



South Dublin County Council

South Dublin Tourism Strategy 2024-2029 Public Consultation Report

KPMG

November 2023

This report contains 28 pages

South Dublin Tourism Strategy - Public Consultation Report v2
29.11.23



South Dublin County Council
South Dublin Tourism Strategy 2024-2029
November 2023

Document review and approval

Revision history

Version	Author	Date	Revision
1	JS	08.11.2023	
1	EZ	08.11.2023	
2	JS	09.11.2023	
3	JC	15.11.2023	
4	JC	29.11.2023	

This document has been reviewed by

	Reviewer	Date reviewed
1	James Chilton	15/11/2023
2	James Chilton	29/11/2023
3		
4		
5		

This document has been approved by

	Subject matter experts Name	Signature	Date reviewed
1	James Chilton		15/11/2023
2	James Chilton		29/11/2023
3			
4			
5			

Contents

1	Introduction	3
1.1	Executive Summary	3
2	Summary of Submissions	4
2.1	Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides	4
2.2	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	4
2.3	David Stanley	5
2.4	Environmental Protection Agency	5
2.5	Elizabeth Hickey (on behalf of Dublin Cycling Campaign)	5
2.6	Geological Survey Ireland	6
2.7	Hidden Identity	7
2.8	John Quigley	7
2.9	Michael Connolly (on behalf of Rathfarnham Castle Residents' Association)	7
2.10	Rathcoole Tidy Towns	8
2.11	Rathfarnham Woods Residents' Association	8
2.12	The Civic Theatre	9
2.13	Vincent Keogh	9
3	Appendix	10
3.1	Appendix A – Detailed Submissions	10
3.1.1	Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides	10
3.1.2	David Stanley	11
3.1.3	Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage	13
3.1.4	Environmental Protection Agency	14
3.1.5	Elizabeth Hickey (on behalf of Dublin Cycling Campaign)	17
3.1.6	Geological Survey Ireland	18
3.1.7	Identity Hidden	21
3.1.8	John Quigley	22
3.1.9	Michael Connolly (on behalf of Rathfarnham Castle Residents' Association)	22
3.1.10	Rathcoole Tidy Towns	23
3.1.11	Rathfarnham Woods Residents' Association	23
3.1.12	The Civic Theatre	24
3.1.13	Vincent Keogh	26

1 Introduction

To create a strategy which has strong 'buy-in', integrating the views, opinions and beliefs of South Dublin County's communities and businesses into the Strategy and its strategic priorities is essential. This report details the findings and recommendations of submissions on the draft South Dublin Tourism Strategy 2024-2028 during the public consultation period in late 2023. An executive summary of these submissions and what they mean for the finalisation of the South Dublin Tourism Strategy 2024-2028 is detailed below.

1.1 Executive Summary

- ❖ A total of **13 written submissions** were received as part of the public consultation period of 6 weeks for the draft Tourism Strategy.
- ❖ These submissions were made by a range of different interest groups, from **state and semi-state agencies to residents' associations and tourism businesses**.
- ❖ Generally, submissions highlighted **strong support** for the draft Tourism Strategy and the Strategic Priorities contained within it.
- ❖ Recommendations by submitters primarily relate to **development of public and open space, active travel and associated infrastructure**.
- ❖ Regarding the creation of new tourist attractions, **a nature-based approach** is seen as essential to any developments associated with new tourism attractions or products.

2 Summary of Submissions

Detailed below is a summary of the 13 submissions received during the public consultation period. These submissions have been presented in alphabetical order and are not presented by order of importance or priority.

2.1 Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides

There is strong support for Strategic Priority 1 by Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides, in particular the importance this SP places on the enhancement of both new and existing cultural and heritage tourism products (specifically within the Clondalkin area). However, little support is given to the inclusion of Clondalkin within the 'Grand Canal Corridor' as the corridor's namesake invokes attractions or products which are exclusively outdoor. Given this, there is a recommendation to establish a new 'Clondalkin and Camac Valley Cluster' as part of the Tourism Strategy, due to the significance of Clondalkin's cultural (i.e., Clondalkin Round Towers GAA Club) natural (i.e., Camac Valley) and built (Clondalkin Round Tower, Brú Chrónáin Visitor Centre, etc.) heritage within Clondalkin and Camac Valley. It is also suggested that a dedicated Clondalkin Tourism Forum is merited given the area's potential as an attractive visitor destination both locally and regionally. This forum would be made up of interest groups and stakeholders within the local tourism environment of Clondalkin and Camac Valley.

Recommendations:

- Consider inclusion of separate Clondalkin and Camac Valley Cluster.
- Consider support for local tourism forums such as a Clondalkin Tourism Forum.

2.2 Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

The Department is generally in support of the Draft Tourism Strategy. The Department notes that the SEA Screening for the Draft Tourism Strategy fully aligns with the existing National Planning Framework and South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028. However, it highlights how there is no mention within the SEA Screening to the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland 1999). In addition to this, the Department also notes that there are over 400 monuments in South Dublin County that are listed in the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR). The Department recommends that the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy refer to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the SMR. The Department notes the inclusion of Rathfarnham Castle and Clondalkin Round Tower as key heritage attractions within the County and recommends that the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy refer to these sites as 'National Monuments'. Regarding the wider Draft Strategy, the Department supports the initiatives that enable cultural heritage to be more accessible and integrated within the wider tourism offering of South Dublin County. Support is given by the Department for the actions contained within the Tourism Strategy regarding cultural and natural heritage and how the enhancement of existing public spaces and places can aid in improving the cultural and natural heritage assets of the county for both residents, visitors and businesses alike.

Recommendations:

- The strategy to refer to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the SMR.
- Refer to Rathfarnham Castle and Clondalkin Round Tower as 'National Monuments'.

2.3 David Stanley

The submission made by David Stanley on behalf of the wildlife and biodiversity of Massy's Wood is generally concerned with the future of the biodiversity and wildlife within Massy's Wood. There is particular concern over the negative effects the Dublin Mountains Visitor Centre would have on the natural environment of Massy's Wood, specifically the development of a footbridge associated with the proposed development. The An Bord Pleanála (ABP) inspector's report also recommended the omission of the footbridge from the proposed development, however ABP overruled their inspector's recommendations and supported the inclusion of this footbridge in the proposed development. The elimination of the bridge is recommended by the submitter due to these negative environmental impacts associated with its construction. It is also noted how the Tourism Strategy represents a prime opportunity for SDCC to embrace nature-first approach to any new developments within the county relating to tourism.

Recommendation:

- No change as Dublin Mountain's Visitor Centre has now been approved and is progressing to development.

2.4 Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA place a particular importance on a proposed SEA determination for the Strategy, and where a determination isn't made, SDCC should determine whether the implementation of the Strategy will have significant effects on the environment. Regarding the Strategy's alignment with other policy at national, regional and local levels, the EPA highlight certain policy documents which should inform the Strategy and its contents, namely the National Planning Framework, Eastern & Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, National Climate Action Plan 2023, National Water Resources Plan, draft National River Basin Management Plan, Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy and Fáilte Ireland strategies concerning Ireland's Ancient East. Additional plans relating to SEA screening guidance are also provided by EPA which should be considered when developing the final Tourism Strategy for adoption. It is also outlined how adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any developments proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Strategy. Additionally, the Strategy should consider the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans.

Recommendation

- Refer comments to SEA/AA Screening third party.

2.5 Elizabeth Hickey (on behalf of Dublin Cycling Campaign)

The Dublin Cycling Campaign enthusiastically endorses the draft Strategy, recognising its acknowledgment of cycling potential within the County. While they generally endorse the overall draft Strategy, they have offered feedback in specific sections regarding active transport.

In Section 2.3, they express their appreciation for the Dodder Greenway's completion and emphasise the urgent need to finalise the remaining sections to ensure accessibility for tourists of all age groups. Moreover, Dublin Cycling Campaign welcomes the

proposed Dublin Rambler Bus Service, but advocate for a holistic approach to public transport, highlighting the necessity for secure bike parking facilities at bus stops throughout the County. In SP1, their vision would be to establish a comprehensive network of high-quality routes that not only captivate the eye but also prioritise safety. In SP2, they assert that the primary focus should remain on Public Transport and Active Travel while acknowledging the need for increased parking. Furthermore, they stress the importance of accommodating the needs of Active Travel for those who opt for public transportation. In SP3, they recognise the significance of signage and wayfinding but urge immediate action with respect to existing tourism routes.

