Your City Your Space

Dublin City Public Realm Strategy

Baile Átha Cliath
Dublin City

The body text in this document is 9.5 point when
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Your City Your Space

Dublin City
Public Realm
Strategy

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Foreword

The Public Realm is an important part of Dublin's identity, of how we understand ourselves and how we want to present ourselves to others. It contributes to Dublin's competitiveness both by influencing the image of the city abroad and by being attractive for people who live in, work in, or visit. The public realm is vital to our city life and this importance requires us to understand it and influence its future through developing vision, appropriate policy and a collaborative approach with people at its centre.

This strategy formally defines for the first time what we mean by the public realm, explains why it is important and highlights the necessity for shared responsibility towards its management and enhancement. Initially the strategy applies to the historic, cultural and commercial core of the city between the Royal and Grand Canals but will roll out across the city in time.

Through its international networks Dublin City Council is increasingly aware of the range of public realm initiatives that are being implemented in major cities that we regard as our peers, and of the increasing importance of effective, integrated management to achieve a standard befitting our capital city.

The strategy seeks to co-ordinate the approach to the public realm and to address its many existing challenges through a series of actions. The establishment of a cross departmental multi-disciplinary Public Realm Co-ordination Group within Dublin City Council is a first step towards this.

In terms of proposals, the strategy is not about proposing expensive master plans or redevelopments for the coming years; it is about finding better ways of carrying out the work that is going on every day in the city, aiming to achieve better quality through process and agreed standards, whilst using limited resources.

Let us not forget that there are some big projects, Grangegorman DIT Campus and Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Project, which provide a major opportunity to expand the public realm and deliver an improved experience for all users in the years ahead. Dublin City Council needs to leverage these opportunities and ensure quality is delivered. There is also scope to prioritise the public realm through the delivery of up to a dozen Local Area Plans which will be prepared over the coming years.

The inner city which is our area of initial focus has undergone great change and is a work in progress. The removal of HGVs, the construction of new bridge connections and the delivery of the Way Finding Scheme and the Dublin Bike Scheme all represent improvements to the city's public realm. The Strategy prioritises walking, cycling and public transport, and minimises the need to use cars while supporting the retail core of the city. The challenge for the coming decade will be to deliver unity and interconnectedness. The public realm will play a critical role in building coherence, legibility and unity.

It is hoped that this document presents an informed and balanced set of proposals for improving the city's public realm. Any and all comments and suggestions on it are welcome, as the more points of view and inputs inform it, the better the document and the delivery.

I would like to thank all reviewers in advance for advice or inputs and look forward to working with you to deliver a shared vision.

John Tierney
City Manager

Summary

What is the 'public realm'?
Generally, all areas to which the public has access (such as roads, streets, lanes, parks, squares and bridges) make up the 'public realm'. This includes the publicly accessible space between buildings, along with the spaces and the buildings or other structures that enclose them.

Why does Dublin need a public realm strategy?
These public spaces of the city play a vital role in how Dublin functions and its attractiveness to those who live in, work or visit the city. The public realm is the main space for movement, circulation and other service infrastructure. It is a key part of the city's identity and distinctive character and its quality affects the city's competitiveness and ability to attract investment. Because the public realm is so essential to the everyday experience of the city, how it is planned, designed and managed is very important.

What area does this Strategy cover?
It applies to the historic, cultural and commercial core of the city between the Royal and Grand Canals. This includes all the public streets, roads, lanes and spaces, and the interface between public and private space. It is intended that in the future an updated Strategy will apply to the entire Dublin City Council administrative area.

Who is behind this Strategy and who is it for?
An in-house multi-disciplinary team prepared this Strategy for use by Dublin City Council, the public and the full range of external stakeholders. The public realm is important to the city, which is why Dublin City Council recognizes that it requires this new and collaborative approach. This Public Realm Co-ordination Group will co-ordinate the actions outlined in the Strategy and also work with other public agencies and private developers to improve the quality of the city's public realm.

How do I use this document?
The strategy defines the public realm, explains how important it is in the life of the city, and describes the context in which the Strategy will function. It gives an historical summary of the development of Dublin city's public realm and identifies the challenges to be addressed. The guiding principles and aims are clearly identified and are further developed into fifteen long term actions and twelve projects.

What are this Strategy's aims?
The aims are: to detail the importance, character and current issues affecting Dublin's public realm; and to develop an agreed vision that is shared by those who use it, design it, build it and manage it.
The Public Realm Co-ordination Group advocates the use of Universal Design Principals as a standard for planning and design. Using these will deliver public space that is safe and easy to navigate, thus increasing Dublin's attractiveness to business and as a place to live.
The Strategy also sets out a series of long term actions to deliver this vision and a two-year implementation plan that will be reviewed regularly.

What challenges does Dublin city's public realm face?
Twenty-two issues have been identified which impact negatively on the existing public realm. These include: urban blight; the need for more greenery; the inclusion of maintenance costs when developing new public areas to ensure they reach their full potential in the future; and the protection of our historic past.

Guiding Principles to ensure quality

A series of guiding principles have been developed to address the challenges identified by Dublin City Council, and to inform the future approach to the public realm. These principles address ethos, working practices and behaviour as well as the overall approach to design in the public realm. Dublin City Council's vision can only be achieved by a fundamental change in approach and by putting people's needs at the heart of our work.

The council intends that all projects undertaken can be accessed, understood and will appeal to all regardless of ability, age or knowledge and to do this the seven Principles of Universal Design have been placed at the core of this strategy. These are a set of internationally accepted principles which were developed by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers to guide design and adhere to international best practice with regard to accessibility and simple and intuitive use of space. For ease of reference the principles have been reproduced in Appendix 1.

Actions and Delivery

To deliver improvement in the public realm, the Strategy focuses on 15 long-term actions and a definitive two-year work plan with twelve assigned projects.

The actions deal with standards and specifications for the delivery and maintenance of public spaces; the protection of the historic public realm; and the agreement of a collaborative approach with all the users, designers and those who maintain the Public Realm. These measures include ongoing consultation and research; the implementation of pilot projects to build knowledge; and how temporary solutions (like temporary art pieces or nighttime pedestrian areas) can be used to enrich public spaces.

Your City Your Space can make a difference

Quality public realm makes for improved quality of life. Your City Your Space aims to improve the quality and enrich the individual experience of Dublin. By working together on delivering this Public Realm Strategy, we can make Dublin a city where people can live, work, and access culture and recreation in a safe, friendly and animated environment.

Portobello Harbour; East Wall Social Inclusion Week; Botanic Gardens Play Development Gardening Project

1.1 Public realm: what it means and why it matters

Cities are about people. Everyday we engage with the public face of Dublin; with roads, streets, lanes, parks, squares, quays or bridges. All this publicly accessible space between buildings, including the empty spaces, streets, pavements, and voids in the urban fabric or other structures enclosed by them, is the 'public realm'. Free to use, it is experienced as a whole by the everyday user regardless of age or capability. It is an essential part of everyday life and has a significant impact on how we interact with and enjoy our city.

This is why Dublin's public realm is so important and deserves such careful consideration and development. How public spaces are planned, designed and built, how clean they are, and how safe we feel while using them influence both the quality of our experience of the city, and how we feel about it as the place in which we live, socialise, visit or work. Dublin's identity is inseparable from the user's experience of the city. Our everyday history, our heritage and culture, and the impact of innovations are all around us in the public realm. It is where we go about our daily business as individuals as well as being an arena for recreation and celebration. It is where we can come together to participate in public activities of all shapes and sizes: from the St. Patrick's Day Festival to the Dublin Marathon; weekend farmers' markets to one-off marches; and from families meeting in parks to tourists on walking tours. How effectively and efficiently the public realm works is vital for the life of the city: how people access services, do business, get around the city and feel safe while doing so. It provides the essential space for services (e.g. lighting, signage, cleaning or drainage) without which the city cannot function. It is the space in which all forms of transportation, key to the healthy functioning of the city, operate. For this reason, safety, orientation and accessibility are important issues to consider when looking at the public realm.

Another important factor for Dublin's economic development and tourism is how the public realm appears to the world outside Dublin. Whether to visit, to live or to work in, people enjoy going to cities where the public areas are pleasant, easy to use and well-functioning. An attractive, high quality public realm can have a very positive impact on our competitiveness with other European cities, both for tourism and for international investment. It is the place where many enterprises, such as retailers, interact with their customers.

The quality of our public realm is vital to Dublin's fortunes and to its people. To make our public realm all it can and should be, for the future, means agreeing a vision and working in unison to make it a reality. A successful, coherent and hard-working public realm can turn a city into a vibrant place with people at its heart.

The variety of Dublin's public realm (from top): the Grafton Street area; a residential street in Portobello; a city centre retailer; Dublin City Comhairle nan óg, St. Stephen's Green

1.2 Why Dublin needs a public realm strategy

By its nature, the public realm is fluid and evolving. It is impacted by changing economic fortunes and governance. Dublin's public realm is uneven in quality and clearly not yet reaching its full potential. Reasons for this include: under-investment, poor or uncoordinated decision-making, and a failure to recognise the importance of the public realm as an asset in its own right with its own value, or to monitor the overall result when incorporating the individual strands at design development.

The reasons for the current problems are fractured but the solution clearly needs collective and well-considered action. With a clear and coherent Public Realm Strategy, all the stakeholders can agree on what is needed and how it can be achieved. A Strategy provides a blueprint for a coordinated approach to delivering and managing the public realm that has at its heart the public's experiences, wants and needs.

1.3 Your City Your Space: Aims

Dublin City Council wants to develop an agreed vision for the public realm with all the stakeholders; one that is inspired by its historic context and shared by those who use, design, build and manage it. Crucially, this includes agreeing the standard of public realm Dublin needs, and identifying the important spaces and routes within that.

This Public Realm Strategy sets out a series of actions for delivering this vision including a two-year action plan/work programme through 12 named projects for initial implementation. It is the blueprint that will be used by the Public Realm Coordination Group who will coordinate the work of Dublin City Council departments responsible for delivering and managing the public realm. It will also provide a framework for Dublin City Council to liaise with other public agencies, private developers and citizens.

James Joyce Bridge, Moore Street market, the Italian Quarter.

1.4 Who should use this strategy?

A Public Realm Strategy is valuable to many different stakeholders with an interest and input in the quality of life and business in Dublin. For example:

- Owners of buildings which abut public spaces can use it to see how policies may affect their proposals, and to gain an understanding of the role private property plays in the quality of the public realm.

- Designers of private developments which include new publicly accessible spaces should use this Strategy to ensure their designs successfully integrate with the surrounding streets.

- State agencies and utilities companies working in Dublin's streets or public spaces should consult this Strategy for clarity as to their responsibilities within the public realm.

- Public representatives, members of the public and community groups will find this Strategy a useful aid in assessing new developments in their areas.

