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**Contents**
Phibsborough is one of Dublin’s oldest and best known neighbourhoods. It is an important local centre and a focal point for the established residential communities in the area. It is also home to institutions of national significance, such as Mountjoy Prison, the Mater Hospital, and Dalymount Park.

In October 2006, Dublin City Council commissioned a multi-disciplinary team led by Paul Keogh Architects and John Spain Associates to prepare an urban framework plan for the Phibsborough /Mountjoy area. Following detailed discussions with local community groups and key stakeholders it was decided, in early 2007, to extend the scope of the urban framework plan into a statutory local area plan.

The City Council’s brief for the framework - and subsequently the LAP - is focussed on a clear overarching objective: - to plan and direct the future development of this area as a quality urban neighbourhood with an identified focus for established and emerging communities, and incorporating sustainable densities underpinned by quality public transport, facilities and services.

Within the Phibsborough/ Mountjoy area there are a number of significant sites which are likely to come forward for redevelopment in the near future. The Government has decided to close Mountjoy Prison, and it is proposed to locate the National Paediatric Hospital on the site of the Mater Hospital. In addition, Bohemians Football Club has plans to relocate from Dalymount Park, and both the former Shandon bakery site at Cross Guns Bridge and the Smurfit printworks on Botanic Road are redundant.

The development of these sites - and the arrival of Metro North and Luas Line D as part of Transport 21 - presents Phibsborough with a unique opportunity to achieve significant social, economic and physical improvement in the years ahead.

The separate redevelopment of the contiguous Grangegorman campus will impact on Phibsborough/ Mountjoy and the integration of the two plans is critical. The LAP sets out strategies to achieve the success of both.

When adopted, the local area plan will remain in force for a period of six years; it will form the basis on which planning decisions for future development proposals within the area are made - both by Dublin City Council and An Bord Pleanála - during the life of the plan.

The LAP is a special opportunity to unlock the potential of Phibsborough/ Mountjoy as a quality urban neighbourhood; to facilitate positive social, economic and environmental change; to support the provision of quality services, amenities and infrastructure; and to provide a focus for established and emerging communities in the area.

This document sets out the plan in draft for public consultation with all relevant parties; elected members, stakeholders, institutions, prescribed bodies, interested parties and - most importantly - residents of the area. Observations submitted in relation to this draft must be taken on board by the planning authority before the plan can be adopted by the City Council.

The EU Directive on Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) requires all European Union member states to systematically evaluate the likely significant effects of implementing a plan or programme prior to its adoption. Having regard to a combination of factors such as its designation as a Prime Urban Centre it was decided that the preparation of an SEA for the Phibsborough/ Mountjoy Local Area Plan was in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. The Environmental Report accompanies the Draft LAP as a separate document.
A Local Area Plan is an important statutory document prepared by the planning authority in accordance with the requirements of the Planning & Development Act, 2000 and the Planning & Development (Amendment) Act, 2002.

A local area plan must be subject to extensive consultation with the public, prescribed bodies and key stakeholders, and adopted by the elected members of the planning authority.

The Planning & Development Act, 2000 provides that a planning authority may, at any time, prepare a local area plan for any particular area within its jurisdiction which the planning authority considers appropriate, in particular for areas which require economic, physical and social renewal; and for areas likely to be the subject of large-scale development within the lifetime of a development plan.

The aim of a local area plan is to set out a detailed framework for the proper planning and sustainable development of a defined area within the functional area of the planning authority.

A local area plan must be consistent with the objectives of the development plan and any adopted local area plan, in conjunction with the development plan, are the primary instruments to guide and control development. Accordingly, an LAP has major implications for the future growth and development of the plan area.

An LAP comprises a written statement and a plan, or plans, indicating the objectives in such detail as may be required by the planning authority.

Once adopted, the planning authority and An Bord Pleanála must have regard to the provisions of the LAP when determining planning applications for development proposals in the area.

Prior to preparing a draft of the LAP, the planning authority is obliged to take whatever steps it considers necessary to consult with the public including resident associations, business interests and other stakeholders in the area. The draft plan must take the issues raised during this pre-draft consultation phase into account during its preparation.

The local authority must place an advertisement in an appropriate newspaper, circulated in the area, announcing the preparation of a LAP Notice and a copy of the draft plan must also be sent to the ‘Prescribed Bodies’ including government agencies.

When the draft is published it must be placed on display for a minimum period of 6 weeks during which submissions and observations are invited from the public and interested parties. A report summarising the issues raised and the manager’s recommendation is presented to the elected members of the planning authority not later than 12 weeks after publication of the notice in the national newspaper.

The elected members have 6 weeks to consider the report and adopt, amend, or reject the plan. Any material amendment to the plan must go on display for a period of not less than 4 weeks.

A manager’s report summarising the issues raised in submissions - and the recommendation of the manager - is presented to the elected members of the authority not later than 8 weeks after publication of the notice in the newspaper. The elected members have a maximum of 6 weeks to consider the report and adopt, or reject the plan.
The Brief

The city council brief for the LAP set out the following objectives:

1. Provide for the consolidation and coherent growth of Phibsborough as a designated Prime Urban Centre, with an appropriate mix of uses to enhance the social and economic vitality of the area.

2. Allow for a structured approach to the redevelopment of major high profile sites e.g. Phibsborough Shopping Centre and Dalymount.