Recommendations:

Section 3.2 - Catalytic Projects:

- Consider the following measures in relation to the proposed Dublin Rambler Bus Service:
- Consider Incorporating the ability to transport bicycles (including heavier e-bikes) either by means of exterior racks or indeed interior space within the buses.
- Consider opportunities for provision of for safe, secure bike parking at the bus stops along any routes and facilities such as repair stands and-bike charging options.
- Consider opportunities for the route to serve not just the tourist attractions in the County but should serve locations from which people access walking and cycling routes which are currently accessible only by private car.

Strategic Priority number 2 - Redefine our Reputation:

- Consider emphasizing the point that Public Transport and Active Travel should be the key focus for the development of amenities, events and public realms. Active Travel and public transport should be key prioritizations and providing for those who do opt for public transport active travel should be a key consideration of their needs.

2.6 Geological Survey Ireland

Geological Survey Ireland (GSI) have recommended the use of GSI data tools, maps and other resources for inclusion in both the Draft Strategy and in the SEA Screening, EIAR or other planning procedures which may result from implementation of certain actions within the Strategy. GSI outline a suite of resources operated by GSI for use in future planning procedures as part of the final Strategy. The resources relate to areas such as County Geological Sites (CGS) in South Dublin County under the Geoheritage Programme, the GSI Groundwater Map Viewer, QGIS compatible bedrock (100K) and Quaternary geology map data, the Active Quarries, Mineral Localities and the Aggregate Potential Map Viewer. Additionally, geology within South Dublin County's culture and tourism offering is also highlighted as an area which should incorporate the resources and recommendations of GSI. Ireland currently has three UNSECO Global Geoparks, based in the Wild Atlantic Way, Ireland's Ancient East and Ireland's Hidden Heartlands. GSI encourage South Dublin County Council to continue this trend of Geopark development across Ireland's tourism regions, and to use the geological audit information provided by GSI in making it easily available to the general public. They also encourage geology to be a significant part of any heritage or tourism initiative that may be introduced.

Recommendation

- Refer comments to SEA/AA Screening third party.

2.7 Hidden Identity

This submission was generally supportive of the draft Strategy; however, it highlighted several areas of improvement. It was suggested that the draft Strategy could be improved by mentioning Palmerstown Architectural Conservation Area, situated at the Mill Lane Complex with existing informal access to Waterstown Park. It was further highlighted that opportunities currently exist and could be identified to acquire lands and buildings as part of consolidation of lands. They have identified a commercial property for sale at Mill Lane and Mill Complex as two potential sites for such development. These acquisitions would provide access to Silver Bridge, would open up the potential for visitor facilities and interpretative centres, and progress connectivity initiatives for sustainable walking and cycling routes along the Liffey Valley. The importance of riverine habitat (pNHA), and potential for conservation-grazing management of biodiverse grassland was also highlighted.

Recommendation:

- Include reference to opportunities associated with Palmerstown Architectural Conservation Area.

2.8 John Quigley

This submission is in favour of the actions associated with the draft Strategy, particularly those relating to the natural assets of South Dublin County and how they can be leveraged to support sustainable tourism development. Recommendations within this submission are related to generating greater visitor footfall at the Hellfire Club and Massy's Wood. This is specifically related to the development of new walkways and cycleways which connect the Hellfire Club and Massy's Wood to the wider South Dublin County transport network and existing nearby public transport routes (such as the 15, 61 and 161 bus routes). These walkways and cycleways would be comprised of small improvements along roads in Edmonstown, Mount Venus and the wider Ballyboden area. It is believed this intervention would create both greater connection of the Hellfire Club and Massey's Wood to both the built-up area of South Dublin County and existing walking networks along the Dublin Mountains Way and would be complementary to the existing actions contained within the draft Tourism Strategy relating to the Hellfire Club and Massy's Wood.

Recommendation:

- Consider opportunity to connect the Hellfire Club and Massy's Wood to the wider South Dublin County transport network and existing nearby public transport routes.

2.9 Michael Connolly (on behalf of Rathfarnham Castle Residents' Association)

Rathfarnham Castle Residents' Association highlighted that the efforts to turn existing operations or proposed projects into a regional food destination in Rathfarnham Village face significant challenges and are not well thought through or viable. It is indicated that

the village lacks the culinary infrastructure needed for such an ambitious transformation. Its food scene primarily consists of takeaways, coffee shops, and a few mid-range restaurants. The Residents' Association suggests that rather than attempting to establish an impractical new tourism attraction, one that's likely to struggle in drawing more visitors to the area, that more focus should be on enhancing the existing, unique historical attractions already in their vicinity. Similarly, rather than creating 'high-end' food offering to attract visitors, the Strategy should aim to re-develop already existing infrastructures.

Recommendation:

- None given current process with regards to Rathfarnham Castle Courtyards.

2.10 Rathcoole Tidy Towns

Rathcoole Tidy Towns expressed their disappointment that the current draft Strategy lacks any action plan for the development of the existing Coillte walks in Saggart Hills and Brittas Ponds fishery. They emphasise how these facilities are already in existence, but their potential is hindered, primarily by limited parking and accessibility. It is suggested that, with a modest investment these locations could transform into outstanding recreational sites. For instance, Slade Valley Golf Club, equipped with ample parking and catering services, is adjacent to the Slievethoul Trail and could easily serve as a drop-off point and central hub for walkers and families exploring the hills with minimal additional investment.

Rathcoole Tidy Towns take issue with the statement that the Slade Valley Greenway cannot have any work done on it as part of the new plan, due to land acquisition issues. The Greenway from Rathcoole Park through Saggart to the Slade Road is already in place, and Uisce Eireann have assured us that they will complete their section of the greenway and associated planting around the new Saggart Reservoir in 2024. They suggest that a circular walkway could be developed around Rathcoole and Saggart for the lower portion of the Greenway. while discussion with landowners further up the valley is underway.

Recommendation:

- Consider opportunity to include proposals with regard to Coillte walks in the area, subject to Coillte agreement.

2.11 Rathfarnham Woods Residents' Association

The Rathfarnham Wood Residents' Association expressed a favourable stance on the draft Strategy. Their submission primarily centres on suggesting further actions related to local attractions. They propose that Seismograph House holds significant potential as a tourist attraction that would be advantageous for both residents and visitors to the County. Additionally, they highlight the prospect of restoring various sites in Rathfarnham, including Rathfarnham Castle Courtyards, the Petty Sessions building, the Church of Ireland and Catholic Churches, the Penal Mass site, and the ancient graveyard near the village. While these areas require some care, the natural amphitheatre at Sean Keating Park is thought to be a superb venue for outdoor summer concerts. Hosting regular afternoon concerts here could serve as an appealing local tourist attraction and could be relatively easy to manage and coordinate.

Given Rathfarnham's proximity to the Dodder Greenway, encouraging attendees to walk or cycle to these tourist spots is a preferred initiative. With a substantial local population residing within a 1-kilometer radius of Rathfarnham Village, there is ample opportunity to enhance the area in a thoughtful and fitting manner, without the need for extensive additional parking facilities.

Recommendation:

- None given current process with regards to Rathfarnham Castle Courtyards.

2.12 The Civic Theatre

This submission supports the actions contained within the draft Strategy related to enhancing the events and festival programme within the county while also improving the quality and marketing of existing events and festivals. The 'South Dublin Culture Day' is commended within this submission and details of the festival programme are outlined in detail within it. Regarding new events and festivals within the county, recommendations are made for South Dublin County Council supporting a new 'Musical Theatre Festival of Ireland'. The festival would aim to celebrate the vibrant and diverse world of musical theatre in Ireland while also attracting visitors to Tallaght, reinforcing South Dublin County's commitment to culture and the arts. Detail of the festival programme is included within the submission, and would involve attractions such as local talent shows, street performers, children's theatre and supports for emerging artists which could improve the local element of the proposed festival. The submission concludes by outlining how the "Musical Theatre Festival of Ireland" could become a signature cultural event in Tallaght, drawing in both domestic and potentially international visitors.

