge at Irish National War Memorial Gardens. We note the reservations expressed in relation to the Funicular and it is very unlikely that such a proposal would be pursued by OPW. We note also the concerns re cycle path arrangements. We have already commissioned a report into cycle lanes on Chesterfield Avenue but as mentioned above, a detailed Mobility study will better inform our understanding of the inter-relating issues for pedestrians, cyclists and vehicular traffic.

**Requested more consideration of people of Ireland instead of visitor / tourist**

**8%**

**Public Observations**

Many contended that the Plan should favour the people of Dublin and Ireland not the 'tourist'. Often referring to language such as tourism 'product' and the Park's 'potential' as unsuitable.

**OPW Comment**

OPW notes the public's reticence in referring to the Park as a tourism product. Improving the heritage offering in the Park and the quality of facilities will improve the attractiveness of the Park with all visitors and users. The Park is an important national resource of the people of Ireland and OPW has to provide facilities to meet the needs of all users whether they are local, national or international. Great parks in cities all over the World play a key role in the attractiveness of their cities to visitors.

## Shortcomings of the consultation process

7%

### Public Observations

Many people criticised the consultation process itself. These complaints stated that the timeframe was too short, the document itself was not clear in terms of language used nor was the scope of the consultation defined.

Others objected to the fact that the full document was not available online and access to the public display was restricted.

### OPW Comment

OPW acknowledges that members of the public were not satisfied with the process of engagement with the public around the Draft document.

OPW acknowledges that people were dissatisfied with the fact that the full report was not online. Given the significant size of the full report, OPW felt it would be helpful to develop an executive summary and present this online with copies of the information panels on display at the Visitor Centre in order to assist the public in considering the core recommendations of the draft review. However, we acknowledge the public's frustration at not being able to access the full document.

The draft report was a review of visitor experience and it was considered important to garner the public's thoughts in relation to the core proposed improvements in user experience. OPW accepts that this was not clearly understood from the exhibition or from the materials online.



## Support for the plan

5%

### Public Observations

A number of observers supported the principle of the plan and the process undertaken in this regard.

### OPW Comment

OPW welcomes public support for the principle that the Phoenix Park is an incredible resource for Dublin city, that it should be invested in and enhanced so that users and visitors can have the very best experience when they come to the Park.

## Against the 'Welcome Pavilion' proposals

4%

### Public Observations

The scale and design of the Welcome pavilion was considered unsuitable. Many considered it unnecessary adding that the retrofit or reuse of existing buildings may be more suitable.

### OPW Comment

We note the public's concern for the scale and design of the Welcome pavilion at Park Gate street and interest in reuse of existing buildings. Traditionally, this has always been the approach taken to providing facilities in the Park, but to meet the expectations of modern-day users, the draft report considers some ideas around new facilities.

Given the volume of visitors that approach the Park from Park Gate Street, OPW must give consideration to how visitors orient themselves upon entering the Park. We may give further consideration to orientation facilities that would be sympathetically designed for this area but which must be in-keeping with the historic fabric and setting.

## Against traffic restrictions to Chesterfield Avenue

4%

### Public Observations

The response to traffic restrictions such as the closure of Chesterfield Avenue were met with mixed responses.

Many residents of Castleknock stated that closures would cause further congestion as the Park is an essential traffic artery in the city.

Similarly some suggested the Plan did not sufficiently consider the needs of car users and their ability to access the Park.

Observers often used the Park as commuting route as they had no alternative.

### OPW Comment

Currently traffic management in the Park is informed and guided by the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011 which clearly articulates a policy of reducing car usage in the Park. OPW acknowledges that the Park is an important artery for accessing the city and our challenge is to ensure that the need for vehicles to traverse the Park is balanced with the conservation of the 'green lung' and users enjoyment of this important oasis in the City. As referenced above, a detailed Mobility study will help us consider how best to meet these competing demands in the future.

## Visitor Centre

2%

### Public Observations

Observers were against specific proposals for the Visitor Centre at Ashtown.

### OPW Comment

OPW notes the reservations expressed in relation to the scale of the proposed new Visitor hub at Ashtown. The challenge for OPW is to provide facilities for 1.7million people who come in to the complex each year and current facilities are not up to standard. OPW will review the proposals for Ashtown with reference to these observations and will carefully consider how to provide the toilets, water stations, café, interpretation and learning spaces that are required by regularly users of Ashtown demesne.

## Improved accessibility for all abilities

2%

### Public Observations

Observations requested that all proposals should consider accessibility for all, specifically for the elderly and those with children. This overlaps with suggestions for improved paths and accessible Parking.

### OPW Comment

As part of all planning processes, OPW carefully considers issues of accessibility and we can assure the public we will be cognisant of the needs of all generations to ensure the Park is available and accessible to all.

## Signage and information

1%

### Public Observations

Supports additional way finding, information and signage sensitive to the character of the Park.

### OPW Comment

We know from our research that many visitors are not satisfied with way-finding and information signage in particular. The public can be assured that any additional signage which might be developed will be sensitive to the character of the Park.

Additional cafes and upgraded facilities



Public Observations

Some people supported one or two additional cafes (e.g. associated with the Magazine Fort proposal) and the sensitive upgrading of existing facilities.

These Observations considered that development should be in keeping with the character and the scale of the Park. In particular development should be limited to small scale café/facilities.

OPW Comment

OPW notes these observations in relation to the need for additional basic facilities such as toilets and small cafes. As above, OPW intends to review the approach to enhancing visitor facilities in particular with reference to scale and content.

# General Themes

We have grouped the above 19 topics into 5 general themes and combined the above percentages. The issues arising within each theme are indicated below:

<b>Conservation and built heritage</b>	<b>65%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Park should be left in its existing condition (natural, informal and wild) and its character / identity maintained as is.</li> <li>• Generally against overdevelopment, loss of greenspace and commercialisation of the park.</li> <li>• Support Magazine Fort proposal and associated suitable facilities.</li> <li>• Support for pedestrian / cyclist connection with south bank of the Liffey (e.g. Liffey foot bridge / Irish National War Memorial Gardens link or with Waterstown).</li> <li>• The Strategic Review should have more consideration of people of Ireland / users instead of occasional visitor / tourist for purposes of 'tourist product' and profit.</li> </ul>	
<b>Transport and Mobility</b>	<b>49%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally against the closure of Chesterfield Avenue and any reduction on car usage which would impact commuters in particular</li> <li>• Support sustainable transport proposals including public transport, electric shuttles, or improved access to train line or extension of Luas line.</li> <li>• Welcome the improvement of pedestrian and cyclist facilities generally (surface, additional paths, crossings, increased management for safety, additional Dublin bike stations and rental locations)</li> <li>• Support the reduction of the Park as vehicular route (slowing down, partial closure of access, increased traffic management, enforcement of speeds)</li> <li>• Against any additional parking (e.g. Bloom permanent car park)</li> </ul>	
<b>Visitor facilities</b>	<b>37%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional facilities required, especially more toilets but also bins and water fountains.</li> <li>• Against any additional parking (e.g. Bloom permanent car park)</li> <li>• The Review should have more consideration of people of Ireland / users instead of occasional visitor / tourist for purposes of 'tourist product' and profit.</li> <li>• Against specific proposals Visitor Centre at Ashtown</li> <li>• Supports additional way finding, information and signage sensitive to the character of the Park</li> <li>• Should have facilities for all abilities and be accessible to all.</li> </ul>	
<b>Biodiversity and climate change</b>	<b>19%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Park is extremely important to the city as green space / lung for the city. Its natural heritage must not be diminished / biodiversity protected / re-wild plant additional trees and plants. Excellent opportunity for climate action.</li> </ul>	
<b>Consultation Process / Approach</b>	<b>11%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consultation process was flawed (too short, structure and language used was unclear, no full plan accessible online etc.).</li> <li>• A number of observers supported the principle of the plan and the process undertaken in this regard.</li> </ul>	

## Other issues arising

We note the following issues that arose less consistently (approximately less than 1%):

Provision of facilities for dogs;

- Litter management requires improvement;
- Reinstatement of gates which had been removed during the Pope's visit;
- The Funicular was considered a 'gimmick' and unsuitable;
- Relatively few people either welcomed or discouraged signage proposals;
- The use of the Park and existing buildings for education was considered appropriate;
- The role of Fáilte Ireland as a stakeholder was considered inappropriate;
- Additional café facilities for the Park required.

