

## **South Dublin County Development Plan**

### **Review of County Development Plan 2004-2010 & Preparation of County Development Plan 2010-2016**

## **BACKGROUND ISSUES**

**Planning Department,  
South Dublin County Council,  
County Hall,  
Town Centre,  
Tallaght,  
Dublin 24.**

**November 2008**

## INTRODUCTION

### The Development Plan Review Process

South Dublin County Council commences the review of the Development Plan 2004-2010 and the preparation of the new six-year County Development Plan for the period 2010 - 2016 on the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2008.

The timeframe for this process is fixed by legislation. The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Development Plan be made within ninety-nine weeks of commencement of the process.

The Act provides for the preparation of the plan in 3 stages:

- Stage 1: Pre-draft
- Stage 2: Preparation of Draft Plan
- Stage 3: Making of Development Plan

Within each of these stages there are three common elements:

- Public Consultation
- Manager's Report / Recommendations
- Councilors' Directions / Motions.

Inputs from a wide range of people, voluntary groups and statutory agencies is important at the start of the plan-making process, so that the Development Plan reflects public aspirations and concerns as well as Government policy, strategies and guidance.

### Development Plans - Guidelines For Planning Authorities

Government guidance on the preparation of Development Plans advises that the structure and presentation of the Development Plan needs to address the following aims;

- meet the requirements of planning legislation;
- address the relevant planning issues in order to promote the proper planning and sustainable development of the area;

- be easy to read and follow a natural and logical progression from strategic issues to more detailed matters such as development objectives and requirements, which provide the basis for development management decision making;
- be internally consistent;
- be laid out clearly with the use of colour, illustrations and maps to enhance understanding and interpretation.

To achieve these aims the Guidelines suggest the following development plan structure:

#### Strategic Planning Issues

A clear focus on the strategic or "big picture" planning issues that an area faces, putting the city, town or county in question in the wider context as established by the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines. This will be followed by an integrated and coherent overall strategy, which could be set out on a topic basis under headings such as settlement, transport, housing, enterprise and employment etc.

#### Policies & Objectives

The policies and objectives and other measures, (e.g. guidance notes, standards) necessary to implement the strategy, particularly in the operation of the day to day development management system.

#### Detail (Appendices)

Ensuring that the plan contains sufficient detail to explain how the strategy set out in the plan has been arrived at.

### Background Issues Paper:

This background paper has been prepared as part of the pre-draft stage of the process. It is intended as further background detail to the pre-draft consultation brochure. This document is split into the following headings which are similar to those of the current County

Development Plan. This is not an exhaustive list of possible issues.

### **Topic Headings**

- Setting Legislative & Policy Scene
- Population, Housing & Settlement Strategy
- Enterprise and Employment
- Social Inclusion & Community Development
- Recreation, Leisure & Tourism
- Town, District & Local Centres
- Retailing
- Transportation
- Water Supply & Drainage
- Environmental Services
- Built Heritage
- Natural Heritage
- Strategic Environmental Assessment

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1: Mandatory Objectives for Development Plans

Appendix 2: Guidelines and Strategies to be considered in new Development Plans

Appendix 3: Elected Members of South Dublin County Council.

## **SETTING THE LEGISLATIVE AND POLICY SCENE**

### **Planning and Development Act 2000**

The Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a Development Plan shall, so far as is practicable, be consistent with national plans, policies and strategies, which relate to the proper planning and sustainable development of the area covered by the plan. In addition, Development Plans should have regard to any guidelines issued by the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, which would have a bearing on proper planning and sustainable development.

### **EU Sustainable Development Strategy**

In June 2006 the European Council approved the new EU Sustainable Development Strategy as an update of the strategy adopted in 2001. The Strategy aims at bringing about a high level of environmental protection, social equity and cohesion, economic prosperity and active promotion of sustainable development worldwide.

The renewed strategy sets out overall objectives, targets and actions for seven priority challenges for the period up to 2010, with the aim of meeting current needs without making the quality of life worse for future generations. These relate to:

- Climate change and clean energy;
- Sustainable transport;
- Sustainable consumption and production;
- Conservation and management of natural resources;
- Public health;
- Social inclusion, demography, migration;
- Global poverty.

The Strategy recognises that there are multiple inter-linkages between the key challenges, for example between the use of renewable energy and climate change, or climate change and poverty, and that solutions must take this into account.

### **National and Regional Policy and Guidance**

There have been a number of developments in national and regional policy and guidance since the Development Plan became operative in December 2004. These initiatives and documents will have an impact on the implementation of the Plan over the coming years.

Some of the relevant guidelines and statutory provisions are outlined below.

#### ***National Climate Change Strategy***

The National Climate Change Strategy 2007-2012 follows on from the first national strategy, published in 2000.

The purpose of the Strategy is twofold:

- to show clearly the measures by which Ireland will meet its 2008-2012 climate change commitments under various international agreements; and
- to show how these measures position us for the post-2012 period, and to identify the areas in which further measures are being researched and developed to enable us to meet our eventual 2020 commitment.

The Strategy recognises that decisions by local authorities on the location, design and construction of domestic and commercial developments and of related economic and social activity, can have a significant affect on greenhouse gas emissions.

#### ***Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area***

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016 (RPG-GDA) provide an overall strategic context for the Development Plans of each local authority in the GDA, and also provide a framework for future investment in sanitary services, transportation and other infrastructure.

The Guidelines propose a strategy for the Metropolitan Area that will lead to a more compact urban form and facilitate the provision and use of an enhanced public transport system.

The projected additional population and households in the Metropolitan Area will be accommodated through measures including:

- Consolidation of the three western towns of Tallaght, Lucan-Clondalkin and Blanchardstown to their approximate design populations;
- The development of a limited number of new areas contiguous to existing centres and to public transport corridors;
- Re-development of brownfield sites and infill development within the existing built-up area; and
- Increasing occupancy rates in existing residential areas.

### **Transport 21**

Transport 21 is the capital investment framework agreed by Government under the National Development Plan for the development of transport infrastructure for the period 2006 to 2015. This framework provides for investment in national roads and public transport and is made up of two investment programmes – a national programme and a programme for the Greater Dublin Area (GDA).

### **Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area**

The Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) strategy 'A Platform for Change', outlines an integrated transportation strategy for the Greater Dublin Area for the period 2000 – 2016. The DTO is currently preparing a new Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area for the period 2010-2030.

The legislation establishing the new Dublin Transport Authority (Dublin Transport Authority Act 2008) requires the DTA's first transport strategy to incorporate the work done on a new transport strategy by the DTO until such time as the DTO is dissolved.

### **Strategic Environmental Assessment**

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of Development Plans is required under the EU SEA Directive 2001/42/EC. SEA is a separate parallel process carried out in tandem with the preparation of the Development Plan.

The objective of the Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development.

### **South Dublin County Strategies**

#### South Dublin County Development Board Strategy 2002 - 2012

In 2002 the South Dublin County Development Board published a 10 year strategy up to the year 2012 for the social, economic and cultural development of the county, entitled 'South Dublin: A Place for People'. It aims to improve the quality of life of people who live or work in, or visit, South Dublin County.

#### South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan 2004 – 2009

"Connecting with Communities" – the Corporate Plan for South Dublin sets out the high level strategy for South Dublin County Council for the period 2004 – 2009. The Development Plan will be drawn up to reflect the objectives of the Corporate Plan and any new plan and to act as the land-use basis for securing its implementation.

Strategic goals and objectives set out in the *County Development Board Strategy* and the Corporate Plan will be taken into account in the preparation of the Development Plan 2010-2016.

