COMHAIRLE CONTAE ÁTHA CLIATH THEAS
SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

Monday 14th of September 2026

HEADED ITEM NO. 13

Chief Executive's Report in relation to the installation of a heat pump system at Clondalkin Civic Centre, Ninth Lock Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, D22 E9X5

1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

The purpose of this Chief Executive's Report is to present the outcome of the Part 8 consultation, to respond to submissions made during the consultation period and to make recommendations in relation to the proposed development where appropriate.

1.2 Site Description

Clondalkin Civic Centre is located on Ninth Lock Road, Clondalkin. The building was constructed in 1999, with a useful floor area of 2,010 m^2. The building includes a large car park at the rear of the building, as shown on the boundary map below.

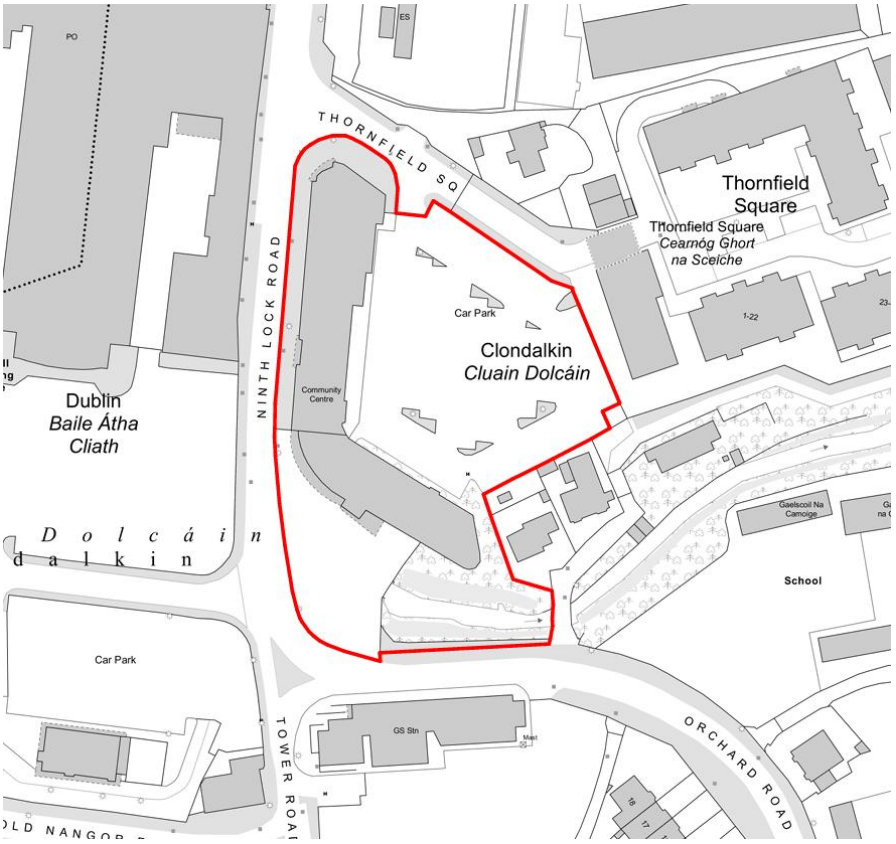

Figure 1.1: Red line boundary of the site including adjoining car park area

The building houses a Council Chamber and councilors' offices, law centre offices, the Childcare Committee offices, a crèche and a Money Advice and Budgeting Services (MABS) office. The ground floor houses the crèche and a number of offices and meeting rooms. The first floor houses the law centre offices and MABS, as well as the Council Chamber and staff kitchen. The second floor houses the server room, a number of councillors' offices and the Childcare Committee offices.

1.3 Description of Proposed Works

The works to achieve decarbonisation and energy efficiency improvements across the building will include:

- Installation of a heat pump system, comprising of 2 No. 37.5kW Air Source Heat Pumps, in the car park area of the building, with associated site works.
- The heat pump system will be installed on a concrete base and surrounded by a 2.4m high mesh fence, with one access gate. This compound will be 5.24m by 4.95m.
- The heat pumps will be housed in an acoustic enclosure that is 2m in width, 3.04m in length and 3.225m in height.

