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On line submission
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The Planning Department
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County Hall,
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25 June 2009

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 a new Development Plan for the county.

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 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 Dublin 15 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 Dublin 15

With the growth of commercial, industrial and residential developments in Dublin 15, have come many of the associated problems that accompany such success.

Those relevant to development plan are:-

- ❑ Higher demand for schools, shops, leisure, entertainment, active and passive recreation.
- ❑ Increased inward investment in industrial / commercial activity, much of which is multinational in nature.
- ❑ Tremendous demand for Public Transport.
- ❑ Greatly increased levels of car ownership.

The effect of this is the capacity of existing infrastructure being exceeded by demand and this is evident across most areas.

What is most needed is an opportunity for infrastructure to catch up with the rapid population expansion over the last 10 years in the Dublin 15 area. This means that other areas of the county must bear the development pressures of expansion over the period of the new plan 2011 – 2017.

3.0 Cross cutting themes (Population, Enterprise & Employment, Urban centres, Urban residential areas, Transport)

One of the most common criticism of living in new estates / areas is that the houses go in first, followed by the apartments and everything else (shops, schools, public open spaces, playing fields and public transport) lags by years if not decades.

The cumulative effect of this on a rapidly expanding area like Dublin 15 area over the past 10 years is unsustainable. The presence of large areas of residentially zoned land meant that the planners were unable to curtail the pace of development to match the provision of infrastructure, leading to major problems for the residents of Dublin 15.

We wish to illustrate this by taking examples of the provision of schools, shops and petrol stations. The common theme is the poor quality of previous planning decisions in predicting and reserving sites for these facilities. We hope that lessons will be learned and applied to all areas of Fingal in the next development plan.

3.1 Schools

Last development plan 2005 – 2011

In our submission (5 September 2003) to the Fingal 2005 – 2011 development plan we raised the issue of the provision of Primary & Post Primary school sites to cope with the population growth. We researched the primary school enrolment data for all schools within the Dublin 15 area and compared the data of primary school enrolments with the available places at second level. We predicted that we would require 3 new schools (1,000 pupils each) to meet this demand, as it happened within two years that figure had increased to 4 new schools (junior infant enrolment in Dublin 15 grew by 50% between 2000 and 2005). The problem was; that only 2 sites were reserved. Over the intervening period, sites were identified for these 4 schools (Phibblestown, Luttrellstown, Hansfield and Tyrrelstown).

It now appears that this estimate of 4 additional post primary schools is an intermediate point, rather than a final number of school sites required for Dublin 15. The demand from existing and planned new communities in land zoned for residential use will increase.

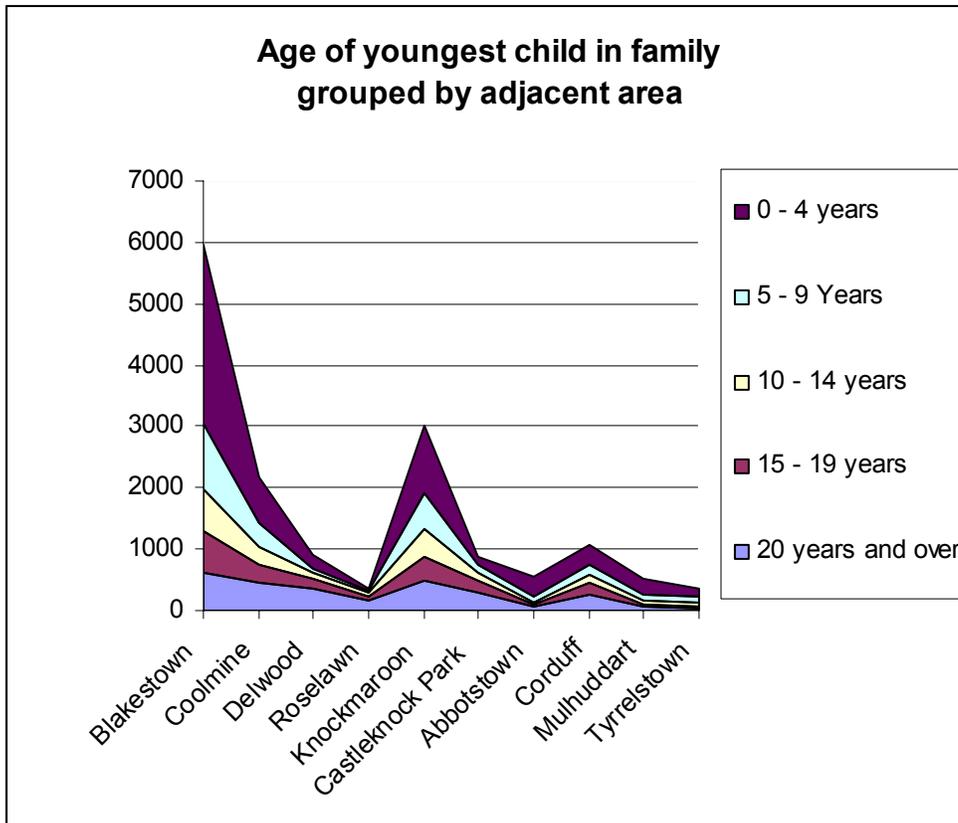
Population data and its implications for schools

The Dublin 15 area has grown rapidly from 53,221 in 1996 to 90,952 in 2006, an increase of 71%. The rapid population growth in Dublin 15 was reflected in junior infant enrolment which continues to rise, with parents experiencing considerable anxiety finding school places.