Recommendation:

- Consider working with our cultural partners such as the CT to develop unique festivals and/or events of note.

2.13 Vincent Keogh

While being supportive of the Strategy, Vincent Keogh suggests development of number of activities that, in their opinion, would be beneficial to Corkagh Park. These include the restoration of the Pet Farm and Zorbing Hill, along with the addition of various other activity offerings such as boat rentals on the park's lakes, organizing a Geocache treasure hunt within the park, establishing a bicycle rental centre, and creating a miniature golf facility near Camac Valley Camping Park.

Recommendation:

- Support additional experience opportunities for Corkagh Park, subject to agreement and funding.

3 Appendix

3.1 Appendix A – Detailed Submissions

3.1.1 Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides

Clann Chrónáin Volunteer Tour Guides (CC-VTG) strongly support Strategic Priority 1 contained with SDCC's draft tourism strategy: Realise our potential. We read this as a goal to develop new, and enhance existing, quality sustainable cultural and heritage tourism products and trails within South County Dublin. In particular, our interest lies in the potential to realise the full tourism potential of Clondalkin village.

We do not believe that the potential of Clondalkin will be served by including it in a Grand Canal Cluster (while nonetheless warmly welcoming a cluster that centres on developing the waterway's extensive potential within south Dublin and as it interconnects with other counties.) The name of the cluster is problematic from a Clondalkin tourism perspective. The term 'Grand Canal Cluster' invokes an exclusively outdoor attraction, extending from Grand Canal Dock in Dublin City in the direction of the Shannon. The name of the cluster in no way identifies the characteristics of Clondalkin itself: medieval village, vibrant cultural centre, compact multi-faceted attraction with something for every category of tourist within a short radius from the core village. The initial substantial financial and strategic investment made by SDCC (Camac Valley and Brú Chrónáin) and the significant strategic vision and social investment of community organisations (of which Clann Chrónáin is but one of many) have established a good tourism base that now deserves to be brought to the next level of development to realise Clondalkin's full potential.

We therefore are **suggesting a separate and distinct Clondalkin Village and Camac Valley Cluster** in addition to the six clusters SDCC have already identified in order to build on the work that has been started but which cries out for the development of an overall cohesive policy promoting hitherto unexplored potential offerings and the overall inter-connectivity and recognition of the cultural and outdoor/sporting hub that is at the Clondalkin's core.

The existence of significant and nationally recognised built, cultural and environmental attractions within Clondalkin provides a compelling opportunity for greater tourism development, the potential for which Clann Chrónáin and their founding body, Clondalkin Round Tower Heritage Group (CRTHG), have long recognised. Indeed, over the last number of years they have made a substantial investment, in terms of cultural enterprise and social capital, into developing an awareness (both locally and at national level) of the area's tourism potential and into developing tourism products and trails. We believe Clondalkin contains a combination of tourism opportunities which together form a unique tourism offering in greater Dublin (not merely within South County Dublin). Much of this potential is as yet untapped or is significantly under-exploited but the possibilities are many to develop authentic, sustainable and enjoyable opportunities for visitors who seek eco-, heritage and cultural immersive experiences (be that a half-day or a week-long experience) in a unique accessible village setting on Dublin's doorstep. For this reason, we are unhappy that within SDCC's current draft tourism strategy Clondalkin heritage village is subsumed into a broader Grand Canal Cluster which we do not believe will realise the vast potential that a dedicated Clondalkin Village and Camac Valley Cluster would address. We allude below to the variety of cultural/heritage and outdoor/sporting attractions Clondalkin has within a short walking distance from the village centre.

The south county's most important National Monument - Clondalkin Round Tower - is complemented by Brú Chrónáin Visitor Centre, in the establishment of which CRTHG was a key driver (persuading SDCC, the Heritage Council and the OPW that such a development was necessary and working with them to realise a shared vision for the finished venue). It is now, according to the draft strategy, one of the top visitor attractions in south county Dublin. Uniquely in Dublin, Clondalkin has Líonra Gaeilge status (next to Gaeltacht status; one of only six officially recognised Líonraí on the island of Ireland) which is centred on the vibrant Cultural Centre of Áras

Chrónáin, situated just around the corner from Brú Chrónáin. The venue hosts a wide range of music, dance and Irish language events as well as acting as a hub for intercultural connectivity. The Round Towers GAA Club (the second oldest club in Ireland) is famed for its Dublin team members and (former) manager. Between these three locations the potential exists to create not just half-day or day-long visitor immersive cultural experiences - through combinations and options between history, language, music, dance, art and sporting workshops – but there is a real opportunity to establish a cultural workshop village with weekend/week-long courses for visitors who would avail of local hotel accommodation. Not exploring this potential would be to miss the opportunity Clondalkin uniquely offers as a very particular Dublin village community.

In terms of the established heritage trail (see CRTHG's Heritage Trail map and SDCC's Heritage App), there is the potential to further develop and promote guided/self-guided trail walks. The tranquil and beautiful site of St John's Church of Ireland Church and its fascinating medieval graveyard are across the road from Brú Chrónáin and are on land which originally formed part of the monastery of St Crónán, in whose honour the round tower was built. The Alms Houses, Moyle Park and Clondalkin Convent (all with their own stories that reflect a microcosm of Irish educational and ecclesiastical history), along with St Brigid's Well (which draws hundreds of visitors for celebrations in the week of St Brigid's Day) follow, one after the other, on the heritage trail up Tower Road and culminate in the 1916 Easter Rising garden at Newlands Cross just opposite the Maldrón Hotel at one of the major entry points to Clondalkin, near the transport hub of the Red Cow Luas Park & Ride. Encircling the built heritage in the core village are the outdoor and sport attractions of the beautiful Corkagh Park (adjacent to Camac Valley Camping Park) and Clondalkin Leisure Centre set in Clondalkin Park along the banks of the Camac.

We strongly feel there is a lot more that can be done to develop a Cluster focussed on Clondalkin itself. Clondalkin is in a strategic location on the edge of the city and at the convergence of the N7, M50 and M4 with a wealth of environmental and heritage attractions (not all are mentioned here for reasons of space) waiting to be further explored. Clondalkin has the potential to be sympathetically cohesively developed and marketed as an engaging, authentic tourism locale with a series of interconnected and inter-active products bursting with opportunities for connecting with the social energy of a unique and vibrant village community and with plenty of opportunities for relaxation, exploring various aspects of a loved culture and for choosing immersive cultural skills' development as well as an ideal to celebrate that special occasion. All the above could and should be leveraged to create employment opportunities and develop local tourism enterprises. A dedicated Clondalkin Tourism Forum of interested parties (tourism organisations, both voluntary and businesses, in collaboration with SDCC's Enterprise section) could prove beneficial in exploring the vast possibilities.

3.1.2 David Stanley

Dear Jason

I have lived in the Killakee area for the past 40 years and over this time have witnessed the steady decline in biodiversity and associated wildlife in the area. It saddens me greatly that this is the legacy that my generation have left for our kids and grandkids. Sadly you as the current generation of decision makers are compounding the situation and indeed threatening to speed up the decline despite being fully aware that we are in the midst of a biodiversity crisis.

This letter is a plea on behalf of the biodiversity and associated wildlife of Massys wood to eliminate the proposed treetop bridge from the new interpretive center in order to prevent an unsustainable increase in footfall in Massys wood whose biodiversity is already suffering. Massys wood is one of the few mature deciduous woods in South Dublin and has the potential to be a jewel in the crown of SDCC's effort to tackle the biodiversity crisis. It has enormous potential for the education of the younger people of South Dublin so that they can grow up to appreciate its biodiversity and in due course remedy some of the damage which our generations have imposed on our landscape. The use of Massys wood in this way will be of far more benefit to the people of Dublin than a theme park style bridge and for those who want a treetop experience the Zipit Forest Adventure is just 2km away in Tibbradden.

