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A Chara

On behalf of DUBLIN 15 COMMUNITY COUNCIL I wish to make the following observation as part of the public consultation in preparation for the Draft of Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022.

1.0 Introduction

The Dublin 15 Community Council was formed 15 years ago (merging the Castleknock & Blanchardstown community councils which date from the early 1970's) to provide an umbrella organisation for the many residents and voluntary community groups in the Dublin 15 area.

Residents Associations and Community groups focus on their own specific areas but often feel powerless to influence the big issues like transport, educational, recreational & sporting infrastructure or crime prevention. The Community Council provides a forum to discuss these issues and potential solutions.

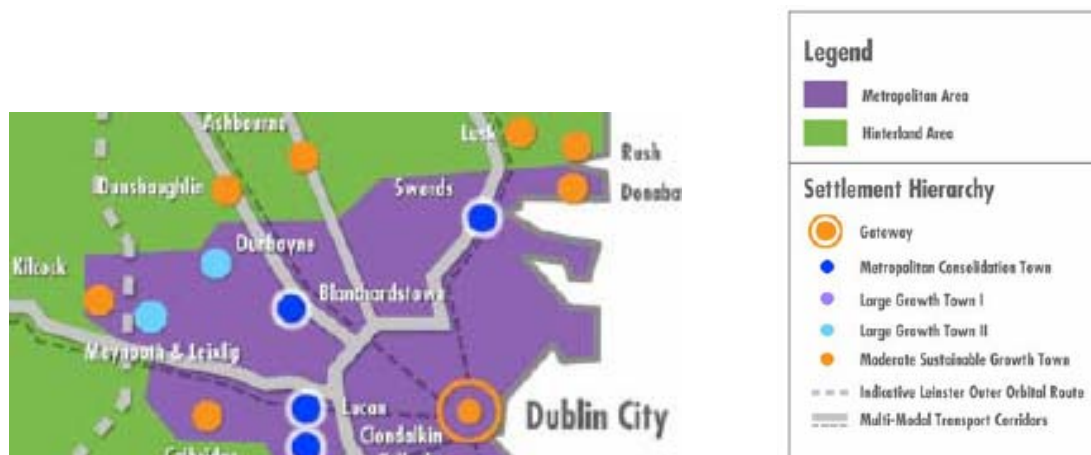
Our main objective is to develop the consensus views of the Dublin 15 community in matters relating to Planning & Development, Public Transport, Environment, Education, Health Care, Policing, Job Creation, Recreational Facilities, General Infrastructure and Tourist facilities. Having developed the consensus, make representation to State and other Statutory Bodies through a wide variety of communication channels, with the aim of improving the quality of life for the residents of the Greater Blanchardstown Area (Dublin 15).

2.0 Major problems

Blanchardstown was earmarked from the early seventies as one of County Dublin's' three new towns. It has been anticipated for the past twenty years that this area would eventually accommodate a population of circa 100,000 persons. The 2006 census showed the population of the Greater Blanchardstown Area at 93,000. It is likely that over time the population will greatly exceed this figure, given the extensive amount of land zoned for additional residential use within the Greater Blanchardstown Area.

Population targets for North West Dublin can be readily absorbed without additional residentially zoned land.

An area of concern is the land in the immediate vicinity of the Greater Blanchardstown Area within the administrative area of adjacent local authorities; Meath and Kildare county councils. This land is designated "metropolitan Area" in the Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022.



The plan for population growth in counties Meath and Kildare in the immediate vicinity of the Greater Blanchardstown are:

- Core Economic Area; Maynooth/Leixlip (Kildare county council)
- Secondary economic growth town, Dunboyne (Meath county council).

Our concern is that this strategy to base growth in the existing town could be undermined by the uncontrolled growth of the greater Blanchardstown area by over spilling into Meath and Kildare county administrative area.

Section 4.6 (page 71) identifies our concern

Rural areas within the metropolitan area shall remain as active agricultural, horticultural and equestrian farmlands or as amenity facilities, both public and private, serving and capitalizing on the opportunities from the large population areas adjacent. Such areas that divide the built up areas of towns from each other or the city shall be identified as long term green belt lands to avoid their future coalescence and the loss of definition between rural and urban places

We believe this issue could be prevented by identifying and incorporating strategic green belts into the Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022. These belts could separate the administrative areas of Meath, Kildare, Fingal, South County Dublin and Dublin City Council, preserving a sense of place within the overall Greater Dublin Area.

These strategic green belts partially exist in local development plans, specifically:

- The Phoenix Park (separating Fingal from Dublin City Council).
- The lands around the former waste landfill at Dunsink and the Tolka valley at Scribblestown (separating Fingal from Dublin City Council).
- The Liffey Valley SAAO and adjacent green belt designated lands (separating Fingal from South Dublin).

The lands in Meath adjacent to the Greater Blanchardstown Area are agriculturally zoned (apart from a small area around Clonee village), and could be designated strategic green belt without materially effecting current land use.

The lands in Kildare adjacent to the Greater Lucan Area are agriculturally or amenity zoned and could be designated strategic green belt without materially effecting current land use.



Proposed changes to draft guidelines

Our recommend changes to the draft Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 are as follows:

2.1 Green infrastructure – enhancing a sense of place

We recommend an additional strategic policy objective (GIP 7) ***Promote a sense of place by locating strategic green belts within the metropolitan area separating the various local authorities (locate at county boundaries where possible).***

2.2 Green infrastructure interconnection:

Figure 15 maps out the strategic links green network. In many cases this radiates out from the very densely built up area in Dublin City Centre. A radial corridor is recommended to link these green networks and ensure the natural habitat is sustained. This corridor will cross various local authority areas and requires the joined up thinking a regional planning guideline is ideally positioned to provide. We recommend the following amendments to strategic policy objective GIR29 *Each Council should prepare a county based Green Infrastructure Strategy linking to adjoining areas and following regional connections, and implement GI strategies in local area plans and development management processes. (Local authorities, shall where necessary, liaise with each other to ensure consistency in delivering regionally identified green infrastructure development as part of their green infrastructure strategies).* ***Local authorities shall identify a new green infrastructure corridor that connects identified Natura 2000 sites & parks to existing rivers and waterways within the Greater Dublin Area.***

3.0 Summary

The Regional Planning Guidelines for Greater Dublin Area provide the potential to create joined up thinking across local authority boundaries. We believe that two key areas need to be addressed:

- Preserving and creating a sense of place in a metropolitan area with a short term (2022) population target of 2,103,900 people.
- Addressing key and important green infrastructure gaps within the Greater Dublin Area that has the potential to preserve our ecological heritage for generations to come.

Yours faithfully