Back in 2000, Dublin 15 was served by 20 primary schools and 6 post primary schools catering for an enrolment of 8,116 primary pupils. Since then:

- 7 new primary schools were given official sanction between 2000 & 2007 (3 in Diswellstown/ Castleknock, 3 in Castaheany-Ongar, 1 in Tyrellstown).
- Three of these new schools were Educate Together, 3 schools were under catholic patronage and 1 school established under temporary catholic patronage.
- In addition, existing catholic primary schools have expanded to take 3 and 4 classes/year (24 to 32 classroom schools).
- The Church of Ireland established a new school in Dunboyne.

The CSO small area statistics published earlier this year convey the picture of the population on census day. I have grouped the data by adjacent areas so that you get an overall picture of the population and the age of the youngest person in the families.



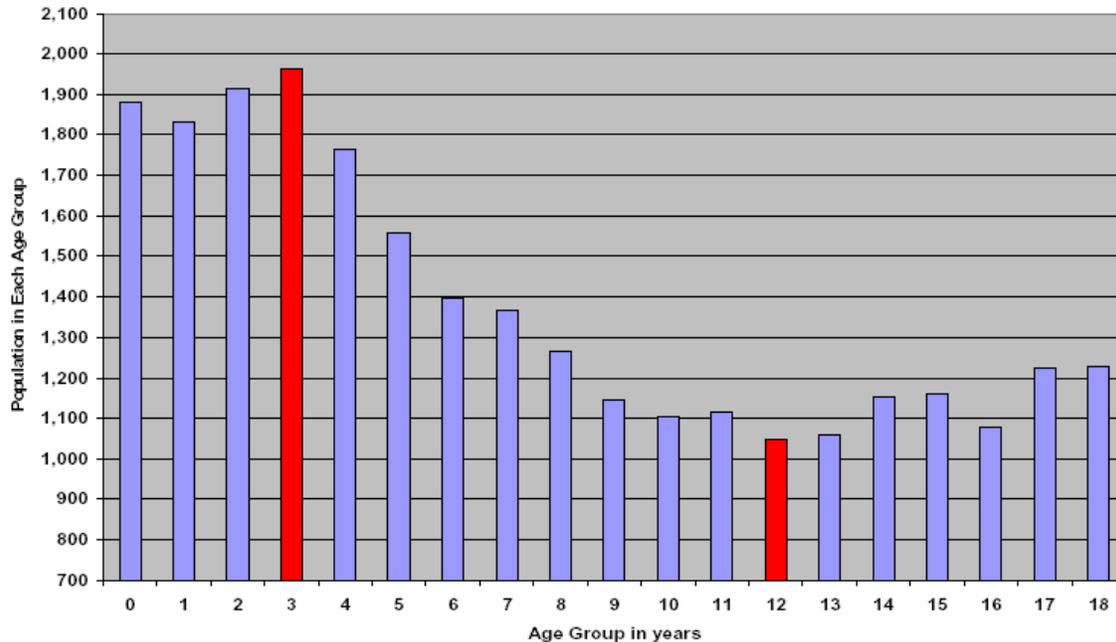
The figures are not surprising, with the Blakestown electoral division (Castaheany-Ongar) showing the greatest increase in young families. The second peak is in the Knockmaroon electoral division (Carpenterstown - Diswellstown).

The CSO data is backed up by the study “Intercultural Education: Primary Challenges in Dublin 15” published November 2007, available at www.bap.ie.

This report funded by the Social Inclusion Unit of the Department of Education and Science in 2007 and was compiled by Enda McGorman (Principal, Mary, Mother of Hope National School, Littlepace) and Ciaran Sugrue (Education Department, St. Patrick’s College, Drumcondra)



The intercultural education report looks in detail at the population growth and subsequent demand for education places in Dublin 15. The data is presented on a Dublin 15 area based analysis and looks at the problem in a holistic way. Figure 4. page 31 graphs the Youth population of Dublin 15 by year group



The report draws attention to the profile of the youth population and its impact on the provision of new school places. While the number of children in the 9 to 18 years age range hovers at or below 1,200, there is a sharp rise in the younger cohort, many of whom are in the pre-school years. There were 1,559 five year olds, rising to a peak of 1,964 three year olds. The most startling statistic in this data is perhaps a comparison of the number of twelve year olds with the number of three year olds, which reveals an increase of 87%.

Current activities of the Department of Education & Science

The Department of Education & Science has commenced a review of the process and procedures for recognizing new schools. It is expected that this process leading to the revised procedures will take in the region of two years

While this review is taking place it is not proposed to recognise any new primary schools, except in areas where the increases in pupils numbers cannot be catered for in existing schools and which require the provision of new schools

Forward Planning Section of the Department of Education & Science is in the process of identifying the areas where significant additional accommodation will be required at primary and post-primary level for 2009 and onwards.

Changing Demographic Trends nationally:

- CSO Regional Population Projections 2011 – 2026 show a population increase of 1.5% per annum on average
- The national population will rise from 4,233,000 to 5,696,000
- The population in eastern areas is expected to increase by up to 2.3% per annum
- The number in the 0 – 14 age group is expected to rise by 249,000
- Overall primary enrolment may rise from approx 486,000 to 563,000 by 2015 (about 2,750 classrooms or about 350 per year)
- Primary school-going age cohort, is projected to increase by at least 10 per cent in the next decade
- Number of primary school children could increase from its present level of circa 480,000 to 650,000 by 2025
- The 2007 figure for births of 70,620 is the highest since 1982 and is 23% higher than the figure for 2000

The Department of Education & Science has recently procured and installed a Geographical Information System (GIS) as a tool in the school planning process. The GIS enables the DES to view, understand, question, interpret, and visualize data in many ways that reveal relationships, patterns, and trends in the form of maps, reports, and charts.