The projected footfall to the proposed interpretive center is 300,000 per year and it is estimated that 80% of these will cross the bridge into Massys wood which will increase the footfall by a factor of 12 from the current footfall in Massys of 20,000 per annum as recorded by SDCC. Even if the percentage using the bridge was 60-70% the increase would still be 9-10.5 times all of which would be much more than a wood of this size could support whilst sustaining any reasonable level of biodiversity.

The current permission also facilitates the opening up of 2 of the main 4 paths through Massys for horse riding which will add significantly to the pressure on the wood and reduce the pathways available for pedestrians. Furthermore the question of health and safety where the bridge crosses the road has not been addressed and other pedestrian bridges in South Dublin are encased in steel cages which will be very unsightly and uninviting.

Having considered the above the An Bord Pleanála inspector recommended that the bridge be omitted from the project but she was overruled by the Bord who were subsequently discredited.

Unfortunately, this discreditation of the Bord came too late for the wildlife and biodiversity of Massys wood.

The deterioration of our biodiversity has been conclusively proven through environmental research, but as it is a slow process unfortunately it is not yet acknowledged by the majority of the population who still believe that nature is an unlimited resource which will always recover however much we exploit and abuse it. The attitude to date in the vast majority of developments has been to find a way around the laws designed to protect nature so that the developments can proceed. This needs to change and this is an opportunity for SDCC to embrace the spirit of EU and Irish law designed to protect nature and provide an example for others to follow. This necessary change requires vision and strong leadership to limit the damage for the benefit of our children and grandchildren.

I understand that it is about 7 years since the council voted to proceed with the development. A lot has changed since then, not least our awareness of the decline in our Natural Heritage and the declaration of a biodiversity crisis by the government.

In the current climate of rapid increase in building costs the budget for the development will most likely be exceeded. The bridge is independent of the proposed interpretive center which offers the possibility for a win, win, win situation by eliminating the bridge.

1. Face up to the reality of the biodiversity crisis
2. Set an example for others to follow by embracing the spirit of EU and Irish law to protect the environment.
3. Reduce the overall budget for the development.

I urge you therefore as the decision makers on this project to embrace the vision and provide the necessary leadership by eliminating the bridge between Hellfire and Massys from the development but proceed with the much needed maintenance of the wood, its pathways and the elimination of invasive species. This would set Massys wood on a road to recovery without dramatically increasing footfall and recreational pressure on an already stretched resource. Massys can then become a jewel in the crown of SDCCs response to the biodiversity crisis.

Our children and grandchildren will thank you for your vision in responding to the biodiversity crisis in this way.

3.1.3 Department of Housing, Local Government and Heritage

A chara,

I refer to correspondence received in connection with the above. Outlined below are heritage related observations/recommendations coordinated by the Development Applications Unit under the stated headings.

Archaeology

The Department welcomes the opportunity to comment on the Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening for the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy.

Relationship with other plans and programmes

The Department notes that the SEA Screening for the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy fully aligns with the existing National Planning Framework and South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028.

The Department notes that the SEA Screening for the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy, in general, makes no reference to the Framework and Principles for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage (Government of Ireland 1999). This sets out national policy on the protection of the archaeological heritage in the course of development and in accordance with the aims and requirements of the 'Valletta Convention'—1992 Council of Europe European Convention on the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage—to which Ireland is a party.

In terms of protection of monuments and related sites, the most widely applicable protective mechanism is the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), established under section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994. There are over 130,000 entries in the RMP, which takes the form of lists and maps for each county in the State. Of course, many more archaeological monuments have been identified since and, while these have not as yet been included in the RMP, the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR) maintained by the Archaeological Survey unit of NMS provides details of these more recent discoveries.

The Department notes that there are over 400 monuments in South Dublin County that are listed in the SMR. **The Department recommends that the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy refer to the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).**

The highest legal protection under the National Monuments Acts in respect of monuments is afforded to national monuments of which the Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage or a local authority is owner or guardian or in respect of which a Preservation Order under the National Monuments Acts is in force. The consent of the Minister is required for any works to national monuments or ground disturbance around or in proximity to them. A national monument is any monument the preservation of which is a matter of national importance by reason of the archaeological, architectural, historical, traditional or artistic interest attaching to it.

The Department notes that there are three National Monuments in South Dublin County: Clondalkin Round Tower & Cross (RMP No. DU017-041005-, National Monument No. 32); Tully's Castle (RMP No. DU017-041006-; National Monument No. 285); Rathfarnham Castle RMP No. DU022-014----; National Monument No. 628).

The Department notes the inclusion of Rathfarnham Castle and Clondalkin Round Tower as key heritage attractions within the County. **The Department recommends that the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy refer to these sites as National Monuments.**

The Department welcomes initiatives that enable cultural heritage to be more accessible and better integrated with wider tourism and recreational opportunities of the county. This will be

strategically important to enhancing as well as spreading the tourism capacity through the county's heritage sites and historic towns. The Department supports the integration and communication of multiple strands of cultural and natural heritage, particularly through the implementation of blue and green infrastructural projects that holistically deal with all aspects of archaeological, built and natural heritage. By delivering high quality renewal and enhancement to existing places the social, environmental and economic objectives for sustainable development of communities will be met and cultural heritage significance, conservation best practice, preservation and protection of biodiversity of these places will be raised in general to the benefit of all.

3.1.4 Environmental Protection Agency

Dear Mr McGarry,

We acknowledge your notice, dated 27th September 2023, in relation to the Draft South Dublin County Tourism Strategy ('the Strategy') and associated Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) screening. The EPA is one of the statutory environmental authorities under the SEA Regulations. In our role as a SEA environmental authority, we focus on promoting the full and transparent integration of the findings of the environmental assessment into the Strategy and advocating that the key environmental challenges for Ireland are addressed as relevant and appropriate to the Strategy. Our functions as an SEA environmental authority do not include approving or enforcing SEAs or plans or programmes. Where we provide specific comments on plans and programmes, our comments will focus on the EPA's remit and areas of expertise (in particular water, air, climate change, waste, resource efficiency, noise, radon and the inter-relationships between these and other relevant topics e.g. biodiversity), as appropriate and relevant to the particular Strategy.

Proposed SEA Determination

If a proposed determination hasn't been made, you should determine whether the implementation of the Strategy would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. The criteria to consider are set out in Annex II of Directive 2001/ 42/EC on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment (The SEA Directive) and in Schedule 1 of the European Communities (Environmental 2 Assessment of Certain Plans and Programmes) Regulations 2004 (S.I No. 435 of 2004, as amended). You should take into account the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 1 into account in making its determination as to whether the Strategy would be likely to have significant effects on the environment. Guidance on the SEA process, including an SEA pack and checklist available on our website at: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-resources-and-guidance/>. We recommend that you take the available guidance into account in making your SEA Screening Determination and incorporate the relevant recommendations as relevant.

Specific Comments on the Strategy

Our Good practice guidance on SEA for the tourism sector (EPA, 2023) may be useful to you in preparing the Strategy and associated SEA Screening.

Suggested plans and programmes to consider.

Additionally, in preparing the Strategy and the SEA Screening, we suggest that the Strategy consider a number of key national and sectoral plans, including the National Planning Framework, Eastern & Midlands Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy, National Climate Action Plan 2023, National Water Resources Plan, draft National River Basin Management Plan, Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy. Failte Ireland also have several relevant tourism strategies that should also be considered, as appropriate, such as Ireland's Ancient East.

Additional plans and programmes that may be useful to consider are included in the attached SEA and land use recommendations guidance document.

EPA SEA Screening Guidance

Our Good Practice Guidance for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) Screening (EPA, 2021) provides specific stand-alone guidance to assist plan or programme makers and SEA practitioners. It focuses primarily on plans/programmes in the non-land use sector in Ireland and includes an elaboration of the steps needed for screening, the legislative landscape underpinning SEA screening, and step-by-step process and templates to assist in preparing the required documentation.

Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Planning Authorities

The Strategic Environmental Assessment: Guidelines for Regional Assemblies and Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2022) provides advice on carrying out SEA in the land-use planning sector for those plans listed in S.I. No.436 of 2004, as amended. These plans comprise regional, county and local plans, including Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies, County or City Development Plans, variations of Development Plans, Local Area Plans and Planning Schemes for Strategic Development Zones. The Guidelines replace previous guidance for Regional Authorities and Planning Authorities published in 2004.

Infrastructure Planning

In proposing the Strategy, and any related amendments of the Strategy and in implementing the Strategy, adequate and appropriate infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Strategy.

Sustainable Development

In proposing and in implementing the Strategy, you should ensure that the Strategy is consistent with the need for proper planning and sustainable development. Adequate and appropriate critical service infrastructure should be in place, or required to be put in place, to service any development proposed and authorised during the lifetime of the Strategy.

In considering the Strategy, you should take into account the need to align with national commitments on climate change mitigation and adaptation, as well as incorporating any relevant recommendations in sectoral, regional and local climate adaptation plans. You should also ensure that the Strategy aligns with any key relevant higher-level plans and programmes and is consistent with the relevant objectives and policy commitments of the National Planning Framework and the relevant Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy.

State of the Environment Report – Ireland’s Environment 2020

In preparing the Strategy and associated SEA screening, the recommendations, key issues and challenges described in our published State of the Environment Report Ireland’s Environment – An Integrated Assessment 2020 (EPA, 2020) should be considered, as relevant and appropriate to the Strategy. It is worth noting that the next iteration of this report is due in 2024 and should be integrated as appropriate.

Available Guidance & Resources

Our website contains various SEA resources and guidance, including:

- SEA process guidance and checklists
- SEA Spatial Information Sources Inventory
- Topic specific SEA guidance (including Good practice note on Cumulative Effects Assessment (EPA, 2020), Integrating climatic factors into SEA (EPA, 2019), and Integrated Biodiversity Impact Assessment (EPA, 2012))

You can access these guidance notes and other resources at: <https://www.epa.ie/our-services/monitoring--assessment/assessment/strategic-environmental-assessment/sea-topic-and-sector-specific-guidance/>

Environmental Sensitivity Mapping (ESM) WebTool

This tool is a decision support tool to assist SEA and planning processes in Ireland. It is available at www.enviromap.ie. The tool brings together over 100 datasets and allows users to create plan-specific environmental sensitivity maps. These maps can help planners examine environmental considerations, anticipate potential land-use conflicts, and help identify suitable development locations while also protecting the environment.

EPA SEA WebGIS Tool

Our SEA WebGIS Tool has been updated recently and is now publicly available at <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/SEA>. It allows public authorities to produce an indicative report on key aspects of the environment in a specific geographic area. It is intended to assist public authorities in SEA screening and scoping exercises.

Catchments.ie

Our <https://www.catchments.ie/maps/> website provides a single point of access to water quality and catchment data from the National WFD monitoring programme.

EPA AA GeoTool

Our AA GeoTool application has been developed in partnership with the NPWS. It allows users to select a location, specify a search area and gather available information for each European Site within the area. It is available at: <https://gis.epa.ie/EPAMaps/AAGeoTool>.

Future amendments to the Strategy

Where changes to the Strategy are made prior to finalisation, or where modifications to the Strategy are proposed following its adoption, these should be screened for potential for likely significant effects in accordance with the criteria set out in Schedule 1 (S.I. No. 435 of 2004, as amended) of the SEA Regulations, as appropriate.

Appropriate Assessment

You should ensure that the Strategy complies with the requirements of the Habitats Directive where relevant. Where an Appropriate Assessment is required, the key findings and recommendations should be incorporated into the SEA and the Strategy.

Environmental Authorities

Under the SEA Regulations, prior to making your SEA determination you should consult with:

- Environmental Protection Agency;
- Minister for Housing, Local Government and Heritage,
- Minister for Environment, Climate and Communications; and,
- Minister for Agriculture, Food and the Marine.

SEA Determination

As soon as practicable after making your determination as to whether SEA is required or not, you should make a copy of your decision, including, if appropriate, the reasons for not requiring an environmental assessment, available for public inspection in your offices and on your website. You should also send a copy of your determination to the relevant environmental authorities consulted.

If you have any queries or need further information in relation to this submission, please contact me directly. I would be grateful if you could send an email confirming receipt of this submission to: sea@epa.ie.

3.1.5 Elizabeth Hickey (on behalf of Dublin Cycling Campaign)

Dublin Cycling Campaign is a registered charity that advocates for better cycling conditions in Dublin. Our vision for Dublin is a place with a cycle friendly culture, where everyone has a real choice to cycle and is encouraged to experience the joy, convenience, health and environmental benefits of cycling. Throughout the Draft Tourism Strategy we note the continued referral to the opportunities that cycling can offer the Tourism Strategy in South Dublin. We are very supportive of the Cycle South Dublin Program and view it as a key enabler of a true modal shift for those who live, work and visit South Dublin. We believe there is further opportunity that cycling can offer to the evolution of tourism in our County, particularly if the development is to be in an environmentally sustainable manner. Please find below our detailed comments on elements of the plan:

Section 2.3 - Access & Connectivity and Visitor Activities:

- We welcome the inclusion of utilizing Active Travel and would like to stress the range and gradient ability that e-bikes now offer the population. They are viable transport and connectivity solution to a Local authority area with the distances and topography that the South Dublin County Council area contains.
- We welcome the Dodder Greenway completion and would stress the requirement that the remaining sections be completed to enable tourists of all ages and abilities to enjoy this wonderful amenity.
- We welcome the completion of the Grand Canal Greenway and likewise would encourage its timely completion as it is a key connector for tourism to and from the neighboring county of Kildare.
- Whilst good to note the plans to connect to the Royal Canal it would be good to see this accelerated.

Section 2.5 - SCOT Analysis

- We welcome the identification of cycling as offering opportunities to the strategy.

Section 3.2 - Catalytic Projects

- We welcome the proposal for a Dublin Rambler Bus Service to offer an alternative to the private vehicle transport now required to reach the Dublin Mountains. However, we would encourage any public transport solution to be considered as a holistic active travel solution. We would suggest that buses offer passengers the ability to transport bicycles (including heavier e-bikes) either by means of exterior racks or indeed interior space within the buses. There should also be consideration for safe, secure bike parking at the bus stops along any routes and facilities such as repair stands and-bike charging options too. In addition, the Rambler Bus Service should serve not just the tourist attractions in the County but should serve locations from which people access walking and cycling routes which are currently accessible only by private car.

Strategic Priority Number 1 - Realise our Potential

- We welcome the continued development of Green Trails and in particular we would like to understand the plans and timelines for the Tymon to Phoenix Green Corridor as this would offer key connectivity between LAs.

- We welcome the further development of cycling trails. It would be of utmost importance that these offer true connectivity between urban areas so that Active Travel can be the sole journey. Currently it is often the de facto with many Greenways and trails around the country that there is a reliance to 'drive' to these trails. The development of the trails should result in a network and the standard of the routes should be world class in terms of attractiveness and safety so that tourists of all ages and abilities can enjoy them.

Strategic Priority number 2 - Redefine our Reputation

- As per our commentary above with respect to inter-connectivity we would like to highlight that Public Transport and Active Travel should be the key focus for the development of amenities, events and public realms. We note a reference to increased parking (presumably motor vehicle), but Active Travel and public transport should be key prioritizations and providing for those who do opt for public transport active travel should be a key consideration of their needs.

Strategic Priority Number 3 - Reinforce Connectivity

We welcome the acknowledgement of the current deficits with interconnectivity within the LA. Many areas within SDCC have been developed in a car dependent manner and we support the solutions cited to remediate the situation both for the tourists already resident in the LA and those coming from afar. It is imperative that the evolution of public transport and Active Travel networks are cohesive, safe and attractive networks. We note the importance of signage and would request that this be immediately acted upon within the existing tourism routes. Currently signage is extremely poor and offers an immediate improvement to any tourists visiting SDCC.

Conclusion

We welcome the SDCC Draft Tourism Strategy's inclusion of the opportunities that cycling can offer the County. We look forward to seeing these plans being developed with cycling not only a key tourism offering but a key enabler throughout transport options.

