



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council

Report to Arts, Culture, Recreation and Community
SPC

11th January 2016

Item No. 4

PARNELL SQUARE CULTURAL QUARTER AND NEW CITY LIBRARY

Project Up-date

Project Stage 2(a) Sketch Design

Presentation of the Stage 2(a) Sketch Design Report is expected by the end of January.

Project Stage 2(a) Investigation and Survey

A contract for investigative works has been tendered.

Laser scans of the buildings are currently underway.

2015 Communications: Summary

As the project entered the sketch design stage, members of the PSCQ Culture Group met with a variety of stakeholders and advisory groups to further develop the brief for the new complex. Consultation during the year has focused on elements of design requirements such as the user experience, collection and learning spaces, accessibility, retail/catering, and music and digital offers.

Commencing in May 2015 regular monthly project up-date reports were submitted to the Arts, Culture, Recreation and Community SPC meeting. <http://www.dublincity.ie/main-menu-services-recreation-culture/arts-culture-leisure-and-community-spc-meetings>

Work on the sketch design is underway, and the project team has worked weekly with Grafton Architects and Shaffrey Associates Architects towards submission of a planning application in 2016. Fourteen design development meetings have been held to date. A tender for Site Investigation work has been issued as part of this stage.

The historic buildings which form the site for the new City Library and the greater Parnell Square area were highlighted through some special events during the year. Culture Dublin One's Spring Awakening event in April the Culture Dublin one network promotes awareness and engagement with cultural institutions in the Dublin 1 postcode. Spring Awakening was a day of open culture, with events on at institutions such as The Lab, James Joyce Centre, DarcSpace Gallery, Dublin Writer's Museum, Hillsboro Fine Art Gallery, the Pillar Room and Belvedere House. Also in April, the photocall for the announcement of the International Dublin Literary Award Shortlist 2015, with Lord Mayor Christy Burke, was taken at Coláiste Mhuire. The award is an international literary prize for a work of fiction with nominations submitted by public libraries world-wide.

Words on the Street, European Literature Night, took place on 20th May at 12 venues around Parnell Square and its surrounding area. More than 1300 people strolled the streets around Parnell Square sampling literature from a dozen different European countries in beautiful settings such as Dublin City Gallery The Hugh Lane and Belvedere House. Over 450 listeners enjoyed the reading talents of Alexander McCall Smith, one of the world’s most prolific and popular writers and a No. 1 attraction at the Abbey Presbyterian Church on Parnell Square North.

In June 2015 the Irish Times and Evening Herald reported on the approval of Report number 185/2015 at the meeting of the City Council on 8th June 2015, concerning an exchange of properties between Dublin City Council and The Office of Public Works. In exchange for a property at Jamestown Road, Dublin 8, the OPW has transferred ownership of the former Coláiste Mhuire buildings to the City Council.

We launched the Parnell Square Digital storytelling project, ‘Dublin: A Great Place to Start’, in October. This project was conceived to contribute to Dublin’s plans for a new City Library at Parnell Square Cultural Quarter. The project brought together stories of new starts in the city, celebrating the diversity and excitement of Dublin. Participants from Ireland, Brazil, Somalia, Italy, Moldova and South Africa, working with our storytelling team, have created a unique collection of 11 short films which are available to view at www.parnellsquare.ie/gallery

Finance Report

Project Budget to Planning

Funding Source	Amount
Philanthropy – Kennedy Wilson seed budget	€2.5 million
DCC Capital Budget 2015-2017	€ 1.8 million

Kennedy Wilson has committed €2.5 million (seed capital) towards the project to bring it to planning. Costs directly related to the project are paid out of the seed capital budget which is managed directly by PSQ Developments. Cost categories covered by the seed budget include design team fees, commissioned reports, surveys and consultations website design and development and the development of project promotional material. An accounts payable procedure with named authorised signatories has been agreed between the City Council and the Parnell Square Foundation for all seed capital expenditure.

Dublin City Council has committed a budget of €1.8 million over the next three years (2015 – 2017) towards the project. DCC is covering the costs for the in-house project manager and other costs not covered by the categories outlined above. Expenditure drawn on the DCC Capital Budget is subject to the City Council’s approval limits, regulations and Accounts Payable Procedures.

Monthly reports are run on the budget and it is monitored closely with a financial report being presented periodically to the Internal steering group who assess and approve project expenditure.

DCC project costs to date amount to: €128,852.00. The majority of this expenditure relates to professional salaries (€71,472), with additional costs related to project promotion, web hosting, remedial works and preliminary reports.

A future cost for the DCC budget will be security and maintenance for the Colaiste Mhuire buildings when there are transferred to DCC.

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