When analysing an area in detail the Department of Education & Science use five assumptions:

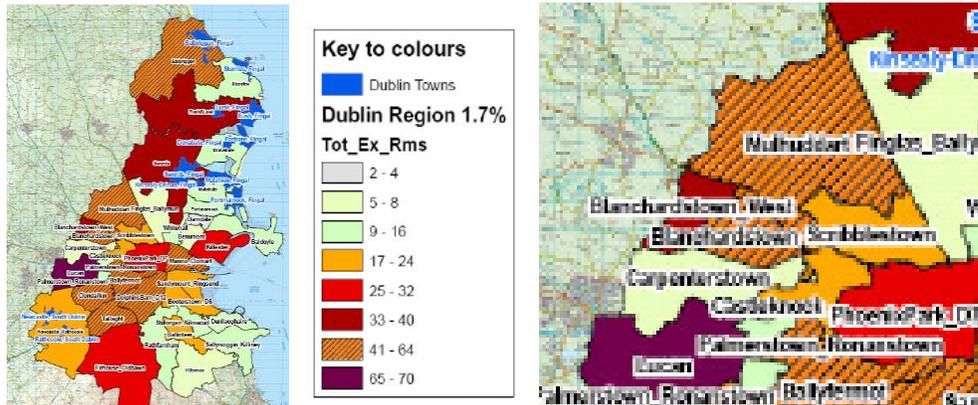
- Natural progression on current enrolments
- Current enrolments plus CSO regional projected increase
- Current enrolments plus the Local Area Plan population projections
- 2006 Census figures
- Births based on Government Records Office data and Social Welfare information



Dublin 15

Community Council

An analysis of these assumptions shows the following position. The DES have compiled a series of maps and a list of the areas of greatest growth up to 2015



According to the figures, compiled by the Department of Education's Forward Planning Section, the following classrooms will be required by 2015.

- Mulhuddart will require between 41 and 64 new classrooms
- Blanchardstown West, 33 to 40 new classrooms
- Castleknock will need an additional 17 to 24 classrooms.
- Carpenterstown will need 5 to 8 classrooms.
- Scribblestown will need between 17 and 24 new classrooms

This does not factor in demand at second level

What planning lessons can be learned from this?

- Previous development plans have grossly underestimated demand for school places.
- There are few if any reserved sites exist to cater for this emerging demand.

What needs to change in the new development plan?

- There needs to be realistic engagement between the Forward Planning Section of the Department of Education & Science and Fingal County Council.
- The failure in the past to adequately plan needs to be urgently addressed and sites reserved.
- New guidelines from the Minister of Environment require the evaluation of primary school places prior to any additional lands re-zoned. This needs to also include a rigorous evaluation of post primary needs.

Clearly this is an issue that needs to be urgently addressed for Dublin 15 and other parts of Fingal. The Development Plan must address the reservation of school sites in existing areas of population, zoned new residential areas and any new residential zoning.

3.2 Shops and retail outlets

One basic requirement for residential areas is access to shops, supermarkets and other retail outlets. Fingal have recognised this importance by developing a retail strategy for the county. A key element in this is the ratio of population to retail outlets.

We are fortunate in Dublin 15 to have a major retail centre of national importance located in the Blanchardstown Centre. The Community Council has been supportive of its development. The recreational, civic and administrative elements transform this retail centre into the cultural hub for the Dublin 15 area.

Other elements of the Fingal retail strategy and land use planning have not been as successful. The community council commenced a benchmarking study in preparation for the development plan.

We decided to look outside Fingal to see how other local authorities and businesses responded to their population needs. We identified the North Kildare area as a suitable benchmark, it was:

- Peripheral to the Greater Dublin Metropolitan area
- Served by Commuter Rail and Dublin Bus
- Contained a significant percentage of residents who commute to Dublin City.
- Has significant local modern industrial base
- Experienced similar pattern of growth in the last 10 years.

Comparing populations and population growth for Dublin 15 and Kildare North:

Persons in each Constituency for elections to Dáil Éireann

Constituency	Persons 2002	Persons 2006	Percentage change 2002-2006	Number of members	Population per member 2002	Population per member 2006
Dublin West	73,186	92,900	26.9 %	3	24,395	30,967
Kildare North	95,027	105,186	10.7 %	4	23,757	26,296

From the above chart we can see that both areas are rapidly growing areas. The Dublin 15 area makes up nearly the entire Dublin West constituency (except for part of Swords), however the Kildare North constituency includes significant rural areas. We wish to narrow down the constituency to the cluster of towns that are most similar to Dublin 15.

The following table gives a population breakdown in each Local Electoral Area.

Electoral Area	Persons	Males	Females
Castleknock	37,668	18,789	18,879
Mulhuddart	53,306	26,470	26,836
Total Dublin 15	90,974	45,259	45,715
Celbridge	21,349	10,859	10,490
Leixlip	26,214	13,310	12,904
Total North Kildare (including Maynooth)	47,563	24,169	23,394

Some comparisons;

- Dublin 15 is approx twice the size of the Maynooth – Leixlip – Celbridge urban conurbation.
- Both Dublin and the Maynooth – Leixlip – Celbridge urban area are experiencing significant population growth.

We compared the number of retail outlets (shops and petrol stations) in both areas.

