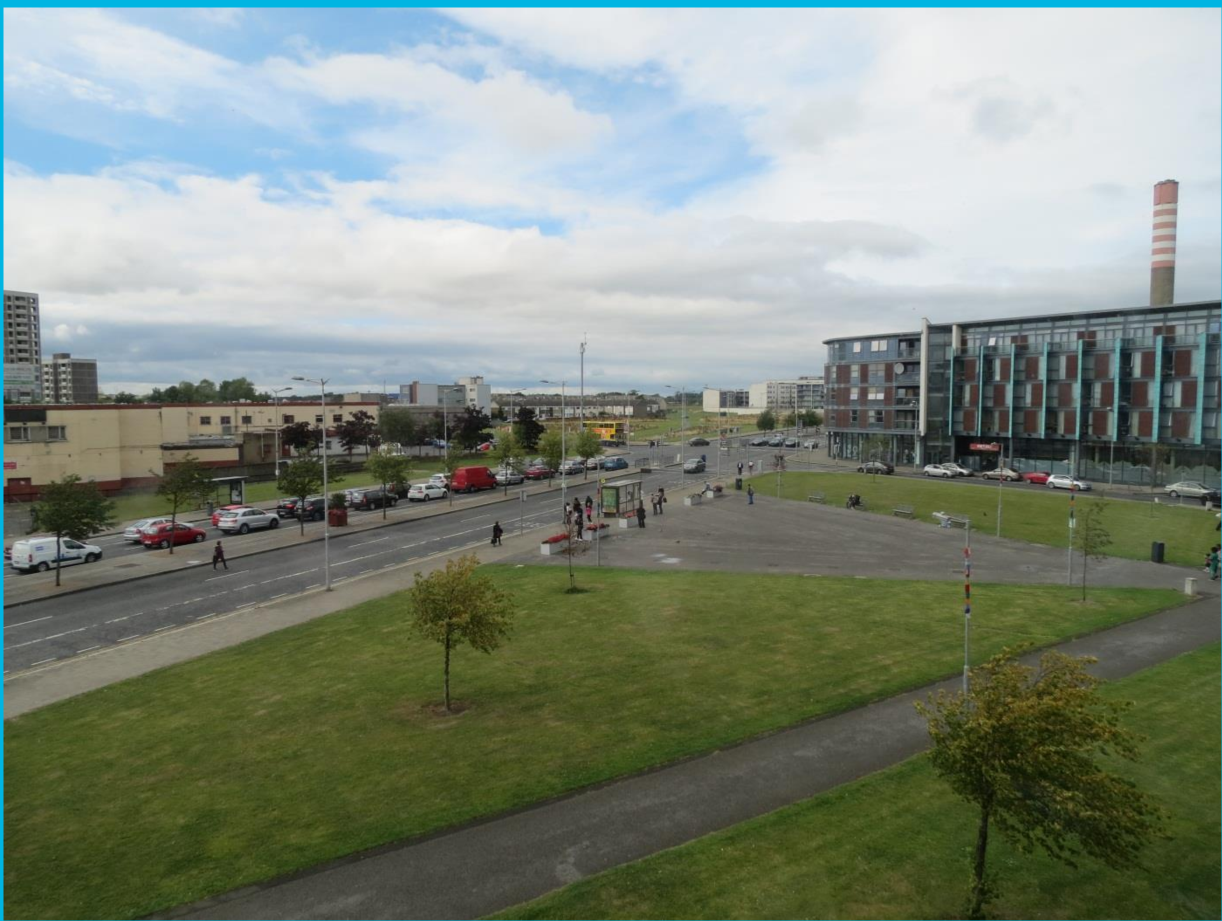
Ballymun Retail Study 2016
Final Report

Prepared on behalf of Dublin City Council



Appendix 5a Report of Consultations

05a

Appendix 5a: Report of Consultations

1.0 Introduction

As well as continuous discussions with Council officials, the consultation process for the preparation of this Retail Strategy involved the following:

- Household shopper survey of 400 households in the Ballymun area
- Presentations to the North West Area Committee (NWAC)
- Presentations to the Civic Alliance
- Workshop with the Ballymun for Business (B4B) group
- One to one semi-structured interviews with key stakeholders in the retail and business sector

The latter included:

- Manager of Ballymun Shopping Centre
- Manager of Charlestown Shopping Centre
- Manager of OMNI Shopping Centre and Retail Park
- Manager of IKEA
- Manager of Axis Theatre
- Lisney Commercial Property Agents

2.0 Key findings of consultations

(i) Household shopper survey, Sep-Oct 2015

This is detailed in Section 4.0 of the Retail Strategy but the most significant findings related to:

- evidence of low retail spending power in Ballymun households;
- high leakage of retail expenditure from area; and a
- desire by residents for more shopping development.