In relation to the Central Line proposals, such as art installations, and commercial kiosks, many felt these proposals were not suitable to the Park, with outdoor gyms often being unused in the long term.



## 4. Conclusion & Next Steps

OPW warmly welcomes all of the submissions and observations received in respect of the review of visitor experience and the associated recommendations to enhance visitor experience in the future. They have informed our thinking in relation to what is best for the Park as we go forward and they will influence how we approach improving facilities in the Phoenix Park to the benefit of all users. Above all, they offer a strong endorsement of our management of the Park to date. We therefore reaffirm our commitment the public to managing the Park, first and foremost, as a most precious 'green' resource for the people of Dublin and Ireland and to safeguarding its rich biodiversity.

As articulated in this report, it is incumbent on OPW to consider the needs of visitors and users who are already coming to the Park in very significant numbers. Having regard to the concerns expressed through the submissions process, OPW is therefore proposing the following programme of sensitive conservation projects and upgrades to enhance the Park's attractiveness and to meet the needs of its users in the medium term. It should be noted that all of the proposals will be subject to the rigours of an open and transparent planning process and will, ultimately, be subject to the availability of funding to realise the projects. This programme seeks to balance the needs of our citizens' health and wellbeing with safeguarding the Park's biodiversity while also modernising and improving the standards of facilities in the Park.

This programme will be advanced within the existing parameters of the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011 which contains the following Vision statement which guides our work:

**To protect and conserve the historic landscape character of the Phoenix Park and its archaeological, architectural and natural heritage whilst facilitating the sustainable use of the Park's resources for recreation and other appropriate activities, encouraging research and maintaining its sense of peace and tranquility.**

### Conservation & Built Heritage

#### Priority Action

Prepare a **Conservation & Restoration Plan for the Magazine Fort** to enable its opening to the public as a new military history attraction for Dublin.

This will be subject to the statutory planning process with Dublin City Council. The Fort is considered to have special architectural, technical, historical and archaeological interest. The Buildings are of International significance. The involvement of John Corneille (military engineer) and Francis Johnston (architect) in the original design and evolution of the fort lends additional interest. It is the only Magazine in Ireland with original timber floors and vaulted ceilings.

#### Other actions:

1. Advance the planning application for the proposed **Commemoration Bridge** at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens as a pedestrian/cycle green route to other cultural institutions such as Kilmainham Gaol, Royal Hospital Kilmainham and as a green biodiversity corridor linking both sides of the River Liffey.
2. Continue to seek the conservation of the built heritage fabric of the Park and in this regard commission an **inventory of all built heritage** features.

### Transport & Mobility

#### Priority Action

Commission **Transport & Mobility Study**, which would explore the connectivity potential external to the Park in tandem with appropriate sustainable transport/mobility options within.

- The study would also review vehicular usage, cycling provision, pedestrian connectivity and parking provision.
- A traffic calming strategy along with public transport links should also be considered in this context with reference to sustainable transport modes.
- The Dublin Canal Greenway Inner Loop and other tourism initiatives to be reviewed as part of this study.

## Visitor Facilities

### Priority Action

Develop plans for the **Phoenix Park Visitor Centre Complex** including the provision of a welcome and orientation hub, restaurant/ café, Science & Learning Centre, toilets and associated parking provision for bus, car & cyclists within the current demesne footprint.

The current facilities are over thirty years old and are unable to adequately cater for the 1.7 million visitors it receives on an annual basis. It is imperative that the new facilities respond to the historic layout, are sensitive to the amenities and vistas at this location yet meets best international practice in sustainability, green design and universal access.

- Development of an international quality **visitor hub**, which is focused on addressing the needs of all visitors, which will provide a defined arrival, orientation and interpretation point for visitors exploring the park and surrounding area. This hub is to include a Restaurant / Café Dock area.
- Re purpose the existing Interpretative centre into a **Science & Learning Centre**, which will include a lecture theatre, classroom space, toilets, areas for improved educational offering to schools, public and local initiatives.
- Plan for **sustainable bus, car and cycle** provision that is contained within the site. Explore the option of the provision of underground parking at this location. Should this be economically unviable all parking must be extensively screened so as not to detract from the amenities of the area.

### Other actions:

1. Restoration of the **Victorian Glasshouse** at the Victorian Kitchen Walled Garden
2. Commission new, **appropriate interpretation & wayfinding signage** for the Phoenix Park and its key attractions
3. Provide **sustainable drinking water points** at key locations.

## Biodiversity & Climate Change

1. Continue to manage and present the designed **landscape and biodiversity** of the Phoenix Park in a sustainable manner as acknowledged through the Green Flag Environmental Awards Scheme, National Biodiversity Data Centre Pollinator Awards etc and to best international practice.
2. All **management practices** to consider Biodiversity, Climate Change impacts on all projects prior to initiation.
3. **Communicate** the importance of Biodiversity & Climate Change through the new Science & Learning centre, citizen science projects and public events such as the 'Phoenix Park Biodiversity Festival & Honey Show'.

## Improved Communications

1. **Engage with the public and elected representatives** on the proposed programme for enhancement of the Phoenix Park 2020-2025 in the short to medium term i.e through stakeholder meetings, press releases, quarterly updates on the Phoenix Park Website etc.
2. Make public the **analysis of the public observations** on the Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review
3. Review the Phoenix Park **website** with a view to including regular updates on the various initiatives being undertaken in the Phoenix Park

# Annex: BSM Report and Detailed Analysis of Submissions

## Analysis of Public Observation on Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review

The following pages 30 to 50 provide the detailed statistical analysis report prepared by Brady Shipman Martin



**Brady Shipman  
Martin.**  
**Built.  
Environment.**

# Content

1.	Introduction	31
2	Overview of Responses and Spatial Distribution	32
3	Analysis of Observations	34
3.1	Content of Observations	34
3.2	General Themes	40
3.3	Green Party & Associated Observations	42
3.4	Community / Heritage / Environment	43
3.5	Public Bodies / Semi-State Agencies	46
3.6	Residents Associations	47
3.7	Public Representatives	49
APPENDIX 1: GLOBAL DISTRIBUTION OF RESPONSES		51
APPENDIX 2: ISSUES ARISING AND PERCENTAGE OCCURRENCES		52

# 1. Introduction

This Report has been prepared on behalf of the Office of Public Works (OPW) by Brady Shipman Martin (BSM) to provide a summary of the analysis undertaken of Observations submitted as part of a public consultation carried out by the OPW in relation to the **Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review (Referred to as the 'Strategic Review')**.

This consultation, which entailed a number of various strands, took place from the 19th March to the 31st May 2019, reached a wide audience including local, national and international respondents. Public consultation included the following:

- Copies of the full draft report were available to view at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre
- A comprehensive exhibition with key highlights of the report were on display at the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre
- The draft Executive Summary and a copy of the exhibition display information was available to view and download on the website [www.phoenixpark.ie](http://www.phoenixpark.ie)
- Observations with respect to the draft report were facilitated by email to [visitorpark@opw.ie](mailto:visitorpark@opw.ie) or by mail to:

Ms. Cathy Mahon  
Office of Public Works  
Heritage Services  
Dublin Castle  
Dublin 2  
D02 V240

- Letters were issued to internal Park stakeholders advising them of the Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review and consultation

## Background to the Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review

OPW has formed a strategic partnership with Fáilte Ireland to jointly develop and advance a programme of capital investment in Ireland's heritage portfolio. The core focus is on enhancing visitor facilities and experience while investing in new interpretation, which can play a key role in attracting visitors from overseas to Ireland. OPW has responsibility for the care of Ireland's most iconic heritage sites such as

the Phoenix Park and, through this partnership, hope to realise strategic investment in the heritage estate which recognises the importance of the heritage asset, conserves and preserves the asset for future generations and which delivers improved visitor experiences for citizens and overseas tourists alike.

