



# DUBLIN CITY CENTRE Developing the Retail Core



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# 1.0 Introduction





# 1.0 Introduction

**“This is an opportune time for Dublin City Centre to reposition itself as a world class shopping destination”**

## Recent Growth of Dublin

Dublin's city centre has been radically transformed by a decade of intense renewal and regeneration. This period of sustained growth has prompted a resurgence in inner city living, the development of a larger and more prosperous workforce and the emergence of new and vibrant commercial and cultural sectors such as the International Financial Services Centre and Temple Bar.

Boosted by the greater levels of economic prosperity and increases in spending power, Dublin City Centre has continued to develop and enhance its position as the premier shopping destination in the region and state.

The arrival of the Luas Light Rail has further demonstrated that the city centre is a strong magnet resulting in significant increases in the number of pedestrians in both the Henry Street and Grafton Street areas. The completion of other projects including the Spire of Dublin, the O'Connell Street Plaza and the Liffey Boardwalk have also caught the public's imagination. The delivery of the next wave of proposed initiatives such as the Markets Food Quarter and the Parnell Square Cultural Quarter will further enhance the city's diversity and richness.

## New Challenges

However, this last decade has also seen the emergence of new challenges in the form of external competition from the major out of town centres that have accompanied the development of the M50 and from the expanding regional centres.

There is also concern that the retail sector has failed to fully capitalise on the city centre's specific strengths to offer a richer and ultimately more satisfying shopping and leisure experience. A buoyant tourist industry, an expanding arts and cultural scene and an explosion in the leisure sector (reflected in the significant increase in the number of eating and drinking establishments) all present great opportunities to build a strong and vibrant retail sector.