## POPULATION, HOUSING AND SETTLEMENT STRATEGY

### Introduction

The population and household statistics and trends are derived from census data. Notwithstanding the current structural issues surrounding the economy and housing, projections still point to an increasing national population and demand for housing, given greater longevity, smaller household size and a stable birth rate.

### Housing Strategy

The Housing Strategy included in the County Development Plan aims to ensure that sufficient land is zoned to meet the existing and future housing needs of the county over the lifetime of the plan. It also seeks to ensure that housing is available for people who have different levels of income by ensuring the provision of 15% of housing units as social and affordable housing. The Housing Strategy will be updated in the review of the County Development Plan.

### Population

The census results show that the population of South Dublin rose by 3.4% from 2002 to 2006.

**Population Change 2002 – 2006**

	2002	2006	actual change	%
South Dublin	238835	246935	8100	3.4
D L Rathdown	191792	194038	2246	1.2
Fingal	196413	239992	43579	22.0
Dublin City	495781	506211	10430	2.1

Source: CSO

A more detailed analysis at District Electoral Division level indicates that there is a decline in population in the older parts of the county. Areas which experienced an increase include Saggart, Firhouse, Lucan Esker and Tallaght-Jobstown. A more significant trend is the net out-migration in the inter-censal period 2002–2006. Although population rose by 8,100 persons natural increase in the county was 13,796 persons (i.e. births minus deaths),

resulting in net out-migration from the county of 5,696 persons.

This contrasts with substantial in-migration to the neighbouring county of Fingal which recorded an increase of 29,869 persons. Census figures also reveal significant in-migration to the surrounding counties of Meath, Wexford and Kildare.

It is possible that the relatively long lead in time to some of the new development areas in the county such as Adamstown has resulted in a slower population increase. The further development of these areas will likely result in significant in-migration to South Dublin in the next intercensal period.

The evident population trends will need to be taken into account as part of the review of the County Development Plan. This will also be influenced by the policies of both the Regional Planning Guidelines for Dublin and the National Spatial Strategy, which emphasise the need to consolidate growth in the Metropolitan Area of the GDA region.

### Household Size

The 2006 census recorded the average household size for South Dublin as 3.03 persons per household which is a fall from 3.21 in 2002. Household size is falling due to smaller households. However it is still above the national figure of 2.8 and the figures for the other Dublin counties.

### Population and Housing Forecasts.

The review of Housing Needs in the Greater Dublin Area (March 2007) shows an increase of 2,064 dwelling units in the projected housing needs of South Dublin in the period from 2003–2010. Overall, in the period from 2003–2016 a total of 46,459 additional housing units will be required in the South Dublin area.

A total of 15,018 housing units were completed in South Dublin from 2003–2007. Therefore 31,441 units will need to be constructed in the period 2008–2016.,

equating to an average of 3,493 units per annum. With respect to the capacity of the existing residential zoned lands it is envisaged that they can accommodate 40,500 dwelling units. The accommodation of this population will form the basis of the settlement strategy for the county in the next plan.

#### **House Completions in South Dublin**

Year	Units
2003	2134
2004	2769
2005	3456
2006	3389
2007	3270
<b>Total</b>	<b>15,018</b>

Source: Annual Housing Statistics, DEHLG

#### **Housing Type**

The table below indicates that, of the four Dublin Authorities, South Dublin has the highest percentage of semi-detached dwellings and the lowest percentage of apartments. However, more recent Planning Department surveys indicate that apartments comprised over 70% of new dwellings completed in South Dublin in 2007. Nonetheless, approximately 90% of all dwellings in the County are houses.

#### **Percentage of Private Households by Accommodation Type 2006**

	De-tached house	Semi-detached house	Terraced house	Apt, flat, bedsit
<b>Dublin</b>	11.8%	36.9%	28.1%	20.5%
<b>Dublin City</b>	4.7%	24.0%	36.9%	31.0%
<b>D L Rathdown</b>	23.1%	42.9%	17.2%	15.1%
<b>Fingal</b>	20.1%	45.8%	18.8%	12.5%
<b>South Dublin</b>	10.5%	53.4%	25.5%	8.0%

Source: CSO

#### **Vacancy**

The rate of dwelling vacancy in the county on the night of the census at 6.2% is the lowest in the State, where the national vacancy rate is 15%.

There were 4,063 vacant houses and 1,033 vacant flats recorded in South Dublin on the night of the census. A more detailed analysis of census results shows that areas with a large number of new residential schemes showed higher rates of unoccupied units – Tallaght Springfield

DED had 15% of units unoccupied and Saggart DED had 24%.

#### **Density, Urban Design and Height**

A sustainable urban form is based on the concept of a compact city characterised by ease of access to public transport, schools and community uses, parks, shops and the work place, without recourse to the private car. The current Development Plan places significant emphasis on setting higher average densities within the urban area as the key to achieving this compact built form, and avoiding a sprawling city edge.

Recent Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government Guidelines, “Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, Consultation Draft Guidelines for Planning Authorities” emphasise the provision of infrastructure in tandem with the provision of housing in new developing areas.

Developments in the Adamstown Strategic Development Zone show that a sustainable density is possible using a mix of unit types, sizes and design, while achieving a high level of amenity for residents and a concurrent provision of housing and other facilities.

#### **Rural Housing**

The key aim is to facilitate the provision of sustainable housing for members of the rural community while at the same time restricting the further widespread proliferation of housing development in rural areas of the county.

## ENTERPRISE AND EMPLOYMENT

### Introduction

The Development Plan 2004-2010 seeks to provide for the future well being of the residents of the County by facilitating economic development and the growth of employment opportunities in all sectors in accordance with the principles of sustainable development.

The strategy for the further development of enterprise and employment in the County is:

- Ensure sufficient serviced land to facilitate inward investment and local economic development and expansion.
- Facilitate a wide range of locations within the County for different types of enterprise from international business and technology parks to small and medium enterprises (SME) and micro-enterprise centres in accordance with the principles of sustainability.
- Facilitate development of tourism infrastructure in a sustainable and sensitive manner that maximises the recreational and tourist potential of the County's natural and built assets.
- Provide for a wide range of employment needs so that people with a diverse range of skill levels can find employment in the County.
- Promote good quality working environments with good access to essential daily services e.g. crèches and local shops, and continue to encourage investment in the environmental improvement and the renewal of existing industrial estates and commercial areas across the County.
- Facilitate and encourage office development and major service sector employment in town and district centres.
- Facilitate the development of science, technology and knowledge-based enterprise and other higher order economic activities in the County.
- Facilitate agricultural, horticultural and rural related enterprises in the County.
- Facilitate the efficient and sustainable

operation of the extractive industry in the County.

South Dublin has been well provided for in the past in terms of industrial zoned land and land zoned within Town Centres for office use, which has contributed to a significant growth in industrial and commercial enterprises within the county. Approximately 67 percent of the land zoned for industry within the county has been developed, with a significant proportion of developed industrial land located in the east and north of the County.

There are over 4 million square metres (m<sup>2</sup>) of gross floorspace within existing industrial areas in the County. However, 10.2 % of this was found to be vacant. Warehousing is the main industrial use throughout the County comprising 57.7 % of all floorspace, followed by office uses at 15.2 % and manufacturing industry at 10.5 %.

Employment within the County is concentrated in the services sector, including both locally and internationally traded services. The growth sectors in the County are biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, metals and engineering, computing infrastructure, hospitality, transport and logistics and internationally traded services.

### Relevant Policy and Guidelines

The national economic development strategy stresses the importance of the knowledge economy in generating both indigenous growth and as a source of inward investment.