These works will be supported by internal building modifications, the majority of which are concentrated in existing mechanical plantrooms.

Figure 1.2: Render of the proposed heat pump location

1.4 Energy and Carbon Emission Savings

The works under the Energy Performance Contract are estimated to reduce energy consumption by 53% and carbon emissions by 48%.

This comprises the following estimates:

- Energy Saving of approximately 166,000 kWh/year, with associated financial benefit.
- Carbon Emissions Saving of approximately 34,500 kg CO2 / year.

This installation of a heat pump system, as outlined above, is a necessary part of achieving these potential targets.

1.5 Plans and Details

Plans, details and reports are available at the following link:

Installation of a heat pump system at Clondalkin Civic Centre, Ninth Lock Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, D22 E9X5 | South Dublin County Council's Online Consultation Portal

List of Plans, details and reports available:

01 – Clondalkin Civic Offices – Site Location Plan_P02
02 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Site Notice Irish and English
03 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Planning Report
04 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Project Site Plan_P02
05 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Air Source Heat Pumps Compound General Arrangement Plan_P01
06 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Air Source Heat Pumps Compound Renders_P01
07 - Clondalkin Civic Offices – Noise Impact Assessment Report_P01
08 – Clondalkin Civic Offices – EIA Screening Report
09 – Clondalkin Civic Offices – AA Screening Report
10 – Clondalkin Civic Offices –Project EIA Screening Determination
11 – Clondalkin Civic Offices – Project AA Screening Determination

1.6 Adjacent Project – for Information

A further project to be delivered to support the decarbonisation and energy efficiency of the Clondalkin Civic Offices is the installation of rooftop solar PV. The array to be installed is less than 300msq and is considered exempted development in line with *(Planning and Development Act 2000 (Exempted Development) (No. 3) Regulations 2022)* and the the Solar Safeguarding Zone Regulations 2022 ((S.I. No. 492/2022 - Planning And Development (Solar Safeguarding Zone) Regulations 2022).

However, as the building is in a Solar Safeguarding Zone (located approximately 3.6km from Casement Aerodrome), a Glint and Glare Assessment was undertaken, to ensure that there are no associated risks. The Assessment determined that the proposed arrays at the Civic Office building results in a 'Pass' at the Casement Aerodrome receptors.

The solar PV project is not anticipated to have any impact on the proposed installation of heat pumps. The proposed location of the solar PV array is shown on the drawings for information purposes only and is not part of this application.

2.0 Project Objectives and Policy Alignment for proper planning and sustainable development

The Climate Action and Low Carbon Development (Amendment) Act 2021 is driving the requirement for Ireland to achieve a 51% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by the end of 2030. With the introduction of carbon budgets and sectoral ceilings, as a Local Authority, South Dublin County Council is required to reduce our direct carbon emissions by 51%. SDCC owned buildings account for 45% of the Council's total energy demand and 40% of Council's total emissions.

The proposed works part of a wider proposal to decarbonise SDCC's buildings that have the largest energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions. Decarbonising involves the reduction or elimination of carbon emissions from how the building is heated/powered/used. The Baseline Emissions profile published in the SDCC's Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 identified 6 buildings owned by SDCC that are considered significant energy users and have the highest emissions reduction potential. The Clondalkin Civic Centre is one of the 6 critical buildings identified.

This proposal aims to decarbonise and improve the energy efficiency of the Clondalkin Civic Centre and will significantly contribute towards meeting the targets. The structure of this project is centered around a performance guarantee, which ensures that ongoing operational performance delivers efficiency, as well as ensuring a high-quality service is provided to building users.