## Opportunity to Create World Class Shopping

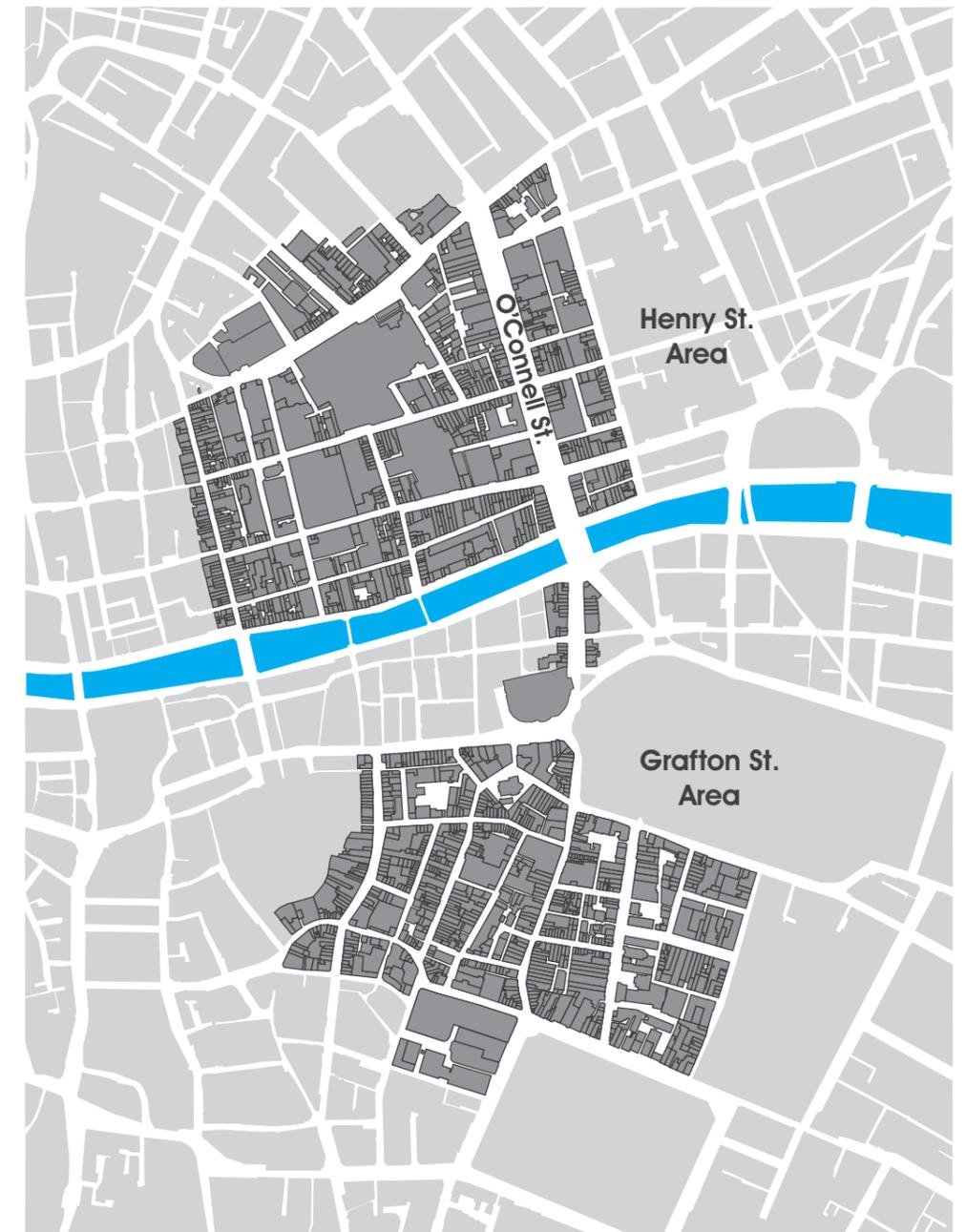
In the context of a renewed and expanded city centre, Dublin City Council recognises that this is an opportune time for Dublin to address these challenges and to reposition itself as a world class shopping destination, supported and nourished by a rich diversity of leisure and cultural uses. In order to achieve this goal, the City Centre will have to offer more to the visitor to compete effectively with both home grown and overseas competition. It will have to build on its existing retail offer to provide greater choice and diversity, including mainstream, specialist and alternative shopping experiences, as well as a wide range of complementary uses.

## City Centre Retail Framework

This Plan sets out the City Council's strategy for the development and promotion of Dublin City Centre as the primary shopping, leisure and cultural destination in the state. It provides planning and urban design guidance, as well as a series of radical interventions for the areas in, connecting and adjoining Henry Street and Grafton Street.

## The Study Area

The focus of the Framework Plan is on the main shopping quarter of Dublin, consolidated around Grafton Street and Henry Street in the heart of the city. The Plan also concentrates on the key pedestrian connections between the two areas including the main civic spine of O'Connell St/Westmoreland Street, the established pedestrian routes through Temple Bar and the Ha'penny Bridge and Millenium Bridge, and Parliament Street/Capel Street via Grattan Bridge.



Study Area

## 2.0 Planning Policy





## 2.0 Planning Policy

**“.....to maintain and reinforce the central shopping core as the premier shopping area in the State”**

### Introduction

A number of important policy documents, at regional and city level underpin this Plan for the development of the central area, including retail provision. These are;

- **Retail Planning Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area.**

The Retail Planning Strategy, published in 2001, acknowledges the regional importance of Dublin City Centre as an attractor to retail providers and consumers for a wide and extensive array of goods. The Strategy recognises the dominant role of the Central Shopping Area and proposes to protect this role as the preferred location for comparison goods, especially higher order comparison goods. It's projects a demand for additional retail floorspace to 2011, of between 56,000 and 88,000 sq. Metres, which is almost exclusively comparison retail floorspace.

The working papers for the Retail Planning Guidelines identified a dearth of development opportunities in Dublin City Centre for the larger multiples with a typical floor area of between 550-1,850 sq. metres.

