

PRESS RELEASE

Balbriggan Public Realm Plan Consultants Appointed

Fingal County Council has recently appointed Dublin-based urban design consultants, **Loci**, to prepare a Public Realm Plan for Balbriggan's historic town centre. The plan is being prepared in partnership with Balbriggan Town Council, the Heritage Council and Balbriggan Chamber of Commerce. The aim of the plan is to improve the quality of streets and public spaces in the town centre on the understanding that people choose to spend more time in high quality streets and public spaces, stopping to linger, rather than using streets and spaces merely as thoroughfares, thereby contributing to both the vibrancy and viability of town centres.

According to **Loci**, the plan will seek to build on the positive aspects of the town's natural setting and topography, links to the wider landscape and environs, natural and built heritage, diversity and mix of uses, in order to make it a more attractive place to live and visit.

Although significant public realm improvements have been undertaken by the Council in the recent past, including high quality resurfacing of footpaths, public lighting, way-finding and street furniture, the commissioning of the plan indicates a recognition on the part of the Council and the plan's sponsors that further work is needed to enhance the pedestrian and cyclist experience.

The Heritage Council introduced the concept of Public Realm Plans (PRPs) in 2006 through the work of its all-island initiative — the Irish Walled Towns Network (IWTN). The Heritage Council is sponsoring the development of Public Realm Plans in historic towns throughout Ireland.

Preliminary work on the plan has begun and the Council is inviting the community and local groups to submit their thoughts about what they consider to be the positive and negative aspects of the streets and public spaces in the town centre and what they think should be done to improve them.

As part of the consultation process a public workshop will be held in Balbriggan Town Hall on **Tuesday the 19th of October** starting at 6.30pm to consider these questions. Individuals or groups wishing to attend the workshop or to submit their comments are asked to notify the consultants:

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Tel: (01) 8814062 or e-mail to info@loci.ie.

ENDS 14/10/10