SDCC have worked closely with SEAI (Sustainable Energy Agency Ireland) to ensure that the project is aligned with overarching national policy and appropriate funding streams, and the project has received support from the SEAI Pathfinder programme. The Pathfinder programme offers support to public sector bodies that are implementing building retrofit and heat decarbonisation projects. The project has been prepared in line with the requirements of the Infrastructure Guidelines and has undergone detailed appraisal of the alignment of the project with the principles of the Infrastructure Guidelines and overarching national policy.

This project demonstrates SDCCs commitment to decarbonisation, climate action, and making progress to achieving the Public Sector Climate Action Mandate, which outlines the requirement that public bodies, including Local Authorities, take actions to "lead by example" to demonstrate that decarbonisation and energy efficiency are achievable, and are worthwhile goals for organisations to pursue.

SDCC have progressed the proposed works in alignment with various relevant Council plans and policies, including;

- South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan 2025-2029
- South Dublin County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 - 2029,
- South Dublin County Council County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

2.1 South Dublin County Council Corporate Plan 2025-2029

The SDCC Corporate Plan identifies "Climate Leadership" as one of the seven Goals of the plan and identifies an objective to *"make South Dublin a low carbon and climate resilient county".* Each of the seven Goals includes targets and indicators, and these indicators under the "Climate Leadership" Goal include "*Number of retrofit works to improve the energy efficiency of council-owned buildings*", and the *"% Local authority energy savings"*.

The proposed project directly promotes this Goal by demonstrating the Council's commitment to meaningful climate action by decarbonising significant energy and emission producing buildings. The structure of this project ensures progress will be seen on these indicators as the project includes an energy performance guarantee that ensures ongoing maintenance and performance are a central aspect of the project. This will ensure that the anticipated reductions in operational energy costs continues for the life of the project and protects against the "rebound effect" that is often seen in energy retrofit projects. This rebound effect occurs when energy savings from efficiency measures are negated over time as occupants use more energy than required to maintain a comfortable environment, and this negatively impacts energy and financial savings.

Figure 2.1: The Seven Goals of the SDCC Corporate Plan 2025-2029

The SDCC Corporate Plan also identifies creating "*A Better Place*" that will "*Deliver the infrastructure and facilities required to serve our growing population*" as a key Goal of the plan. The proposed project delivers on this goal by contributing to the modernisation and upgrading of existing buildings to contribute to the ongoing to ensure continued delivery of high-quality public and community facilities.

2.2 South Dublin County Council Climate Action Plan 2024 – 2029

The SDCC Climate Action Plan 2024-2029 sets out a range of actions across the six theme areas of Energy & Buildings, Transport, Flood Resilience, Nature Based Solutions, Circular Economy & Resource Management and Citizen Engagement, and these areas are aligned to national climate policy to deliver the transition to a climate resilient and sustainable economy.