3. Provide for the development of the Mater Hospital into a major medical centre of excellence including the integration of the National Paediatric Hospital.

4. Carry out an audit of the existing community facilities and social infrastructure in the catchment area and identify shortfalls in the existing provision. Provide for the improvement of existing and the creation of new community infrastructure.

5. Incorporate an integrated movement strategy to promote increased use of more sustainable forms of transport such as public transport, cycling and walking. Improve permeability and accessibility to Metro North and Luas Line D, and improve connections to the city centre, Markets and Grangegorman.

6. Develop a strong sense of spatial legibility through a network/hierarchy of streets, spaces and places. Upgrade public open space and the quality of the public realm, landscaping and recreational areas in the plan area.

7. Promote the principles of good urban design and sustainable neighbourhood design.

8. Undertake a conservation assessment of the Mountjoy Prison site and consider which buildings should be retained to reflect adequately the special heritage of the complex whilst allowing for the release of sufficient lands to secure a critical mass of new uses for the Phibsborough Prime Urban Centre.

9. Undertake a conservation assessment of the Mountjoy Prison complex and consider which buildings should be conserved to reflect the special heritage of the complex whilst also allowing for the release of sufficient lands to secure a critical mass of new uses for the Phibsborough Prime Urban Centre.

10. Provide for the conservation and protection of the built and natural heritage of the area.

11. Conduct a full consultation process with all relevant stakeholders and interest groups, including elected representatives and local residents.
One of the statutory obligations for a local authority preparing a local area plan is that it should incorporate consultation with the public, including resident associations, business interests and other stakeholders in the area. The planning authority then prepares the draft plan taking into account the issues raised during this pre-draft consultation phase.

Accordingly, an extensive process of pre-draft public consultation has been undertaken by Dublin City Council as an integral and important component of the LAP process.

Following an initial presentation to local residents’ groups in February 2007, notification of the intention to prepare a local area plan - and to engage in the initial phase of pre-draft public consultations - was published in local and national newspapers.

Leaflets were distributed to households and businesses in the area, and details were published on the Dublin City Council website.

This initial pre-draft public consultation phase took place during March and April 2007. The aim of this phase of the process was to obtain submissions from interested parties and stakeholders on issues relevant to the future planning and development of the area. Over seventy submissions were received from members of the public, key local stakeholders and political representatives.

A public open day was held on Saturday May 26th 2007 at Croke Park Conference Centre. Invitations were issued to public representatives, those invited to previous meetings and all those who had made pre-draft submissions. Key private and public stakeholders and landowners were also consulted, particularly regarding the future development of key sites within the plan area.

During these pre-draft consultations, a significant number of issues concerning those living and working in the area were highlighted. A report which provided a synopsis of the topics raised was provided to all those who attended the meeting, and published on the City Council website.

The issues raised are summarised in the attached box. These are but a synopsis of the wide-ranging concerns which residents and property owners have regarding the future of the area.

While many concerns regarding the area’s overall performance as an urban neighbourhood were raised, there also appears to be widespread recognition - and support for - the need for change, so that Phibsborough/Mountjoy can deliver on its potential to become one of the most vibrant and attractive neighbourhoods in the city.

A further public open day was held on the 22nd of September 2007 in Croke Park. This consisted of a briefing to interested persons, residents groups and key stakeholders on the progress of the preparation of the draft local area plan.

In addition, prior to publication of the draft LAP, the LAP team has had numerous meetings with interest groups, major stakeholders and public representatives.

Dublin City Council and the LAP team have taken this wide-ranging consultation, and the views expressed, into consideration in the preparation of the draft local area plan now being submitted for formal consultation as provided for in the planning acts.

The decision to publish the LAP in draft format for formal public consultation was agreed by the local area committee of the City Council at its meeting of 12th February 2008.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Community Issues

The following key issues have been identified in pre-plan community consultations and submissions:

1. Traffic and congestion mean that walking and cycling are unattractive and dangerous.
2. Air and noise pollution resulting from through traffic and the proximity of emergency and security vehicles in the area.
3. Parking and the shortage of residential parking schemes in the area.
4. Poor management of the public realm, especially streets, the Royal Canal and the Canal Bank.
5. Deteriorating environmental quality arising from antisocial behaviour, litter, uncontrolled street parking and others.
6. Poor shopping opportunities and the increase in low quality shops in the area. The area needs new retail development at a scale appropriate to the locality including the potential to create a local farmers market.
7. Poor housing maintenance especially due to the prevalence of short term occupancy and private landlords.
8. Low levels of community and social infrastructure - the shortage of quality schools, services, facilities, cafes, restaurants and such like.
9. Lack of identity due to the run-down aspect of the shopping centre and the negative impact of Mountjoy and Dalymount on the area.
10. Anti social behaviour due, especially to the presence of Mountjoy in the locality, and the anti social activity which it creates.
11. The poor quality of public transport and the lack of access to the rail network adjoining the area.
12. Social integration and the lack of housing choice in the area, especially for families with children.
13. Development pressures, especially the threat of high rise, high density development on unsuitable sites such as the bakery and Smurfit sites.
14. The need for community and recreation facilities for all age groups, including youth clubs particularly multipurpose spaces and a community hall, possibly provided by a multi-purpose civic centre.

PUBLIC CONSULTATION

Public Consultations, May and September 2007