- The *National Development Plan 2007-2014* identifies investment priorities including economic infrastructure and enterprise, science and innovation.
- *Towards 2016; A Ten Year Framework Social Partnership Agreement 2006-2015* sets out a

- vision for Ireland focusing on social and economic policy.
- *Strategy for Science, Technology and Innovation, 2006-2013* seeks to ensure that Ireland excels in research and knowledge.
  - *Transport 21, 2006-2015* is the national blueprint to provide the transport infrastructure that promotes accessibility to employment, commercial and residential developments by sustainable modes.
  - The *National Spatial Strategy* advocates a closer matching of where people live with where they work, and highlights the need for effective integration of land use and transportation policy within the spatial structure of the Greater Dublin Area.
  - Consolidation of the urban centres and redevelopment of previously developed lands (brownfield sites) within the Metropolitan Area are key objectives of the *Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG-GDA)*.

### **Serviced Land**

Serviced land has been provided primarily on green field sites, within the county. Development on these sites has been guided through the use of masterplans prepared for relevant lands.

### **Science and Technology**

The Council has continued to encourage a high level of development of science, technology and knowledge-based enterprise in the county and has succeeded in attracting major companies, such as Wyeth Medical and Microsoft, to locate at Grange Castle Business Park.

### **Business Parks**

The Council has promoted a high quality of development within business parks (such as Citywest, the home to the National Digital Park) and have promoted quality buildings within attractive open parkland. This has in

turn attracted major companies to invest within the county.

### **Office Development**

Office development has grown significantly within the county, a large proportion of which is located on land zoned industrial in the current plan. Approximately 134,000 m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace located within industrial areas has been recorded as office-based industry. This represents a significant increase on 2001 figures when just 37,000 m<sup>2</sup> of office-based industry was recorded.

### **Enterprise Centres**

The Council has assisted in the provision of incubation and micro-enterprise units in local centres and disadvantaged neighbourhoods, as well as in areas which do not have any such facilities.

### **Key Challenges**

One of the main challenges in the future will be facilitating the continuance of inward investment and the development of indigenous businesses within the county while ensuring that employment activities are located in appropriate areas.

Employment-intensive uses such as office-based industry are appropriate in locations well served by public transport and other services, such as the town and district centres, thereby helping to discourage the over reliance on the private car for commuting purposes. Road transport dependent activities such as wholesale and distribution businesses are better located in areas with good access to the major road network.

Knowledge-based industries require a highly educated and skilled workforce and it will be a challenge for the county to work with national agencies responsible for education policy to ensure that the county's education needs are met.

## **SOCIAL INCLUSION AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

### **Introduction**

Community facilities such as schools, health centres, neighbourhood centres, libraries, community centres and childcare facilities are vital to the life of the county in that access for all to good community facilities enhances the quality of life for all. The need for a high standard of community facilities is paramount particularly with the increase in higher density living. The recent *“Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas, consultation draft guidelines for planning authorities”* places a great emphasis on the need to provide community facilities such as schools and health centres in tandem with the provision of residential units.

### **Social Inclusion**

Social exclusion refers to where certain individuals or groups do not feel they belong to the community because of poverty, lack of education, training or life skills. Social inclusion is the active process of strengthening the sense of belonging an individual or group has to their community. It ensures the fullest participation of all member of the community in decision making.

Social exclusion can affect a number of groups and individuals including older people, members of the travelling community, lone parents, homeless people, asylum seekers, long term unemployed, women, and migrants. The county has a number of areas in West Tallaght and also North and South West Clondalkin where a high proportion of the population experiences social exclusion.

At a national level the *National Action Plan for Social Inclusion 2007 – 2016* published in February 2007 outlines a coherent national strategy for social inclusion.

South Dublin has a dedicated Social Inclusion Unit and a social inclusion strategy to combat social exclusion. The shared vision for the social, economic and cultural development of the county is contained within the *South Dublin County Development Board Strategy 2002 – 2012“ – A Place for People*. The Development Plan has a more specific role dealing with the physical development and the proper planning and sustainable development of the county. However section 10 (2) (D) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended) states that a development plan shall include objectives in relation to *“The integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population.”*

The development plan through its impact on the built environment has a key role to play in developing viable and sustainable communities. Different groups such as older persons, women, disabled, young people, members of the travelling community all have different planning needs.

### **Community Development**

Attention has already been drawn to the need to plan for community facilities such as schools, health centres, childcare facilities, and neighbourhood centres when planning new communities. This creates its own separate challenges in that provision of some facilities such as schools and health centres lies outside of the remit of the Local Authority.

### **Schools**

Traditionally sites have been designated in Local Area Plans and development plans for schools, but they have in some case lain idle over the life time of the relevant plan. Recent experience in Adamstown has shown that with careful planning schools can

be rolled out along with housing. The schools in Adamstown have also explored the use of school facilities by other groups something which has traditionally caused problems with concerns regarding insurance and liability.

The recent Department of Heritage, Environment and Local Government publication *The provision of schools and the planning system, A code of practice for Planning Authorities*, sets out new practice approaches for Planning Authorities so as to ensure the timely and cost effective roll out of school facilities.

### **Childcare**

Planning permission for large scale residential schemes of over 75 dwelling units includes conditions to provide childcare facilities in accordance with the *Childcare Facilities Guidelines*. This equates to one facility with 20 places per seventy five units. A number of the Councils local plans have also adopted different standards. For example the Tallaght Town Centre Local Area plan allowed the requirement to be waived if alternative community space or concierge facilities were provided in residential schemes.

In February 2008 the South Dublin County planning department carried out the "Planning and Childcare Facility Study" which examined planning permissions granted for childcare facilities between 2002 and 2007. Planning permissions were granted for 128 facilities in this period, providing approximately 4,930 childcare places. Approximately 50% of these childcare spaces are as yet not provided. There is evidence of clustering in Tallaght and Lucan with 50% of these grants being in these two areas. This degree of clustering reflects the large population growth in these areas in the last number of years. 32 facilities were granted in Lucan and 29 of these are currently operational. In Tallaght only 15 of the 32 facilities granted are operational and only 355 childcare places out of 1,293 granted have been provided.

The report provides a snap shot in time and given that it relates to a five year period

(2002 – 2007) the time lag between the granting of permission and implementation may account for some of the discrepancy between places granted and provision of places.

New facilities tend to be concentrated in new development areas however there is a large

number of smaller facilities providing sessional Montessori and after school care in more established residential areas such as Rathfarnham.

### **Other Community Facilities.**

The development plan will also deal with other community facilities such as medical centres, libraries, sports centres, community centres and neighbourhood centres. All of these facilities generate different issues such as traffic relating to medical facilities in residential areas, access to library facilities for all, use of community centres, and the mix of uses to be provided in neighbourhood centres.

### **Allotments**

There has been a recent resurgence of interest in allotments. At present the council provides approximately 250 allotments with 30 identified for future provision in Grange Park, Griffeen Valley.

## RECREATION, LEISURE AND TOURISM

### Introduction

South Dublin is well served by recreation facilities and open space. There are 50 neighbourhood parks spanning 4,000 acres under the management of South Dublin County Council, and 150 playing pitches, which are used on a weekly basis by 12,000 sportsmen and sportswomen (550 soccer and 320 GAA teams).

The mountains, rivers, canals and built heritage of the county play an important role in the provision of active and passive recreation.

South Dublin County Tourism Limited aims to develop and implement a sustainable tourism policy on behalf of the industry and enhance the image of South Dublin County as an interesting and enjoyable place to visit. While the County's tourism product is partly dependant on the natural environment and cultural heritage an important element is the accommodation of commercial events due to the ease of access from the both the city and country.