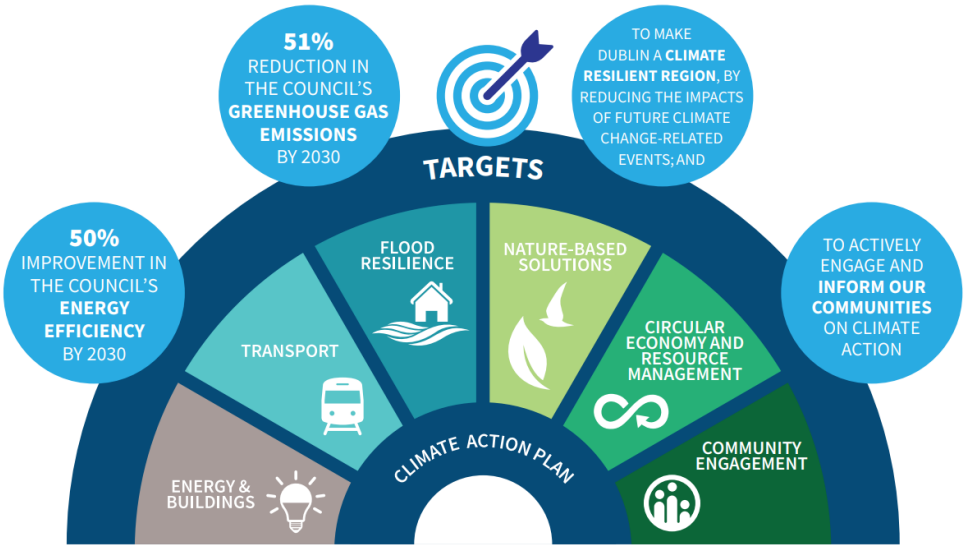

Figure 2.2: The six action areas of the SDCC Climate Action Plan 2024-2029

In the Action Area of 'Energy and Buildings', Action E8 of the CAP specifically identifies the progression of this project as part of a wider Energy Performance Contract as an action required in order to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions in SDCC buildings as outlined below. The SDCC Climate Action Plan identifies Clondalkin Civic Centre as one of the most crucial buildings to implement renewable energy projects at to meet the 2030 climate action targets that apply to South Dublin County Council.

Improve Energy Efficiency and reduce Carbon Emissions in SDCC Buildings							
E8	Progress Energy Performance Contracts (EPC) to deliver energy efficiency targets for SDCC owned buildings with significant energy usage, including the Leisure Centres, County Hall and Library, and Clondalkin Civic Offices.	EPC awarded; Measurement and verification of savings	Planned Commencement: Ongoing. Duration: until 2029.	Mitigation	Full Accountability	EWCC - Climate Action, Energy	CODEMA, Housing, Social and Community Development (HSCD); Corporate Performance and Change Management (CPCM); Leisure Centre Management

Figure 2.3: Extract of action E8 of the SDCC Climate Action Plan regarding the delivery of an Energy Performance contract

Action E15 of the CAP outlines the intention to install solar PV arrays on council-owned buildings, and this project will deliver on this action as solar PV is included in this proposal. The installation of this solar PV, along with efficiency gain across the building, will result in significant carbon, as well as annual bill savings due to reduced electricity imports at the building.

2.3 South Dublin County Council County Development Plan 2022 – 2028

Chapter 10 of the SDCC County Development Plan on Energy outlines a vision to "*Deliver a green society and circular economy adaptable to new technologies, a home and place of employment for people and industries striving towards reducing their carbon footprint*". The plan outlines various policies and objectives to support the decarbonisation and optimisation of energy performance in both new and existing buildings across the County.

Objective 3 of Policy E7 specifically outlines support for the installation of solar PV on council-owned buildings, as will be delivered in this project.

E7 Objective 3:
To support and encourage the ongoing delivery of solar technology on Council owned buildings and sites in accordance with the South Dublin Climate Action Plan.

Figure 2.4: Extract of Policy E7, Objective 3 of the SDCC County Development Plan supporting the installation of solar PV on council buildings

3.0 Screening Determination

The proposal has undergone Screening for Appropriate Assessment in accordance with Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) and Screening for Environmental Impact Assessment under the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU, as amended by Directive 2014/52/EU.

In accordance with Article 81 of the Planning & Development Regulations 2001, as amended, the Planning Authority has made a determination and concluded that:

(a) The proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not result in likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservations or the conservation objectives of any designated European Site. A Stage 2 Appropriate Assessment is therefore not required.

(b) The proposed development would not be likely to have significant effects on the environment and that the proposed development is not of a class set out under Schedule 5 of the Planning and Development Regulations 2001, as amended, and therefore the completion of an EIAR is not required.

The authority has also made a determination under Article 6(3) of the Habitats Directive (92/43/EEC) that the proposed development, either individually or in combination with other plans and projects, will not result in likely significant effects on the qualifying interests, special conservations or the conservation objectives of any designated European Site.