Supermarkets

Dublin 15 has 22 supermarkets.

Maynooth (7), Leixlip (4) and Celbridge (3) have 14 supermarkets

Petrol stations

Dublin 15 has 10 petrol stations,

Maynooth (3), Leixlip (1) and Celbridge (5) have 9 petrol stations.

When we look closer at the comparison, we see that Dublin 15

- only 1 large supermarket (Dunnes Stores, Blanchardstown Centre)
- 4 medium sized supermarkets and 3 Discount supermarkets.
- 14 small supermarkets (Spar, Centra, Marks & Spencer, Superquinn express).

The Maynooth – Leixlip – Celbridge urban area has

- 2 large supermarkets (Tesco Extra and Dunnes Stores)
- 1 medium sized supermarkets and 4 Discount supermarkets.
- 7 small supermarkets (Spar, Centra).

The competitive market forces are clearly at work in the Maynooth – Leixlip – Celbridge area, where a large number of supermarkets aggressively compete for business. There are also relatively few convenience supermarkets.

In contrast, the Dublin 15 area with a significantly larger population has less large supermarkets and less discount supermarkets. It also has twice as many convenience supermarkets.

It is hard to avoid the conclusion that, in planning the Dublin 15 area the retail strategy has favored medium sized supermarkets and convenience supermarkets. The impact is less competition from retailers and higher prices for residents in Dublin 15.

The Blanchardstown Town Centre Development Framework / Masterplan adopted earlier this year had a clear aim of displacing the supermarkets out of the town centre. This was a particular concern given the relative shortage of large, medium and discount supermarkets in Dublin 15 as outlined above.

We decided to test this theory. The Community Council did not have the resources to do a full CPI shopping basket comparison on a store by store basis. We did however conduct a petrol price survey on 22 May 2009.

Survey summary:

North Kildare (*Excluding Applegreen discount rate*),

Best price was Petrol (c/L) 110.8 Diesel (c/L) 99.8

Highest price was Petrol (c/L) 112.9 Diesel (c/L) 102.9

Kildare North

Petrol Average	112.26	Diesel Average	101.26
Standard deviation	0.77	Standard deviation	1.32

Dublin 15 (*excluding Topaz Hartstown Rd which was missed*)

Best price was Petrol (c/L) 113.9 Diesel (c/L) 102.9

Highest price was Petrol (c/L) 117.9 Diesel (c/L) 104.9

Dublin 15

Petrol Average	115.78	Diesel Average	103.80
Standard deviation	1.46	Standard deviation	0.99

Conclusion; Petrol and diesel prices were noticeably lower in the Maynooth – Leixlip – Celbridge area.



What planning lessons can be learned from this comparison?

- Current planning and development policies are failing to deliver infrastructure to newly developing areas in a timely manner.
- Shortage of retail infrastructure leads to higher pricing (basic economic supply & demand theory).
- Shortage of infrastructure leads to higher demand for the infrastructure that is built (full car parks, displacing parking to adjacent residential areas at peak time, and congestion).
- Resistance to retrofitting retail infrastructure to mature areas (fear of full car parks, displacing parking to adjacent residential areas at peak time, and congestion).
- New neighborhood centres delivering convenience supermarkets.
- Reluctance of major developers / landowners to construct a competitive retail environment that meet the needs of residents, (desire of developers to construct high margin convenience supermarkets with consequent high property lease / sale value).

What needs to change in the new development plan?

- The development plan needs to plan for a competitive retail environment at a town and county level.
- Local area plan to look at the adjacent areas for infrastructure deficits and use new development to address need of new area and existing shortages.
- Appropriate locations for petrol stations to be identified (location to provide adequate dispersion to prevent petrol fume impacting residential areas).
- Look at how the economic development unit can encourage retail development to ensure that it is delivered concurrently with new residential developments.
- Ensure that retail development is sensitively designed to ensure it does not become a nuisance to adjacent residential areas (separate road access, no overspill of car parking).

4.0 Population & Housing

4.1 Playgrounds:

Playgrounds are excellent facilities for young children. The Riverwood and Millennium Park playgrounds in Dublin 15 are heavily used. New developments must provide playgrounds so that residents can use such facilities without having to travel. The playgrounds must be made available very early in the development process.

4.2 Schools:

New developments must provide school sites. These must be released very early in the development process so that children are not forced to travel outside the area because the school is not built.

4.3 Public consultation

Current legislation permits developers to have pre planning discussions with the planning department in local authorities. Community groups do not have this opportunity. Provide opportunity for liaison with local community groups and Resident associations, Councillors and FCC management. Extend existing pilot.

5.0 Enterprise & Employment

5.1 Rural Economy:

Create Farmers Markets in major areas. Allow allotment owners sell produce at these markets.

5.2 Village Enterprise:

To maintain enterprise in our villages the conversion of retail premises to non-retail use should be discouraged or prohibited.

5.3 Neighbourhood Centres:

Underused neighbourhood centres should be renewed or rebuilt. This will assist in maintaining local services e.g. post office and local shops.

6.0 Urban Centres

6.1 Insufficient Schools:

As discussed in section 3.1 the provision of reserved sites for schools has proved to be entirely inadequate.

There is a considerable delay in providing school sites and schools. This forces parents to drive out of their area to bring children to schools – mature areas such as Blanchardstown village, Roselawn / Delwood and Beachpark Castleknock have full and expanding schools. This adds unnecessary vehicles onto the road and is an avoidable contributor to climate change. Providing local schools on time, and safe routes to these schools, will make a positive impact on traffic volumes and the health of children.