### Relevant New Policy & Guidelines

- *Coillte Recreation Policy 2006-2010*
- *National Countryside Recreation Policy – Comhairle Na Tuaithe, Department of Community, Rural and Gaeltacht Affairs (2006)*
- *Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy, National Children's Office*
- *National Recreation Policy for Young People - Office of the Minister for Children (2007)*
- *Tourism and the Environment: Failte Irelands Environmental Action Plan 2007-2009*
- *South Dublin County Council Children Play Policy 2006 – 2009*

### Current Development Plan

The current Development Plan aims to ensure the provision of accessible recreational facilities, including local / neighbourhood centres, parks and open spaces and ensure that they are adequate to meet the needs of the communities they serve, are physically integrated with residential and employment areas, and are provided in tandem with new residential development.

It is also a policy of the Council to co-operate with the County Development Board and other appropriate agencies in identifying and promoting the tourism assets of the county and the development of tourism infrastructure in a sustainable manner in the county.

### Progress Achieved

The county benefits from wide and varied tourist attractions as well as a range of leisure and recreation facilities such as:

- 2 Council run major leisure, sporting facilities including swimming pools at Tallaght and Clondalkin.
- Development of a new arts centre in Tallaght.
- Irelands only purpose built baseball facility at Tymon Park
- 13 playgrounds
- 4 MUGAS (Multi usage games areas),
- Camac Valley camping and Caravan Park,
- The Camac angling facility.
- 2 All weather athletic tracks under local club management
- Approximately 250 allotments

New facilities in the county include; a new playground in Tymon Park; a pavilion in Corkagh Park; a Skate park in Griffeen Valley Regional Park; and the upgrading of Sean Walsh and Killinarden Parks.

Within the County there are a range of existing facilities which are central to the promotion of recreation, leisure and tourism these include the County Theatre in Tallaght, a large number of golf courses and the County parks.

A tourist map and tourist trails of the Villages of the county have been developed. Booklets highlighting the opportunities in the county for leisure, heritage, culture shopping and a guide to golf and accommodation in the county have also been produced.

## TOWN DISTRICT AND LOCAL CENTRES

### Strategy

The Council's strategy for the development of Town, District and Local Centres in the County, as set out in the Development Plan, is to:

- *Develop a hierarchy of high quality, vibrant and sustainable urban centres;*
- *Maintain the future viability of the existing town, district and local centres in the County and develop them with an appropriate mix of commercial, recreational, leisure and residential uses, new urban streets and public and semi-public spaces.*
- *Improve the environments of existing town, district and local centres, remove through traffic and create pedestrian oriented centres.*
- *Provide a strong residential element within urban centres to enhance their vitality as lively and vibrant centres with safe and attractive streets and spaces.*
- *Consolidate local centres to contain a range of community, recreational and retail facilities, including medical/dental surgeries and crèches,*
- *Identify and secure the redevelopment and regeneration of areas in need of renewal.*

### Progress to date

Considerable progress has been made in achieving the Council's objectives regarding the Town, District, and Local Centres in the county as set out in the current Development Plan.

### Tallaght County Town

The masterplan for Tallaght Town Centre adopted in October 2006 envisages the development of Tallaght Town Centre as a vibrant, sustainable centre, where the whole community can avail of the highest standards of housing, employment, services and amenities, enjoying good connections and accessibility, in an attractive built environment.

Significant objectives, among others, to achieve this vision include,

- opportunities to intensify development in tandem with a high quality architecture and public realm;
- high quality retail, commercial, civic, cultural, and leisure uses;
- attractive and safer streets, squares and parks;
- a wide range of job opportunities;
- a wide choice of quality new housing, and a diverse social mix;
- a choice of public transportation
- conserving the natural and built heritage of the area.

The masterplan for Tallaght Town Centre makes provision for improved access from The Square into Sean Walsh Park via an enhanced bridge structure, such as a land bridge, which would also provide direct vehicular access to The Square from the N81.

### Town and District Centres

#### Clondalkin Town Centre

The Architects Department in conjunction with the Planning Department are currently preparing an Urban Design Framework for Clondalkin Town Centre. This project is ongoing. In addition, Urban and Village Renewal projects have been completed on Main Street, Clondalkin.

#### Liffey Valley Town Centre

A Local Area Plan (LAP) has been adopted for the Liffey Valley Town Centre. The LAP will guide the development of new civic, retail and residential areas integrated with the existing shopping centre.

#### Adamstown District Centre

Planning permission has been granted for Phase 1 of Adamstown District Centre which will act as the centrepiece for Adamstown. The centre is located adjacent to the rail way station, and will include residential units, shops, offices and community facilities, including a large public library. A central civic square will host markets and other public events.

Clonburris Eco-District

A Masterplan has been prepared providing detailed guidance for the development of a new Eco-District on 265 hectares (656 acres) of greenfield lands at Clonburris, located between Lucan and Clondalkin. New housing, schools, shops and employment uses will be developed in tandem with road, rail and bus improvements, and the new district is planned to be an exemplar of sustainability.

**Urban Villages**

Objectives for environmental improvements in urban areas have largely been implemented through the Urban and Village Renewal Programme. The Urban and Village Renewal Programme 2000 - 2006 provided footpath and amenity improvements within the main shopping areas, to improve pedestrian safety and convenience with particular emphasis on the needs of disabled and mobility-impaired people. Although provided for in the National Development Plan, details of a new scheme are currently awaited from the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government.

An important element in the urban renewal programme has been the extensive work carried out in Killinarden, Jobstown and Rowlagh. These redevelopments have included community and enterprise centres to promote a more holistic redevelopment of the areas.

Lucan

A Village Design Statement (VDS) for Lucan has been produced in conjunction with the National Heritage Council, through an extensive community consultation programme. The VDS identifies and describes the unique qualities of architectural, historical and natural importance that contribute to Lucan's character, and will provide guidance for future planning and enhancement of the village in ways that will contribute to the quality of life in the village and its environs.

Rathfarnham

Urban and Village Renewal projects have been completed on Main Street, Rathfarnham.

Ballyboden

The Ballyboden Village Masterplan for Phase 1 of the Ballyboden Village Area has been completed and was adopted by the Council in July 2006. The plan will guide future development in the area.

**Local Centres**Kingswood Village

New development in the Kingswood Local Centre since 2004 has included a substantial expansion of the Kingswood Country House Hotel, offices, and a range of residential units.

Brookfield Road – opposite Rossfield Shops

Additional commercial units are included in a Council project at Brookfield Road Local Centre to facilitate a range of services in association with residential units.

**Rural Villages**Newcastle

The Newcastle Lyons Local Area plan operates as the policy structure for assessing planning applications within its designated lands. This plan is complemented by a non-statutory masterplan for the zoned lands to the north of the main street.

Brittas Village

The Brittas Village Planning Study has been commenced.

Saggart Village

A considerable amount of development has taken place in and around Saggart Village centre including new residential and retail facilities. This is in accordance with the approved Local Area Plan.

Rathcoole Village

A range of developments have taken place within Rathcoole village including the Avoca café and shop at the eastern entrance to the village.

## RETAILING

### Introduction

The County Development Plan 2004-2010 seeks to facilitate the development of a strong retailing sector and to support the future vitality and viability of the existing retail centres of the County.