The Objectives of this Review are:

1. To review the future 'tourism' development potential of the Phoenix Park
2. To prepare a development plan for the Phoenix Park Visitor Centre
3. To prepare a development plan for the Magazine Fort

Further, the Review's Brief states:

- Enhancing the visitor experience and attractiveness of the Phoenix Park may help further develop the attractiveness of this cluster of attractions and, by doing so, may help to spread the economic benefits of tourism within Dublin.
- The Phoenix Park as a destination has the potential to develop further and appeal to new audiences and users. Within this part of the study we require consultants to prepare a strategic park overview and make recommendations for the future tourism development of the park as an iconic experience.
- It is the ambition of the Strategic Review to create new products and a visitor proposition aligned to the Dublin brand strategy.

The 'Draft Phoenix Park Visitor Experience Strategic Review' examined five distinct zones in the Park and considers themes of welcome, history and heritage, activity and wellbeing, identity, biodiversity and connectivity with the city to assess the current and future potential visitor experience at the Phoenix Park. The report proposes 29 distinct recommendations, which, if implemented, would increase the Park's contribution to Ireland's visitor economy while at the same time ensure that the unique character of the Phoenix Park would be conserved and protected for the enjoyment of generations to come.

## 2. Overview of Responses and Spatial Distribution

### Nature and origin of Responses

The majority of respondents are users of the Park who live nearby, many visiting on a regular basis. While many of the Observations submitted via email do not include an address, the majority which do include an address originate from Dublin City. A number of the observations were not based on the Strategic Review but rather their general observations on the Phoenix Park.

The petition submitted by **Cllr. Neasa Hourigan of the Green Party** includes addresses of signatories, which provides an indication of this (see Figure 1). There are also a number of submissions which originate from across Ireland. A small number originate from elsewhere in Europe, New Zealand, Australia and the United States (see Figure 2).

In addition, a number of community or environmental organisations, public representatives and resident's associations made Observations.

These include:

### Community / Heritage / Environment

All Ireland Polo Club, Athletics Ireland, An Taisce Birdwatch Ireland, Civil Service Harriers Athletic Club, Community Road Safety Action & Information Network (COSAIN), Conragh na Gaelige, Dublin Chamber, Dublin Cycling Campaign (cycling.ie), Friends of Mayo Dark Skies, ICOMOS National Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes, Irish Environmental Network, Irish Pedestrian Network, Irish Wildlife Trust, Kilmainham Inchicore Network (KIN), Leave No Trace, Na Gaeil Óga C.L.G, Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Trust, Ordnance Survey Ireland, Phibsboro Village Tidy Towns, Royal Canal Park Community Association, Wild Awake & Phoenix Forest School.

### Public Bodies / Semi-State Agencies

Bord Bia, CIE Property Group

### Public representatives

(Councillors, TD's) Andrew Montague Cllr, Ciaran Cuffe (MEP) Green Party, Cieran Perry Cllr, Emer Currie Cllr, Jack Chambers TD, Joan Burton TD, John Walsh Cllr, Office of the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar (Ted Leddy Cllr), Marie Sherlock Cllr, Mary Fitzpatrick Cllr, Neasa Hourigan Cllr, Roderic O'Gorman Cllr, Ruth Coppinger TD, Tina MacVeigh Cllr, Emer Currie Cllr

### Resident's Associations

Chapelizod Residents Association, Coolmine Residents Association, Deer Park Area Residents Association, Kirkpatrick Rockfield, Navan Road Community Council



## Location: address / Google Maps function

The map here gives an indication of the geographic distribution of responses. The petition submitted by Councillor Neasa Hourigan contains addresses for most of the responses. The accuracy of these addresses varies and therefore should be considered as a general indication.

In addition, only a small quantity of responses recorded via email include an address.

## Format of submissions

Hard copies:	21 No.
Unique Emails	1,121 No.
Emails in template	425 No.
Petition signatures:	4,511 No.

Of the 1,546 Observations submitted via email, 425 No. (approx. 27%) were in the template format prepared by Councillor Neasa Hourigan on behalf of the Green Party and displayed online for use by potential Observers.

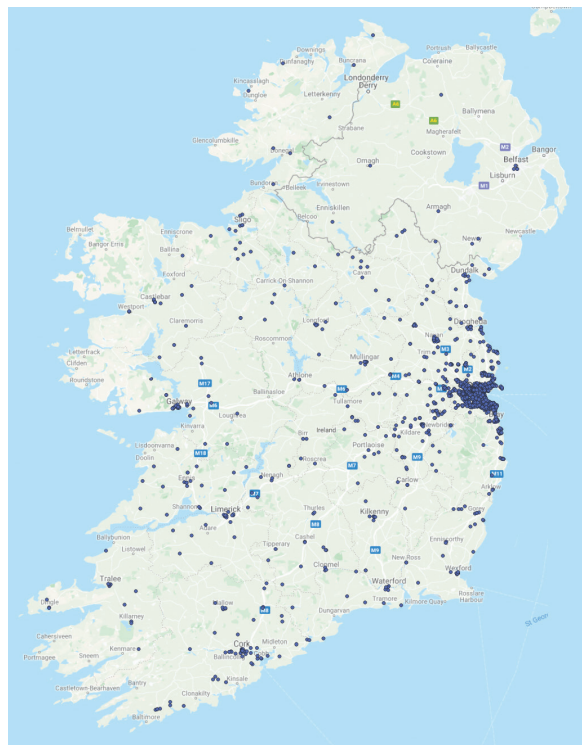


Figure 1: Distribution of response addresses within Ireland (blue dot).

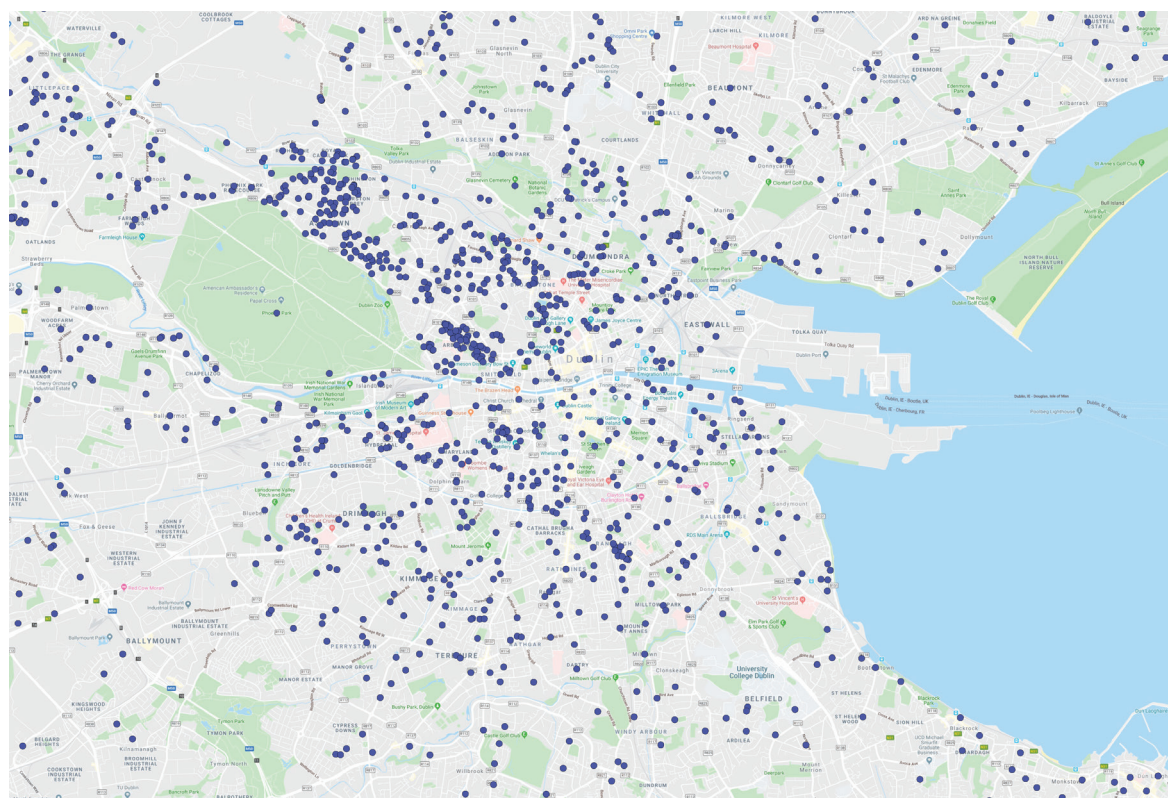


Figure 2: Distribution of response addresses within Dublin City (blue dot).