6.2 Reduction of school reserved site size

No reserved school land should be reduced in a developing area. For example Pobailscoil Setanta in Phibblestown had the site reduce from 18 acres to 8 acres. The data presented in section 3.1 demonstrates that this reduction was premature.

6.3 Retail.

As discussed at length in section 3.2, the growth of retail outlets has failed to keep pace with the growth of Dublin 15.

It is surprising that densely-populated Dublin 15 does not have a large DIY store such as B & Q. There is a small Atlantic in Blanchardstown Centre, and two builders providers (Mulhuddart and Supermikes Clonsilla Road) – other than that nothing!

7.0 Urban Residential Areas

7.1 Design Guide:

FCC need to provide developers with a Design Guide to avoid the poor quality developments constructed in the early years of the recent property boom. The current development plan contains significant elements of a Design Guide. These elements should be retained and expanded to include insulation guidelines for heat and sound. These insulation guidelines should improve on current standards and should be looking to make dwellings very energy efficient.

Acoustic standards are critical to minimizing nuisance in higher density developments. Adequate storage space within a dwelling is very important for families and the inevitable clutter they accumulate. This is generally an issue with apartments.

The design guide should also encourage the development of 3 and 4 bedroom units in order to enable families remain in the area instead of transient residents. This will assist in the building of communities.

7.2 Street Layouts:

Small, low maintenance, open space areas should be scattered throughout the development. This allows children play very close to home, which will make parents more comfortable.

Where possible restrict the straight length of entrance in to estate to curb speeding in estates. Establish a safe speed limit within estates (less than that applicable on distributor roads).

7.3 Parking

Ensure that parking allocation is fairly distributed within estates, whether assigned to individual units or a partially assigned with the remainder visitor parking.

7.4 Road width in estates

Increase road width in estates so as to ensure that fire truck access or waste collection is not blocked by resident parking.

7.5 Open Space:

All residential developments must provide open space areas within the development. These open spaces must be ready for use very early in the development process e.g. as soon as a tiny number of residents move in.

Combining open space requirements to create an area park well away from the developments causes problems for residents on a day-to-day basis. There are obvious issues of transport to and from the open space areas. A balance needs to be struck between accumulating sufficient open space to provide playing pitches and recreation and the need for informal “kick around” and other passive recreation within a development.

It is becoming common for developers to avoid surplus topsoil disposal costs by creating hills on estate open spaces. This prevents use of the open space as informal kick-around. Discourage mounded greens in estates.

7.6 Provision of recreational facilities as a condition of planning

Fingal have extensive experience of conditioning developers to provide playgrounds and other facilities as a condition of planning permission. This often comes as a surprise to the residents who purchase the residential units and are vigorously opposed due to concern about antisocial activities or excessive numbers of visitor car parking. Developers must be required to provide facilities / amenities prior to first dwelling occupation and clearly detail in all marketing plans before first house is sold.

7.7 Flood plains

Flood plains data updated regularly to take a proactive role in predicting the impact of development on natural drainage and limiting development until adequate drainage is in place. Evaluate Northern Ireland system to address this issue.

7.8 Cross county boundary developments

The boundary between neighbouring county councils should be planned on an integrated basis to ensure local community at border towns are properly planned. i.e Meath county council and the border of Fingal county council to ensure pathways amenities and links road cross these borders. This is becoming a problem in the Clonee – Littlepace area.

Additional measures are required to ensure proper public consultation and integration. It is important that all stake holders in both counties are informed.

7.9 Estate management

A register system for landlords in the area, cross reference with local government, PRTB and Revenue .To ensure landlords are made accountable to the local communities and neighbours for maintenance and upkeep of external building, gardens etc.

The current system of 3rd party complaints to the PRTB is ineffective for residents. The local authority must play an active role in dealing with antisocial activities in private estates. A mediation service would be a good start.

7.10 Enforcement:

The Planning Enforcement Section should be a feared group that aggressively tackle errant developers. The Phoenix Park Racecourse developers were forced to rebuild a protected structure (near Blackhorse Avenue) – more action like this is necessary.

Develop a WEB base system for people to log there queries and receive a ticket number. Ensure the customer is kept up to date on their query.

8.0 Rural Fingal

Rural areas in proximity to major towns like Swords and the Dublin 15 area need to be carefully protected. They form an important part of the green infrastructure.

The normal arguments for 1 off housing in this sensitive area must be very critically appraised and discouraged, as estate type housing is readily available in the adjacent urban area.

One of the arguments for re-zoning rural lands in proximity to urban area is that the presence of residents renders the lands unsuitable for farming (crops damaged by trespassers, livestock disturbed). Local Authority allotments are currently over subscribed. There is an opportunity to sublet allotment sites to the urban dweller – this would provide a buffer between the urban and rural and create a more sustainable rural environment in areas close to towns.

Is there a role for Fingal engaging in long term land rental and subletting in standard allotment size?

9.0 Community, Recreation and Open Space

9.1 Zoning for community facilities:

While a specific zoning objective is not needed to protect community facilities, the Planning Section must stipulate the location and delivery timing of community facilities when granting planning permission to developers.

9.2 Allotment sites:

Allotments are currently over subscribed so there is a definite need to provide more allotment sites. These should be spread throughout the county to minimise the distance between allotment tenants and the sites.

9.3 Community infrastructure gaps

An infrastructure deficit is the presence of community centres in new developing areas. Fingal County Council's model of shared community / school facilities is a great idea and one that has won awards for initiation. Continue with this approach as discussed in the section on schools above there is no shortage of opportunities to use this model.