The Retail Strategy in the Development Plan based on the Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area (2001) is as follows:

- Ensure sufficient retail floorspace in the County;
- Maintain dominant retailing and Major Centre functions of Tallaght Town Centre as the County Town;
- Designate and facilitate Liffey Valley, Quarryvale as a Major Centre, and new District Centres at Adamstown and at Verschoyle / Carrigmore;
- Ensure provision of additional retail floorspace relates to the hierarchy of retail centres;
- Ensure proposed commercial developments, where appropriate, will incorporate retail, residential, employment and entertainment / cultural and civic uses;
- Maintain and strengthen the retail character of key shopping areas of existing centres;
- Facilitate retail warehousing, retail parks and discount stores subject to appropriate protection of centres in the retail hierarchy.

### Relevant Guidance

New retail policy guidance to which the new plan must have regard include the Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) and the review of the 2001 Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy (2008). The revised Guidelines provide for the previous cap of 6,000 m<sup>2</sup> for retail warehouses to be lifted, within the functional areas of the four Dublin local authorities only within Integrated Area Plan areas, and in the other National Spatial Strategy Gateways. Any such proposals would have to demonstrate that they are close to a road network, will be served by public transport

and will not detract from the vitality of surrounding town centres.

### Retail Hierarchy

The Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005) seeks the allocation of retail floorspace in the County into a retail hierarchy. This hierarchy aims to protect, and ensure the sustainability of existing and planned town, district and local centres. It is the policy of the Council to maintain the dominant retailing and Major Centre functions of Tallaght as the County Town and Liffey Valley as a major centre.

The total retail floorspace in South Dublin at in 2004 was approximately 222,560 m<sup>2</sup>, of which 31.8% is located in and around the two major centres of Tallaght and Liffey Valley. Since 2004 there has been significant further development of retail floorspace in the Tallaght area. This is in accordance with the current Retail Strategy of the Plan.

### Progress achieved

Apart from the development of floorspace in the major Town Centres, there has been a significant increase in retail (warehousing) park schemes in the County. These have added to the retail infrastructure in the County. Issues associated with retail parks relate to their off-centre location and the effect this can have on the vibrancy of existing town and district centres, and the greater reliance on the private car to access retail parks. A significant proportion of retail development, mainly retail warehousing and discount foodstores, has been approved on sites outside the designated retail centres in areas zoned "E" ('to provide for enterprise and employment related uses').

New and planned district centres at Adamstown and Clonburris will further reinforce the retail offer of the county while

protecting these centres in the retail hierarchy.

### **Future Challenges**

Since 2001 retail development outside the county has had a significant impact on the pattern of retail expenditure of the population of the county. Dublin city centre and Dundrum have become more significant destinations for shopping trips from the county. This highlights a major challenge for the future of the retail sector in the county.

Challenges for retail development in the county include maintaining the vibrancy and in some case revitalising existing town and local centres, and meeting and embracing opportunities presented by transport improvements such as the planned Luas extension and the proposed Metro West.

## TRANSPORTATION

### Introduction

The Development Plan seeks to promote ease of movement within, and access to South Dublin, by integrating land use planning with a high quality, sustainable and integrated transport system for people and goods within the County.

The strategy for the development of transportation infrastructure in the County is as follows:

- Promote and facilitate the development of Integrated Land Use and Transportation proposals based on delivery of the public transport measures outlined in the Dublin Transportation Office Strategy, "Platform for Change 2000 - 2016".
- Promote and facilitate the improvement and further development of the public transport system in the County.
- Implement the road objectives set out in the six-year road programme and implement other road objectives in the longer term.
- Promote and facilitate the development of cycling and pedestrian facilities in the county for all users.
- Protect all national routes from frontage access and to keep the number of junctions to a minimum consistent with good traffic management.
- Promote road safety measures throughout the county, including traffic calming, road signage and parking.
- Implement an integrated traffic management system to make more efficient use of road networks and integrate it in an effective way with public transport.

### Transport 21

The projects and programmes in *Transport 21* relevant to the Greater Dublin Area (GDA) aim to: *increase accessibility, ensure sustainability, - expand capacity, - increase use of public transport, enhance quality, create a high quality, efficient national road and rail network, strengthen national, regional and local public transport services..*

The main objectives of the *Transport 21* programme for the Greater Dublin Area of most relevance to South Dublin are:

- develop Metro West - LRT linking Tallaght to the city centre and the airport via Metro North;
- construct the Suburban Rail Interconnector linking Heuston Station and the Docklands, via St. Stephen's Green and linking with the Metro North line;
- extend the network to Citywest, construct a new Luas line joining the two existing Luas lines, and construct a new line from Lucan to the City Centre;
- develop the bus network to create a meshed network of services and reorient it to take account of the planned rail developments;
- create a network of interchange points and introduce integrated ticketing for all public transport services;
- develop park and ride facilities at carefully chosen locations;
- implement a phased programme of demand management measures;
- introduce an integrated public transport information system;
- complete the upgrade of the M50.

### Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area

The Dublin Transportation Office (DTO) is currently preparing a new Transport Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area for the period 2010-2030.

The Dublin Transport Authority Act (2008) requires that the authority shall make a strategic transport plan ('transport strategy') to provide a long-term strategic planning framework for the integrated development of transport infrastructure and services in the GDA for between 12 and 20 years. The Authority's first transport strategy shall incorporate the work done on a new transport strategy by the DTO until such time as the DTO is dissolved.

### Public Transport

In the last four years significant progress has been made in relation to the provision of public transport in the county with the opening of the Luas Red Line Adamstown and Fonthill train station, these are part of the ongoing improvements to the main rail

line as part of the Kildare route project. Further enhancements are planned such as the Luas extension to Citywest, Metro West and a new train stations at Kishogue, Clondalkin.

**Percentage of Persons aged 5 years and over by means of travel to work, school or college, 2006**

Means of Travel	South Dublin	D-L Rathdown	Fingal	Dublin City
On foot	16.6	13.4	14.5	27.6
Bicycle	2.7	3.8	1.9	5.5
Bus / mini-bus / coach	15.3	11.9	12.0	19.1
Train / DART / LUAS	1.8	10.4	10.0	5.5
Motor-cycle / scooter	1.1	1.0	0.8	0.9
Car driver	41.8	38.3	41.0	25.8
Car passenger	12.5	15.1	12.2	7.4
Other	6.3	5.2	5.5	5.0
Not stated	1.9	1.0	2.0	3.3

Source: CSO

In 2006 South Dublin County had the lowest percentage of people travelling to work or school by train, Dart or Luas. The percentage is surprisingly low given that the Luas red line to Tallaght commenced operation in Autumn 2004 however it is probably accounted for by the fact that in 2006 there were no train stops within the county. It is expected that rail usage will increase with the opening of Adamstown station and the planned new stations at Clonburris and Kishogue.

The four tracking of the Kildare Route and the provision of the Inter-connector between Connolly Station and Heuston will greatly increase capacity and service by train in South Dublin. Both of these infrastructure projects are key for the future development of the county as they will allow a significant modal shift from private car to train. These projects will have a significant impact on the development plan with far reaching influence on any proposed overall strategy for the county. Other transportation infrastructure which has been delivered since 2004 includes the extension of the bus lane network to almost 50km. The ongoing review of the DTO Strategy will impact on

the proposed strategy in the next Development Plan.

Access to transport is also an issue for rural parts of the county. Urban generated housing means that many of those residing in rural areas commute by car to urban areas for work.

### Major Roads

Two national primary routes the N4 and N7 traverse the county, and the busiest stretch of road in the country - the M50 between the Red Cow junction and the junction with the N4 is also in the county. A critical issue is that much of the traffic on these arteries is passing through and not stopping in the county.

With respect to major roads a number of significant improvements have been made including the completion of the Outer Ring Road linking Lucan with Tallaght and including a grade separated junction with the N7; The continued upgrading of the M50 including the provision of freeflow interchanges and the expansion of the number of lanes; The ongoing construction of a grade separated junction at the Newcastle road N4 junction and the approval of a grade separated junction at Newlands Cross. A scoping report is currently underway for the improvement of the N81.

