

SHANTYMAN SCULPTURE SCHEME

Five Foot Way Carpark, Cobh.
26.05.2023

CPIU Architects
Cork County Council



PRELIMINARY DESIGN REPORT

A new sculpture has been donated to Cobh town, which will be placed along the walkway of the Five-Foot Way carpark, in hopes to generate a positive impact for locals and visitors of the town. The 3.6m tall, corten steel sculpture depicts a shantyman singing the song 'Holy Ground'. The location has been chosen to emphasise the art piece's strong connection to the sea and ensure its exposure to existing high levels of pedestrian footfall. As outlined in the Cork County Development Plan, the objective of the scheme is to enhance and activate pedestrian links and improve gateways into the town centre.

To accommodate the new sculpture, a new public space (pocket park) has been designed to welcome daily walkway users and visiting tourists to linger longer and enjoy the sculpture with an ocean vista background. The pocket park will create a new safe and universally accessible public amenity by applying DMURS principles; will contribute to slowing down passing traffic and new raingarden including trees will add to nature-based drainage solution, biodiversity, and placemaking. The high-quality amenity proposal in-lieu four carparking spaces will encourage community and local music events around the sea-shanty character.

DESIGN DETAILS

The new soft landscaping is designed as a sustainable drainage raingarden, positively contributing to the strategy of the Flood Risk Assessment Report, which is part of Cork County Development Plan 2022-2028. The raingarden provides a green backdrop concealing the cars from users and any photographs of the sculpture. It contributes to safety and traffic calming measures, collects, and cleans run-off water, and promotes biodiversity with pollinator friendly planting.

A material palette of local and natural materials offers a glimpse of future public realm improvements in the town as part of the Cobh Public Realm Enhancement Plan.

New paving is designed to provide context for the sculpture and situate it within the site. Natural stone contrasts with exposed aggregate concrete to inform visitors of the best point for photographing the sculpture with the harbour backdrop. Stone pavers are inscribed with the lyrics of the 'Holy Ground' shanty, providing emotive context for the sculpture. Metal inserts playfully carry on existing geometries, act as expansion joints, and emphasize the separation between the new and the old.

Innovative integrated seating of the raingarden offers an accessible resting point for all users. This seating will encourage visitors to linger, enjoy the seaside views, and gather amidst the art piece. Ambient placemaking lighting enhances the features of the scheme and creates a safe, gender-sensitive space after dark.

The overall aspiration of the scheme is to provide a new, safe, sheltered, and inclusive public space for the community and visitors to take pride in.