9.4 Community centres:

The shared school facilities/community centres is excellent, but such community use is only available after school hours, welcome though it is. In the long-term, could developers be obliged to reserve an amount of space, pro-rata to the final population size, for community use? It is as useful and necessary as shops/ church/ schools, and should be located adjacent to these. With an increasing older population, pre school mothers & toddlers groups, plus so many who are now without jobs, day-long venues would be increasingly valuable. Explore how the existing limited number of day – long venues can be more intensively utilized.

9.5 Address lack of facilities for teenagers

There is a noticeable drop off in participation of children in sport as they go through the teenage years. This is one age group that is very poorly catered for.

Consideration needs to be given to the provision of internet cafés in neighborhood centres & age appropriate facilities when applying model of *shared community / school facilities* to post primary level.

9.6 Sporting infrastructure deficit in Dublin 15 area;

We would like to draw attention to The Fingal Sports Strategy 2003-2007 published by the Fingal Sports Partnership (Fingal County Council, the County Dublin VEC and the Campus Stadium Ireland).

The report states (page 10):

“The largest single issue highlighted by sports clubs across Fingal was the access to, availability of, or the complete lack of facilities available to them to provide for their sport. The range of difficulties relating to facilities and grounds varied from security and safety of premises to lack of changing facilities or parking to unavailability of the desired facilities at appropriate times. The situation relating to facilities is outlined in greater detail by the Collier & Broderick study. In some parts of the county there are proportionately less facilities per capita (this will be exacerbated by projected population growth) than in older longer established communities. This is the case in many parts of Dublin 15. While particular attention needs to be directed at these areas there are also needs in all of the areas across the county. The Collier & Broderick (p.21, 2002) study illustrates that 3 areas (Blanchardstown, Castleknock and Swords) with the greatest growth in population between 1996 and 2002 are now the most deprived in terms of facilities compared with other parts of the county.”

Chapter 3 page 17 *“In Dublin 15 (greater Blanchardstown and Castleknock) which has 75,000 people and is expected to grow to 100,000 by the end of the decade there very few sports clubs proportionally when compared to the rest of the county. Map 1 illustrates this as there is a higher proportion of sports clubs with their own facilities along the coastal areas and in Swords.*

- When we talk of disadvantaged areas, the Castleknock, Castaheany and Swords areas are not areas that are associated with disadvantage. In the past clubs in similar areas would have fundraised to acquire playing fields, facilities etc.
- The issue that makes it very difficult for sporting organizations on their own to provide facilities is the cost of acquiring lands. The situation arises due to speculative pressure on land in proximity to residentially zoned land in the Dublin 15 area which has made it virtually impossible for clubs to purchase their own lands.
- In addressing the disadvantage detailed in “Fingal Sports Strategy 2003-2007“ experienced by Dublin 15 and Swords area, we believe that the majority of the funding should be focused in these two areas rather than evenly distributed across the county.

9.7 Fingal Leisure Strategy

Evaluate the recommendations of the draft (17-Oct-08) Fingal Leisure Strategy. Incorporate into the development plan.

9.8 Taking in charge of playing fields

Green space should be tested for drainage to ensure suitable for changing climate condition pitches playable. (Hazelbury Park - 60% is not playable in adverse weather conditions)

10.0 Natural Heritage (bio diversity, geology & landscape)

The new development plan needs to focus on developing a green infrastructure.

A good definition of green infrastructure is:

- A strategically planned and delivered network comprising the broadest range of high quality green spaces and other environmental features.
- Designed and managed as a multi-functional resource capable of delivering those ecological services and quality of life benefits required by the communities it serves and the need to underpin sustainability.

The county varies enormously from lightly populated agricultural and coastlines to large and expanding towns like Swords and Dublin 15. A one size solution clearly does not fit all.

10.1 Our recommendations for Fingal in preparing the next development plan are:

- Focus on “at risk” areas, for example large and expanding towns like Dublin 15.
- The design and management of green infrastructure should respect and enhance the character and distinctiveness of an area with regard to habitat and landscape types. Engage the services of a professional ecologist to research what are tangible and achievable objectives that should be incorporated in the next development plan.
- Objectives for Dublin 15 should be based around the waterways (Tolka & Liffey rivers and Royal Canal), the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area Order and the character of lands in private ownership currently zoned as Green Belt / High Amenity.
- Balance the needs of accessibility in an environmentally sensitive way. The ideal environment for maximizing biodiversity is an absence of humans however this is obviously not feasible in lands near a major urban area or on lands designed for active or passive recreation.
- Balance the needs of biodiversity with safety – areas with poor passive supervision can quickly become a “no go” area.

- Green infrastructure needs to be delivered at all levels (Regional, local & neighborhood) accommodating accessible natural green spaces within local communities and the larger sites in both public and private ownership on the urban greenbelt and the wider countryside.
- Provide long term protection to a linked network of green infrastructure spaces, possibly in the form of a national park or an expanded Special Amenity Area Order designation.
- Work with the RAPID & Safer Blanchardstown to improve the green infrastructure through community engagement in projects (example: the youth fishing club that successfully stocks and manages fishing along the Tolka river).
- Encourage community involvement in green infrastructure by facilitating the demand for allotments.
- Liase with NGO's to develop community engagement in green infrastructure by developing and promoting schemes (similar to the green flag initiative in primary schools).