- Members of Dublin City Council departments undertaking works or design in the public realm will use this Strategy to inform their work.
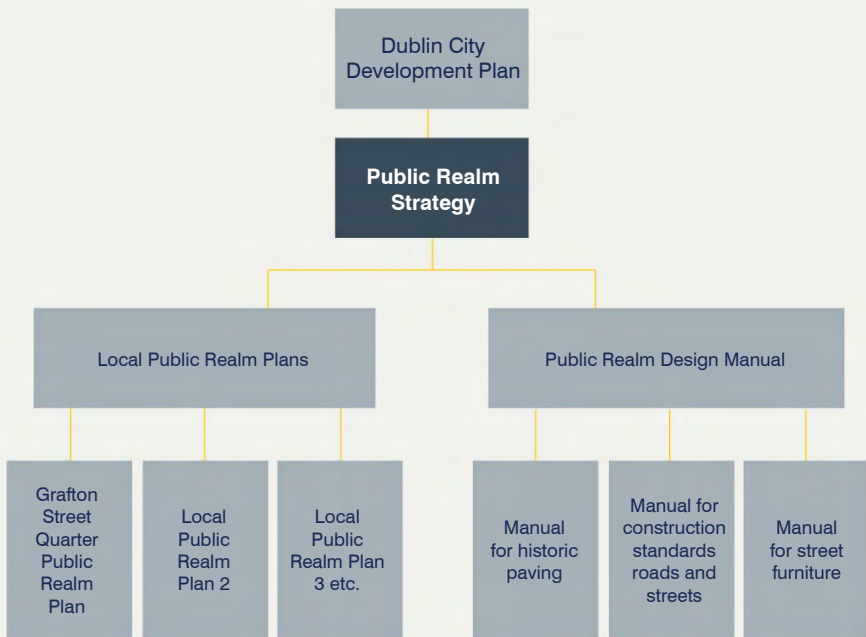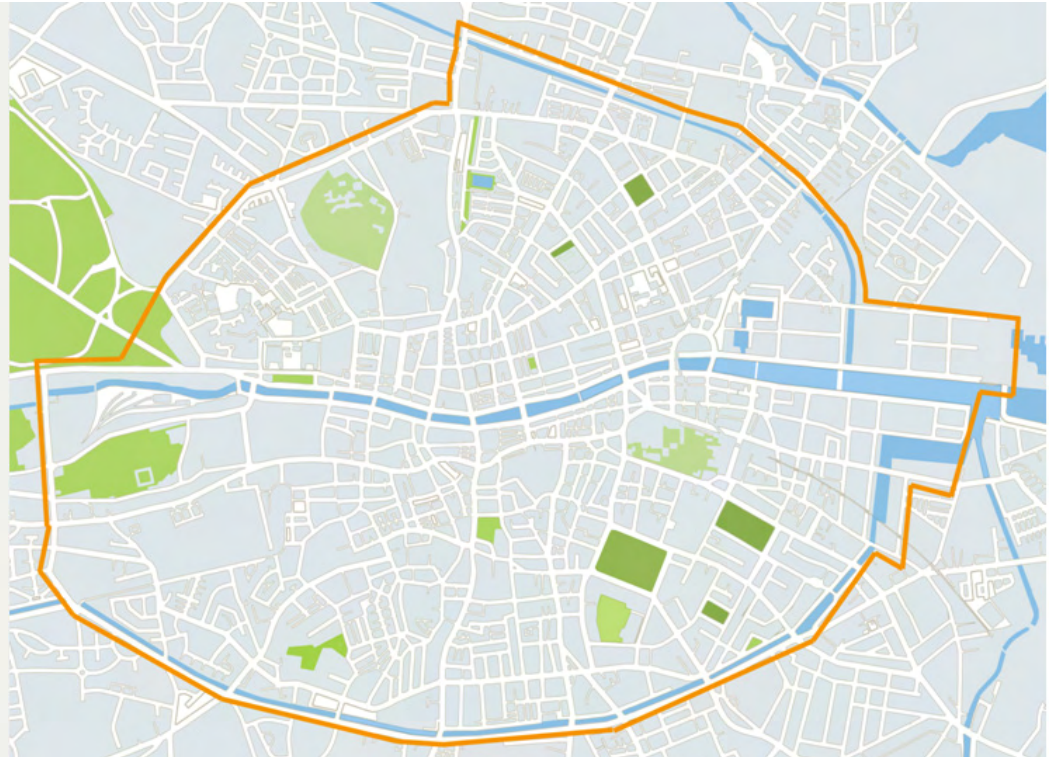
St. Stephen's Green

Diagram 1.1. The Public Realm Strategy and associated policy documents.

[Map 1.1] The Public Realm Strategy area.

1.5 Status and scope of this strategy

Your City Your Space is an action of the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017, and as such is the primary guidance for the design and management of the public realm. A series of local Public Realm Plans providing guidance for design and maintenance in specific areas of the city will follow, together with guidance manuals for design and workmanship relating to the public realm of the city generally.

As a first step, this Public Realm Strategy applies to the historic, cultural and commercial core of the city between the canals (see map 1.1). It covers all public streets, roads, lanes and spaces in the city and the interface between public and private space, whether developed by Dublin City Council, other government agencies or the private sector. In the future, it will be updated to apply throughout the Dublin City Council administrative area.

1.6 How to use this document

Section 1 defines the public realm and sets out the aims and scope of the Strategy.

Section 2 describes the historical development of the city's street network, how the city's main streets relate to each other and the transport and planning policies which affect them.

Section 3 sets out Dublin City Council's public realm vision for the future; the challenges to this; the guiding principles which inform how these challenges will be approached.

Section 4 outlines a series of long-term actions to make the vision a reality and the work planned for 2012-2013. (See diagram 1.1)

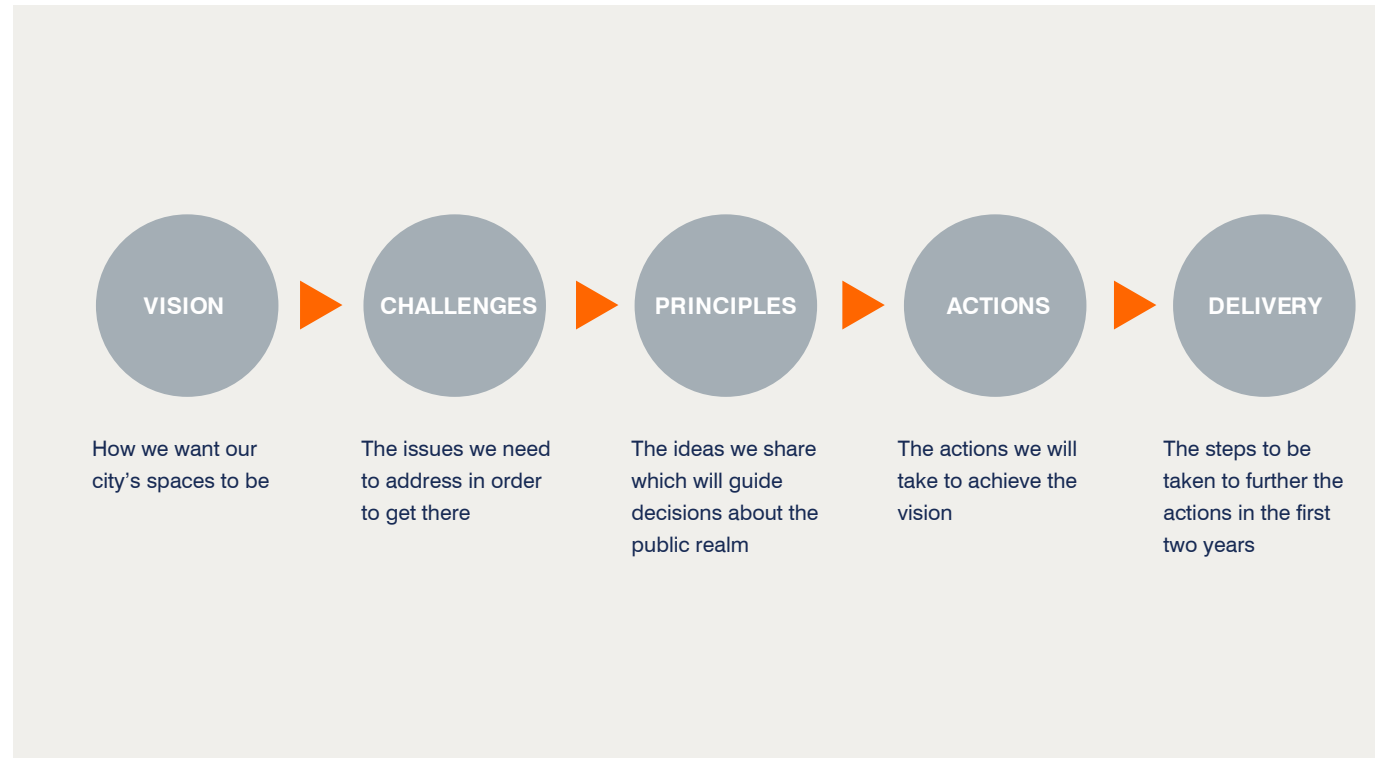| VISION	CHALLENGES	PRINCIPLES	ACTIONS	DELIVERY
How we want our city's spaces to be	The issues we need to address in order to get there	The ideas we share which will guide decisions about the public realm	The actions we will take to achieve the vision	The steps to be taken to further the actions in the first two years

Diagram 1.1. The Public Realm Strategy and associated policy documents.

2.0 Understanding Dublin's Public Realm

## 2.1 History in action: how Dublin's streets and squares developed

We cannot properly know today's city and its public realm without understanding its history. From invasions to rebellions and from social conflicts to cultural revolutions, Dublin city has a dramatic history of constant change. This history continues to live and breathe in the shape of our streets and spaces. The apparently random layouts of city centre streets are often founded on very practical historical issues; such as a Viking river crossing, a path along a stream or the turning-circle once needed for a horse and carriage. The streetscape that resulted, with its fascinating range of buildings, interesting hidden corners and dramatic view-lines, has become a huge asset to Dublin and Ireland alike.

Dublin City Council is determined to build on an understanding of how history has influenced the layout of the city, because an understanding of the history of the streets plays an important role in deciding how to plan and design future maintenance and change. Appreciating the past is key to developing a city in which both residents and visitors can experience and enjoy the links that public spaces have with the city's rich history. The development of urban design ideas and attitudes through the centuries is clearly visible in the different characters of areas in the city. Dublin still displays: the importance of topography in medieval times; how distant vistas were used to close off streets in the 17th century; the sophisticated street facades of the 18th century; and the thoroughfares and processional routes of the 19th century.

With their rich range of traditional materials and craftsmanship, the historic details and fabric of the city's spaces tell fascinating stories about Dublin's history. For example, the 18th-19th century residential districts had granite pavements, some with cellars below. The use of such high quality paving was designed to signify the importance of both pedestrian and thoroughfare. The 2009 Historic Street Surfaces Study sets out proposals for protecting this material. This Public Realm Strategy supports developing this Study into guidelines for working in, and protecting, the city's historic street landscape.

The following pages describe how the layout of our streets evolved into the complex mix of places recognisable to us all today.
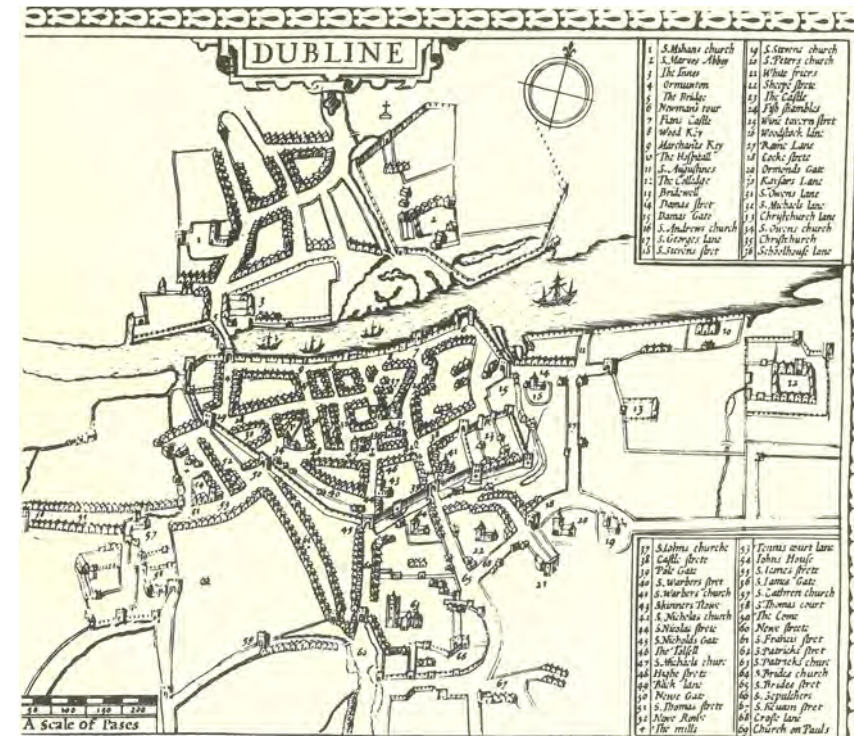
John Speed's map of Dublin, 1610, showing the city centred around the castle, with today's Thomas Street and Patrick's Street being significant routes to the west and south. The enclosure of Trinity College fronting onto today's College Green is to the east.