We would gladly welcome the opportunity to discuss any of our observations above with the Council as the strategy further evolves.

3.1.6 Geological Survey Ireland

Dear Sir/Madam,

Geological Survey Ireland is the national earth science agency and is a division of the Department of the Environment, Climate and Communications. We provide independent geological information and gather various data for that purpose. Please see our [website](#) for data availability. We recommend using these various data sets, when conducting the EIAR, SEA, planning and scoping processes. Use of our data or maps should be attributed correctly to 'Geological Survey Ireland'.

The publicly available data referenced/presented here, should in no way be construed as Geological Survey Ireland support for or objection to the proposed development or plan. The data is made freely available to all and can be used as independent scientific data in assessments, plans or policies. It should be noted that in many cases this data is a baseline or starting point for further site specific assessments.

With reference to your email received on the 09 October 2023, concerning South Dublin County Council County Tourism Strategy, Geological Survey Ireland would encourage use of and reference to our datasets. This data can add to the content and robustness of the SEA process. With this in mind please find attached a list of our publicly available datasets that may be useful to the environmental assessment and planning process. We recommend that you review this list

and refer to any datasets you consider relevant to your assessment. The remainder of this letter and following sections provide more detail on some of these datasets.

Geoheritage

Geological Survey Ireland is in partnership with the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) in the Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht to identify and select important geological and geomorphological sites throughout the country for designation as geological NHAs (Natural Heritage Areas). This is addressed by the Geoheritage Programme in Geological Survey Ireland, under 16 different geological themes, in which the minimum number of scientifically significant sites that best represent the theme were rigorously selected by a panel of theme experts.

County Geological Sites (CGSs) have been adopted in the National Heritage Plan, and will form a major strand of geological nature conservation to complement the various ecological and cultural conservation measures. It is important to note however, that management issues for the majority of geological heritage sites may differ from ecological sites. County Geological Sites are the optimal way of addressing the responsibility of each authority under the Planning and Development Act 2000 and its amendments, to protect sites of geological interest.

The audit for South Dublin was published in 2014. The full report details and 10 individual CGS Reports can be found [here](#).

Culture and Tourism

Over the past number of years geology has become a large part of Irish tourism. Ireland currently has three UNESCO Global Geoparks, and a number of other geotourism projects. These Geoparks, along with other tourism initiatives such as the Wild Atlantic Way, Irelands Ancient East, and Irelands Hidden Heartlands have bolstered tourism in various parts of Ireland and helped to increase its levels in areas that were previously not as popular with tourists. We would encourage South Dublin County Council to continue this trend, and to use the geological audit information making it easily available to the general public. We would encourage geology to be a significant part of any heritage or tourism initiative that may be introduced.

Dimension Stone/Stone Built Ireland

Stone Built Ireland was a research collaboration agreement between Geological Survey Ireland, Trinity College Dublin & the office of Public Works. The project aims to document building and decorative stone in Ireland to inform government agencies, building owners and conservationists of the sources for suitable replacement stone in restoration work and to develop a greater awareness among the general public.

In addition to promoting citizen science and awareness of local materials, the inventory will aid the public in complying with part 4 of the Planning and Development Act 2000, which requires owners to conserve protected structures. It will also assist local authorities in issuing Section 57 Declarations, which outline 'the type of works which it considers would or would not materially affect the character of the structure or any element of the structure'.

This project builds on work already completed funded by the Irish Research Council (March 2019 - September 2020) that carried out primary research on the topic and developed a simple database and web-based platform as well as hosting various heritage displays at venues (www.stonebuiltireland.com). The complete STONEBUILT IRELAND online database is due to be released shortly.

Groundwater

Geological Survey Ireland's [Groundwater and Geothermal Unit](#), provides advice, data and maps relating to groundwater distribution, quality and use, which is especially relevant for safe and secure drinking water supplies and healthy ecosystems.

Proposed developments need to consider any potential impact on specific groundwater abstractions and on groundwater resources in general. We recommend using the groundwater maps on our [Map viewer](#) which should include: wells; drinking water source protection areas; the national map suite - aquifer, groundwater vulnerability, groundwater recharge and subsoil permeability maps. For areas underlain by limestone, please refer to the karst specific data layers (karst features, tracer test database; turlough water levels (gwlevel.ie). Background information is also provided in the Groundwater Body Descriptions. Please read all disclaimers carefully when using Geological Survey Ireland data.

[GWClimate](#) is a groundwater monitoring and modelling project that aims to investigate the impact of climate change on groundwater in Ireland. This is a follow on from a previous project (GWFlood) and the data may be useful in relation to Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and management plans. Maps and data are available on the [Map viewer](#).

Geological Survey Ireland has completed Groundwater Protection Schemes (GWPSs) in partnership with Local Authorities, and there is now national coverage of GWPS mapping. A Groundwater Protection Scheme provides guidelines for the planning and licensing authorities in carrying out their functions, and a framework to assist in decision-making on the location, nature and control of developments and activities in order to protect groundwater. **The Groundwater Protection Response overview and link to the main reports is here: <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/programmes-and-projects/groundwater/projects/protecting-drinking-water/what-is-drinking-water-protection/county-groundwater-protection-schemes/Pages/default.aspx>**

Geological Mapping

Geological Survey Ireland maintains online datasets of bedrock and subsoils geological mapping that are reliable and accessible. We would encourage you to use these data which can be found [here](#), in your future assessments.

Please note we have recently launched QGIS compatible bedrock (100K) and Quaternary geology map data, with instructional manuals and videos. This makes our data more accessible to general public and external stakeholders. QGIS compatible data can be found in our downloadable bedrock 100k .zip file on the [Data & Maps](#) section of our website.

Our 3D models can help stakeholders visualize, understand and characterise geology, for deposit and resource mapping, for flooding and for urban geology applications including basement impact assessment, Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS), and subsurface management. Our 3D models offer a key element of geotechnical risk management by identifying areas requiring further site investigation.

Further information on the bedrock and Quaternary 3D models of Dublin is available [here](#) and [here](#).

Geohazards

Geohazards can cause widespread damage to landscapes, wildlife, human property and human life. In Ireland, landslides, flooding and coastal erosion are the most prevalent of these hazards. We recommend that geohazards be taken into consideration, especially when developing areas where these risks are prevalent, and we encourage the use of our data when doing so.

Geological Survey Ireland has information available on landslides in Ireland via the National Landslide Database and Landslide Susceptibility Map both of which are available for viewing on our dedicated [Map Viewer](#). Associated guidance documentation relating to the National Landslide Susceptibility Map is also available.

Geological Survey Ireland also engaged in a national project on Groundwater Flooding. The data from this project may be useful in relation to Flood Risk Assessment (FRA) and management plans, and is described in more detail under 'Groundwater' above.

Natural Resources (Minerals/Aggregates)

Geological Survey Ireland is of the view that the sustainable development of our natural resources should be an integral part of all development plans from a national to regional to local level to ensure that the materials required for our society are available when required. Geological Survey Ireland highlights the consideration of mineral resources and potential resources as a material asset which should be explicitly recognised within the environmental assessment process. Geological Survey Ireland provides data, maps, interpretations and advice on matters related to minerals, their use and their development in our [Minerals section](#) of the website. The Active Quarries, Mineral Localities and the Aggregate Potential maps are available on our [Map Viewer](#).

We would recommend use of the Aggregate Potential Mapping viewer to identify areas of High to Very High source aggregate potential within the area. In keeping with a sustainable approach we would recommend use of our data and mapping viewers to identify and ensure that natural resources used in developments are sustainably sourced from properly recognised and licensed facilities, and that consideration of future resource sterilization is considered.

Geochemistry of soils, surface waters and sediments for Dublin Region

Geological Survey Ireland provides baseline geochemistry data for Ireland as part of the Tellus programme. Data is available at <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/data-and-maps/Pages/Geochemistry.aspx>. **This page also hosts urban geochemistry mapping (Dublin SURGE project) which may be useful to the plan.**

Geological Survey Ireland has completed a geochemical characterization of the subsoil beneath large parts of Dublin, known colloquially as the Dublin Boulder Clay. The report documents the analysis completed on a third-party geochemical dataset obtained from the private sector and is accompanied by an excel spreadsheet containing the database of geochemical observations. Further details can be found at: <https://www.gsi.ie/en-ie/publications/Pages/Geochemical-characterization-of-the-Dublin-Boulder-Clay.aspx>.

