



Kilkenny County Council
County Hall
John Street Kilkenny

26 June 2018

Dear Kilkenny County Council,

Re: Abbey Quarter Temporary Car and Coach Parking – Planning Submission

As you know the Watergate Theatre, Kilkenny's Municipal Theatre, is situated at the heart of the developing cultural quarter, the Abbey Quarter and towards the end of the Medieval Mile. As a 324-seater theatre, funded by local and central government, we have a remit to provide arts, creative, cultural, educational and entertainment opportunities to people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds in Kilkenny; both resident and visitors.

The Watergate is also central to the evening entertainment infrastructure of the proposed Abbey Quarter, so it is essential that access to it is made as straightforward as possible for patrons.

Through this submission the Watergate would like to voice its support for the establishment of a car and coach parking facility which will make access to the theatre for visiting tour operators, schools and all those using the municipal amenity, possible.

The current annual numbers visiting tourist sites and businesses at the Kilkenny Castle end of the Medieval Mile is almost six times as large as that which accesses the attractions and businesses at the proposed Abbey Quarter end. This is not reflective of the quality of offering at one end over the other, rather it points to a disproportion in the planning, development and infrastructural focus given to one end, perhaps to the detriment of the other.

The allocation of sufficient and visible parking at the Kilkenny Castle end of the Medieval Mile has translated directly into footfall, custom and tourism being focussed in that area. This precedent provides an excellent case for developing the same facilities to give focus in equal measure to the resident businesses and tourist attractions at the Abbey Quarter end to enable access to and development of this section of the city.

The establishment of adequate parking at the Abbey Quarter end of the city will have an immediate positive impact and uplift on the businesses and tourist attractions there. We are delighted to see the plan for this through the provision of a temporary car and coach park.

Please contact me for any questions that might arise as part of this submission.

Kindest regards,

Joanna Cunningham
Executive Director
Watergate Theatre