The story of a street

Aside from their development as part of a network, individual streets have their own histories which can be read in their layouts and buildings. O'Connell Street, once known as Sackville Street and often referred to as Dublin's Main Street, has seen many shifts of fortune through its fascinating lifetime.

Its origins as a beautiful Georgian promenade are clear and its buildings tell its own story as well as speaking of major upheavals in Irish history. Originally a shorter street which served as the central space for an elegant quarter, it was later extended to the River Liffey, forging the north-south axis of the Georgian city. Many of the 18th and 19th century buildings were destroyed by shelling during the 1916 Rising, when the street's most famous building, the GPO, was taken over by rebels. The rebuilding produced an array of new styles of commercial and retail architecture, including the palatial Clery's department store.

In 1966, the destruction of Nelson's Pillar by the IRA removed what had become both the traditional landmark of the city centre for trams and buses as well as the functional divider of Upper and Lower O'Connell Street.

Continual increases in traffic meant by the 1990s what had been for many years an informally accessible place for drivers had become congested with vehicles. A new phase in the life of the street began in 1998 with a regeneration which: integrated design for pedestrians with reduced traffic movement; created a civic space at the GPO; and replaced the missing Nelson's Pillar with The Spire.
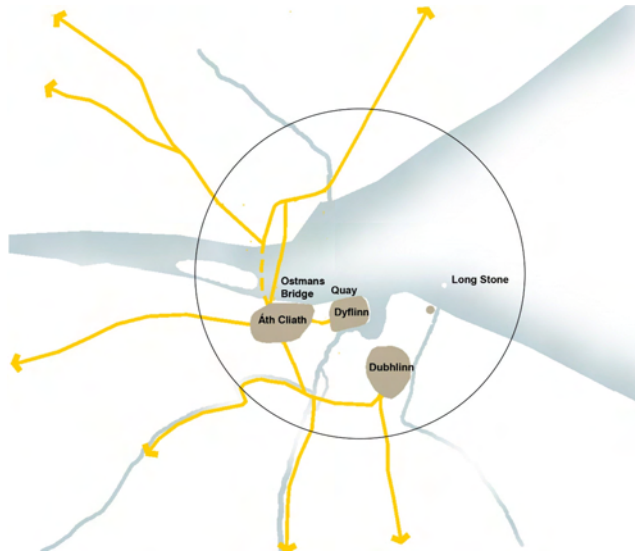
[Map 2.1] Gaelic and Viking Origins

There were two original Gaelic settlements – Dublin (approximately where Aungier Street is today) and Áth Cliath (approximately where Cornmarket is today) [1]. The Viking settlement developed close to Áth Cliath at the mouth of the Poddle River [2]. A network of ancient routes (slíghe) linked the settlements with other locations in the country and generally followed topography. Familiar streets today such as Manor Street, Francis Street, Camden Street and Thomas Street are all descendants of these ancient Gaelic routes. [3]. The river crossing was initially a ford located near what is now known as Usher's Island, and later a bridge built by the Vikings running along the line of Blackhall Place [4]. For scale, the circle represents a 1km radius, centred on today's Grattan Bridge.

[Map 2.2] From the Medieval City up to the 17th Century

The city walls were constructed around the hill of Christchurch. This established it as the heart of the medieval city on high ground above the river, and drew the populace into the impressive cathedral [1]. Further routes were developed, building on the slíghe to develop an early urban network of streets [2]. The streets around Stephen's Green were laid out, setting up the structure of the south Georgian quarter [3]. Additional bridges cross the Liffey, with land reclamation continuing to reduce the size of the river mouth [4].
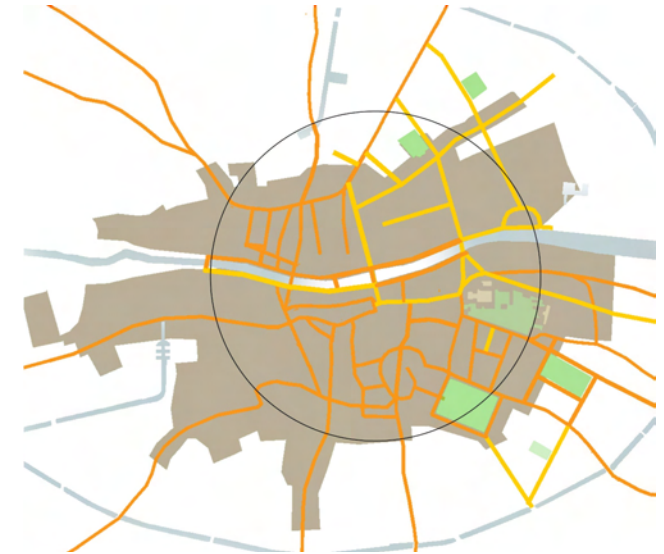
[Map 2.3] The 18th Century

Georgian estates shifted the focus of the city south-eastwards. At this time, a new type of street appeared in the city: one that was broad, straight and enclosed by orderly buildings of brick. Landmark public buildings in stone created grids with elegant garden squares [1]. Riverside properties were redeveloped facing the water where previously they had backed onto it, thus turning the Quays into significant public spaces [2]. Sackville Place (O'Connell Street) was laid out [3]. Dame Street, College Green and Westmoreland Street were widened. This gave College Green the form visible today and reinforced its civic importance [4]. The canals were developed, defining what is now considered the historic core of the city [5].
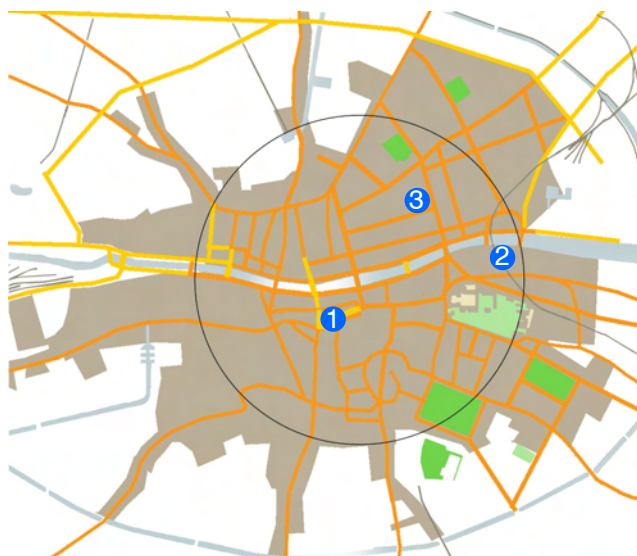
[Map 2.4] The 19th Century
The widened route along Dame Street was extended up to Christchurch, and the newly-created Lord Edward Street opened up a previously closed vista to the medieval cathedral [1]. The continuing development of the city's infrastructure had a significant affect on the city: the growing docklands created a street network to the east of the city centre and construction of the Loop Line Bridge created a major landmark, which defined the break between the city and the docks [2]. The tram network reinforced central spaces such as O'Connell Street as a focus for the expanding suburbs of the city [3]. Significant market buildings with great civic presence such as City Markets off Capel Street and the Georges Street Market were built to serve central districts.
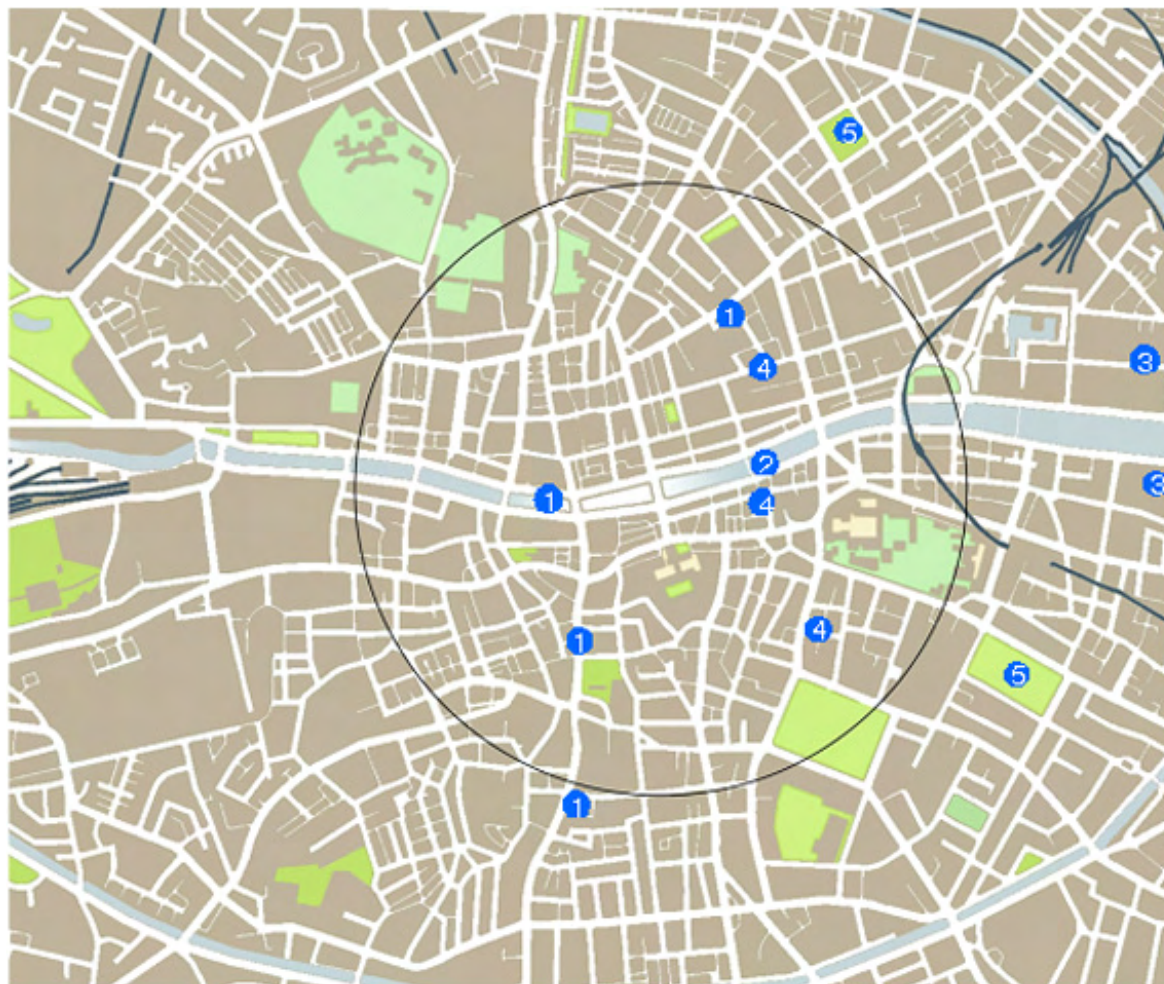
[Map 2.5] The Twentieth Century
The redevelopment of significant central streets and historic arteries (such as the Quays, Parnell Street and Clanbrassil Street) as primarily vehicular routes had a significant negative impact on the quality of the public spaces of the city centre. [1]. Further new river crossings significantly increased the connectivity of the north and south sides of the city. The Boardwalk was constructed along the north side of the quays as another step in developing the river as an enjoyable public space [2]. As changing times made large parts of the docklands redundant, they became redeveloped with mixed use developments, extending the city core eastwards [3]. Other streets were pedestrianised, such as Grafton Street, Henry Street and the regenerated Temple Bar with a focus on leisure and retail activity [4]. Formerly private squares became public parks [5].

Thingmount

River Liffey

College Green: at the heart of civic space for centuries

Our streets and spaces have played a big role in the social and cultural history of Dublin. College Green has had a prominent role as a civic space going back to Viking Dublin when the Thingmount, where town meetings were held, was located on the river shore nearby (close to the present-day St. Andrew's Church).

