

Sandymount Village Design Statement

1 AIMS

The aims of Sandymount Village Design Statement are to:

- Record what is distinctive and important to the residents of Sandymount to ensure these features are protected and / or enhanced through the local planning system and other relevant socio-economic programmes;
- Devise design principles to guide future development within Sandymount and adjacent areas which would impact on village character;
- Provide advice and up front guidance on local design issues to decision makers and developers;
- Suggest how specific projects that will benefit Village residents and their environment may be initiated;
- Act as a focus for the community to participate and collaborate effectively in the local planning process as well as in regard to other aspects of life in the Village.



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BRIEF HISTORY

The land between the River Dodder and the sea was originally owned by Richard de St Olof in the 13th century. By the 15th century it had passed through the Bagods of Baggotrath into the ownership of the Fitzwilliams of Merrion.

In the 18th century Lord Merrion established a brick works along the shore which provided material for many of the fine buildings in Dublin's Georgian squares. By 1760 the original settlement of Sandymount was shown as Brickfield Town on Rocque's map.

In 1791 Lord Merrion commenced construction of the sea wall to protect his brick works. The Martello tower was built on the strand in 1806 as part of a defence system to protect against a Napoleonic invasion.

The sea wall and embankment, with the roadway on top, encouraged people to build seaside villas overlooking the bay. The Fitzwilliam Estate controlled the residential development of area, now renamed as Sandymount, by granting long leases requiring a high standard of construction.



LANDMARKS

The unique and distinguishing features of Sandymount are the beautiful Village Green and the magnificent strand with its sea wall, promenade and Martello Tower.



The Poolbeg Chimneys also provide a recognisable landmark on northern approaches to the Village and there are other landmarks that define various other geographical parts of the Village, such as the Aviva Stadium and various churches, schools and historic buildings which often occupy prominent locations.



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COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

Public Meetings | Steering Committee
Public & Schools Workshops
Draft and Review | Launch



Key Issues

- Village Context & Landscape Setting including: Landscape, Scenic Views & Important Features
- Heritage and History including: Village Shape, Scale, Layout, Evolution, Street Pattern & Spaces
- Streetscapes and Buildings including: Street Furniture, Paving, Materials & Finishes
- Community Aspects of the Village including: Amenities and Missing Amenities

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BUILDING STYLES AND MATERIALS

Red brick is intrinsic to Sandymount's heritage. There is a mixture of brick type, ranging from the softer, hand-made bricks of the early 19th century to the more uniform, machined brick of the 20th century. Rendered stone or brick houses and terraces, dating from the early 19th century, and painted in pastel colours, are a feature, particularly along Strand Road.



Granite is used for windowsills, kerbstones, wall copings and low plinth walls. Rubble stone boundary walls are also characteristic throughout the Village, lending an air of old-fashioned charm.

The predominance of two-storey buildings has generally been retained, even in the Village centre, with very few exceptions. Original, natural slate roofs and decorative, terracotta ridge combs are evident on many properties, some of which use fishscale tiles, which further add to the distinctive streetscape character.



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DEVELOPMENT OVER THE CENTURIES

These maps illustrate the gradual development of Sandymount from the 19th century to the present day. In the early 1800s there were very few houses. These were mostly located on and around Sandymount Green with only a few along the coast. By 1900 the main roads and avenues were well established with many houses built along them, while the entire length of Strand Road was occupied with seaside villas. A hundred years later, by the early 21st century, nearly every available space had been developed with many modern estates filling in the land between the main roads.



SHARED VISION FOR THE FUTURE OF SANDYMOUNT

- To protect and enhance Sandymount's unique 'sense of place' that is provided by its streetscape, rich architectural heritage and relationship with the surrounding landscape.
- To improve the appearance, quality and function of the public realm.
- To ensure that future development respects Sandymount's unique character and promotes a balanced and harmonious relationship between the existing and the new by adopting an Architectural Conservation Area.
- To enhance Sandymount's green infrastructure for public enjoyment and biodiversity potential.
- To enhance existing community amenities, facilities and events in order to provide a rich and diverse range of social and recreational opportunities for the residents of Sandymount and visitors to the Village.
- To raise awareness of the VDS in all relevant City Council Departments, and amongst architects, planners, designers, statutory bodies and other groups and organisations to ensure it is used to guide future change.



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7 Design Principles

THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE

Objective: To retain the structure and unique character at the heart of the Village.

The Green, and its interrelationship with the surrounding buildings, is one of the primary elements of Sandymount's unique sense of place. The protection and enhancement of this is a primary objective for the Sandymount community.

THE STRAND & PROMENADE

Objective: To retain the Strand and sea wall as a primary visual and recreational amenity for residents and visitors in recognition of its contribution to Sandymount's cultural and natural heritage.

The wide expanse of sand that is exposed at low tide is not just a huge asset to Sandymount but is also the reason why the Village has developed in the manner in which it has done.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE & DEVELOPMENT

Objective: To fully recognise the contribution of the wide variety of building style to Sandymount's unique sense of place and to ensure that new / replacement development complements this existing character.

Sandymount contains an interesting and eclectic range of building styles. It is this variety, as well as the high quality of design and maintenance of many individual buildings, that contributes to the Village's unique character.

THE PUBLIC REALM

Objectives: To retain and enhance the quality of the streetscape as a common resource. To reduce the amount and visual impact of unattractive elements such as bins, bollards, certain signage, overhead wires etc. To investigate ways in which vehicular traffic can be reduced in volume and prominence to favour pedestrian movement.

The majority of movement in, out, through and within Sandymount takes place on public roads and footpaths from which people can view and appreciate the character of the Village. Whilst architectural character is of primary importance, the appearance and function of the roads and pavements also has a strong influence on people's perception and use of the Village.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives: To retain and enhance opportunities for biodiversity and habitat creation within the Village. To respect the ornamental planting which is of importance to Village character. To monitor the effect of development on wildlife/ habitats.