- **Regional Planning Guidelines, Greater Dublin Area 2004-2016**

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area, July 2004, provide a long-term planning framework for the development of the Greater Dublin Area (Dublin City, Dun Laoghaire-Rathdown, South Dublin, Fingal, Kildare, Meath and Wicklow). A key element of the Guidelines is a concentration of future development in the Metropolitan Area, especially Dublin City and the Metropolitan Consolidated Towns (Swords, Blanchardstown, Lucan, Clondalkin, Tallaght, Dun Laoghaire, Dundrum and Bray).

In relation to Dublin City Centre, the strategic policies for the Metropolitan Area include:

- *Strengthen the provision of retail in Dublin City Centre as much as possible, focusing on speciality and higher order comparison sectors, and;*
- *Develop the cultural role of Dublin City Centre including the literary, artistic and theatrical fields.*

- **Dublin City Development Plan 2005-2011**

The Dublin City Development Plan 2005-2011, acknowledges the central role of retailing in the economic, social and physical life of the city and state. The following policies specifically support city centre retailing;

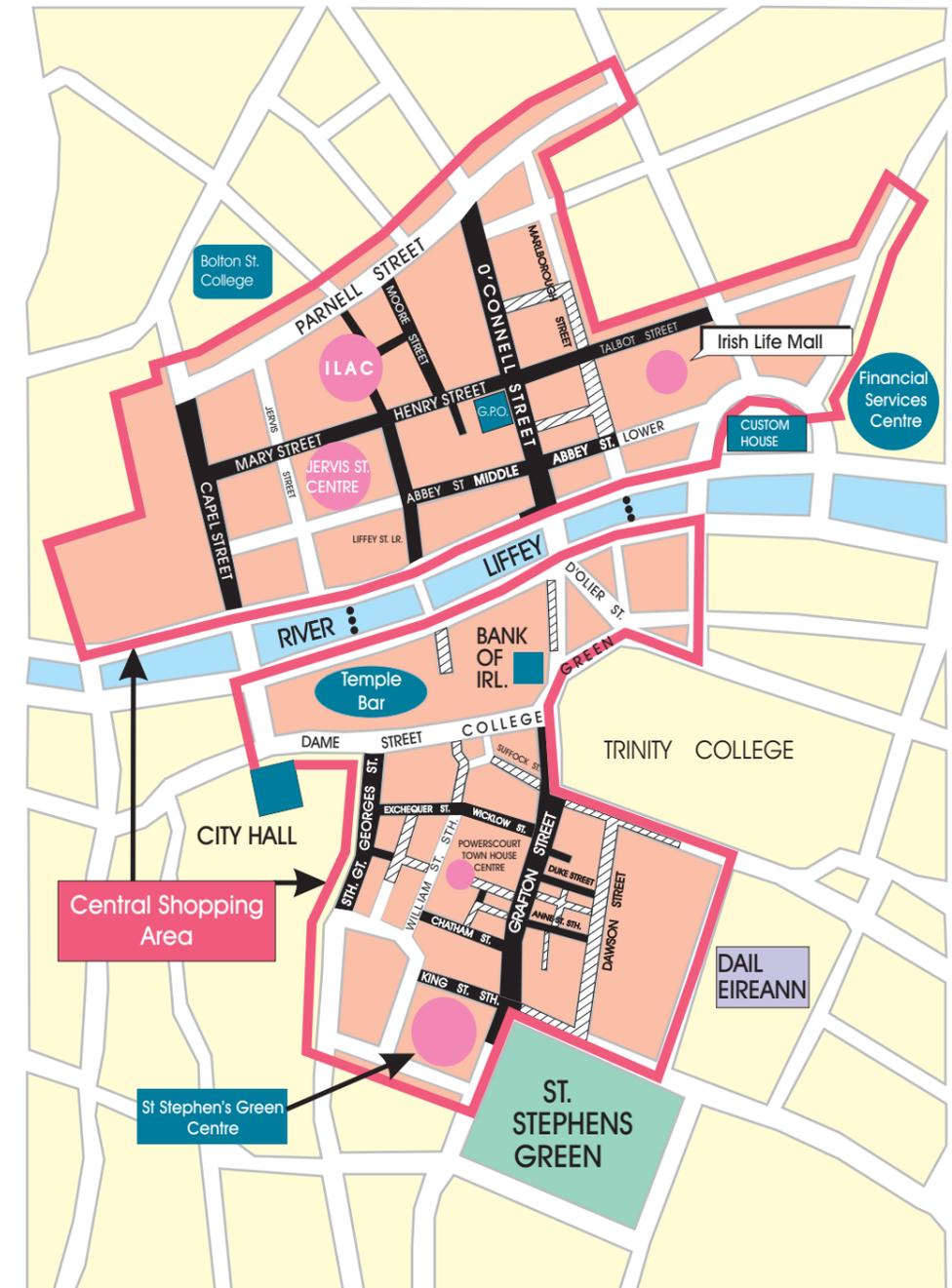
- **Policy S3** to maintain and reinforce the dominant position of the central shopping core as the premier shopping area in the State.
- **Policy S10** to control the provision of non-retail uses at ground floor level on the principal shopping streets, ie: Category 1 and Category 2 (see appendix 1)
- **Policy S11** where large-scale redevelopment is planned for Category 1 or 2 shopping streets..., the traditional arrangement of small-scale and or specialist retail units with individual frontage and access onto the street should be respected and maintained.
- Policies on the enhancement of the public domain, promotion of good shop front design and accessibility are also contained in the Development Plan