Traditionally the place where the Trinity College campus met with the life of the city, its prominence today comes from its connection between the civic route from Parnell Square along O'Connell Street and the east-west route along Dame Street to Christchurch. It is believed that in the 16th century College Green was cobbled. There were no kerbs, so the street surface running up to the edge of the buildings.

In the 18th century redevelopment by the Wide Street Commissioners turned it from an irregular junction into a significant public space, fronted by the impressive House of Lords (now Bank of Ireland) which housed Ireland's parliament until its abolition in 1800.

This imposing setting has been the backdrop to major events in Irish life, such as the famous public address by Michael Collins in 1922 (shown right). The layout of College Green and the elegant backdrop provided by the Bank of Ireland created a naturally impressive stage for President Barack Obama in 2011.

Key

- ▬ Civic spine and river
- ▭ River
- ▬ Primary network
- ▬ ▬ Network to be developed
- ◆ Interchanges

[Map 2.6] Map of the principal pedestrian routes in the city centre (Legible Dublin, Spatial structure - primary linking routes, 2004).

2.2 The policies guiding our public realm

Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017
The vision of the Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 is one of a city people actively want to live, work and experience. This vision is of a sustainable, dynamic and compact city with a distinct character, a vibrant culture and a diverse, innovation-based economy. The Development Plan sets out a spatial framework to guide this future growth and development in a coherent, orderly and sustainable way. A high quality, joined-up public realm is key to achieving this vision, and is emphasised throughout the Development Plan.

The Development Plan provides guidance on the design of successful streets and public spaces. Importantly, a key objective of the plan (objective SCO10) is to prepare a Public Realm Strategy to further guide the development of Dublin's public space, and this represents a key implementation measure of the Development Plan. The chapter 'Shaping the City' identifies the key spaces and connections necessary to enhance the legibility of the city (fig. 5). It emphasises the need to develop a high quality network of active, attractive and safe streets and public spaces which are memorable and encourage walking (City Development Plan, policy SC18 & SC19).

The chapter 'Connecting and Sustaining the City's Infrastructure' has a strong focus on the promotion of walking and cycling. It states that Dublin City Council will seek to provide a safe and pleasant walking experience for all, and will actively encourage walking as the primary mode of travel in the city. By 2017 the aim is that 25-30% of all commutes within the city will be by bike because people of all ages will have the confidence, incentive and facilities to cycle.
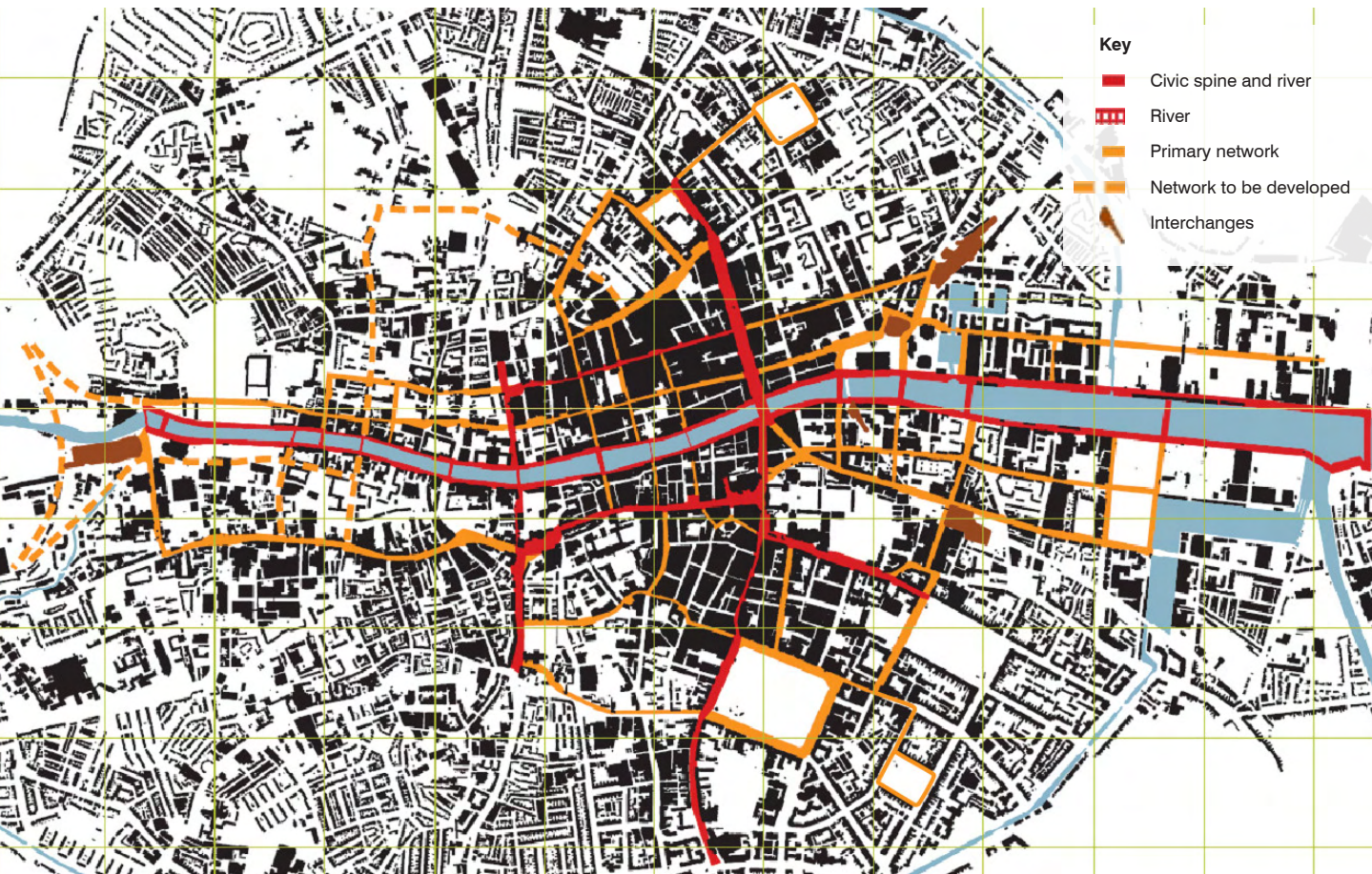
The Legible Dublin study

The Development Plan was informed by Dublin City Council's 2004 'Legible Dublin' study. This was the first step towards developing a vision for the evolving role of public space. It recommended an implementation framework with three objectives: to create a walking city, to create a public domain of international standing and to create a connected city through high quality signage and information design. The provision of the first phase of an integrated wayfinding system for the city together with the publication of the Public Realm Strategy are important steps in the realisation of the core objective.

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

This is the national planning framework designed to coordinate future development and planning in Ireland in a sustainable manner. It emphasises the creation of living environments of the highest quality through attention to the design and the integration of amenities. The Dublin City Development Plan 2011-2017 sits at the 'city level' in a hierarchy of statutory planning policy documents. It was prepared to ensure consistency with higher-level policy documents such as the National Spatial Strategy, which also highlight the importance of the public realm.

Guidelines for Planning Authorities on Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas

Published by the Department of Environment, Community and Local Government in 2009, this distils a range of relevant national policies into a series of high-level aims for successful and sustainable development in urban areas. This includes the creation of high quality places which:

- Prioritise walking, cycling and public transport, and minimise the need to use cars;

- Deliver 'quality of life' in terms of amenity, safety and convenience;

- Present an attractive, well-maintained appearance, with a distinct sense of place and a quality public realm that is easily maintained;

- Are easy to access and wayfind for all;

- Enhance and protect the built and natural heritage.

The Guidelines are accompanied by a non-statutory design manual in which the 'public realm' is identified as a key criterion to be used in assessing development proposals. The Guidelines highlight the importance of achieving quality in the finish of the public realm. In this context, planning authorities are encouraged to establish a programme to monitor completed developments to ensure that development plan objectives are met with particular reference to the public realm. The Public Realm Strategy is consistent with this approach and will provide direction in ensuring these works are finalised.

2030 Vision

Currently a draft, this is the National Transport Authority's strategic transport strategy for the Greater Dublin Area for the period up to 2030. It represents the top level of transport plans within a regional hierarchy and envisages the Greater Dublin Area becoming a recognised city-region for walking and cycling, with a walking and cycling environment that is attractive, safe and user-focused. The strategic planning policies set out in '2030 Vision' impact on, and are reflected in this Public Realm Strategy.

The city centre way-finding map and on-street signage, developed following the Legible Dublin study.

National Disability Strategy

The National Disability Strategy (NDS) was launched by the Government in September 2004 with the overall aim of supporting equal participation of people with disabilities in society. The parties to the agreement share a vision of an Ireland where people with disabilities have, to the greatest extent possible, the opportunity to live a full life with their families as part of the local community free from discrimination.

2.3 Moving in the public realm

The public realm operates on many levels, some of which are not obvious to its daily users. The street network carries pedestrians, cyclists, public transport lines, private traffic and service vehicles. This network and the public realm generally are performing an important function for locals and visitors alike. However, the city's street network also carries within it necessary infrastructure for the functioning of the city, such as that used for power, communications, water and drainage.

While the legal framework governing the public realm is largely the Road and Road Traffic Acts, the space itself has movement, residential, economic, social, heritage and other demands made of it. The historic nature of the street pattern obviously restricts the availability of the space needed to accommodate all these activities. This means that the management and development of the public realm involves balancing all these spatial demands while facilitating future public transport proposals. It is complex but it can be done - as O'Connell Street demonstrates. O'Connell Street Regeneration is proof that a balance of traffic management, access requirements and public realm enhancement is possible when a multi-disciplinary approach to analysis and design is undertaken. As such it should be considered an example of best practice.

The efficient movement of people and goods continues to be vital for the economic and social viability of the city. A city that isn't functioning as it should cannot attract new investment. Currently, over half a million people need to move into, around and out of the city centre every day. Since the 1990's the city's traffic network is at capacity, and

As alternatives to the car, such as trams or cycling, grow as a proportion of the city's journeys, successfully integrating their requirements into the design of streets will become increasingly important. Active management of the public realm as a movement system at the DCC Traffic Control Centre.

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cannot accommodate the future projected movement requirements without reallocating additional space to public transport, pedestrians and cyclists. That is why Dublin City Council has reduced reliance on the private car for commuting to the city centre to 34% and aims to further reduce it to 20% by 2020. Another ambitious objective of the City Council is to increase the percentage of trips by bicycle to 20-25% of all journeys by 2020.

The city centre in the future will be predominantly accessed by sustainable means which will result in a cleaner, less noisy and more pleasant environment. On foot, by bicycle or by public transport will be the main modes of access and through-traffic will be pro-actively discouraged. Movement in the public realm should be characterised by a mutual respect among all road users which results in a safer, slower and more pleasant environment for all. While economic needs require private car and service vehicle access for business and shopping trips, the predominant movement pattern in the city centre will be on foot. Which means it is vital that the public realm is easily accessible, pleasant and safe. Additional footpath space, improved crossing facilities and more green time for pedestrians, all play an important role in improving the environment for pedestrians in the city.

2.4 The public realm today

With the historical context as an important backdrop, it is easier to understand Dublin's public realm today. The focus is limited to the area within the canals and begins with the most important areas - such as the River Liffey Corridor and the Civic Spine - and moves through a hierarchy of streets and routes within the city.

