

## STEPHENS STREET PLAZA SLIGO

Computer Generated Image of the proposed plaza (Source; Sligo County Council)



Sligo County Council has received funding from the Urban Regeneration Development Fund that is an initiative set up by Government to redevelop underused areas in towns and cities around Ireland to enable for compact growth of our urban areas. The aim of the Urban Regeneration Development Fund is to stimulate new residential and commercial development in our cities and towns. The proposed plaza is currently occupied by a surface car park. The funding will allow for Sligo County Council to make a number of improvements to the public realm in the town.

There are several redevelopments planned including the car park at Stephens street is proposed to be redeveloped as a new plaza area by the river. The plaza has the potential to be a high-quality public realm design for all residents in Sligo and visitors of Sligo to use and enjoy. Stephen Street car park has the potential to be the central, animated square that Sligo needs. This development will help promote the city as a destination and provide the opportunity to host a wider range of events and activities.

The proposed development is planned to include granite seating, outdoor café/ restaurant seating; retractable canopies to provide occasional covered space at the western corner of the site; a large fixed multi-use canopy to provide a permanently covered space; granite boulders inset in reinforced grass lawn, granite paving; street furniture, street lighting and low shrub planting in the plaza.

The plan will see the removal of all car parking spaces and pave the majority of the space, and create two grass mounds near the building block. Sligo town has proposed some changes in the area which will change the way people travel in the town. Many people believe this will be a positive change which will increase walkability through the town. Sligo County Council want to emphasise the positive impact it will have on Sligo's cultural, social and recreational life.

Members of the public are unhappy with the removal of the car park in the town. The council has reassured the public this will not affect the availability of car parking in the town as there are almost 2,500 other car parking spaces nearby.

As there will need to be changes to the movement of traffic and parking areas to allow for new development to take place, this has been met with resistance from members of the public. Planners and Councillors are worried this resistance from the public will slow the development of the plaza.

A meeting will soon take place between members of the public and Sligo County Council, this meeting will provide an opportunity for all views to be considered and a consensus to be reached between those opposed to the project and others who are in favour of the new plaza.