Geophysical data

Geological Survey Ireland produces high-resolution geophysical data (Magnetic field, electrical conductivity, natural gamma-ray radiation) of soils & rocks as part of the [Tellus programme](#). These data currently cover approximately 75% of the country and provide supporting geological information on a regional scale useful for assessing environmental impact and risk.

Physiographic Units

Physiographic Units are cartographic representations of the broad-scale physical landscape of a region. They delineate physical regions showing internal uniformity with respect to one or more environmental attributes that can be clearly differentiated from neighbouring regions. They are valuable for regional land-use planning, and in studies of the influence of physical landscape on the ecological environment. This map is produced in support of the actions to be implemented in National Landscape Strategy for Ireland 2015 – 2025. Physiographic Units map data can be viewed online under the Physiographic Units tab on the online [Map Viewer](#).

I hope that these comments are of assistance, and if we can be of any further help, please do not hesitate to the Geological Survey Ireland Planning Team at GSIPanning@gsi.ie.

3.1.7 Identity Hidden

The Draft Strategy could be improved by **mentioning Palmerston Architectural Conservation Area, situated at the Mill Lane Complex with existing informal access to Waterstown Park**. Opportunities currently exist (commercial property for sale at Mill Lane) and may be identified (Mill Complex and

adjoining lands) to acquire lands and buildings as part of consolidation of lands, providing access to the Silver Bridge, potential for visitor facilities and interpretative centre, and progressing connectivity for sustainable foot and cycle routes along the Liffey Valley. Important riverine habitat (pNHA), and potential for conservation-grazing management of biodiverse grassland also arise.

3.1.8 John Quigley

Dear Administrative Officer,

I wanted to commend the Council on their work in the South Dublin County Tourism Strategy. I massively support the investment in South Dublin's unique natural assets in the Dublin Mountains to drive up tourism. I also commend its commitment to sustainable transport, busses, walking and cycling. In this regard, I wanted to draw attention to *Table 2, Visitor Numbers to South Dublin Attractions 2018-2022*. In this table, you can note the rise in visitors in 2020 and 2021. As a local of the area I can tell you that while the car parks were full, most of these visitors arrived via walking and cycling. The rise in figures was possible because of reduced traffic along Edmondstown Road, Old Military Road and Gunny Hill, enabling safer walking and cycling. Following the subsequent increased traffic on this road and increased noise and anxiety, foot traffic to the Hellfire sharply reduced.

I want to draw your attention to a unique opportunity to bring back foot traffic to the Hellfire Club. **With short stretches of footpaths and quality cycling paths, the Hellfire Club could be connected to the 15, 161, and 61 bus routes.** Minor improvements would need to be made along Edmondstown road from Rockbrook College to Cruagh Lodge Stud and St. Colmcille's Well to the Hellfire Club, with crossing points along Mt Venus Road and the Old Military Road.

This would create a walking route from Edmondstown bus stop, up through Massy's Woods, up the Hellfire Club, and down to the 15 Terminus in Wood's Town. Connecting via Massy's Woods to the broader Dublin Mountain Way. The effect would draw visitors into the Mountains, increasing foot traffic to local cafes and pubs. As side benefits, Rockbrook College, Ballyboden Wander's GAA, the DSPCA and other local attractions would be connected to the bus network. I believe this would amplify the effects of the grand plans you have put in place.

3.1.9 Michael Connolly (on behalf of Rathfarnham Castle Residents' Association)

SDCC Tourism Strategy 2024 - 2029

•"A key issue for South Dublin County is the current lack of high-end food and drink offerings in comparison to other destinations in Ireland".

•"The development of Rathfarnham Castle Courtyards as a regionally important food destination hub ... "

The above are 2 quotes from the Tourism Strategy document. This is Delusional Trying to create a regional food destination hub from existing operations/ proposed project cannot work. The base for the same is non-existent at present. The main food operators in Rathfarnham Village are night-time takeaways, together with a few daytime coffee shops / snack/ lunch offerings [The Window Box/ The Studio]. The only restaurant is Morilles, and a few Pub Grub offerings [Yellow house/ Revels].

The preferred" operator of the - still no planning permission plans available -, while probably very good operators in their particular field of Coffee shops / Delicatessens, together with a few mid-market restaurants in North Dublin, could by no means be considered "high-end" food operators

in comparison to other Tourist destinations in Ireland. We were told by SDCC officials recently that the regular food offerings would finish at 6.00 pm, initially at least.

All of this is just sheer nonsense - even when you add some possible Food Trucks as indicated on some sketches. We would have no problem with a few food trucks in the car park, during daytime / early evening if there is a market for same currently. Does SDCC even realise how long it takes to create "high end" food offerings, how much risk there is in such businesses? There was a study some years ago which showed a failure rate within 1 year of c.75%.

In the past 12 months, two new (max. 12 months operating) "high-end" food businesses failed, without ever getting seriously established, despite massive social media and "old" media exposure. In Rathfarnham Village "Salt & Vinegar" was established by very experienced operators with a premium take-away offering. "Ton Tin", a Bar, Wine Bar, Pizza, Cafe which was open for Breakfast, Lunch, Dinner, and invested hugely in fittings/ atmosphere etc, both failed very quickly. Instead of trying to create an impossible new Tourism attraction, which in any event is highly likely to fail to attract additional "visitors" to our locality, why not develop our current undoubted, unique, historic attractions already on our doorstep. The neglect & failure to utilize our real treasures in recent decades is shameful.

3.1.10 Rathcoole Tidy Towns

Hi, as secretary of Rathcoole Tidy Towns, we would like to comment that we are disappointed that there is no inclusion of any action item in relation to development of the current Coilte walks in the Saggart Hills or in relation to Brittas ponds fishery. These facilities are already in place the only restriction being lack of parking space and accessibility, with small investment, these could become excellent recreational facilities. For example, The Slade Valley golf club with excellent parking and catering facilities is directly beside the Slievethoul Trial and with little or no investment could become a minibus drop of point, and focal point for walkers and families wishing to explore the Hills. We also would like to take issue with the statement that the Slade Valley Greenway cannot have any work done on it as part of the new plan, due to land acquisition issues. The Greenway from Rathcoole Park through Saggart to the Slade Road is already in place, and Uisce Eireann have assured us that they will complete their section of the greenway and associated planting around the new Saggart Reservoir in 2024. We would suggest that a circular walkway could be developed around Rathcoole and Saggart for the lower portion of the Greenway. while discussion with landowners further up the valley is underway.

3.1.11 Rathfarnham Woods Residents' Association

The Rathfarnham area has a wealth of underdeveloped tourism opportunities. In particular, Rathfarnham Castle, its curtilage and the adjoining Village embody so much heritage and history of which most people are unaware. The Seismograph House beside the Castle is unique in the country and its importance should be celebrated. 100 years ago, Fr O'Leary's seismograph, located in that house, could detect earthquakes and earth tremors from across the world – that was a fantastic achievement for the time. There is great potential for a wonderful local tourist attraction, incorporating interactive elements to introduce children to the concepts of seismology. We understand that the Seismograph House (see photo below) should be in decent condition and that some care has been taken in maintaining it in recent years, even though it has not been accessible to the public. Also, the Rathfarnham Castle Courtyards themselves offer unique potential to create beautiful artisan workshops / work areas for artists similar to those in Marlay Park. While in need of careful restoration, there are many beautiful old stone buildings in the Southern and Central courtyards (see photos below). These buildings and courtyards underwent some restoration / roofing works 5 years ago, at a reputed cost of over €1m, but are not proposed to be used under any current plans, which is a shame. There are other historic buildings and areas within a few minutes' walk of Rathfarnham Castle, including the Petty Sessions building, the Church of Ireland and Catholic Churches, the Penal Mass site and the very old graveyard beside the Village. Rathfarnham Castle Park itself is incredibly under-appreciated given its wide