### Cycle Route Network

New cycle tracks continue to be provided in conjunction with new road schemes. The cycle lane network now extends to approximately 150 km. There is no funding currently available from the DTO in respect of new cycle-track schemes.

A report has been drafted recommending the provision of a number of spine pedestrian and cycle routes throughout the County to promote tourism and facilitate cycling as an alternative transport mode for leisure and travel to work and school. Two pilot projects were recommended for 2006/7 one route along the Dodder River and one from the Liffey to the Grand Canal. It is also intended to provide a pedestrian and cycle route along the Canal from Inchicore to the 12<sup>th</sup> Lock commencing in 2009.

## WATER SUPPLY AND DRAINAGE

### INTRODUCTION

The Development Plan 2004-2010 seeks to develop, improve, protect, and enhance, the range and accessibility of water and drainage infrastructural services in a manner that promotes sustainable development in the County.

### Strategy

The strategy for the development of Water Supply and Drainage Infrastructure in the County is as follows:

- Continue the sustainable development and improvement of the water supply and drainage systems throughout the County to meet the anticipated water and drainage requirements of the area.
- Protect surface water catchments and manage catchment areas where appropriate to protect ground water and surface water.
- Implement the provisions of national policy and legislation in the control of water pollution.
- Ensure that existing and proposed developments are not subject to undue risk of flooding.

### WATER SUPPLY

#### Future Water Supply

SDCC is part of the Regional Water Steering Group with Dublin City Council acting as lead authority in assessing short and long term sources at a regional level to ensure water supply into the future. Consideration is being given at regional level to developing further capacity to meet the projected longer term demands. In this regard a Strategic Environmental Assessment is being carried out on a new major water source that would meet the long term needs of the Greater Dublin Area. Shorter-term enhancements at Ballymore Eustace and Leixlip plants will address shorter-term demands for water supply.

Most of the treated water supply in South Dublin County is currently supplied from Dublin City Council via the Belgard Reservoir. The County Council has two schemes to improve water supply in the

county. Lucan/ Palmerstown Water Supply Scheme which was completed in 2004 serves the north and west of the County, and Boherboy Water Supply Scheme which is at construction stage will serve the south of the county. The net effect of the two schemes will be to reduce the area supplied from Belgard and improve the quality of supply in the whole county.

### Leakage and Wastage

Water-By-laws have been in force since 2005. A new Water Maintenance Specification manual was published in 2004 and updated in 2006. Unaccounted For Water (UFW) levels are below 20% in South Dublin County.

Additional network management schemes, including pressure management and expansion of district metering, have been approved for funding under the Water Conservation Programme 2006. Measures such as the Greater Dublin Region Mains Rehabilitation Programme, coupled with continued leakage effort are the principal drivers to maximise usage of such a scarce resource.

The Dublin Region Non-Domestic Metering Project which is ongoing will facilitate volumetric billing of all non-domestic customers.

### DRAINAGE

#### Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study

Significant improvements are required to the waste water collection and treatment systems in the Dublin Region. The Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) has identified deficiencies in the capacity of the region's sewerage system as a potential constraint to the level of development envisaged in the Greater Dublin area. Close integration of the policies of all the local authorities in the area is required to ensure that effective measures are put in place to cater for the projected needs of the city and to meet the water quality requirements of the EU Water Framework Directive and other

relevant EU Directives. A Strategic Environmental Assessment of the GSDSDS completed in 2008 recommended a new regional waste water treatment plant at a site in the northern part of the Greater Dublin Area with associated coastal outfall and orbital sewer.

The GSDSDS and Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works have been adopted Regionally. Developers are required to comply with the GSDSDS & the Greater Dublin Regional Code of Practice for Drainage Works.

### **Water Quality Management**

The Water Framework Directive (WFD), which is the overarching legislation covering matters of water quality throughout the EU, was transposed into Irish law in December 2003. The WFD requires that water management be on the basis of River Basin Districts (RBD). The Council is committed to achieving the objective of good water status by 2015, through its participation in the production of the Eastern River Basin District Management Plan. The plan is currently the subject of a strategic environmental assessment.

Implementation reports are carried out every two years under the *Local Government (Water Pollution) Act 1977 (Water Quality Standards for Phosphorus) Regulations 1998* and the *Water Quality (Dangerous Substances) Regulations 2001*. Monitoring is regularly carried out to fulfil the requirements of the Regulations, so as to input to the various Measures Reports that are prepared by the EPA.

The Water Framework Directive refers equally to groundwater quality as to other surface water sources – rivers, streams, lakes, coastal, transitional, etc

### **Surface Water Catchment Areas**

Surface water schemes have been completed on the Camac and Griffeen rivers. Further works are planned for the Dodder, Camac, Griffeen, Poddle and Tobarmaclug catchments.

### **Bohernabreena Catchment Area**

The protection of the Bohernabreena Reservoir and catchment area will be undertaken in accordance with the Eastern River Basin District Management Plan.

### **Drainage Network**

The drainage network in South Dublin is largely broken down into two areas - the area draining to the Grand Canal Drainage System, and the Dodder Valley Sewer. The Council has planned works in these two catchment areas. The schemes will provide for future development and reduce the frequency of overflows to receiving waters. The Saggart/Rathcoole Newcastle Drainage Collection system, which is at planning stage, will provide local foul and surface water infrastructure to these towns.

### **Flood Alleviation**

In conjunction with adjoining local authorities and the OPW Catchment Flood Risk Assessment and Management Studies (CFRAMS) have commenced on the Liffey and Dodder catchments. The Dodder Study is presently the subject of a Strategic Environmental Assessment.

The Council has adopted the Flood Alleviation policies recommended in the Greater Dublin Strategic Drainage Study (GSDSDS) which include attenuation of surface water flows and implementation of Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDS). Developers are required to comply with these policies. The principles enumerated under this objective form the keystone for a future sustainable drainage network and minimal flood risk. These principles are to be achieved through strong Development Management coupled with enforcement where required.

### **Protection of Piped Infrastructure**

Consideration is being given as to how the identification and removal of surface water misconnection and infiltration can best be achieved. This is largely dependent on resources.

## ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

### Introduction

The Development Plan strategy for the development of Environmental Services seeks to:

- Conform to the European Union and National Waste Strategy in all matters relating to the production, handling, treatment and disposal of waste within the County.
- Co-operate with and participate in the preparation of regional plans for the collection, treatment, handling and disposal of wastes.
- Promote the prevention and reduction of waste and the increased reuse and recycling of materials from all waste streams in accordance with the Waste Management Plan for the Dublin Region.
- Reduce the effects of air, noise and light pollution on environmental amenity.
- Reduce the risk and limit the consequences of accidents at manufacturing and storage facilities that present a major accident hazard having regard to the EU Directive on Control of Major Accident Hazards.
- Promote public education and awareness of environmental issues.

### Waste Management Plan

The Waste Management Plan for the Dublin Region 2005–2010 sets out the policies and objectives to deliver progress in accordance with the aims of EU waste hierarchy. The Council co-operates with local authorities, relevant state agencies, private sector and the public to implement the plan.

The Waste Management Plan addresses three practical problems:

- lack of recycling and disposal infrastructure in the short to medium term as well as in the long term;
- current waste management infrastructure is not adequate to meet modern legislation - current land filling rates cannot continue, alternative methods must be found;

- inadequate funding - to improve standards, increase recycling and provide a proper system of waste regulation will require significant additional cost recovery from all waste producers.