10.2 Royal Canal :

It is clear that there will be development along the banks of the canal - walkways, cycle tracks. Ensure that whatever is designed doesn't imitate the section between Ashtown and Broombridge - not a hedge left, just another flat dreary urban footpath beside a body of water - Awful. Where possible retain the hedgerows and ditches and lush growth, with the illusion of being far from concrete. Consider retaining one side of the canal as a wildlife corridor and the other side as an amenity for people to enjoy a walk, (ensure that the wildlife corridor does not become an area for antisocial activity).

11.0 Built Heritage & Archaeology

11.1 Add to RPS

Luttrellstown Castle and its environs (wall, gate lodges, etc.) should be added to the RPS. It is in danger of being purchased for residential development. This would erode green belt close to the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area.

Luttrellstown Castle estate should be incorporated into the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area.



12.0 Infrastructure

12.1 Renewable Energy:

New developments must be very energy efficient and incorporate renewable energy technologies (e.g. solar water heating). These items can be included in a Design Guide.

12.2 Solar Energy:

Public buildings should be retrofitted with solar panels for either water heating or electricity generation. Installing on public buildings will not encounter planning permission issues.

Google installed solar panels on their Californian HQ and they generate 30% of their electricity demand!! While we would not achieve those results, any reduction in fossil fuel usage is welcome. <http://www.google.com/corporate/solarpanels/home>
On this topic, businesses should be encouraged to install solar panels on their roof tops and allowed to sell the generated electricity to the national grid.

12.3 Increase Recycling:

Measures to collect glass from domestic premises should be examined. The recycling programme in California (Mountain View, near San Francisco) accepts glass in the kerbside bins. While broken glass could pose a problem, a small separate bin could be provided.

Polystyrene is not accepted at recycling centres. This should be examined to provide an avenue to divert this bulky material from landfill.

12.4 More recycling locations:

A few bottle banks have disappeared from Dublin 15 because shopping centre owners did not want them. FCC should install bottle banks and paper/plastic banks on public land to make up for this.

12.5 Wind Farms:

The construction of wind farms should be encouraged. Suitable areas should be zoned to prevent conflicting development there.

13.0 Transportation

13.1 Holistically resolving the Transport problems in Dublin 15

As discussed in earlier sections, the growth of Dublin 15 has impacted residents. On the key Dublin 15 – Dublin city centre route, the area is constrained by an existing road network which is very unlikely to increase in capacity.

If anything this network is likely to be reduced with Dublin City Council seeking to close or restrict access via Chapelizod and the OPW attempting to reduce traffic volumes and restrict commuter access to the Phoenix Park.

Clearly population growth in the Dublin 15 area is only sustainable if accomplice with a significant increase in public transport.

Some improvements have taken place over the last 10 years, notably:

- The M50 upgrade
- Improved services on the Connelly – Maynooth rail line, and a new service between Docklands and Clonsilla and a new station at the Phoenix Park racecourse.
- Improved frequencies on the 3 bus routes connecting Dublin 15 with Dublin city centre
- Plans for the extension of the Docklands – Clonsilla service to Hansfield and Dunboyne.
- Plans for the Metro West (with route selected and stops designed).

Despite these improvements some chronic problems remain with overcrowding on the commuter rail service and very long journey times particularly on the #39 QBC.

Solutions to the transport problems of Dublin 15 are known, the ***Blanchardstown Catchment Area Integrated Development Framework*** study completed by consultants SIAS and Grontmij in November 2002 analyzed the transport problems and made recommendations on how to address the problem.

- As outlined above some progress towards the objectives are evident.
- Proposed new bus routes – little or no progress.
- Cycling and walking – little progress

Consider a major review of the plan to determine what additional measures are required.

13.2 **Road widths:**

Minimum road widths should be increased to allow space for on-street parking and cycling. Currently motorists illegally park partially on paths, often forcing pedestrians onto the road.

13.3 **No more speed ramps:**

Speed ramps are appearing all over the place. They are lazy, and often ineffective, methods of reducing speeding in an area. They generate additional road noise which can become a problem in residential areas at night.

Speed ramps mainly punish the innocent and cause people to use more fuel as they slow down and speed up between ramps. They also cause additional wear on vehicles. Furthermore, they are often badly designed and cause even worse damage to bicycles, who are not the speeders.

The alternative to speed ramps is better design;

- Avoiding excessive straight sections where motorists can either unintentionally build up speed or where straight sections become a track for the “boy racers”.
- Use roundabouts at the junctions of estates and distributor roads.
- Design internal road network within new estates to eliminate opportunity for excessive speed.
- Apply the design solutions the NRA use when the national road network runs through villages, by using street furniture & signs.
- Work with An Garda through the Fingal Joint Policing Forum to enforce speed limits and change the culture (where speeding is acceptable or assumed to be without consequence). Identify roads where they are a particular concern to residents for targeted action.

13.4 **Improve pedestrian/cycle routes:**

There is often a very long delay in providing pedestrian and cycle facilities. This simply encourages driving. These should be provided at the same time as roads. Pedestrian and cycle routes should include 'short cuts' that are not available to motor vehicles.

Pedestrian crossing timings should be more favourable to pedestrians otherwise they will not wait.

13.5 Shared pedestrian/cycle paths:

These shared use pathways are not useful for the experienced cyclist who will instead use the road. They are however useful for young and inexperienced cyclists. Pedestrians frequently walk in the cycle portion of the pathways and the pathways end at every junction making travel along them very slow. FCC should re-evaluate where these shared use pathways should be provided (routes to primary schools) or whether pathways should be wider and/or on-road cycle tracks provided.