biodiversity and importance as a breeding habitat for numerous protected species. It has bats, frogs, tufted ducks, a grey heron, grey squirrels, foxes, mallards, moorhens and, occasionally, a kingfisher. It has two lovely playgrounds. One of these, the Woodland Playground, is particularly loved by neurodiverse and autistic children. It offers a lovely peaceful natural play space for children, and is a quiet haven, tucked away from the noise and traffic behind a high wall and fully surrounded by trees. It offers a sensory experience which is not offered by more mainstream playgrounds and is very valued by local autistic children. A nature trail has just been installed in the Park (under the €300k Have Your Say programme) and this is a lovely addition. There is also a beautiful contemplative ornamental pond area at the other side of the Courtyards, the Sean Keating Garden. While in need of some TLC, this is a fantastic natural amphitheatre and is particularly suitable for outdoor concerts in the summer months. **Regular outdoor afternoon concerts here would be a lovely local tourist attraction and should be possible to organize relatively easily.** Rathfarnham is close to the Dodder Greenway and attendees could be encouraged to walk or cycle to these tourist attractions if possible. There is also a very large population living within 1km of Rathfarnham Village, so there is great scope to enhance this area in a sensitive, appropriate way, without the necessity for large scale additional parking facilities.

3.1.12 The Civic Theatre

Introduction:

South Dublin County Council is excited to introduce "South Dublin Culture Day," a vibrant and inclusive festival that celebrates the rich tapestry of cultures that call our county home. As part of our Tourism Strategy for 2024-2029, this annual event will showcase the diversity of our community while promoting unity and understanding among residents and visitors alike.

Festival Highlights:

Multicultural Parade: Kick off the day with a colorful parade featuring representatives from various cultural groups, local schools, and community organizations. Participants will showcase their unique traditions through music, dance, and traditional attire.

Cultural Villages: Transform public spaces into cultural villages, each dedicated to a specific country or culture. Visitors can explore interactive displays, sample international cuisine, and engage in hands-on activities such as art and craft workshops.

World Music and Dance Performances: Enjoy a diverse lineup of live performances throughout the day, featuring music, dance, and performances from around the world. From Irish folk music to Bollywood dance, there will be something for everyone.

Culinary Delights: Savour the flavours of the world at our international food market. Local restaurants and vendors will offer a wide range of dishes, allowing attendees to embark on a culinary journey without leaving South Dublin.

Cultural Workshops: Participate in workshops and demonstrations that highlight the arts, traditions, and customs of different cultures. Learn to create traditional crafts, practice martial arts, or try your hand at dance from around the globe.

Cultural Exhibitions: Visit cultural exhibitions and galleries showcasing art, history, and artifacts from various cultures. Gain a deeper understanding of the global influences that have shaped our community.

Interactive Learning: Engage in cultural exchange through storytelling sessions, language classes, and discussions on intercultural topics. These activities promote dialogue and understanding among attendees.

Children's Activities: Provide a dedicated area for children's activities, including face painting, storytelling, and games from different cultures. This ensures that Culture Day is a family-friendly event for all ages.

Unity Ceremony: Conclude the festivities with a unity ceremony symbolizing the coming together of diverse communities in South Dublin County. This powerful moment reinforces the message of inclusion and harmony.

Inclusion / Getting Involved:

We invite local cultural organizations, community groups, schools, and businesses to participate in South Dublin Culture Day. Whether you want to host a cultural village, perform on the main stage, or set up a food stall, your involvement will help make this event a resounding success.

New "Music Theatre Festival"

Dates: from 19th August for 2 weeks

Location: The Civic Theatre & various other venues and performance venues in Tallaght and South County Dublin

Introduction:

South Dublin County Council could lead the way to announce the inaugural "Musical Theatre Festival of Ireland" as a significant addition to our Tourism Strategy for 2024-2029. This festival aims to celebrate the vibrant and diverse world of musical theatre while attracting visitors to Tallaght, reinforcing our commitment to culture and the arts. There are so many artists, musicians, composers already making a living in this field of work. At one stage a couple of years ago there were 5 people from Dublin playing lead roles in West End productions.

Festival Highlights:

Diverse Productions: The festival will feature a diverse line-up of new & original musical theatre productions, including original works by local artists and companies (of which there are many) along with concert versions of unseen Broadway shows, as well as talks and Master Classes. So we are encouraging the development of local Irish artists and welcome work from overseas.

Local Talent Showcase with a Bursary on offer: Provide a platform for local talent to shine by hosting auditions and workshops, encouraging community participation and collaboration. Local schools, drama clubs, and emerging artists will have opportunities to showcase their skills. The winner could receive a bursary to study in Ireland. There are already Full-time degree courses established in T.U., American College (IMIT) in Dublin and Munster TU (Cork) with more schools and colleges due to be established in the coming years.

International Guest Performances: Attract renowned international artist to perform and speak at the festival, offering audiences a chance to experience top-tier productions without leaving Tallaght.

Interactive Workshops: Offer educational workshops and masterclasses led by industry professionals. These sessions will cover various aspects of musical theatre, including acting, singing, dancing, costume design, and stagecraft.

Children's Theatre: Organize family-friendly shows and workshops, introducing young audiences to the magic of musical theatre. These productions will inspire the next generation of performers and theatre enthusiasts.

Street Performances: Enhance the festival atmosphere by featuring street performances, pop-up musical numbers, and impromptu performances in public spaces throughout Tallaght.

Thematic Events: Create themed events such as sing-along nights, costume contests, and theatrical trivia, encouraging audience engagement and participation.

Community Engagement:

Involve the local community in planning and organizing the festival, from volunteer opportunities to partnerships with local businesses and schools. Encourage residents to take pride in their artists & cultural stories.

Support for Emerging Artists:

Offer grants, mentorship programs, and networking opportunities to support emerging artists and theatre companies in the region, fostering a thriving arts community in South Dublin.

Conclusion:

The "Musical Theatre Festival of Ireland" aims to become a signature cultural event in Tallaght, drawing visitors from near and far to experience the magic of musical theatre. Through this festival, we hope to enrich the cultural landscape of our region, promote tourism, and provide a platform for local talent to shine on a global stage. There is currently no festival like this in Europe.

We look forward to working with local artists, theatre enthusiasts, and the community to make the South Dublin Musical Theatre Festival a resounding success. Together, we will celebrate the performing arts and showcase Tallaght as a vibrant and culturally rich destination.

Food & Hospitality

From working in Tallaght over the past year I believe the variety of restaurants could be better. The choices available are not great and the opening hours are very limited. Tallaght Village looks like a good area to develop - perhaps the Tallaght Food Quarter might be next. This is vital in the development of Tourism - people will travel if the food is good.

3.1.13 Vincent Keogh

Dear Administrative Officer,

Part a) of the first section of the Tourism Strategy looks for us to increase the number of activities available. With this in mind I would like to suggest a number of activities that could be quick wins in relation to Corkagh Park. The reinstatement of the Pet Farm and the Zorbing Hill together with a number of additional activities such as boats on the lakes, a Geocache treasure hunt about the park, a bike hire centre and the development of a crazy golf facility close to Camac Valley Camping Park.



Contact us

James Chilton
KPMG Future Analytics
E james.chilton@kpmg.com

Jack Shakespeare
KPMG Future Analytics
E jack.shakespeare@kpmg.com

Ema Zacko
KPMG Future Analytics
E ema.zacko@kpmg.com

Some or all of the services described herein may not be permissible for KPMG audit clients and their affiliates or related entities.

www.kpmg.com

© 2023 KPMG, an Irish partnership and a member firm of the KPMG global organization of independent member firms affiliated with KPMG International Limited, a private English company limited by guarantee. All rights reserved.

The information contained herein is of a general nature and is not intended to address the circumstances of any particular individual or entity. Although we endeavour to provide accurate and timely information, there can be no guarantee that such information is accurate as of the date it is received or that it will continue to be accurate in the future. No one should act on such information without appropriate professional advice after a thorough examination of the particular situation.

The KPMG name and logo are trademarks used under license by the independent member firms of the KPMG global organization.