Recent progress made in addressing these problem includes planning permission granted for the Dublin City Council waste to energy plant by An Bord Pleanala, and the proposed landfill in Fingal currently under consideration by An Bord Pleanala. The EPA are currently considering IPCC licences for both.

The life of the landfill at Arthurstown has been extended to 2010. Funding issues are still relevant with full cost recovery set as an objective for the local authority waste services, though large deficits prevail at present.

### Control of Waste Activities

Monitoring and enforcement of waste legislation is ongoing. Additional regulations were introduced in 2005 and 2006 in respect of Waste Electrical and Electronic Equipment (WEEE) and End Of Life Vehicles. Waste activities are subject to permits or licenses issued by the Council or by the Environmental Protection Agency (depending on the nature or scale of the activity). There is a requirement under new Regulations that planning matters be resolved or significantly advanced upon application. Waste Collection Permits are co-ordinated regionally on the Council's behalf by Dublin City Council. The Council responds promptly and effectively to any reported illegal waste activity. A new Litter Management Plan for the County was adopted in 2008.

### Waste Prevention and Minimisation

The prevention and minimisation activities of the Council are directed to three target audiences – community, schools, and business with goals and targets for each. A programme of awareness building is

implemented by the Environmental Awareness Team, targeted at schools, business and community sectors. Waste auditing is being developed. The four Dublin Authorities fund the website [www.dublinwaste.ie](http://www.dublinwaste.ie) which provides a wide range of information.

### **Recycling Facilities**

The expansion of waste streams, within the kerbside collection system is coordinated at regional level. The development of a second Civic Amenity and Recycling Centre is being co-ordinated, subject to funding. In accordance with the Waste Management Plan for the Dublin Region, 2005 – 2010 the Council is committed to the development of regional facilities which include:-

- Waste to Energy Facility;
- Biological composting facilities;
- Materials Recovery Facility (recyclables);
- Residual Landfill.

All these projects are currently being advanced by the four Dublin Local Authorities.

### **Hazardous Waste Management**

Hazardous Waste Management Planning is the responsibility of the Environmental Protection Agency. The Council provides, within its awareness programme, household hazardous waste collection services on certain dates.

## BUILT HERITAGE

### Introduction

The County Development Plan 2004-2010, in line with the Planning and Development Act 2000 and Government Policy seeks to protect and conserve buildings, areas, structures and features of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.

The most important items of archaeological and architectural heritage in the county are recorded under Schedule 1- the Record of Monuments and Places, and Schedule 2- the Record of Protected Structures, of the current Development Plan. There are 154 Recorded Monuments and approx, 526 Protected Structures. The *National Inventory of Architectural Heritage* also highlights a representative sample of important architecture of the county.

There are also six zones of Archaeological Potential in the county located at Tallaght, Newcastle, Clondalkin, Lucan, Saggart and Rathcoole.

In protecting the built heritage of South Dublin an insight into the pattern of social and economic development of the county is preserved. South Dublin benefits from a vast and varied array of built heritage across the county ranging from grand houses, demesnes and ecclesiastical architecture to the cottages of industrial workers and industrial buildings, public buildings such as schools, libraries and courthouses, structures associated with railways, canals, spas and items of local architectural importance such as milestones and water pumps.

### Progress Achieved on Main Objectives

The County Development Plan 2004-2010 designated five Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA);

- Clondalkin Village
- Lucan Village

- Palmerstown Lower (Mill Complex)
- Rathfarnham Village, Including Willbrook
- Tallaght Village

Guidance leaflets have been produced for owners and residents within ACA's and information days were successfully held by the conservation officer offering an opportunity for those living within an ACA to gain more of an insight into what the designation means. These information days were a valuable forum for discussion and will inform future designations.

The Council continues to implement the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government Scheme of Grants for Protected Structures on an annual basis.

### Relevant New Policy & Guidelines

- *Advice Series 2007- Maintenance, A Guide to the Care of Older Buildings & Windows, A Guide to the Repair of Historic Windows*
- *Action on Architecture 2002-2005- Currently Under Review*

## **NATURAL HERITAGE**

### **Introduction**

The conservation and enhancement of the natural environment is a major function of the Development Plan. Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended) requires that a Development Plan include objectives relating to the conservation and protection of the environment and heritage.

Biodiversity is commonly understood to include the number, variety and variability of organisms living on earth. Natural heritage includes many familiar features of our environment; forestry, trees and woodlands, hedgerows, grasslands, scrublands, flora and fauna, rivers and streams, upland boglands and geological features. It is to be found in our parks, gardens, woodlands, open spaces and in the upland areas of the Dublin Mountains. It also manifests itself in our landscapes, in the patterns of fields, hedgerows, woodlands and rivers.

The protection and conservation of the natural heritage of the County, is an important role of the Council. One of the aims of the County Development Plan 2004-2010 is to protect the landscape of the county in a way that ensures features of natural heritage are protected, important wildlife habitats are conserved, watercourse are safeguarded from pollution; the beauty of the landscape is maintained and enriched; and recreational use is facilitated in a sensitive manner.

Areas of natural heritage in the county are protected in designated sites such as the two proposed Special Areas of Conservation, the five proposed Natural Heritage Areas and in other areas of proposed designation including the Special Amenity Area of the Liffey Valley. Heritage is therefore all around us, reflecting that which we have inherited from preceding generations.

### **Progress Achieved**

The preparation of a County Heritage Plan is a stated objective in the current County Development Plan 2004-2010. In March 2008 South Dublin County Council appointed a Heritage Officer and with the support of the Heritage Council, South Dublin is in the process of preparing the County's first Heritage Plan. Following public consultation on the draft Heritage Plan in early 2009, it is intended that the County Heritage Plan for South Dublin will be launched in mid-2009. The objectives of the Heritage Plan will also provide issues and objectives for the new Development Plan.

### **Future Challenges**

The enhancement of biodiversity, preservation of natural amenities, integrity of wildlife corridors and protection of the natural environment are all important issues to be addressed in the preparation of the new county development plan.

## STRATEGIC ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

### Introduction

Section 10 (5) (a) of the Planning and Development Act 2000 requires that a development plan shall contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan.

Strategic Environmental Assessment of Development Plans is required under the *EU SEA Directive 2001/42/EC*. The SEA Directive was transposed into Irish law under the *Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004*. SEA is a separate parallel process carried out in tandem with the preparation of the Development Plan.

Article 1 of the SEA Directive states:

“The objective of this Directive is to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to contribute to the integration of environmental considerations into the preparation and adoption of plans and programmes with a view to promoting sustainable development, by ensuring that, in accordance with this Directive, an environmental assessment is carried out of certain plans and programmes which are likely to have significant effects on the environment.”

DEHLG Guidance on the implementation of SEA Directive 2001/42/EC is set out in the *Assessment of the Effects of Certain Plans and Programmes on the Environment - Guidelines for Regional and Planning Authorities*, issued in November 2004.

### What is Strategic Environmental Assessment?

Strategic environmental assessment (SEA) is the formal, systematic evaluation of the likely significant environmental effects of implementing a plan or programme before a decision is made to adopt the plan or programme.

The process includes:

- Scoping of the Environmental Report, in consultation with environmental authorities;

- Preparing an Environmental Report where the likely significant environmental effects are identified and evaluated;
- Consulting the public, environmental authorities, and any EU Member State affected, on the environmental report and draft plan or programme;
- Taking account of the findings of the report and the outcome of these consultations in deciding whether to adopt or modify the draft plan or programme;
- Making known the decision on adoption of the plan or programme and how SEA influenced the outcome.