### 3. Analysis of Observations

#### Methodology

The below summary has been obtained from analysis carried out by BSM. Each response was reviewed and its content considered. The content of each email was analysed thematically through an excel table, with the occurrence of each theme within the response assigned a nominal value (of 1). Nineteen separate topics were highlighted within the public observations received.

The full summary list of topics arising is provided in Appendix 2, detailing each topic in order of highest to lowest frequency. Please see Appendix 3 for the full wording of each topic. The cumulative total was then used to prepare the percentages. (To note, due to the volume of Observations which submitted the template response by the Green Party, we considered this Submission to stand for itself, and is reviewed separately and specifically in Section 3.1 below.)

#### 3.1 Content of Observations

Overall much interest was generated by the Strategic Review, some supported the Review, the process, and proposed upgrades / improvements to the infrastructure in the Park, however the respondents frequently objected to the scale and extent of the proposals / interventions.

The following topics occurred widely:

**Character of the Park should be preserved in its current, informal and semi-wild state**

**25.9%**

Many were concerned that interventions could damage its essential character and should be left in its existing condition.

The most consistently raised themes within Observations stated that the Park should be left in its existing and informal condition. Some considered this as semi-wild state.

Many did not want change and related this to the recent international award that Phoenix Park received.

### Importance of the Park as a green space for natural heritage, biodiversity and climate change mitigation

19.2%

Many submissions emphasised the importance of the Park as a green space, as a haven for biodiversity, and that its role in climate change considerations were not sufficiently considered in the Plan.

It was argued the proposals must not diminish the natural heritage of the Park through loss of greenspace and disruption to wildlife.

Division of Park into 'quarters' was considered inappropriate as biodiversity should relate to entire Park and this was seen as a relegation.

### Against the overdevelopment and commercialisation of the Park

19.1%

Observations argued that the proposals would result in the over development and commercialisation of the Park. In particular, responses related to the amount of new build and loss of greenspace.

While some welcomed a modest visitor centre or the refurbishment of Ashtown Demesne, the majority were against a large visitors centre which would impact the character of the Park with 'Statement architecture'. Proposals for a retail hall and visitors centre at the Park are objected to.

### Support the reduction of car usage and improved traffic management

14.5%

Many observers considered there to be too much traffic in the Park. Measures to reduce vehicular access, enforce speed limits, improve traffic management for safety and car usage within the Park were supported.

Additionally many people did not think proposals went far enough and car use in the Park should be phased out entirely.

### Against further retail and café development

13.6%

Many opposed additional expanded 'retail opportunities', stating it was out of character with the Park and unnecessary. Many stated that existing facilities were adequate however others stated an appropriate upgrade was acceptable.

Some small scale café facilities could be acceptable provided the existing providers were supported and were in keeping with the Park.

### Against additional car parking proposals

13.6%

Many thought the proposal to provide more car Parking was excessive. In particular, to make the 'Bloom temporary car Park' permanent would only attract more traffic and would result in the loss of greenspace.

### Additional facilities

10%

Additional facilities required, especially more toilets but also bins and water fountains.

### Support Magazine Fort proposals

8.9%

Many Observations supported the proposals for the Magazine Fort, such as creating a visitor attraction and restoring the ramparts.

However, these Observations considered that development should be in keeping with the character and the scale of the Park. In particular development should be limited to small scale café/facilities.

### **Sustainable Transport Proposals**

**8.7%**

Support sustainable transport proposals including public transport, electric shuttles, or improved access to train line or extension of Luas line.

### **Cycling and pedestrian facilities**

**8.1%**

Observations welcomed improvements of pedestrian and cyclist facilities generally. This included surface improvement, additional paths, crossings, increased management for safety, additional Dublin Bike stations and rental locations.

### **Support the proposals for new pedestrian and cyclist connections with the Irish National War Memorial Gardens on the south bank of the Liffey**

**7.8%**

Many supported new proposals for pedestrian / cyclist bridge connecting the Irish National War Memorial Gardens. Many also requested a similar connection with Waterstown Park, or the renewal of Silver Bridge. However a funicular was considered excessive by some. Generally cycle paths arrangements could be better managed.

### **Requested more consideration of people of Ireland instead of visitor / tourist**

**7.8%**

Many contended that the Plan should favour the people of Dublin and Ireland not the 'tourist'. Often referring to language such as tourism 'product' and the Parks 'potential' as unsuitable.

### Shortcomings of the consultation process

7%

Many people criticised the consultation process itself. These complaints stated that the timeframe was too short, the document itself was not clear in terms of language used nor was the scope of the consultation defined.

Others objected to the fact that full document was not available online and access to the public display was restricted.

### Support for the plan

4.5%

A number of observers supported the principle of the plan and the process undertaken in this regard.

### Against the 'Welcome Pavilion' proposals

3.7%

The scale and design of the Welcome pavilion was considered unsuitable. Many considered it unnecessary adding that the retrofit or reuse of existing buildings may be more suitable.

### Visitors Centre

2.3%

Observers were against specific proposals for Visitor Centre at Ashtown.

### Improved accessibility for all abilities

2%

Observations requested that all proposals should consider accessibility for all, specifically for the elderly and those with children. This overlaps with suggestions for improved paths and accessible Parking.

### Signage and information

1%

Supports additional way finding, information and signage sensitive to the character of the Park.

### Additional cafes and upgraded facilities

0.7%

Some people supported one or two additional cafes (e.g. associated with the Magazine Fort proposal) and the sensitive upgrading of existing facilities.

These Observations considered that development should be in keeping with the character and the scale of the Park. In particular development should be limited to small scale café/facilities.

## 3.2 General Themes

We have grouped the above 19 topics into 5 general themes and combined the above percentages. The issues arising within each theme are indicated below:

<b>Conservation and built heritage</b>	<b>65.4%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Park should be left in its existing condition (natural, informal and wild) and its character / identity maintained as is.</li> <li>• Generally against overdevelopment, loss of greenspace and commercialisation of the park.</li> <li>• Support Magazine fort proposal and associated suitable facilities.</li> <li>• Support for pedestrian / cyclist connection with south bank of the Liffey (e.g. Liffey foot bridge / Irish National War Memorial Gardens link or with Waterstown).</li> <li>• The Strategic Review should have more consideration of people of Ireland / users instead of occasional visitor / tourist for purposes of 'tourist product' and profit.</li> </ul>	
<b>Transport and Mobility</b>	<b>48.6%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Generally against the closure of chesterfield avenue and any reduction on car usage which would impact commuters in particular</li> <li>• Support sustainable transport proposals including public transport, electric shuttles, or improved access to train line or extension of Luas line.</li> <li>• Welcome the improvement of pedestrian and cyclist facilities generally (surface, additional paths, crossings, increased management for safety, additional Dublin bike stations and rental locations)</li> <li>• Support the reduction of the Park as vehicular route (slowing down, partial closure of access, increased traffic management, enforcement of speeds)</li> <li>• Against any additional parking (e.g. bloom permanent car park)</li> </ul>	
<b>Visitor facilities</b>	<b>36.7%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional facilities required, especially more toilets but also bins and water fountains.</li> <li>• Against any additional parking (e.g. bloom permanent car park)</li> <li>• The Review should have more consideration of people of Ireland / users instead of occasional visitor / tourist for purposes of 'tourist product' and profit.</li> <li>• Against specific proposals Visitors centre at Ashtown</li> <li>• Supports additional way finding, information and signage sensitive to the character of the Park</li> <li>• Should have facilities for all abilities and be accessible to all.</li> </ul>	
<b>Consultation Process / Approach</b>	<b>11.5%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The consultation process was flawed (too short, structure and language used was unclear, no full plan accessible online etc.).</li> <li>• A number of observers supported the principle of the plan and the process undertaken in this regard.</li> </ul>	
<b>Biodiversity and climate change</b>	<b>19.2%</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Park is extremely important to the city as green space / lung for the city. Its natural heritage must not be diminished / biodiversity protected / re-wild plant additional trees and plants. Excellent opportunity for climate action.</li> </ul>	



### Other issues arising

We note the following issues that arose less consistently (approximately less than 1%):

- Provision of facilities for dogs;
- Litter management requires improvement;
- Reinstatement of gates which had been removed during the Pope's visit;
- The Funicular was considered a 'gimmick' and unsuitable;
- Relatively few people either welcomed or discouraged signage proposals;
- The use of the Park and existing buildings for educational was considered appropriate;
- The role of Failte Ireland as a stakeholder was considered inappropriate;
- Additional café facilities for the Park required. .