- **Legible Dublin Study**

A recent study carried out by Dublin City Council - 'Legible Dublin' - outlines a strategic framework of routes to connect the city's main structuring elements i.e. activities/destinations, principal streets, key spaces, points of arrival and departure and major landmarks. This framework is underpinned by three key themes;

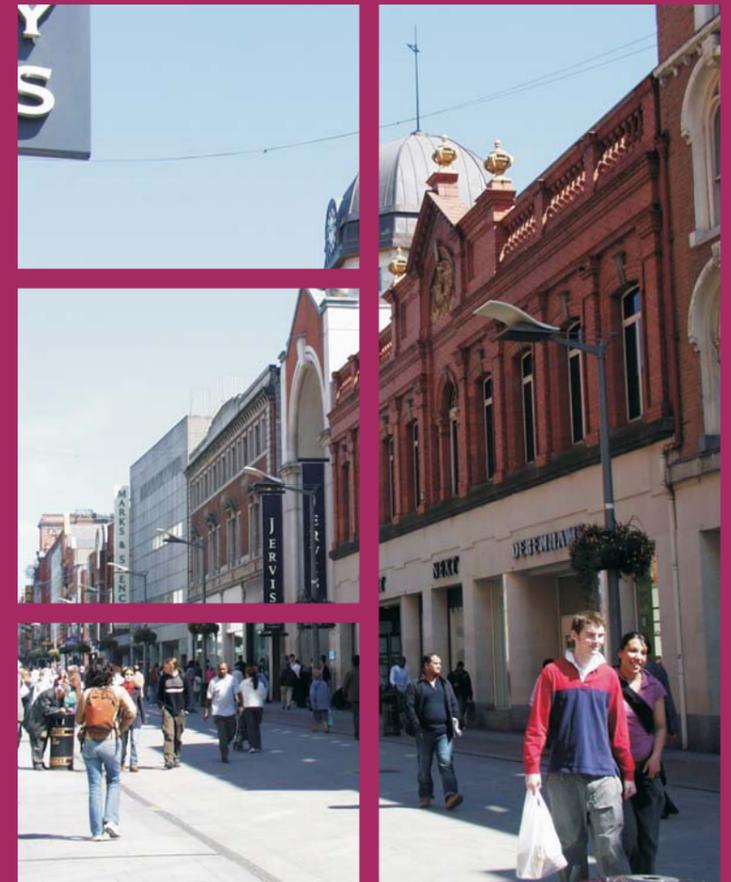
- The walkable city - creating a pedestrian friendly and extended city centre.
- The reclaimed city - creating a public domain of international standing
- The connected city - creating a way finding and information system