Understanding the hierarchy of spaces within this structure helps to prioritise maintenance and investment and to guide design decisions. It can also show the significant areas where particular care must be taken by developers, utility companies and Dublin City Council itself when working on maintenance or development.
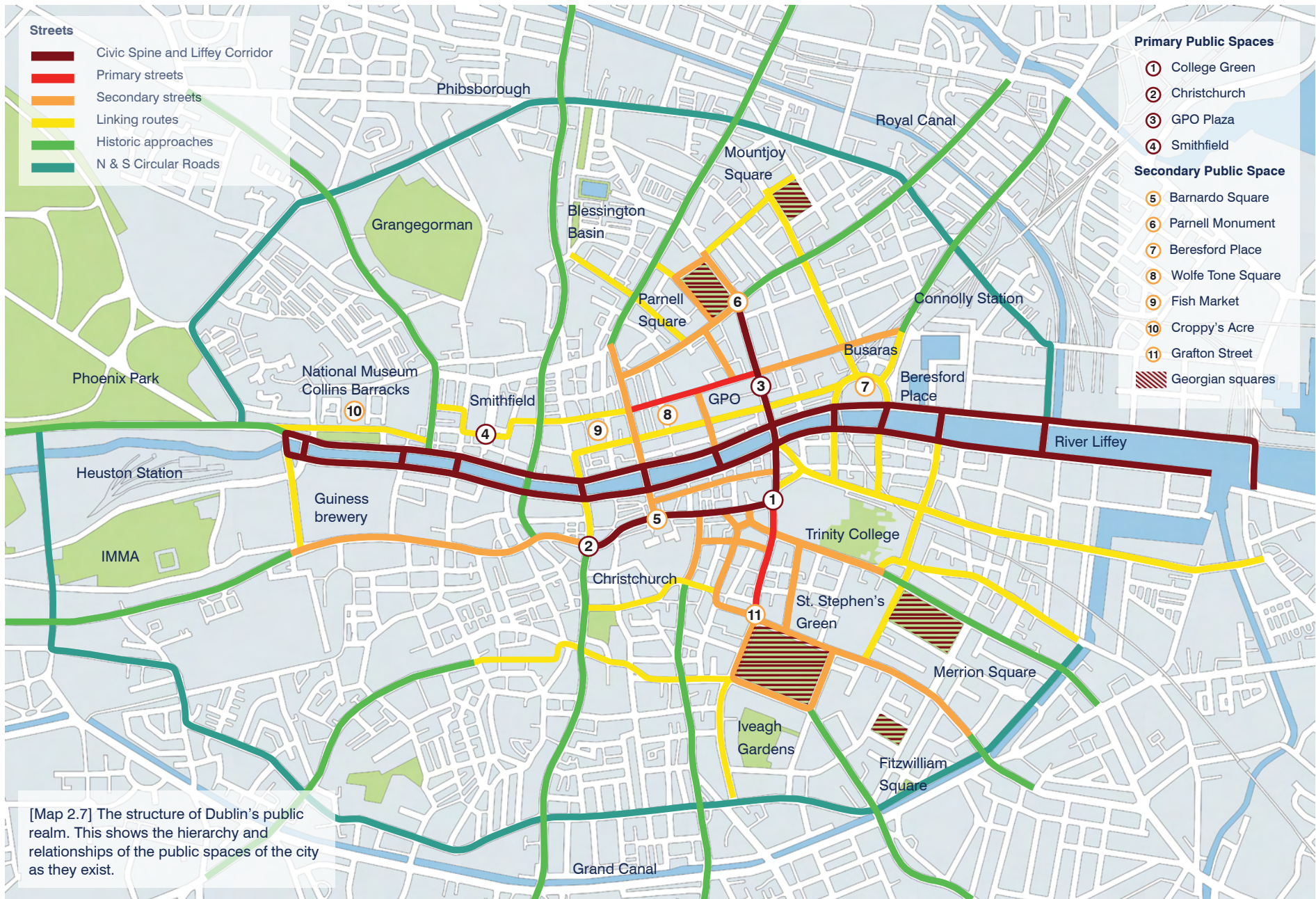

Book market, Temple Bar; street art, Francis Street; film screening, Meeting House Square.

Table 2.1: Dublin's existing network of public spaces

Public spaces	Character
The Liffey Corridor	The most important landmark public space in many people's understanding of the city's public realm is the River Liffey. It provides an orientation point and is a focal point for an understanding of the 'city centre'. It is articulated by many bridges of high quality in which it is possible to see the chronological development of the city in phases along the estuary of the river. The channelling of the river in the 17th century provided the city with significant shipping facilities and a dramatic connection to the majesty of Dublin Bay.
The Civic Spine	The name given to the route through the city centre along which the city's primary civic, economic, cultural and historic attractions are located. It runs from Parnell Square through O'Connell Street, College Green and Dame Street to Christchurch Place. This route forms the spine for the central network of city streets that make up the inner city area. It is of national and civic importance as a 'ceremonial route' for civic processions such as parades and demonstrations.
Primary Streets	The most significant destination streets in the city, these include the iconic Grafton Street and Henry Street. They are the capital's main shopping streets and have both national and local appeal.
Secondary Streets	These are the significant streets which support the primary retail streets through mixed uses and offer retail, cultural and social activities. Examples include; Capel Street, Talbot Street, South William Street, and Wicklow Street.
Link Routes	The link routes are important streets that link the city's core network of streets and spaces to other destinations within the city centre area. These include Mary Street, Thomas Street and Gardiner Street and link such destinations as Heuston Station, Collins Museum, Docklands and the Georgian Squares.
Historic approach routes and North and South Circular Roads	These historic approach routes are significant places in the city because they define the way the city was historically experienced by visitors. Today they function as significant places in themselves, often displaying a 'high street' character in parts and are the locations for many of the capital's tourist attractions. In form they are focal points for surrounding blocks and streets. In most cases their historical alignments are retained, and some have their origins in pre-Viking times.

Public spaces	Character
Historic approach routes and North and South Circular Roads	These historic approach routes are significant places in the city because they define the way the city was historically experienced by visitors. Today they function as significant places in themselves, often displaying a 'high street' character in parts and are the locations for many of the capital's tourist attractions. In form they are focal points for surrounding blocks and streets. In most cases their historical alignments are retained, and some have their origins in pre-Viking times.
Primary Public Spaces	The city's key civic spaces form a network of connection points in the oldest parts of the city. At College Green, Dublin's most recognisable, connected and iconic urban space (see Section 2.1), the flow of the civic spine from Christchurch along Dame Street opens out to create a majestic space before turning dramatically northwards along the colonnade of Parliament Buildings (Bank of Ireland) to become the capital's main thoroughfare, O'Connell Street. Despite the erosion of its quality by the need to accommodate large traffic volumes with its associated signage, controls and markings, College Green still retains a magnetic attraction and claims a major role in our most important civic occasions.

Christchurch Place is another key civic space, terminating the Civic Spine to the west and marking the heart of the medieval city but suffering under the weight of significant through-traffic. Like College Green, this space has the potential for reinvention as a primary civic space. |
| Secondary Public Spaces | A network of open spaces providing opportunities for amenity and occasional events and activities within the city centre. A number of the spaces identified have as yet unrecognised potential to be changed into formal gathering and amenity spaces. |
| The Georgian Squares | Originally private, the city's beautiful Georgian Squares provide impressive centrepieces to the North and South Georgian cores. They contribute significantly to the green space available in the city centre. However, they could be better integrated into the pedestrian network and made more easily accessible. |

Streets

- Civic Spine and Liffey Corridor
- Primary streets
- Secondary streets
- Linking routes
- Historic approaches
- N & S Circular Roads

Primary Public Spaces

1. College Green
2. Christchurch
3. GPO Plaza
4. Smithfield

Secondary Public Space

5. Barnardo Square
6. Parnell Monument
7. Beresford Place
8. Wolfe Tone Square
9. Fish Market
10. Croppy's Acre
11. Grafton Street

- Georgian squares

Phibsborough

Royal Canal

Mountjoy Square

Blessington Basin

Grangegorman

Parnell Square

Connolly Station

Busaras

Beresford Place

Phoenix Park

National Museum Collins Barracks

Smithfield

GPO

River Liffey

Heuston Station

Guiness brewery

Trinity College

IMMA

Christchurch

St. Stephen's Green

Merrion Square

Iveagh Gardens

Fitzwilliam Square

Grand Canal

[Map 2.7] The structure of Dublin's public realm. This shows the hierarchy and relationships of the public spaces of the city as they exist.

3.0 Vision, challenges and principles

3.1 Vision

Dublin aspires to be a sustainable, dynamic and resourceful city: a city that is renowned internationally for its unique character, a vibrant culture and a diverse, smart, green, innovation-based economy. Dublin City Council's vision for the public realm is for a network of diverse, interesting and enjoyable spaces which support and foster this aspiration.

People want to enjoy their surroundings. Planning and designing for the public realm has to recognise the importance of creating enjoyable spaces that are convenient, accessible and safe. The city's streets and public spaces are an essential part of what makes Dublin 'Dublin'.

Realising the potential of the city is a valuable opportunity to strengthen this sense of identity, to create a real point of difference for the city, and to foster its competitive edge.

Dublin City Council's vision is for a public realm that:

• Is easy people of all ages or abilities to use. Universal Design Principles will be used to design create and deliver spaces that are safe, easy to navigate and can easily facilitate daily life and business.

• Is welcoming and comfortable, one that supports and promotes health lifestyles and behaviours for all because quality experiences make life more enjoyable.

• Celebrates the quality of Dublin's unique spaces and historic character, and creates areas where people can get together.

• Shows the city to its best advantage which in turn makes it more attractive to business and investors.

Grand Canal Square; Play Day 2012, Merrion Square; the St. Patrick's Day parade.

VISION ▶ CHALLENGES ▶ PRINCIPLES ▶ ACTIONS ▶ DELIVERY

3.2 Challenges

A number of key issues or challenges will need to be addressed in order to achieve a significant change in the quality of Dublin's public realm.

A united voice
Consensus is required on the critical role of a high quality public realm in facilitating a rich public life in the city. This agreement is required across the various departments within Dublin City Council and from external agencies, developers and the general public.

Agreeing the strategic network of key routes and spaces will provide unity and legibility and constitute the backbone of the public realm in the city. Primary walking routes will link all the major local areas of the city together, while the major urban spaces will provide orientation and civic focus. Agreement and support from all involved in developing and using the public realm are critical for improving quality. Residents, businesses and those undertaking works in the public realm should all be part of this discussion about the quality of experience we should expect from our streets.

Public space is such a tangible dimension of the city that successful new spaces always become endorsed though use. The more public engagement there is with new design proposals – for example, through trials of pilot projects – the better the final outcome will be for everyone.

Communities and businesses also need to be informed about everyday work which is planned in the public realm and interaction between these interest groups and Dublin City Council should be promoted.

Safety first
People don't like spaces where they don't feel safe. The design and use of the public realm affects how safe and secure people feel. Particular consideration needs to be given to how spaces are experienced at night and how design can improve this experience. While design and management actions exist which can help reduce other antisocial activities such as fly tipping, graffiti and vandalism, alternative approaches which deal with the roots of some of this behaviour need to be taken.

Urban blight
Buildings and their uses frame public spaces. The quality of buildings is a critical factor affecting the public's experience of streets. Urban blight - where vacant, derelict or undeveloped sites fronting onto public spaces have a negative impact - detracts from the quality of the public realm. Many of these sites are in private ownership and collaborative approaches to resolving this issue will to be proactively pursued.

Space is for everyone
Public spaces must be welcoming and accessible to all people in society irrespective of their age, gender or ability. How public spaces meet the needs of those with access difficulties as well as their attractiveness to groups such as children or the elderly has to be considered and developed.

Dublin is a city that appeals to all the senses, be it sight, smell, touch or sound. Dublin has a unique landscape and soundscape embodied by its wealth of public spaces, parks, beaches and waterways. Enhancing the sensory experience of the city for all is a challenge with sometimes competing needs and expectations.

This photograph, taken in a high profile location linking the Garden of Remembrance to Blessington Basin and the Grangegorman campus, shows many of the street quality issues which affect parts of the city. Many issues are combined to create an overall poor experience and coordination across these issues will be important for lifting quality in the city's public realm.

Keep on moving

Over half a million people currently access the city centre daily. This includes 235,000 workers, 45,000 students and approximately 120,000 visitors for retail or leisure purposes as well as additional business-related visits. This figure is in addition to the 116,000 people living in the city centre. Projected figures for 2020, notwithstanding the current economic downturn, suggest a rise to 350,000 workers, 70,000 students and 180,000 residents. This means that substantially more people will want to access and move around the city centre, and more residents will rely on the city itself to provide much-needed open space.