In relation to the Central Line proposals, such as art installations, and commercial kiosks, many felt these proposals were not suitable to the Park, with outdoor gyms often being unused in the long term.

### 3.3 Green Party & Associated Observations

Approximately 4,500 individuals signed the petition in support of the below submission prepared by Councillor Neasa Hourigan on behalf of the Green Party. 425 No. of the emails received by the OPW also submitted this template. It contains a number of overlapping themes with the above analysis. The submission is divided into 4 no. sections:

1. Development of Retail Facilities
2. Parkland, Nature and Wildlife
3. Transport to and Around the Park
4. Quality of Space: Historic and Social Value, Noise and Disruption

#### Development of Retail Facilities

The response states that the proposed buildings amount to the overdevelopment of the Phoenix Park. Any and all work should only consolidate and upgrade existing structures providing toilets and tourist facilities.

The submission states that the Park's key issue is that Chesterfield Avenue remains one of the main roads into the city from Castleknock and beyond. There should be a focus on retrofitting existing buildings. The observation is very much against the promotion of retail opportunities in the Park and its associated impact through traffic, construction, waste, noise.

#### Parkland, Nature and Wildlife

The submission states that green space, wildlife and biodiversity should be the focus of the entire Park. It further states that the proposals '*seeks to relegate biodiversity to one quarter of the Park*'. It states that this plan sets out an inadequate and poorly defined set of goals for the natural realm.

#### Transport to and Around the Park

The submission is very much against the permanent car parking associated with Bloom which would be "*a vast intrusions into the natural landscape of the Park. It is incredible that the OPW would propose to make these a permanent feature.*"

Further, the submission states that the overall transport proposals are unclear, a clearer position would benefit the Park in the long term and should focus on active travel. While there are some good proposals within the plan. Better and more Comprehensive cycling infrastructure is required. Pedestrians should be considered more by shared space concept. The shared space on that Central Line is a cause for alarm for pedestrians.

#### Quality of Space: Historic and Social Value, Noise and Disruption

This observation states that the Strategic Review for the Phoenix Park fails to honour the aims of Conservation Management Plan in its approach to new construction within the Park and to supporting its biodiversity which are of important historic value and historic landscape.

## 3.4 Community / Heritage / Environment

### All Ireland Polo Club (AIPC)

**All Ireland Polo Club (AIPC) is based within the Phoenix Park at the field on the 'Nine Acres'.**

The tourism, employment that the AIPC has brought to Phoenix Park and its potential to grow should not be undervalued. The historic significance in the built heritage of the polo club and the field on the 'Nine Acres', combined with continuing growth as a tourism destination with employment, education and training opportunities establishes the AIPC within the Park. In a historical and tourism context, the AIPC is one of the most important sports in Phoenix Park

### An Taisce.

**An Taisce, the national trust for Ireland, is an environmental and non-governmental organisation.**

Objection referred to the following to the introduction of modern pavilions into the Park's historic central avenue which would impact the park negatively; and the impact of traffic in the Park. Levels of car parking accommodation are unsustainable and seriously undermine the natural and historic landscape character. The overarching objective of the Strategic Review must be for a significantly reduced number of motor vehicles entering and using the Park. Public realm improvement to the critical Parkgate Street approach should be incorporated.

The re-use of existing buildings, as opposed to new-build, is the preferred approach having regard to sustainability and the need to conserve the Park's sensitive historic landscape. In particular as part of the Magazine Fort restoration. Use of nearby derelict structures would benefit the park.

### Athletics Ireland

**Athletics Ireland is the National Governing Body for Athletics in Ireland and run a series of charity and competitive events in the Park.**

Suggests that the Strategic Review seems to favour the tourist visitor experience above the needs of Dublin residents and Irish tax payers to develop a healthier lifestyle.

Lists the running events that take place within the Park and requests that plans be reconsidered to avoid disruption to these events.

### BirdWatch Ireland

**BirdWatch Ireland, is an independent conservation organisation in Ireland aimed at the protection of bird life.**

Overall BirdWatch Ireland are in agreement that the proposed measures/plans are good and a positive move forward for the park and visitors. They state that OPW should engage with experts in advance of formalising plans which will allow design teams and construction teams to avoid pit falls and conflicts further down the line, offering knowledge in particular on grass mowing during skylark season and sobbing out of ditches.

### Civil Service Harriers Athletic Club

**Civil Service Harriers Athletic Club is a club based within Phoenix Park. The club facilities lie within the proposed Activity quarter, the club is concerned that specific proposals may impact their training and parking facilities.**

Proposals should not be at the cost of those who currently use the park's fantastic amenities on a daily basis, and any changes to the existing park layout should involve consultation with organisations/clubs based in the park

### Community Road Safety Action & Information Network (Cosain)

**COSAIN is a community group which aims to make Galway a safer and more welcoming environment for pedestrians and other people who travel by means other than the private car.**

They place an emphasis sustainable transport, active travel, climate action and protection of nature in the Park.

### Conradh na Gaeilge

**Conradh na Gaeilge is a social and cultural organisation which promotes the Irish language.**

Conradh na Gaeilge recommends that the southern part of Chesterfield Avenue (from Parkgate St. to the Phoenix Monument) is renamed Hyde Avenue after the first president of Ireland, Douglas Hyde, and also suggests that a statue of Douglas Hyde is erected within the Park. It also recommends that any visitor experience planned for the Park is also available through Irish, as children receiving education through Irish should have the accessibility to this experience in their choice of language. Conradh na Gaeilge also recommend the preservation of the old Irish signs in the park.

## Dublin Chamber

**Dublin Chamber is an organisation aimed at helping businesses network be successful in Dublin City Centre.**

Their submission welcomes improved connectivity with the city. Stating that the Park should embrace sustainable transport options and reduce need for the private car. Not in favour of mass car parking facilities. The OPW should prioritise development of integrated sustainable and public transport options to improve connectivity between Phoenix Park and the wider city, including rail, cycling, and walking infrastructure.

Public transport developments should be sustainable, using the latest in zero emissions technology, while also sympathetic to the park's history and character. The submission includes a list of recommendations in this vein.

## Dublin Cycling Campaign (cycling.ie)

**Dublin Cycling campaign is an independent, voluntary group lobbying local and national government to bring about improved conditions for cyclists and greater recognition of the benefits of cycling.**

The group broadly welcomes the Strategic Review, the proposed increased connectivity of the Phoenix Park to its neighbouring areas, and the City in general is an important step.

Cycling and active travel overall will play a key role in the development of the outlined proposals and they look forward to participating in any future consultation process. Dublin Cycling Campaign is a key stakeholder in the development of mobility/transport planning for Dublin City.

## Friends of Mayo Dark Skies

**The Friends of Mayo Dark Skies is a voluntary community group whom supports the objectives of the Mayo Dark Sky Park and continues research and development of the dark sky initiative.**

Please also avoid the use of LED lights over 3,000 kelvin due to their impact on biodiversity and wildlife. Discusses why dark skies are important, light pollution and what can we do to help.