(ii) Workshop with the Ballymun for Business (B4B) group, 10th September 2015

Participants were probed on the strengths, weaknesses and opportunities in Ballymun and the output is enclosed as a separate note in this appendix. Overall, the feedback provided an important snapshot of the views of the business community in Ballymun.

(iii) Presentations to the North West Area Committee (NWAC), 20th October 2015 & 15th December 2015

While welcoming the Preliminary findings of the Retail Study in October 2015 initial feedback also centred on a number of matters requiring further research. These generally included issues pertaining to: rents and rates; car parking; the availability of development land in Ballymun; and the role of non-retail uses in generating footfall in Ballymun. These matters were addressed in the draft version presented to NWAC in December 2015.

Presentation of the Retail Study's draft proposals in December 2015 elicited concerns that the low retail floorspace projections may serve as a constraint to retail development. Mindful of the fact that these figures only constitute broad guidance on floorspace capacity, as per national guidance, it was agreed that a qualifying note should be inserted in the document to highlight that the floorspace capacity figures shall not serve as floorspace caps.

(iv) Presentation to the Civic Alliance, 20th October 2015 & 28th January 2016

The Civic Alliance was equally positive in its response to the preliminary proposals in this Retail Study in October. Feedback at this session generally concentrated on interrogating the results of the household shopper survey and the methodology used to carry it out.

At the January presentation the same concerns were expressed about the low retail floorspace capacity findings and again it was decided to underline within the document that these were for broad guidance purposes only.

Attention was also drawn to an expression of interest in developing a site immediately north of the former shopping centre for a discount foodstore and a number of other units. It was considered that development here would not contravene the recommendations of the Retail Study for a number of reasons. It is located within the main Commercial node of Ballymun and its size accords with the lower end of the floorspace capacity identified in the Study. Also, it satisfies the sequential test outlined in national guidance in that it is the next preferred site for retail development given that the former shopping centre site will not become available for redevelopment for at least three years.

(v) Manager of Ballymun Shopping Centre

A valuable insight was obtained into the reasons for the demise of Ballymun Shopping Centre and the track record of businesses that operated there. The latter discussions helped cast light on what could realistically resurface within a new retail scheme for Ballymun.

(vi) Managers of Charlestown & OMNI Shopping Centres

The benefit of interviewing the managers of all the Shopping Centres was their corroboration of the survey findings for Ballymun. Significantly, among all the managers, there was universal acknowledgement that there was low purchasing power in Ballymun because of its socio-economic profile.

The centre managers also helped verify the health of these centres in terms of vacancy levels, rental levels and footfall levels. Furthermore, they provided useful insights into retail operations on the ground and the micro factors involved in influencing shopper behaviour, for example, peak times correlating with school runs.

(vii) Manager of IKEA

Again, discussions with IKEA elicited extremely useful information on the health of the store and the extent of its catchment. Our surveys suggested that approximately 72% of its customer numbers came from the Greater Dublin Area and this finding roughly accorded with the 80 per cent figure stated by IKEA.

Discussions with IKEA shed light on the employment contribution that it makes to the Ballymun area and the limited appeal it has for joint promotional marketing with other businesses in Ballymun.

(viii) Lisney Commercial Property Agents

Discussions with Lisney indicated that the retail market in the suburbs was still challenging. The best prospects for occupancy of vacant units on Main Street Ballymun were connected with detenanting of businesses from Ballymun Shopping Centre. Conversations also confirmed that there would be little developer interest in seeking to re-establish a mall-like shopping centre in Ballymun.

(ix) Manager of Axis Theatre

This consultation was useful in gaining an understanding of the role played by non-retail businesses in drawing people into Ballymun. Evidence was obtained on the numbers attracted to the facilities at Axis and the potential that events and festivals possessed for bolstering trade in the District Centre.

(x) Dublin City University (DCU)

Comments from DCU clarified that 16,000 students, including new students from St Pat's and MDI campuses, attend the university.