Sandymount is fortunate in having the beach as a natural resource. The Strand is one of Ireland's prime Special Protection Areas (SPAs) for winter wading birds. This is enhanced by the wildlife corridor associated with the River Dodder, the proximity of the Irishtown Nature Walk, several green open spaces and the fact that a large proportion of the village is cultivated as private gardens.

Sandymount Village Design Statement

Agreed VDS Action Plan – 12 Future VDS Projects

THE HEART OF THE VILLAGE



- Project 3: Annual Literary Events**
- Establish an annual programme of events highlighting the important connection between Sandymount and its notable residents, including Heaney, Yeats, and Joyce.
 - Create a literary trail through the Village and along the Strand;
 - Consider creating a guide book, audio / interactive experience, a play, etc.

Project 1: Village Green Enhancement

- Remove the ESB sub-station or failing this enhance the physical appearance of the ESB sub-station and its relationship with the Green;
- Replace concrete kerbs and asphalt surfaces with materials appropriate to the heritage value of the Green and Village centre, including granite kerbs;
- Carry out any necessary tree works;
- Repair/ replace existing street furniture as required;
- Provide safe pedestrian access to the Green on all three sides.

Project 4: Community Information Centre

- Provide a Community Information Centre located in an area of Sandymount that has a high footfall rate (e.g. the Green or along the Strand);
- Establish an effective way to provide up-to-date information on Village news.



- Project 2: Annual Cultural Heritage & Community Events**
- Establish an annual programme of events based in the Village;
 - Incorporate the existing Summer Children's Day;
 - Re-establish concerts in the Green, with bands, school choirs, Irish dancing etc.
 - Revive Sandymount Community Week which used to be a vibrant and successful festival.
 - Take advantage of existing local amenities and proximity to the city centre and Aviva stadium.

THE STRAND & PROMENADE



Project 5: Flood Risk, and Preservation of the Sea Wall and Martello Tower

- Establish a working group to consider flood issues in the context of the existing sea wall, promenade and Martello tower;
- Potential issues are likely to include:
 - Preservation of coastal amenity, e.g. views, beach access, footpaths, etc.;
 - Loss of views currently enjoyed from seaside villas;
 - Preservation of pedestrian amenity alongside cyclists and vehicular traffic;
 - Impact of defences being constructed on the River Dodder;
- Proposals currently under consideration to raise bridge parapets on Newbridge Ave and Londonbridge Rd to further improve flood defences;
- Preservation of Maritime Heritage.



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THE PUBLIC REALM



Project 8: Traffic Calming & Pedestrian Safety Measures

- Develop a set of principles as a framework to guide traffic improvements;
- Aim to enhance linkages/ permeability and achieve improved access for all;
- Consider pedestrian and cyclist safety;
- Consider motorists who wish to use the facilities and open spaces in the centre;
- Consider the needs of traders to ensure that a flourishing, prosperous Village core is maintained;
- Ensure that any traffic calming measures are sensitive to the historic context of Sandymount and do not detract from or cause the loss of existing historic and vernacular character elements.

Project 9: Streetscape Enhancements

- Survey the variety and suitability of existing street furniture;
- Define preferred style(s) with the objective of harmonising (as opposed to standardising) various items, e.g. lampposts, benches, planters, road nameplates, litterbins, etc.;
- Replace unsuitable furniture in conjunction with other physical enhancement projects;
- Identify where clutter is visually unacceptable and devise methods of reduction in association with the Council, utility companies and local businesses;
- Create a recognisable identity for each distinct part of the Village;
- Coordinate street signage to give improved guidance to visitors, being mindful of overall need to reduce physical 'clutter'.

Project 10: Village Branding

- Develop a strong brand for Sandymount that reflects the 'Shared Vision' that has established by community and stakeholder input into this VDS been (see Chapter 6);
- Devise a brand strategy that differentiates Sandymount from the rest of Dublin by its unique sense of place, friendly personality and community spirit, its village green, and homely atmosphere.



ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE & DEVELOPMENT



Project 6: Architectural Conservation Area Designation

- Implement the commitment in the City Development Plan 2011-2017, Objective FCO34, to undertake an assessment to inform a potential ACA designation;
- Investigate the necessary steps needed to facilitate an ACA designation of the Village centre.

Project 7: Historic Landscape Character Assessment

- Collect, map and analyse historical detail of Sandymount's settlement, pattern and form, its boundaries and its buildings;
- Document both natural feature and man-made changes over the last three centuries;
- Focus on the Village's development from the early 1600s to present day;
- Collate all information using a computerised system or database;
- Make this information available to the public through a dedicated website, via seminars and by presentations to local groups;
- Use the HLCA results as a primary reference source for further research and character appraisal.

GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE



Project 11: Sandymount Greenway & Ecology Trail

- Establish a continuous, attractive, and publicly accessible network of green spaces throughout the Village;
- Strengthen wildlife corridors, including public and private green spaces, river and rail corridors, and mature trees;
- Prepare a program to maintain, extend and enhance existing footpaths;
- Provide signage, maps and leaflets to help people of all ages use the Greenway, and understand its ecological value;
- Encourage sustainable construction methods;
- Create new spaces and habitats where possible and necessary;
- Designate a suitable buffer zone along the perimeter of habitats protected under European Directives.

Project 12: Creation of New Public Spaces

- Identify potential locations, and develop initial plans, for new public open spaces;
- Explore the potential of developing the following open spaces within Sandymount: children's playground; cycling and roller-blading paths; skateboarding area; public football pitches; a bowling green.