## ICOMOS National Scientific Committee on Cultural Landscapes

**The International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) is a professional association that works for the conservation and protection of cultural heritage places around the world.**

ICOMOS submission focused primarily on built heritage and conservation. Stating proposals to the park should be subject to Historic Landscape Assessment (HLA) in order to assess the impact of proposals on the historic landscape character of the Park.

A Mobility Management Plan should address current needs but also recognise that mobility options are likely to change in the future because of climate change. The observation supports connections to the Phoenix Park to other green spaces beyond the park boundary.

The observation further states that the Strategic Review refers should be in keeping with Conservation Management Plan of 2011; they are against the welcome centre proposals as they would be visually prominent; and Placed emphasis on local engagement.

## Irish Environmental Network (IEN)

**The Irish Environmental Network is a network of individual environmental Non-Government Organisations (NGOs) that work individually and, as appropriate, jointly to protect and enhance the environment.**

IEN requests that the proposal is screened for Strategic Environmental Assessment. The Observation generally discusses the shortcomings of the consultation process and the legal obligation for the OPW to provide further details of the project.

## Irish Pedestrian Network

**The Irish Pedestrian Network (IPN) group which represents the needs of pedestrian in an inclusive and ambitious way and to deliver a public realm that is accessible, walkable and supportive of our own, and the planet's, health.**

IPN submission has a lot of overlap with the generic submission prepared by the Green Party. It supports an integrated strategy for movement within the Park; more permeability and wayfinding for pedestrians and a focus on amenity and green spaces. But is against the focus on the central line; the inclusion of shared space on that central spine.

### Irish Wildlife Trust

**The IWT is a national conservation charity which works to raise awareness of the importance of nature to people.**

The Observation states that while lacking in specific details the Strategic Review is clearly aimed at increasing visitor numbers to the Park. They are concerned that no review seems to have been undertaken as to the capacity of the Park to receive increased numbers. The prioritisation of the Parks natural heritage is essential if it is to retain this function. In this context any conversion of green spaces to hard surfacing would be undesirable. There is no discussion in the plan as to how the Park can be enhanced for its wildlife value.

### Leave No Trace

**Leave No Trace is an outdoor ethics programme designed to promote and inspire responsible outdoor recreation through education, research and partnerships.**

Leave No Trace would be delighted to work alongside the OPW and the Phoenix Park specifically in the area of outdoor education regarding positive behavioural change in outdoor recreation. For the biodiversity quarter they would recommend that a habitat map is undertaken. Within each of the quarters, where visitor information is provided, Leave No Trace Ireland would like to see the incorporation of the seven principles of 'leave no trace'.

### Na Gaeil Óga C.L.G

**Na Gaeil Óga is an Irish athletic club that is based in the Phoenix Park.**

They state that no reference is made to the sport, GAA or playing fields in the draft document.

They want to ensure that all of these parks will be in the future and that players will have access to them without any additional interference.

The focus should be on the use of the local and regular community as well as protecting and promoting the park's heritage by focusing on restoring existing buildings rather than building new ones, and protecting the parks and green areas.

### Northern Ireland Heritage Gardens Trust

**The aim is to preserve, protect and promote the heritage parks and gardens of the whole island.**

It is our view that this is an architect driven review in which none of the contributors have demonstrable background in dealing with historic landscapes or gardens and inconsistent with the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan of 2011.

Proposed Visitors Centre is out of character with the Park. A small lodge, in keeping with the park's character and discreetly located 'within the grove of Holm Oaks' would be much more appropriate.

The need to upgrade the Ashtown facilities has been widely recognised, as have the advantages of opening up the Magazine Fort and building a bridge to the Memorial Gardens.

### Ordnance Survey Ireland

There are two areas on OSi perimeter that might consider, which would greatly enhance the experience of visitors to OSi:

- The ha-ha boundary, which surrounds the OSi complex dates from the same period as Mountjoy House. The ha-ha is a feature of the Phoenix Park and was a great source of interest for our visitors. The ha-ha boundary of OSi is a good example of this type of boundary, however over the years the moat part of ha-ha has become partially overgrown and requires clearing.
- The rear pedestrian gate to the complex requires expert refurbishment and painting.

### Phibsboro Village Tidy Towns

**Phibsboro Village Tidy Towns is a community organisation. Submission provided is in generic template as submitted by the Green Party.**

### Wild Awake & Phoenix Forest School

**Wild Awake Education aims to rekindle environmental and cultural resilience through woodland experiences for children, teenagers and adults.**

The school has been present since 2015 and supports the positive biodiversity role within the plan. Emphasises the importance of Phoenix Park for education in this regard. Support more planting of trees and wildflowers. Phoenix Park has a lot of potential for a re-wilded urban space, sustainable energy and providing a much needed wildlife haven for animals and humans alike. Forest School would like to be involved in this.

## 3.5 Public Bodies / Semi-State Agencies

The following public bodies / semi-state agencies submitted observations during the consultation, the contents of their submissions are summarised below and also captured within Section 3.1:

### Bord Bia

**Bord Bia, an Irish state agency, our aim is to promote Irish food, drink and horticulture suppliers. Operates Bloom annually.**

Welcomes the OPW's commissioned Strategic Review of the Phoenix Park and the role Bloom has in this regard.

The sustainable basis on which Bloom is developed, built and reversed is consistent with the aims of the Strategic Review in regard to sustainability and specifically for the Demesne space at its core.

They envisage a place for Bloom within the new visitors centre at Ashtown Demesne in its current form and its evolved from following its own Strategic Review. Its exact location should regard Bloom's role.

They note that Bloom is likely to generate a floor area greater than that suggested in the diagrammatic representation. Request that consideration be given to scaling up the services and other elements to cater for events such as those outlined. Request that fully impact of construction on Bloom be fully assessed to avoid disruption to or suspension of the event.

### CIE Property Group

**The Group Property Department is responsible for the CIE property portfolio nationwide including Heuston Station.**

CIE has an interest in this process as both the provider of sustainable public transport services to key hub and node points around the park and as a neighbour at the critical Park Gate "Welcome Quarter". In this regard a number of the Actions highlighted in the Strategic Review are of direct relevance to the CIE Group.

CIE are in the process of renewing their Masterplan for Heuston Station lands.

## 3.6 Residents Associations

The following Residents Associations submitted observations during the consultation, the contents of their submissions are summarised below and also captured within Section 3.1:

### Chapelizod Residents Association

Central Line proposals are unclear and problematic. If the grand vista down Chesterfield Avenue is to be improved, they suggest planting more chestnut trees, rather than adding attractions.

Supports Ashtown Visitors Centre proposals, link to the Irish National War Memorial Garden. Instead of farming out necessary work on further studies to consultants, the OPW should instead consider employing a small team of analysts which would also benefit OPW capacity in the long term.

### Deer Park Area Residents Association

Against any loss of access to Chesterfield Avenue which will result in significant gridlock in the area for many; driverless shuttles would attract vandals, low electric buses are preferable; welcome centres at entrance would draw further car parking; existing cycle paths are unsafe, sufficient parking on Chesterfield Avenue to facilitate even increased usage on fine Summer days.

### The Georgian Village Residents Association

Generally positive response to the proposals. Traffic measures for Chesterfield Avenue considered impractical. A visitors centre without car parking is also impractical. Should be sensitive to needs of car users.

### Kilmainham Inchicore Network (KIN)

Kilmainham Inchicore Network (KIN) aims to facilitate local people, local businesses and community groups engage in the development and enhancement of the economic, social, cultural, and environmental aspects of Inchicore and Kilmainham.

KIN welcomes the proposed footbridge linking the Phoenix Park to the Irish National War Memorial Gardens and would like to see greater linkages, magazine fort; would like to see greater connectivity and linkages explored and extended beyond the Irish National War Memorial Gardens outwards

to Kilmainham Gaol and Courthouse, IMMA and Richmond Barracks.