These three themes have informed the development of the spatial framework which is made up, at the strategic level, of several key elements; an expanded civic thoroughfare, key pedestrian routes and public spaces including the River Liffey routes. The development of these elements will have a positive impact on the City Centre Retail Core; creating a more pedestrian friendly environment, improving linkages between the two prime shopping areas as well as to the city's other major commercial, cultural and institutional sectors .



**PRINCIPAL SHOPPING STREETS**  
 CATEGORY 1 .....  
 CATEGORY 2 .....  
 NEW BRIDGES .....

## 3.0 Retail Performance





## 3.0 Retail Performance

### “Dublin City Centre aspires to the same high standards set by our international competitors”

#### Dublin City's Performance as a Retail Destination

Dublin City Centre is the prime retail destination in the country. In spite of increased competition, it has maintained its position at the top of the Irish retail hierarchy, dominating in terms of size of retail offer.

In preparation for this Plan an analysis of the city centre's performance as a retail destination was undertaken, together with its performance relative to competing locations and developments. The main findings are summarized as follows:

#### • Visitor Numbers

Each week, nearly 900,000 people visit the city centre for shopping and leisure purposes, with 635,000 people visiting Henry Street and 620,000 visiting Grafton Street. These figures are anticipated to grow further with the ongoing implementation of planned improvements to public transportation.

#### • Customer Profile

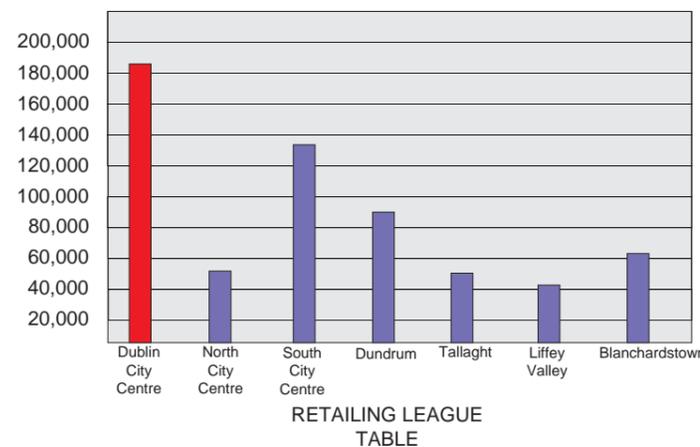
The city centre is particularly attractive to younger customers who are frequent shoppers, with nearly 75% of all customers aged between 16 and 44. However, this may also suggest that families and older customers are shopping in the suburbs where they can avail of the car parking and family friendly facilities offered by the suburban shopping centers. A key challenge of the Plan will be to increase the overall volume of shoppers coming to the city, including families and older customers who have drifted to the suburban centers.

Tourists and visitors are also bringing many benefits to the city centre, arriving in increasing numbers and contributing upwards of half a billion a year to the retail trade alone. However, the number of tourists and visitors coming to the city indicate that there is significant potential to 'grow' this figure upwards, further boosting the city centre as an important shopping destination.

#### • Market Share

In terms of market share, Dublin City Centre represents 45% of the comparison retail offer in the Dublin Area. This is a significant change from 1990, when the city faced only limited competition from The Square in Tallaght. In spite of this major growth in the Greater Dublin Area, the city centre still provides the largest retail offer in the state. Nevertheless, as suburban and regional towns and shopping centres continue to expand, there is a genuine concern that this is not being matched by a corresponding growth in the city centre.