Such increases put pressure on the public realm. As the amount of space available is restricted by the historic street patterns of the city, it will be necessary to reallocate road space or infill spaces to meet the public's changing requirements. It is also important from an environmental as well as a functional point of view to increase the number of people walking, cycling and taking public transport in the city.

Clearing congestion

Ease of movement of people and goods through the city is critical to Dublin's future success. Making Dublin a pleasant and accessible city for walking will aid this, but continual innovation is required to meet the requirements of the diverse street user groups. Too much traffic (and its controls, such as pedestrian barriers) impacts negatively on the street environment because of noise and the compromise in air quality.

Pedestrian congestion itself is also proving to be a growing challenge in some areas.

From the point of view of street activity, a degree of traffic contributes positively to a bustling city experience. This means that an approach that rebalances the city to reflect the needs of all users, particularly pedestrians and cyclists, would maximise sustainable movement. This includes balancing the space allocated to different users and controlling the impact vehicular traffic has on environmental quality.

It's time to declutter

There has been a proliferation of street furniture, signage and other forms of street clutter in recent years. Some of this is in response to legal requirements, some is caused by low controls on informal installations and signage. This clutter has negatively affected the accessibility of spaces and their visual quality. Removing or reducing clutter where possible would contribute positively to the public realm.

An audit of street furniture shall be carried out to identify the extent and location of redundant street furniture as a first step in decluttering the city as part of local public open space projects and other environmental projects. This will include private signage erected on Dublin City Council traffic poles and public lighting columns.

Bus traffic in College Green; teenagers taking part in the Arts Office Open Spaces programme 2011. The plaza in front of the Central Bank which has proven extremely popular as a public space for young people.

VISION ▶ **CHALLENGES** ▶ PRINCIPLES ▶ ACTIONS ▶ DELIVERY

High quality street finishes require appropriate maintenance resources. The negative impact of delayed reinstatement work. Uncoordinated or informal signage furniture adds to clutter.

Quality of work

Management and interventions within the public realm are complex. Many different organisations, or sections within a given organisation, can be involved. The key players in the managing or carrying out works in public spaces are: the local authority, transport agencies, statutory utility companies, state agencies and the private development sector. There is no overarching control mechanism other than a permit system. Unfortunately, this can impact negatively on quality where works or repairs may not conform to the existing environment, or the use of differing materials in close proximity to each other creates a disjointed experience.

Establishing an effective code of practice for doing work and reinstating afterwards would be beneficial in improving quality and efficiency. It would also reduce waste and costs.

Materials matter

An extensive variety of materials such as paving, street furniture, advertising panels and lighting are in use. These are not coordinated across the city. Consistency would improve both the visual quality and cost efficiency. However appearance and aesthetic quality are not the only factors. Within this there is a structural requirement for robust and durable materials to be provided for use by HGVs, buses, bintrucks, fire tenders and other weighty vehicles.

Maintenance is for life

The quality of design and materials is clearly important, but the level of resources committed to maintenance is essential. Resources include whole-life costs such as training staff and providing appropriate equipment. The full life-cycle costs of materials, including sustainable maintenance or replacement, also needs to be considered. These requirements need to be properly identified at design and selection stages and resourced in practice.

Use of Space

Public spaces should feel comfortable, safe and welcoming. These qualities can be determined by many factors such as the character and quality of the surface materials, however, the quality of the street furniture also plays an important part – features such as public lighting, seating, bins, planting can all encourage greater use of space and increase the public's enjoyment and appreciation of public spaces. While the detailed selection, design and location of these elements is a matter for the local public realm plan, the challenge will always be to ensure that the provision of these features does not contribute to street clutter or exacerbate problems associated with anti-social behaviour.

Quality of design

Not all of Dublin's recent public space designs have been successful. It is important to critique existing public spaces and understand what works and what does not work. The right brief is more likely to produce a successful public space. Effective, cross-disciplinary design briefs for new works from the outset can ensure that design proposals address identified needs.

Selecting the right designer is vital. Procurement methods such as design competitions can help prioritise design quality as well as generate ideas and help to raise the profile of new proposals. They can be employed by public sector agencies and the private sector and can even apply to temporary use of public space. Design reviews during design evolution are important to ensure that designs are of the standard required and are meeting the requirements of the brief and the Public Realm Strategy.

Buildings provide the 'street walls' which help streets and spaces to be understood by their users. The design of new buildings and their impact on public space needs to be considered so that they support the quality of the public realm and make a positive contribution to the life of the street.

Protecting the past

Historic paving is a fundamental part of the identity of the city centre. However, it is vulnerable to damage and incremental loss. Mapping and maintaining this to agreed standards must form part of the city's overall approach to the public realm. The challenge is to do so without compromising modern transport and accessibility standards.

Funding

Funding of public realm improvements or maintenance is an issue in the current economic environment and new methods of funding need to be found. The potential, for example, for publicly accessible areas to be privately managed needs to be encouraged. New methods of achieving optimum planning gain for public realm improvements from the planning process need to be investigated.

Culture is for everyone

Public art is interactive and an important part of an ongoing conversation about Dublin's identity and culture. Regeneration or development proposals should include the appropriate integration of art in public space and foster innovation about its role including exploration of collaborative options and temporary interventions.

A derelict vacant site in the north inner city; a derelict building in the north Georgian core; lack of resources for maintenance of street surfaces compounds the sense of neglect.

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Fly-tipping in the historic core is a growing problem which is affecting the quality of experience.

Making things happen
Dublin City Council is committed to developing an events culture in public spaces. How well-connected a space is and how its design accommodates events both greatly affect the suitability of the space and success of events. The Strategy is also supportive of Street Markets as they add vitality and animation to the public realm while improving the lifestyle of residents and reducing food miles.

Developing knowledge
Building up shared knowledge and recording data in the city about the public realm will inform its future development and bring about innovative solutions. Copenhagen is an excellent example of how a city documents its progress in developing the public realm.

Establishing a research programme to document and understand Dublin's evolving public realm – will help us learn from the past and record how changes impact on quality.

Climate change: minimising impacts and creating resilience
The provision of a high quality public realm has an environmental impact, whether through the environmental cost of the materials used or the resources used for maintenance and renewal. Future works and practices need to take these into account when decisions are made. Coordinated efforts are required to reduce such impacts.

The design of the public realm affects the city's ability to withstand or accommodate the impacts of a changing climate. Examples include: the ways in which surface-water drainage is managed, the incorporation of flood defence features in public realm works, or the use of low impact traffic or public lights.

Greening the city centre

Planting trees on city streets is important because they alleviate noise and air pollution, provide habitats for wildlife, and improve resilience to climate change. Increasing and improving the greening of the city's streets must be approached strategically and practically. For example, the provision of build-outs to allow trees on otherwise narrow footpaths is a measure which should be promoted.

Public advertising

Advertising has a major impact on the character of the public realm. A Draft Outdoor Advertising Strategy (see Appendix 2) has been developed to integrate advertising needs while protecting the public realm.

Private vs. public

Privately owned spaces which abut the public realm raise issues in relation to quality, particularly where these are used in a way inappropriate to their setting (such as parking on busy commercial streets). The recent proliferation of terraces outside bars and cafes has led to a perception that public space is under threat of privatisation. This concern should be addressed without losing the benefits that such street activity can bring.

Markets

Street markets can bring life back to public spaces and the growth of farmers' markets and artisans' markets is a positive trend that will require further support to encourage additional growth and the use and animation of public space. In order to promote this sector, solutions like temporary, weekend/ nighttime pedsetrianisation and bespoke markets will be trialled.

VISION ▸ **CHALLENGES** ▸ PRINCIPLES ▸ ACTIONS ▸ DELIVERY

Private spaces can positively contribute to public realm: well maintained residential space, the Italian Quarter and East Wall Social Inclusion Week; Street markets contribute greatly to the liveliness of streets.

3.3 Principles

A series of 'guiding principles' has been developed to address the challenges Dublin City Council has identified, and to inform the future approach to the public realm. These principles address ethos, working practices and behaviour as well as the overall approach to design in the public realm. The vision outlined in Section 3.1 can only be achieved by a fundamental change in approach.

Put people first
Dublin City Council policy in recent years has embraced an approach that arranges its activities according to people's needs rather than the other way around. In keeping with this, it is proposed that departments will commit resources to setting up a team which will take a coordinating overview of strategic, qualitative management and social inclusion issues in the city's streets and spaces. This team will also work to ensure the active participation of people at all stages of the lifecycle in decisions affecting the public realm.

Recognise the varied roles of streets
The efficient movement of people and goods is necessary for a successful and vibrant city. While the city's streets facilitate this transport role, they are also places where people choose to meet, linger and play. A Public Realm Strategy must recognise the importance of these many roles and promote a public realm where the transportation, social and cultural needs of all users are met and which is universally accessible and inclusive.

Christmas lighting on Grafton Street.

Protect and enhance Dublin's character and history
Dublin's historic inner city is made up of a network of local areas, each of which has a distinctive sense of place and character. This character is shaped by the buildings, streets, spaces and activities in each area and how they interact. It is important that the significance of this character is acknowledged and enhanced and where appropriate (as with Georgian paving, for example), recorded and protected and enhanced where possible. Also important is the need to recognise that there are some areas of the inner city with potential for a new or expanded public realm (such as Dublin Docklands, Heuston Quarter and Grangegorman).

Make the streets welcoming and safe
All of Dublin's many and diverse communities are entitled to use and enjoy the city's public spaces. Ensuring accessibility through design, participation by provision of multiple use spaces and a standard of finish which promotes safe use are all elements of good public realm.

Improve quality through high quality contemporary design
Dublin City Council is committed to a contemporary design philosophy which understands Dublin's historical context. The legacy of Dublin's public heritage must be protected, maintained, and integrated with respect into contemporary requirements. The design quality of new proposals or upgrade works is the first step in achieving a high quality public realm and should allow for the input of the general public along with all other stakeholders.

Improve quality through management and maintenance

The process under which the public realm is created, managed and maintained needs to be reworked to ensure an optimum approach across all Dublin City Council departments.

Achieve more through collaboration and pilots

The Street Charter Concept is inspired by the Freiburg Charter for Sustainable Urbanism. It can apply in scale to a city, to a neighbourhood or to a street. Essentially it draws all players into collaboration to articulate/ affirm the role and vision for an area or street, gain a consensus on issues, and work together proactively to improve the urban environment.

The charter suggests three areas of focus which should help collaboration:

- The Spatial; Covering movement, street pattern, building fabric. Public realm etc

- Content; this covers the 'programme,' i.e. the range of uses, events, culture, markets etc

- Process; dealing with the challenge of how to draw all stakeholders into a collaborative and partnership process.

Improve sustainability

Public realm works represent a significant body of construction, and reducing the environmental impact of these works is an aim of the Strategy. The public realm also has a vital role to play in developing the city's resilience to climate change; for example, through using sustainable drainage solutions to help minimise flooding and using green technology in maintenance approaches.

Continue to develop research on users' needs, historic context and best practice

Creating a pedestrian-friendly city with a world class public domain is dependent on having a complete understanding of the quality, role and historic significance of the existing and future public realm. To increase this understanding, Dublin City Council proposes to carry out new research and best practice reviews in public realm design and management and as appropriate initiate additional surveys of the inner city's public realm. The intention is to carry out this work in partnership with the public, the city's institutions and with the support and assistance of third level educational institutions.

Stay on track

This Strategy proposes an ambitious schedule of actions. Implementing these in an economically challenging environment will require innovative solutions. It is a first step in promoting a world-class public realm for Dublin and delivering its objectives with energy and enthusiasm will be a significant achievement for the city.

Father Collins Park, Clongriffin; Opera in the Open, Wood Quay; Grattan Bridge.

