



Galway is an exquisite city.

Its beauty draws visitors from near and far and we are delighted to share this world famous beauty with them.

But this beauty is fragile and finely balanced. It depends on the gentle and close co existence of the urban and wild, the natural and the manmade, human beings and other lives.

Galway is no Rotterdam, nor Miami nor Barcelona nor was meant to be.

Ireland is a small and easily spoiled island in global terms. Above all we must value what we have and maintain a sense of scale.

Visitors come gently by rail and bus and car and bike and still they swell our streets through the seasons.

They come to walk, to hear music and poetry, to see film but above all to soak in the beauty; to see the sunrises and sunsets around Galway Bay, to photograph the magnificent swans and old boats at the Claddagh. They might chance upon an otter or a heron on their way or see seals in pursuit of mackerel. Undoubtedly swans will swoop low overhead.

One of the most astoundingly beautiful walks in Galway City sets off from the end of Long Walk, through the Spanish Arch over Wolfe Tone Bridge, along the Claddagh Quay and Nimmo's Pier to South Park. This area throngs with visitors and locals in the summer. The eye is drawn outwards all the way following the course of the thundering river Corrib out across the Bay to the Slieve Aughty and Clare Hills bathed in Atlantic light. It is extraordinarily and transcendently beautiful.

Every inch of this vista will be spoiled by the proposed Harbour development. Instead of looking across the bay to distant hills industrial construction will face the viewer. Concrete and buildings will dominate the iconic outlook. An area that appears to be the size of the Claddagh and as large as medieval Galway will protrude out into the bay crossing the course of the Corrib causing untold disturbance to the wildlife and the natural currents.

It is clear to Galwegians that the Corrib has never before surged with such mighty and sudden and swollen torrents. To make a construction that would partially obstruct its outflow appears reckless even to the layperson.

What a bizarre notion to spoil the beauty of Galway to usher in fleeting visitors to witness the beauty we have spoiled in the process...

Why would we do this? Why would we jeopardise and sacrifice all we have, for what? There is a want to do it by some individuals but there is certainly no need. The railway connection works in both directions. The country can be easily crossed now in 2 hours. We as humans are evolving to appreciate that progress is not about ruining places of natural beauty for short term gain but in living harmoniously and valuing our natural world which yields wholesome and sustainable economic benefits.

Galway is too beautiful and fragile for this development. She must be protected and cherished for the good of all, locals and visitors.