13.6 Use canals:

FCC should work with Waterways Ireland to pave the canal bank. These have the potential for use as excellent commuter routes for cyclists.

13.7 Bicycle parking:

Sheltered bicycle parking, with suitable parking stands (not the low ones most places currently has) should be provided at train stations. They should also be provided at multiple locations in towns and villages (bike theft is so high that cyclists will park their bicycles as close to their destination as possible).

Yours faithfully

Kieran O'Neill

Kieran O'Neill

Public Relations Officer
Dublin 15 Community Council



Appendix 1

North Kildare Supermarkets

Shop chain	size	Address
Dunnes Stores	Large	Manor Mills, Maynooth, Co Kildare
Tesco	Large	Dublin Rd, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Tesco	Medium	Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co Kildare
ALDI	Discount	Kilcock Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
ALDI	Discount	Maynooth Road, Celbridge, Co. Kildare
Lidl	Discount	Maynooth Road, Leixlip, Co. Kildare
Lidl	Discount	Straffan Road, Maynooth, Co. Kildare
Centra	Small	Greenfield s.c. Maynooth Co. Kildare
Centra	Small	Main st Maynooth Co. Kildare
Eurospar	Small	Old Celbridge Rd Barnhill Shopping Cntr Leixlip Co. Kildare
Polski Mini Market	Small	Main St, Cellbridge Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Main st Leixlip Co. Kildare
Spar	Small	Newtown S C Maynooth Co. Kildare
Spar	Small	U1 Gleneaston Lodge Leixlip Co. Kildare

Dublin 15 supermarkets

Shop chain	size	Address
Dunnes Stores	Large	The Blanchardstown Centre
Superquinn	Medium	Main st Blanchardstown 15 Co. Dublin
Dunnes Stores	Medium	Ongar Village Clonee, Dublin 15
Eurospar	Medium	Hartstown Shopping Cntr 15 Co. Dublin
Tesco	Medium	Roselawn View, Blanchardstown, Dublin 15
Lidl	Discount	Blakestown Way
Lidl	Discount	Tyrellstown Town Centre
Lidl	Discount	West End Retail Park (The Blanchardstown Centre)
Centra	Small	Unit 1 Pinewood House Huntstown 15 Co. Dublin
Centra	Small	Unit 10 Laurel Lodge SC Castleknock 15 Co. Dublin
Centra	Small	Unit 4 Royal Canal Blanchardstown 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Carpenterstown rd Carpenterstown 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Castleknock Village Cntr Castleknock 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Church rd Mulhuddart 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Hartstown S.C. Blanchardstown 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Littlepace S.C. Clonee 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Riverside Muhuddart 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	The Mall Clonsilla rd 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Weavers Row Clonsilla 15 Co. Dublin
Spar	Small	Westend Village Blanchardstown 15 Co. Dublin
Superquinn	Small	Tyrellstown SC Tyrellstown 15 Co. Dublin
Marks & Spencer	Small	The Blanchardstown Centre

North Kildare Fuel stations (*Excluding Applegreen discount rate*),

Best price was Petrol (c/L) 110.8 Diesel (c/L) 99.8

Highest price was Petrol (c/L) 112.9 Diesel (c/L) 102.9

Kildare North

Average 112.26 Average 101.26
Standard deviation 0.77 Standard deviation 1.32

Name	Town	Road	Petrol (c/L)	Date	Diesel(c/L)	Date
Esso	Maynooth	Straffan Rd	112.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Maxol	Maynooth	Straffan Rd	111.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Tesco	Maynooth	Leixlip Rd	112.9	22 May 09	101.9	22 May 09
Esso	Ceilbridge	Clane Rd	111.9	22 May 09	99.9	22 May 09
Maxol	Ceilbridge	Maynooth Rd	112.9	22 May 09	100.9	22 May 09
Tougher	Ceilbridge	Dublin Rd	111.9	22 May 09	99.9	22 May 09
Applegreen	Ceilbridge	Maynooth Rd	110.8	22 May 09	99.8	22 May 09
Applegreen Discount	Ceilbridge	Maynooth Rd	105.8	22 May 09	94.8	22 May 09
Maxol	Leixlip	Ceilbridge Rd	112.9	22 May 09	101.9	22 May 09

Dublin 15 Fuel stations (*excluding Topaz Hartstown Rd which was missed*)

Best price was Petrol (c/L) 113.9 Diesel (c/L) 102.9

Highest price was Petrol (c/L) 117.9 Diesel (c/L) 104.9

Dublin 15

Average 115.78 Average 103.80
Standard deviation 1.46 Standard deviation 0.99

Name	Town	Road	Petrol(c/L)	Date	Diesel(c/L)	Date
Esso	Castleknock	Navan Rd E	116.9	22 May 09	104.9	22 May 09
Esso	Castleknock	Navan Rd W	115.9	22 May 09	104.9	22 May 09
Topaz	Castleknock	Castleknock Rd	115.9	22 May 09	103.9	22 May 09
Topaz	Blanchardstown	Main St	117.9	22 May 09	104.9	22 May 09
Topaz	Coolmine	Fire Station Rd	115.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Topaz	Clonsilla	Hartstown Rd	No data		No data	
Discount Fuels	Clonsilla	Clonsilla Rd	113.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Texaco	Blanchardstown	Corp Park	116.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Esso	Mulhuddart	Hollystown	113.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09
Topaz	Mulhuddart	Navan Road	114.9	22 May 09	102.9	22 May 09

Maxol	Dublin 7	179Navan Rd	114.9	22 May 09	104.9	22 May 09
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