The main university building in the Ballymun area is DCU in the Community, which acts as a bridge between the university and the local community.

Its mission is "To provide educational opportunities to local people in North Dublin in order to increase participation levels and to promote equality in third level education". Its aim is to broaden access and increase participation in higher education. DCU in the Community recognises the individual talent of each student and offers a flexible curriculum based on their needs and aspirations, and acts as a 'drop in centre' for all local learners seeking information and advice in relation to accessing further education options. It seeks to promote Sustainable Community development and serve as a bridge between the resources of DCU (and the wider higher education system) and the local Community (see www.dcu.ie).

Figure 1 – University College Dublin – Ballymun Office

According to the university, the student accommodation it provides is located in the area outside Ballymun and includes:

- 1108 bedrooms on DCU Campus in Glasnevin;
- 250 bedrooms in DCU St. Pat's;
- 100 bedrooms in DCU All Hallows.

While DCU does not have its own student accommodation in Ballymun there are other blocks of student accommodation operated privately in the area. These include:

- Shanowen Hall - 55 Apartments, made up of 4/5 bedrooms;
- Shanowen Square - 338 Bedrooms;
- Hazelwood Apartments – Approx. 200 Bedrooms;
- Gateway Ballymun - 350 Bedrooms.

Mindful of the latter figures it is clear that there is accommodation in the general area of Ballymun for over 1,000 students, with those residing in the Gateway complex most likely to contribute to the shopping fortunes of the area.

3.0 Conclusion

Overall, participation in the consultation process by the public, elected representatives, business organisations and the retail sector was instrumental in highlighting what could and could not be achieved under this Retail Study for Ballymun.

Appendix 5b B4B Meeting Note

05b

Project:	**Ballymun Retail Strategy**	Job No:	**47075686**
Subject:	**Ballymun Business Network Draft Meeting Notes**		
Prepared by:	**Laura Michael**	Date:	**Meeting on 10th September 2015**
Checked by:	**Una Somerville**	Date:	**15th September 2015**
Approved by:	**Una Somerville**	Date:	**18th September 2015**

1. Aecom provided a powerpoint presentation of the scope, survey methodology, consultation strategy and timeframe for the Ballymun Retail Strategy.

Table 1 Theme	Current Vision	Future Vision
Atmosphere	Grey Dire Bleak Dull Terrible Grim	Vibrant Exciting Thriving Busy
Amenities	No Diversity Empty Lacking Sparse Inadequate	Employment Opportunity Local Value Diverse Relevant Creative
Accessibility	Inconvenient Challenging	Untapped

2. Aecom then suggested the attendees break into two groups and both individually and collectively list three separate words that describe Ballymun Retail scene currently and as people/groups would like to see it in the future. Table 1 is a summary of the individuals' commentary

3. After the formal presentation – two representations were made directly to Aecom raising concerns over the shopping centre and how it has been handled. Issues of poor morale and communication were identified. Also the decision making processes of decant and relocation, moving the market etc were cited as legacy issues that need to be addressed.

4. Summary comments from the two groups:

Current vision:

- Fantastic location
- Reputation of area/stigma/perception
- Concentration of retail facilities
- Lack of secure parking
- Lack of parking for shops
- No focal point
- Just a thoroughfare
- Weekends quiet
- Community story

Future vision:

- Tapping into the airport
- Employment & Income are key
- People want a variety of opportunities on their doorstep
- Outlet Centre
- Ikea – where are shoppers coming from – can we tap into them?
- Lure of M50/Metro opportunities of transportation links
- Glasnevin/area to tap into.

About AECOM

AECOM (NYSE: ACM) is built to deliver a better world. We design, build, finance and operate infrastructure assets for governments, businesses and organizations in more than 150 countries.

As a fully integrated firm, we connect knowledge and experience across our global network of experts to help clients solve their most complex challenges.

From high-performance buildings and infrastructure, to resilient communities and environments, to stable and secure nations, our work is transformative, differentiated and vital. A Fortune 500 firm, AECOM companies had revenue of approximately US$19 billion during the 12 months ended June 30, 2015.

See how we deliver what others can only imagine at aecom.com and @AECOM.

Contact
Una Somerville
Associate Planner
T +44 (0)28 9070 5111
E una.somerville@aecom.com

aecom.com