KIN state that development of linkages and connectivity between all the sites in the surrounding southern neighbourhoods of Kilmainham and Inchicore will achieve a far wider and greater benefit to the Phoenix Park Visitor Experience as well as the citizens living in the areas.

### Kirkpatrick, Rockfield, Coolmine Residents Association

Lack of accessibility of the report for example legibility and availability. Very little intervention needed, improved signage needed, additional visitors and education centre required, restriction to Chesterfield Avenue would be problematic.

### Navan Road Community Council (NRCC)

The NRCC is a community group which represents local interests in the Navan Road area by lobbying Dublin City Council and local representatives in relation to issues such as traffic, planning and policing.

NRCC refer to their role as recognised Stakeholders in the Phoenix Park as part of the Phoenix Park Conservation Management Plan 2011. Stating that consultation was insufficient for a number of reasons.

They further object to the potential for the OPW to profit from the park and the provision of large café / retail opportunities. The existing Ashtown Demesne Visitor Centre should be retained. Further - one small visitors centre would suffice which would be sympathetic to the Park. A very modern structure would not be in keeping with Chesterfield Avenue, the historic gas lamps, the gate lodges and existing monuments.

The submission also objected to the provision of a Dublin Bus service specifically in the Park, BBQ facilities, and further concerts.

## **Royal Canal Park Community Association**

The Royal Canal Park Community Association aims to protect and improve the quality of life for all those living in Royal Canal Park.

The view of the Associations is that in principle proposals to upgrade the Park as an amenity are to be welcomed. They are concerned however, that proposals should not adversely affect or detract from the Park's existing character.

The Park was awarded the Gold International Large Urban Parks Award in 2018. The current configuration, running, and traditions of the Park are the qualities that gave rise to this very prestigious award. They suggest that care and sensitivity are required in any upgrade proposals, and further consultation with the wider communities around the Park would be beneficial.



## 3.7 Public Representatives

The following Public Representatives submitted observations during the consultation, the contents of their submissions are summarised below and captured within Section 3.1:

### Ciaran Cuffe MEP (formerly Cllr)

Supports the Strategic Review overall and majority of proposals. Bus service should be allowed back into the Park, car traffic should be reduced, review on redesigning the pedestrian and cycling facilities required, suggests café and bike hire at Magazine Fort, more benches should be provided, further Info on 'Star Fort' could be provided, reconsider banning BBQs, Infirmary Road Derelict Toilets could be adapted, improved Dog facilities needed, bye laws are out of date and should be updated.

### Cieran Perry Cllr

Wishes to highlight the inadequacy of the current consultation process. Requests that DCC requirement for preparation of a Special Amenity Area Order (SAAO) for the Phoenix Park is completed prior to any further progress at this review stage.

Has a huge concern with any proposed increase in retail and parking facilities to either accommodate this expanded retail or the increased visitors.

Phoenix Park is a 'sanctuary from the city' and the surrounding urbanisation of the city. Minor adjustments rather than major infrastructural changes are all that are required.

Is opposed to the modernisation of the original entrance to the park as portrayed by the 'Welcome Pavilions' in the photomontages or the Magazine Fort.

### Jack Chambers TD

Concerned that the proposals neglect the park's important historical and cultural role; any change in access requires great consideration a mobility management plan would need to take into account the needs and views of residents.

Concerns over the push towards profit making with increase in concerts and community opportunities. Further review needs more defined proposals.

### Joan Burton TD

Reservations about the role of Fáilte Ireland as a designated stakeholder. Supportive of the link to the Irish National War Memorial Garden and the Magazine Fort proposals. However large scale retail proposals are not in the interest of the park.

Other development initiatives about the park should proceed. Strong literary connections should be emphasised. Scope for more sporting activities in the park. Knockmaroon-Mount Sackville entrance proposal is good.

### John Walsh Cllr

Supportive of Magazine Fort rehabilitation with a modest cafe; and Irish National War Memorial Garden link; train station link; visitor centre at Knockmaroon Gate. Concerned about emphasis on retail; improved facilities in the Park.

### Ted Leddy on behalf of Office of the Taoiseach Leo Varadkar

Welcomes the Strategic Review of the Phoenix Park and the Consultation; supportive the commemorative quarter and the Magazine Fort; the integrated visitor experience and the proposed improvements at City Gate. However is against the over development (including new buildings and car parks). It is also important to bear in mind that the Phoenix Park is an important through road link for many commuters in the wider Dublin 15 area. This should not be ignored in the review process.

### Mary Fitzpatrick Cllr

The scope of the public consultation on the proposed Strategic Review was far too limited; insufficient awareness among public; against 'limiting bio. diversity in the Phoenix Park to one section'. Transport proposed are positive but some unclear suggestions. Existing PP properties should be improved and re-let to staff.

Suggests online visitor experience. Retail activity in the park is wholly inappropriate.

### **Neasa Hourigan Cllr**

Coordinated submissions on behalf of the Green Party and enclosed petition. See Section 3.2 above.

### **Roderic O’Gorman Cllr**

Park must not be changed at the expense of the existing environmental and leisure benefits; additional toilets and facilities; Magazine Fort, pedestrian and cycling linkage to Irish National War Memorial Garden supported; importance of the park to wildlife; considers biodiversity quarter as a reduction in status; access through the Park should be maintained along Chesterfield Avenue; cyclist pedestrian conflict points need to be reviewed.

Would like more engagement from Fingal County Council with the OPW in regard to Ashtown Gate.

### **Ruth Coppinger TD**

Proposal has too much focus on retail opportunities arising from tourism; essential that the Park’s character is maintained; the ‘major visitor centre’ and permanent car parking in the area is a serious concern; welcome recommendations such as opening up access to the park from the Irish National War Memorial Garden in Island bridge; any changes in the Magazine Fort should take into consideration the historical importance; Phoenix Park should be used for major events on occasion but done in a manner mindful of the local community and the primary purpose of the Park; increasing public transport capacity to the Park required; the deer herd in the Park should be maintained and space needs to be given to them.

### **Tina MacVeigh Cllr**

This observation questions the links to the 2011 Conservation Management Plan; too much emphasis placed on the tourist which may be at the expense of historical, ecological importance of the Park; what steps are taken to improve transport links to the Park; questions the assumption that the document that visitors want a museum/event /retail experience; how will chain retail outlets be prevented from setting up in the park.