4.0 Public Consultation

The public consultation period took place from the 20th July to 31st August 2026 inclusive (a period of 6 weeks) during which time information on the proposed Part 8 Development and environmental reports were disseminated to the public and submissions were invited. The public consultation on the proposed works included the following statutory and non-statutory elements:

- Newspaper notice in the Echo
- Sites notices (2 No. erected)
- SDCC Online Consultation Portal - https://consult.sdublincoco.ie
- Email communication notifying relevant bodies

Plans and particulars of the proposed works were available for inspection at the Planning Department counter in the offices of SDCC, County Hall, Tallaght, Dublin 24 during standard working hours for the display period from 20th July to 17th August inclusive (a period of 4 weeks).

Submissions may be made online or by post to the Climate Action Department. All submissions received within the statutory timeframe must be considered by the Chief Executive and are addressed in this report.

Non statutory consultation was carried out with relevant bodies with regards to the adjacent project to install a rooftop solar PV array, as outlined in Section 1.6, to ensure full transparency with relevant stakeholders. Project information including plans and a Glint and Glare Assessment were provided as part of this non statutory consultation.

5.0 Outcome of the Public Consultation Process

Three (3) submissions were received during the specified period of public consultation in respect of the proposed works from the following:

- Department of Defence
- Irish Aviation Authority
- Tallaght University Hospital – Capital Planning and Delivery

5.1 Department of Defence

Summary and Categorisation of the issues Raised:
The submission noted that the Minister for Defence is responsible for the regulation of military aviation, whereas the Irish Aviation Authority is responsible for the safety regulation of civil aviation including aerodromes.

The Department of Defence consulted with the Air Corps colleagues at Casement Aerodrome. Safeguarding of military flight operations and installations is intended to protect both current and future aircraft operations and also to take account of the security requirements associated with some of those operations. As such, the submission stated that "Should future negative effects on Irish Air Corps ATC or flight operations become apparent, then the owner must take measures necessary to mitigate these effects to an acceptable level, without delay."

Chief Executive's Response:
The submission and the requirement outlined are acknowledged and noted.

Chief Executive's Recommendation:
It is recommended that no changes be made to the Part 8 proposal.

5.2 Irish Aviation Authority

Summary and Categorisation of the issues Raised:
The submission acknowledged the consultation and recommended that as the proposed solar PV developments are located within the respective solar safeguarding zones of Casement Aerodrome and Tallaght University Hospital, the Glint and Glare reports should be submitted to the Property Management Branch of the Department of Defence, Casement Aerodrome and the HSE Aeromedical Section and Tallaght University Hospital for their review and comment.

Chief Executive's Response:
The submission and the recommendation is acknowledged. The bodies listed in the submission were contacted for their review and comment.

Chief Executive's Recommendation:
It is recommended that no changes be made to the Part 8 proposal.

5.3 Tallaght University Hospital– Capital Planning and Delivery

Summary and Categorisation of the issues Raised:
The submission acknowledged the consultation and that the Glint and Glare Assessment results for the installation of rooftop solar PV on buildings within the relevant Solar Safeguarding Zone showed a 'Pass' at Tallaght Hospital Helipad receptor.

The submission noted that "Should future negative effects on flight operations for those utilising the Helipad become apparent, then the owner must take measures necessary to mitigate these effects to an acceptable level, without delay".

Chief Executive's Response:
The submission and the requirement outlined are acknowledged and noted.

Chief Executive's Recommendation:
It is recommended that no changes be made to the Part 8 proposal.

6.0 Chief Executive's Recommendation

Having regard to the nature, scale and purpose of the proposed works, it is considered that the proposed development is in accordance with the South Dublin County Development Plan and represents the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.

Following review of the submissions received, the Chief Executive is satisfied that all submissions are appropriately addressed and should an issue arise it will be addressed at operational stage.

It is therefore recommended that the Council proceed with the Part 8 proposal for the installation of a heat pump system at Clondalkin Civic Centre, Ninth Lock Rd, Clondalkin, Dublin 22, D22 E9X5

Colm Ward
Chief Executive

Date 04th September 2026