VISION ▶ CHALLENGES ▶ PRINCIPLES ▶ ACTIONS ▶ DELIVERY

Table 3: Dublin City public realm proposals and policies

Public spaces	Desired character and experience	Design policies
Corridor and the Civic Spine	The Liffey Corridor and the Civic Spine are the most important series of streets and spaces in the city and as such the quality of the public realm is exemplary and of the highest international standard. The public realm is coherent and consistent in design, and constructed using the highest quality materials creating a pleasant environment in which it is easy to move around. A mix of activities are accommodated which make the Civic Spine a key attraction nationally.	The Liffey Corridor will be the subject of an urban design and landscaping proposal to improve the quality of experience. Refer to Table 4.1. Comprehensive design briefs will be developed to extend the integrated landscape of O'Connell street through the rest of the Civic Spine. Building proposals to enclosures must protect historic character and achieve outstanding quality. An agreed standard of treatment and floral decoration for this important space will be implemented.
Primary Streets	These streets are the key destination streets in the city centre and are the anchor for the north and south retail areas. The quality of the public realm should be exemplary: coherent and consistent in design with the highest quality materials, construction and maintenance. They should be an enjoyable experience, easy to move around and meeting the needs of businesses and a diverse range of visitors.	Develop comprehensive design briefs in order to achieve the required standards of quality in the public realm. Building proposals to enclosures must protect historic character and achieve outstanding quality.
Secondary Streets	These streets are important commercial and cultural streets in the city, as such the quality of the public realm is exemplary and of the highest international standard. The public realm is coherent and consistent in design, and constructed using the highest quality materials leading to a pleasant environment, easy to move around with a mix of activities which make the secondary streets a key attraction nationally and regionally.	Develop comprehensive design briefs in order to achieve the required standards of quality in the public realm. Building proposals to enclosures must protect historic character and achieve high quality. Initiate comprehensive study to investigate possibilities of rebalancing vehicular and pedestrian movement in these areas.
Link routes	These streets are important linking routes in the city and often contain commercial and cultural attractions, as such there is a high quality public realm that is coherent and consistent in design and constructed using high quality materials leading to a pleasant environment, which it is easy to move around in with a mix of activities which make these streets important and interesting linking routes.	Improve the quality of experience by rebalancing pedestrian, cycle and vehicular movement and improve the environment through greening and de-cluttering.
Historic Approach Routes and North and South Circular Roads	These major routes are high quality routes for moving around and navigating the inner suburbs.	Building proposals to enclosures must protect historic character and achieve high quality, emphasising the importance of these streets in the neighbourhoods they pass through.
Future / enhanced connections	These are proposed improvements to street connections within districts and to destinations.	Where connections exist already the pedestrian environment will be brought up to the standard of other Linking Routes. For future routes Dublin City Council will work with stakeholders to form good quality street connections.
Primary Public Spaces	These spaces are reinvented to become world renowned civic spaces of the highest quality. These principal spaces epitomise the progress of the city in terms of our attitude towards urban living and our achievements in developing creative solutions for the complex urban challenges of movement, conservation and sustainable use.	Comprehensive design briefs developed to incorporate space successfully within the civic spine plan. Consideration of future proposals for College Green must include a range of more appropriate uses for the Bank of Ireland complex.
Secondary Public Spaces	These spaces are improved and/or reinvented to become civic spaces of the highest quality. They are flexible, multifunctional and capable of hosting an array of events of different scales becoming significant destinations within the city.	Comprehensive design briefs developed to achieve successful civic spaces. Planning applications for buildings enclosing the spaces must protect historic character and achieve outstanding quality.
The Georgian Squares	The squares are improved and provide an enhanced offer in terms of appropriate recreation, leisure and late night use.	Planning applications for buildings enclosing the spaces must protect historic character and achieve outstanding quality.

Streets
- **Civic Spine and Liffey Corridor**
- **Primary streets**
- **Secondary streets**
- **Linking routes**
- **Historic approaches**
- **N & S Circular Roads**
- **Future / enhanced connections**

Primary Public Spaces
1. College Green
2. Christchurch
3. GPO Plaza
4. Smithfield

Secondary Public Space
5. Barnardo Square
6. Parnell Monument
7. Beresford Place
8. Wolfe Tone Square
9. Fish Market
10. Croppy's Acre
11. Grafton Street

Georgian squares

[Map 3] The Dublin City public realm proposals and polices, identifying the proposed hierarchy of existing streets and spaces and proposals for new spaces.

Phibsborough · Royal Canal · Mountjoy Square · Blessington Basin · Grangegorman · Parnell Square · Connolly Station · Busaras · Phoenix Park · National Museum Collins Barracks · Smithfield · GPO · Beresford Place · River Liffey · Heuston Station · Guiness brewery · Trinity College · IMMA · Christchurch · St. Stephen's Green · Merrion Square · Iveagh Gardens · Fitzwilliam Square · Grand Canal

4.0 Delivery: making it happen

4.1 Actions

The Public Realm Strategy's success will be easily measured because its impact will be visible in the city around us. Following on from the guiding principles described in Section 3.3, the following are the strategic actions which Dublin City Council will undertake to improve the quality of public realm in the city. These actions are long term and/or on-going. They work across a range of activity areas from management, process and planning to design and maintenance.

It is intended that the actions set out below will be implemented through collaboration, consultation, pilot and project work. A report on progress will be submitted annually to the City Council.

Action 1
Establish a cross-departmental group to coordinate Dublin City Council's public realm projects and to liaise with external agencies delivering public realm works.

Action 2
Collaborate with project delivery teams to ensure that comprehensive design briefs are prepared and cross-disciplinary design reviews are carried out for all Dublin City Council's public realm projects.

Action 3
Work with project teams to integrate Universal Design Principles into designs for new public realm works (see Appendix A1).

Action 4
Create a Design Manual of design guidance and co-ordinated specifications (including no noise characteristics) for materials, furniture and other public realm fixtures. This will be used for co-ordination across departments and to inform developers, utilities and others involved in public realm works.

Action 5
Review protocols with utilities providers and any other parties permitted to carry out works in the public realm to ensure that works are co-ordinated, carried out in an environmentaly acceptable manner, that damage to existing finishes is minimised, and that works are reinstated to an acceptable standard.

Action 6
Develop Service Level Standards for public spaces, to protect and improve qualitative and quantitative standards for air quality, noise control and pedestrian volume and safety. Take proactive action on behalf of the Council to ensure that these standards are achieved. To engage with third parties to achieve these standards and to use legal means to do so if necessary. Special consideration to be given to those noise hot spots and quite areas identified in the Dublin Noise Action Plan.

Traffic Light Box, DCC Beta project; East Wall Social Inclusion Week; St. Patrick's Day parade.

VISION ▶ CHALLENGES ▶ PRINCIPLES ▶ **ACTIONS** ▶ DELIVERY

Action 7
Develop a Strategy for Parks and Open Spaces to set standards for design, use, maintenance and service provision in public parks and open spaces in the city. It will utilise pilots and innovative management approaches to improve the range and quality of recreational amenities in the city.

Action 8
Improve controls and coordination of information about underground services for works departments and utilities providers.

Action 9
Advise or facilitate the training of staff and contractors in work and best practice in the public realm. This will include producing a manual for working with, and protecting historic street surfaces.

Action 10
Provide an accessible and useful point of contact for the public on the design and management of the public realm and actively build awareness and ownership of public realm quality issues.

Action 11
Consult with interest groups on a project basis through the use of new technologies and approaches to develop policies that make public spaces more inclusive and accessible for all ages and capabilities, with a particular emphasis on children, youth and the elderly.

Action 12
Engage with building owners to improve the impact of their buildings on public realm quality. When developing projects, engage with owners of privately owned public open spaces (POPOS) to promote quality, accessibility and integration with the city's public realm and to discourage inappropriate uses, such as private parking or vacant lots while encouraging recreational activities and informal play.

Action 13
Survey the quality of the Dublin's public realm on an ongoing basis to inform a programme of improvement works.

Action 14
Work with third level institutions and other bodies to develop or collate research on different aspects of the public realm for example historic surfaces, shared surfaces and street furniture including a central repository for such studies.
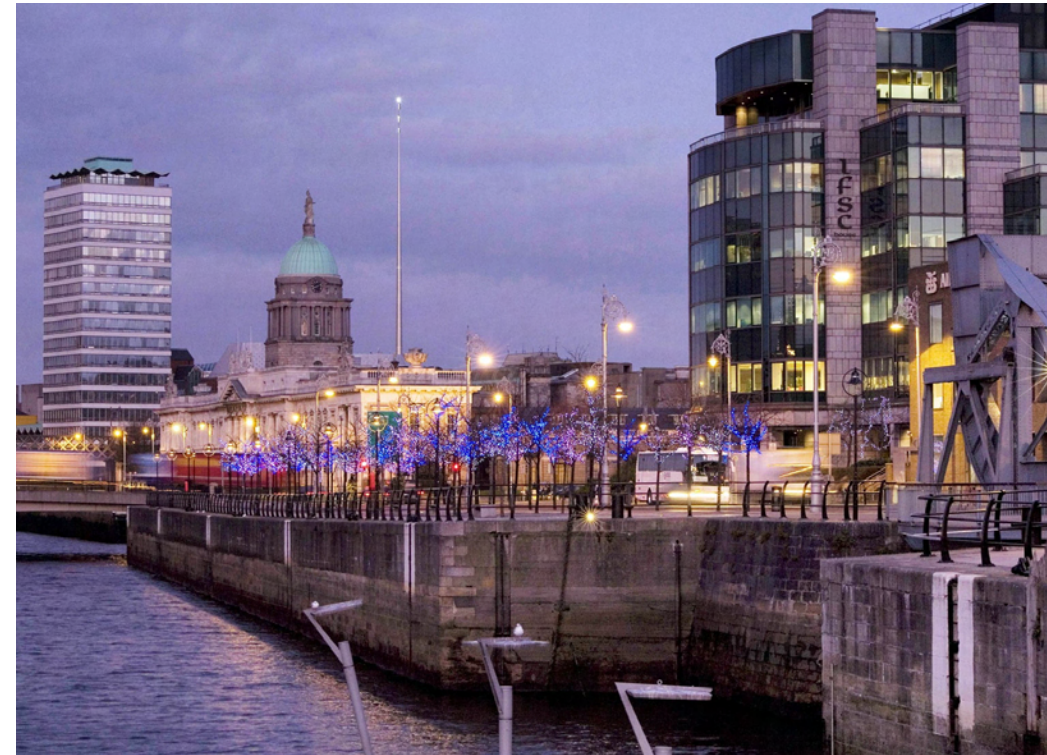
Action 15
Implement a two-year work plan to include pilot projects in order to build knowledge and act as exemplars and catalysts for the improvement of quality. This will include utilising temporary solutions (such as public art, cultural programmes, temporary public spaces) and addressing diverse issues such as historic surfaces and shared surfaces to enrich the public realm.

New public space in the Herberton (formerly Fatima Mansions) regeneration; temporary art installation at Parnell Square; the Royal Canal.

4.2 Public realm projects
2012 - 2013

This sets out the work programme over the next two years to progress the projects identified in table 4.1. A series of projects will be initiated to address the challenges Dublin City Council has identified. These projects present an opportunity to apply the guiding principles for the public realm and the fundamental change in approach and work practices that the Public Realm Strategy requires. The experience and learning from these projects will inform future reviews of the strategy.

Table 4.1 lists the projects which the Public Realm Group will coordinate under this strategy for the period 2012—2013. Each project has a promoter identified with responsibility for project management, in conjunction with the Public Realm Coordination Group.

Projects which relate to specific geographical areas within the city are identified on map 4.1.

Custom House Quay.