### Benefits of SEA

SEA is intended to provide the framework for influencing decision-making at an earlier stage when plans and programmes, which give rise to individual projects, are being developed. It should lead to more sustainable development through the systematic appraisal of policy options.

SEA will play an important role in addressing the cumulative impacts of individual projects. Experience with implementation of the EIA Directive for project environmental assessment has shown that EIA is not always best placed to address cumulative impacts. SEA provides the mechanism whereby this gap can be filled. However, SEA does not obviate the need for project environmental assessment where such assessment is required under the terms of the EIA Directive.

SEA will improve the quality of the plan-making process by:

- Facilitating the identification and appraisal of alternative plan strategies;
- Raising awareness of the environmental impacts of plans;
- Encouraging the inclusion of measurable targets and indicators which will facilitate effective monitoring of implementation of the plan, and thus make a positive contribution to subsequent reviews.

**SEA and the Development Plan Making Process:**

<b>Stage</b>	<b>Development Plan</b>	<b>SEA</b>
Pre-Draft	Preparation of Working Papers on key issues	
Initial Public Consultation	Publication of statutory notice of intention to make or review plan	Scoping of the Environmental Report, in consultation with environmental authorities
Preparation of Documentation	Preparation of Draft Plan	Preparation of Environmental Report
Public Consultation	Public display of Draft Plan and consideration of submissions	Public display of Environmental Report and consideration of submissions
2 <sup>nd</sup> Display (if required)	Display of any material amendment(s) to Draft Plan	Identify any significant environmental effects of such material amendment(s)
Completion of Process	Adoption of Plan	Making known how SEA influenced the Adopted Plan
Post Plan	Implementation	Monitoring of significant environmental effects

## APPENDIX 1

### Mandatory objectives for Development Plans

#### Part II Section 10 of the Planning and Development Act 200-2007

(1) A development plan shall set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area of the development plan and shall consist of a written statement and a plan or plans indicating the development objectives for the area in question.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of *subsection (1)*, a development plan shall include objectives for—

- (a) the zoning of land for the use solely or primarily of particular areas for particular purposes (whether residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, as open space or otherwise, or a mixture of those uses), where and to such extent as the proper planning and sustainable development of the area, in the opinion of the planning authority, requires the uses to be indicated;
- (b) the provision or facilitation of the provision of infrastructure including transport, energy and communication facilities, water supplies, waste recovery and disposal facilities (regard having been had to the waste management plan for the area made in accordance with the Waste Management Act, 1996 ), waste water services, and ancillary facilities;
- (c) the conservation and protection of the environment including, in particular, the archaeological and natural heritage and the conservation and protection of European sites and any other sites which may be prescribed for the purposes of this paragraph;
- (d) the integration of the planning and sustainable development of the area with the social, community and cultural requirements of the area and its population;
- (e) the preservation of the character of the landscape where, and to the extent that, in the opinion of the planning authority, the proper planning and sustainable development of the area requires it, including the preservation of views and prospects and the amenities of places and features of natural beauty or interest;
- (f) the protection of structures, or parts of structures, which are of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest;
- (g) the preservation of the character of architectural conservation areas;
- (h) the development and renewal of areas in need of regeneration;
- (i) the provision of accommodation for travellers, and the use of particular areas for that purpose
- (j) the preservation, improvement and extension of amenities and recreational amenities;

(k) the control, having regard to the provisions of the Major Accidents Directive and any regulations, under any enactment, giving effect to that Directive, of—

- (i) siting of new establishments,
- (ii) modification of existing establishments, and
- (i) development in the vicinity of such establishments,

for the purposes of reducing the risk, or limiting the consequences, of a major accident;

(l) the provision, or facilitation of the provision, of services for the community including, in particular, schools, crèches and other education and childcare facilities, and

(m) the protection of the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Gaeltacht including the promotion of Irish as the community language, where there is a Gaeltacht area in the area of the development plan.

(3) Without prejudice to *subsection (2)*, a development plan may indicate objectives for

any of the purposes referred to in the *First Schedule*.

(4) The Minister may prescribe additional objectives for the purposes of *subsection (2)* or for the purposes of the *First Schedule*.

- (5)
- (a) A development plan shall contain information on the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the plan.
  - (b) The Minister may by regulations make further provisions in relation to the manner in which *paragraph (a)* may be complied with.

(6) Where a planning authority proposes to include in a development plan any development objective the responsibility for the effecting of which would fall on another local authority, the planning authority shall not include that objective in the plan except after consultation with the other local authority.

(7) A development plan may indicate that specified development in a particular area will be subject to the making of a local area plan.

(8) There shall be no presumption in law that any land zoned in a particular development plan (including a development plan that has been varied) shall remain so zoned in any subsequent development plan.

**APPENDIX 2****Guidelines and Strategies to be considered in new Development Plans**

Architectural Heritage Protection	Rural Housing Policies and Local Need Criteria in Development Plans - Circular Letter SP/5/08 (2008)
Architectural Heritage Protection for Places of Worship	Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) (2004)
Best Practice Urban Design Manual (2008)	Sustainable Rural Housing Guidelines (2005)
Childcare Facilities Guidelines (June 2001)	Taking in Charge of Residential Developments Circular Letter PD 1/08 (2008)
Design Standards for New Apartments (2007)	Telecommunications Antennae and Support Structures (1996)
Development Management Guidelines (2007)	Wind Energy Development (2006)
Development Plans Guidelines (2007)	Draft Planning Guidelines on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas (2008)
Funfair Guidance	The Planning System and Flood Risk Management - Consultation Draft Guidelines
Implementing Regional Planning Guidelines-Best Practice Guidance (2005)	Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000: Housing Supply (2000)
Draft Landscape and Landscape Assessment and Appendices (2000)	Tree Preservation (1994)
Provision of Schools and the Planning System (2008)	
Quarries and Ancillary Activities (2004)	
Redevelopment of Certain Lands in the Dublin area primarily for Affordable Housing (2006) Regional	
Planning Guidelines – Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016	
Residential Density Guidelines (1999)	
Retail Planning Guidelines (2005)	
Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008-2016	

**APPENDIX 3****List of Elected Members of South Dublin County Council****Terenure/Rathfarnham Councillors**

Cllr. Colm Brophy.	Fine Gael
Cllr. Paddy Cosgrave.	Labour Party
Cllr. Cait Keane.	Fine Gael
Cllr Eamonn Walsh.	Labour Party
Cllr Tony McDermott	Green Party
Cllr. John Lahart	Fianna Fail
Cllr. Maire Ardagh	Fianna Fail

**Tallaght Central Councillors**

Cllr. Seán Crowe	Sinn Fein
Cllr. Mick Murphy	Socialist Party
Cllr. Eamonn Maloney	Labour Party
Cllr. Karen Warren	Fine Gael
Cllr. Joe Neville, Peace Commissioner	Fianna Fail

**Tallaght South Councillors**

Cllr. Cathal King	Sinn Fein
Cllr. Catriona Jones	Labour Party
Cllr. Marie Corr Mayor	Labour Party
Cllr. John Hannon	Fianna Fail
Cllr. Jim Daly	Fianna Fail

**Clondalkin Councillors**

Cllr. Tony Delaney	Progressive Democrats
Cllr. Shane O'Connor	Sinn Fein
Cllr. Robert Dowds	Labour Party
Cllr. Therese Ridge	Fine Gael
Cllr Trevor Gilligan	Fianna Fail

**Lucan Councillors**

Cllr. Dorothy Corrigan	Green Party
Cllr. Eamonn Tuffy	Labour Party
Cllr. Guss O'Connell, Deputy Mayor	Independent
Cllr. Derek Keating	Fine Gael