### **Marie Sherlock Cllr**

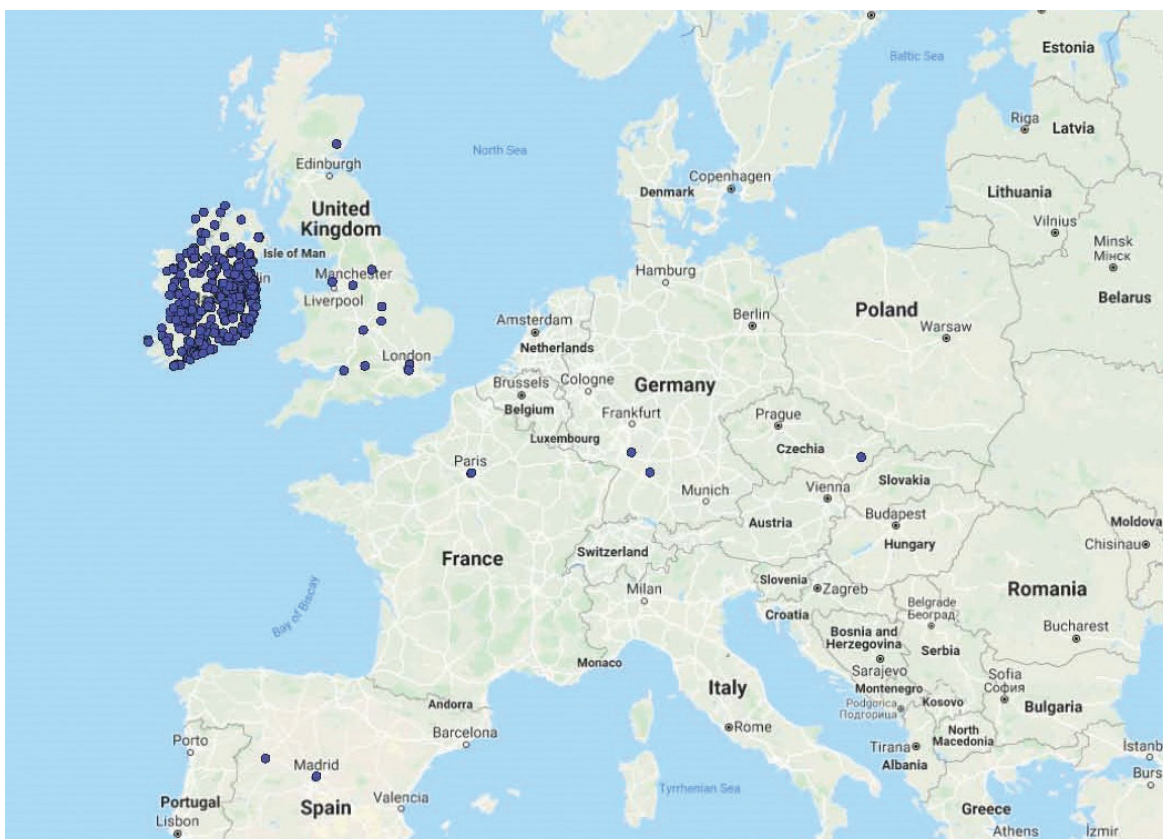
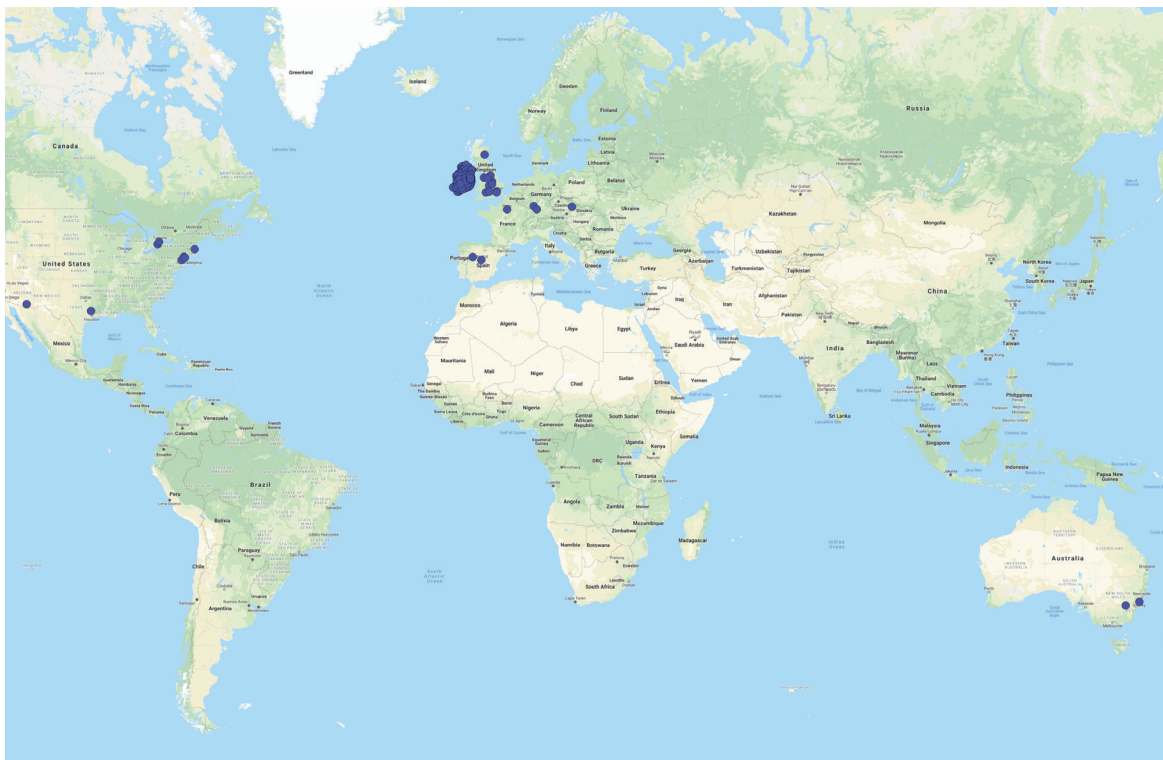
Unhappy with the consultation process. Welcomes the appropriate conservation of the Magazine Fort and the proposed bridge at the Irish National War Memorial Gardens. Concerned if Dublin Bus permitted through the Park as it would detract from the character of the Park. Needs more information on the proposed new visitor centre and opposed to retail and over development of the Park. Welcomes efforts to raise awareness of Park

### **Emer Currie Cllr**

Review must be balanced with the needs of the residents in D15 & wider Dublin area. Concerns on lack of consultation with local community. Issue with limiting commuter through traffic without the provision of alternative options. Objected to Dublin Bus operating through the Park. Concerned about over development of Park. Supportive of Magazine Fort & Bridge at the War Memorial Gardens. All proposals to be developed in consultation with local community.

# Appendix 1

## Global Distribution of Responses



## Appendix 2

# Issues Arising and Percentage Occurrences

The table below is a summary of the Excel table used in this analysis. The topics below are the same as those discussed in the analysis generally.

Topics	Count	Percentage
The Park should be left in its existing condition (natural, informal and wild) and its character / identity maintained as is.	290	25.9%
The Park is extremely important to the city as green space / lung for the city. Its natural heritage must not be diminished / biodiversity protected / re-wild plant additional trees and plants. Excellent opportunity for climate action.	215	19.2%
Generally against overdevelopment, loss of greenspace and commercialisation of the park.	214	19.1%
Support the reduction of the Park as vehicular route (slowing down, partial closure of access, increased traffic management, enforcement of speeds)	162	14.5%
Generally against expanded the retail and café area	153	13.6%
Against any additional parking (e.g. bloom permanent car park)	152	13.6%
Additional facilities required, especially more toilets but also bins and water fountains.	112	10.0%
Support Magazine fort proposal and associated suitable facilities.	100	8.9%
Support sustainable transport proposals including public transport, electric shuttles, or improved access to train line or extension of Luas line.	97	8.7%
Welcome the improvement of pedestrian and cyclist facilities generally (surface, additional paths, crossings, increased management for safety, additional Dublin bike stations and rental locations)	91	8.1%
Support for pedestrian / cyclist connection with south bank of the Liffey (e.g. Liffey foot bridge / Irish National War Memorial Gardens link or with Waterstown).	87	7.8%
The Review should have more consideration of people of Ireland / users instead of occasional visitor / tourist for purposes of 'tourist product' and profit.	87	7.8%
The consultation process was flawed (too short, structure and language used was unclear, no full plan accessible online etc.).	79	7.0%
A number of observers supported the principle of the plan and the process undertaken in this regard.	50	4.5%
Against visitors centre proposal at entrance to the park (specifically the pavilion building).	42	3.7%
Generally against the closure of chesterfield avenue and any reduction on car usage which would impact commuters in particular	41	3.7%
Against specific proposals Visitors centre at Ashtown	26	2.3%
Should have facilities for all abilities and be accessible to all.	22	2.0%
Supports additional way find, information and signage sensitive to the character of the Park	11	1.0%
Support café and upgraded facilities in particular welcome centre in keeping with the scale and sensitive to the character of the Park.	8	0.7%

### Brady Shipman Martin

**DUBLIN** Canal House, Canal Road, Dublin 6, +353 1 208 1900

**CORK** Penrose Wharf Business Centre, Penrose Wharf, Cork, +353 21 242 5620

**LIMERICK** 11 The Crescent, Limerick, +353 61 315 127

## Notes

## Notes



Office of the Public Works

Head Office, Jonathan Swift Street, Trim, Co. Meath, C15 NX36

Tel: (046) 942 6000 / 0761 10 6000

LoCall: 1890 213 414

Fax: (046) 948 1793

Email: [info@opw.ie](mailto:info@opw.ie)

**[www.opw.ie](http://www.opw.ie)**



**Rialtas na hÉireann**  
Government of Ireland