VISION ▶ CHALLENGES ▶ PRINCIPLES ▶ ACTIONS ▶ DELIVERY

Table 4.1: Public Realm Strategy Projects 2012-2013

	Project (Lead Department)	Description	Actions
1	**Grafton Street Quarter Public Realm Plan** (South East Area)	This is the regeneration project proposed for the Grafton Street Quarter. The status of the area requires a high standard of design and integration with the historic fabric of the city. The design work when complete will guide the section of the Design Manual relevant to the Civic Spine and character areas of the city (part of Action 3).	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11
2	**Trinity to IMMA East-West Route** (South Central Area, Traffic)	This project ties together a number of projects at various stages so as to maximise value to the city and improve this key route. Projects already underway include Castle Street public realm works, Thomas Street QBC, Fáilte Ireland public realm funding. There are potential partnerships with the Digital Hub and NCAD.	2, 3, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12
3	**Liffey Corridor Project** (Planning)	A research project to apply innovative urban design and landscape design to the Liffey Quays. It is intended that the outputs of this project will inform a proposed Local Area Plan.	3, 4, 6, 10, 11, 12
4	**Mountjoy Square Park and Environs Regeneration** (Parks and Central Area Office)	Development of a plan to guide the long-term regeneration of Mountjoy Square Park that is sensitive to its Georgian background.	2, 3, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11
5	**North East Inner City Quadrant** (Central Area Office)	This project pilots design and management approaches to improve quality of everyday life and to identify design opportunities that may reduce crime and anti-social behaviour in an inner urban residential area. The area of Parnell Street between O'Connell Street and Gardiner Street should be the focus of a sustained examination and assessment - in conjunction with local businesses - with a view to producing a set of proposals to enhance and improve the public realm at this location.	2, 4, 5, 7, 11, 12, 13, 14
6	**Grangegorman – Connections with the City** (Engineering)	A project to define the strategic connections necessary to integrate the Grangegorman redevelopment into the surrounding districts and the city centre. It includes key public realm connections at Broadstone, Smithfield and Prussia Street as well as within the site.	2, 3, 4, 5, 9, 14
7	**Aungier Street Historic Street Regeneration Pilot** (City Architects and the South East Area Office)	A pilot multi-disciplinary project to develop a conservation led approach to the regeneration of Aungier Street, a C17th historic core street, thus improving the quality of experience for residents, visitors and businesses.	2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12
8	**Public realm information management project** (Roads, IS Section, Planning)	A Project to review and develop work processes and information systems to provide efficiency and effectiveness in utility opening and reinstatement works in the public realm. Develop a web consultation tool to better engage with the public.	5, 8, 9, 10, 13
9	**Dereliction Project** (Planning, City Architects)	This pilot project will focus on the route of the Luas red line, from O'Connell St to Collins Barracks which has high levels of dereliction, vacancy, buildings in need of maintenance and development sites. The Project will work in collaboration with stakeholders, owners, Area Management and all Departments of Dublin City Council setting standards of maintenance, lighting, cleanliness and appearance with a view to improving the overall public realm.	4, 6, 7, 8, 11, 12
10	**Design Manual for working with Historic Public Realm** (Roads, Heritage Office)	The first step is the production of the Design Manual (Action 4), which will specify materials and workmanship when carrying out works-in areas with historic street surfaces. This will build on the research in the 2009 Historic Street Surfaces study and develop it into a working manual.	2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 14
11	**Merrion Square Tearooms** (Parks Dept)	Provision of Café/Tearooms, interpretive space and public toilets within the Park.	2, 3, 4, 7, 10, 11
12	**Street Charter Pilot Initiative** (Planning Dept and South Central Area Office)	This pilot initiative will apply to Thomas Street Dublin 8. The key objective will be to collaborate with all interest groups in defining the role, vision for an area or street, gain a consensus on issues, and work proactively together to improve all aspects of the urban environment.	2, 3, 10, 11, 12

[Map 4.1] Locations of Public Realm projects 2012-2013

Appendices

Appendix A1 The seven principles of universal design

The 7 Principles of Universal Design were developed in 1997 by a working group of architects, product designers, engineers and environmental design researchers, led by the late Ronald Mace in the North Carolina State University.The purpose of the Principles is to guide the design of environments, products and communications. According to the Center for Universal Design in NCSU, the Principles "may be applied to evaluate existing designs, guide the design process and educate both designers and consumers about the characteristics of more usable products and environments."

Principle 1: Equitable Use
The design is useful and marketable to people with diverse abilities.

Guidelines:
a. Provide the same means of use for all users: identical whenever possible; equivalent when not.
b. Avoid segregating or stigmatizing any users.
c. Provisions for privacy, security, and safety should be equally available to all users.
d. Make the design appealing to all users.

Principle 2: Flexibility in Use
The design accommodates a wide range of individual preferences and abilities.

Guidelines:
a. Provide choice in methods of use.
b. Accommodate right- or left-handed access and use.
c. Facilitate the user's accuracy and precision.
d. Provide adaptability to the user's pace.

Principle 3: Simple and Intuitive Use
Use of the design is easy to understand, regardless of the user's experience, knowledge, language skills, or current concentration level.

Guidelines:
a. Eliminate unnecessary complexity.
b. Be consistent with user expectations and intuition. Accommodate a wide range of literacy and language skills.
c. Arrange information consistent with its importance.
d. Provide effective prompting and feedback during and after task completion.

Principle 4: Perceptible Information
The design communicates necessary information effectively to the user, regardless of ambient conditions or the user's sensory abilities.

Guidelines:
a. Use different modes (pictorial, verbal, tactile) for redundant presentation of essential information.
b. Provide adequate contrast between essential information and its surroundings.
c. Maximize "legibility" of essential information.
d. Differentiate elements in ways that can be described (i.e., make it easy to give instructions or directions).
e. Provide compatibility with a variety of techniques or devices used by people with sensory limitations.

Principle 5: Tolerance for Error
The design minimizes hazards and the adverse consequences of accidental or unintended actions.

Guidelines:
a. Arrange elements to minimize hazards and errors: most used elements, most accessible; hazardous elements eliminated, isolated, or shielded.
b. Provide warnings of hazards and errors.
c. Provide fail safe features.
d. Discourage unconscious action in tasks that require vigilance.

Principle 6: Low Physical Effort
The design can be used efficiently and comfortably and with a minimum of fatigue.

Guidelines:
a. Allow user to maintain a neutral body position.
b. Use reasonable operating forces.
c. Minimize repetitive actions.
d. Minimize sustained physical effort.

Principle 7: Size and Space for Approach and Use
Appropriate size and space is provided for approach, reach, manipulation, and use regardless of user's body size, posture, or mobility.

Guidelines:
a. Provide a clear line of sight to important elements for any seated or standing user.
b. Make reach to all components comfortable for any seated or standing user.
c. Accommodate variations in hand and grip size.
d. Provide adequate space for the use of assistive devices or personal assistance.

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Appendix A2. Related policy documents and further reading

All relevant legislation and Government guidelines have been considered and incorporated into the fabric of this Dublin City Public Realm Strategy. The following documents have also been considered;

Related policy documents;

Dublin City Development Plan, 2011-2017
Dublin City Council, 2010

Dublin City Centre Action Plan
Dublin City Council, 2011

Legible Dublin
City ID on behalf of Dublin City Council, 2005

City Centre Transportation Plan
Dublin City Council, 2007

Greater Dublin Area, Draft Transport Strategy, 2011-2030,
National Transport Authority, 2011

Irish Manual for Streets, Department of Transport 2012

National Disability Strategy Towards 2016
Government Publication 2009

Principles of Universal Design,
Centre of Excellence in Universal Design, 2012

Outdoor Advertising Strategy 2011
Before Council as a separate report.

Historic Street Surfaces in Dublin,2009
Lotts Architecture & Urbanism for Dublin City Council

Liberties Regeneration Plan 2008
Published by Dublin City Council

Phibsborough Mountjoy Local Area Plan 2009
Published by Dublin City Council

Georges Quay Local Area Plan 2011
Published by Dublin City Council

Parnell Square Framework Plan 2005
Sean Harrington Architects for Dublin City Council,

Dublin Docklands Development Plan 2008

Docklands Campshire Vision
Dublin Docklands Development Authority, 2007

Urban Design Manual, A Best Practice Guide 2008
Dept of Environment, Heritage Local Government

Department for Transport: Cycle Infrastructure Design,
Department for Transport, 2008

National Cycle Policy Framework, 2009-2020,
Department of Transport, 2009

Appendix A2. Related policy documents and further reading

Further reading;
Camden & Wexford Street D2,
Máiréad Ní Chonghaile, Dublin Civic Trust

Capel Street D1
Olwyn James, Dublin Civic Trust

Defining Dublin's Historic Core
Dublin Civic Trust, 2010

Dawson, Molesworth & Kildare Streets
Robin Usher, Dublin Civic Trust

Meath & Francis Street
Graham Hickey, Dublin Civic Trust

Pearse Street D2
Katriona Byrne, Dublin Civic Trust

South William Street D2
Julie Craig, Dublin Civic Trust

Thomas Street D8
Emmeline Henderson, Dublin Civic Trust

Parnell Street East Regeneration Study
Dublin Civic Trust, 2011

Mountjoy Square Research Project
UCD School of Architecture on behalf of Dublin City
Council, 2011

Paved with gold: The real value of street design
CABE (UK), 2007

Safer Places: The Planning System and Crime
Prevention UK Home Office, 2005

Recovering Quality Urban Spaces in Bath;
Bath County Council 1996

Lyons, Public Realm Strategy,
Agence d'Urbanisme de Lyon, 1991

Oxford Public Realm Strategy 2000

Wexford Town Public Realm Plan 2009

Limerick City Public Realm Design Guide 2008

Life between Buildings: Using Public Spaces,
Island Press, Jan Gehl, 2011

Dublin City Play Plan;
Dublin City Council 2012

UN convention on the Rights of Children

Lord Mayor's Commission on Antisocial Behaviour,
Dublin City Council, Lord Mayor Andrew Montegue,
2012

Best Practice Access Guidelines, Designing
Accessible Environments,
Irish Wheelchair Association, 2nd Ed., 2010

Architectural Heritage Protection -Guidelines for
Planning Authorities,
Stationary Office Dublin, 2011

Access Improving the Accessibility of Historic
Buildings and Places,
National Disability Authority, Dublin 2011

Appendix A3 – Background and research.

Dublin City Council commenced work on a public realm strategy for the city in 2009 with the establishment of a multi-discipline, cross departmental, working group. This group undertook the research phase, looking at international best practice and public realm strategies/ solutions in equivalent international cities. Consultations were held with a number of stakeholders and services providers in the city. A further round of consultations and research was undertaken with individuals and departments within Dublin City Council having long experience of dealing with public realm issues.

Four sub-groups were established to research and report on;

1. Qualities of Good Public Space,
2. Criteria and Design Brief, Maintenance in the Public Realm,
3. Vision, Role and Strategic Framework for Public Space and
4. Critique of Public Space.

The draft document "Your City, Your Space" was then developed with input from, Senior Management, 3 Strategic Policy Committees and a number of stakeholder and specialist groups. In August 2011 a Project Manager was appointed and an 8 week public consultation commenced in November 2011. This process included On-Street interviews with members of the public and an open consultation through area offices, libraries, web and social media. An evaluation report of submissions received was presented to the Transport and Traffic SPC, Economic Development, Planning and International Affairs SPC, Environment and Engineering SPC and the Arts, Culture, Leisure and Youth Affairs for consideration in June/July 2012. Observations of the Strategic Policy Committees and agreed amendments have been made to the final strategy attached.

Your City, Your Space; Dublin City Public Realm Strategy will result in improved methods of carrying out our normal daily work in the city, with the ultimate aim of achieving better quality through integrated processes and agreed standards, whilst working within our limited resources.

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20   Speed's Map of Dublin; National Library of Ireland

21   Painting of Sackville Street
Ruins, O'Connell Street, 1916
O'Connell Street 1920s
O'Connell Street 1960s
O'Connell Street regeneration

25   College Green c.1900; National Library of Ireland

Speech by Michael Collins in support of the Irish Free State, College Green, 1922;
Barack and Michelle Obama in College Green; WhiteHouse.gov (public domain)

27   Map of orbital routes, City ID
Map of key walking routes, City ID

30   Aerial view of Dublin; Peter Barrow
Father Collins Park, Anthony Woods
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