In order for the city centre to compete effectively, it must increase its range of offer. This will require the reinvigoration and expansion of the two prime shopping areas as well as the reinforcement of linkages across the city, to ensure that the city centre provides a combined retail offer that surpasses any other shopping proposal.



1. Pedestrianised shopping street - Glasgow

#### • International Competitiveness

The economic development and extent of physical regeneration that has taken place in Dublin over the last two decades has placed the city firmly on the list of major tourist destinations, competing with the likes of London, Paris and Rome.

To sustain its competitive position, Dublin needs to continue to focus on all aspects of quality in relation to the visitor offer, and keep abreast of developments in other cities. Other countries have developed a range of successful initiatives to promote their city centres and the many economic and cultural activities sectors they support. Innovative examples from Toronto and Sydney and, closer to home, cities like Glasgow, Birmingham and Manchester, reveal a number of shared elements;

- A vibrant mixed-use culture, juxtaposing a wide diversity of economic and cultural uses combined with a strong residential content to make for a lively city centre.
- Easy access to and within the city centre for public transport, private cars, cycling and pedestrians.
- High quality and pedestrian friendly public spaces - including streets and public spaces.
- Excellence in urban design and architecture.
- Innovative relationships (public/private) between stakeholder groups to address issues in a proactive manner and to fund the promotion and marketing of the city.

Dublin City Centre aspires to the same high standards set by our international competitors. However, in meeting these standards, the focus should be on the development of a uniquely Dublin experience, building on the existing strong local character as reflected in our network of streets and public spaces, architecture and specific mix and juxtaposition of uses.



2. Pedestrian shopping boulevards - Barcelona

## 4.0 Urban Structure and Fabric





## 4.0 Urban Structure and Fabric

**“The unique character and identity of the city's shopping areas has been shaped by the pattern of streets, spaces and buildings inherited from the historic development of the city.”**

### 4.1 Urban Structure/Pattern of Street and Spaces

#### • Henry St Area

On the north side of the city the grid pattern of streets is a legacy of the great classical era of planning and building in 18th century Dublin. The central spine of Henry St, Mary Street and North Earl Street, was formally laid out and developed in the 1750's as a residential street. It quickly developed as a busy shopping street and as one of the most important east west routes in the city. The spine, together with adjoining streets, creates a formal grid pattern, although less fine-grained than in the south of the city, with larger blocks and fewer streets.

The completion of O'Connell Street, Westmoreland Street and D'Olier Street by the Wide Street Commissioners in the 1790's, created a major civic route, which linked the grand residential areas of O'Connell St/Parnell Square with the city's major educational, political and religious institutions including Trinity College, Dublin Castle and Christchurch Cathedral. This extended and enhanced new spine helped to change the character of O'Connell St from a residential street to a prestigious commercial boulevard. It also shifted the focus away from the older Capel St/Dublin Castle axis to the College Green/O'Connell St axis.

The late 20th century marked a significant change in the form of shopping development and the coarsening of the finer 18th century grain with the development of the ILAC Shopping Centre. For the first time an extensive internal mall was developed which amalgamated a large number of smaller sites, closed off a number of established streets and created a block size which was unprecedented in the city. This was followed by a number of other large-scale developments, including the extension of Arnotts Department Store, Marks and Spencer's, Penney's and the Jervis St. Shopping Centre. These large-scale developments are clustered in the centre of Henry Street and contrast in form and scale with the more traditional retail developments to the east and west and on adjacent streets.

#### • Grafton St Area

The street network on the south side of the city is older and hence more organic in form, following an earlier medieval pattern. This has resulted in a narrower, more irregular and more intensive network of streets.

Block sizes and plot widths are smaller than on the north side and there have been fewer large-scale interventions. St Stephen Green Shopping Centre, at the junction of The Green and Grafton St, is the only purpose built shopping centre on the south side of the city centre.

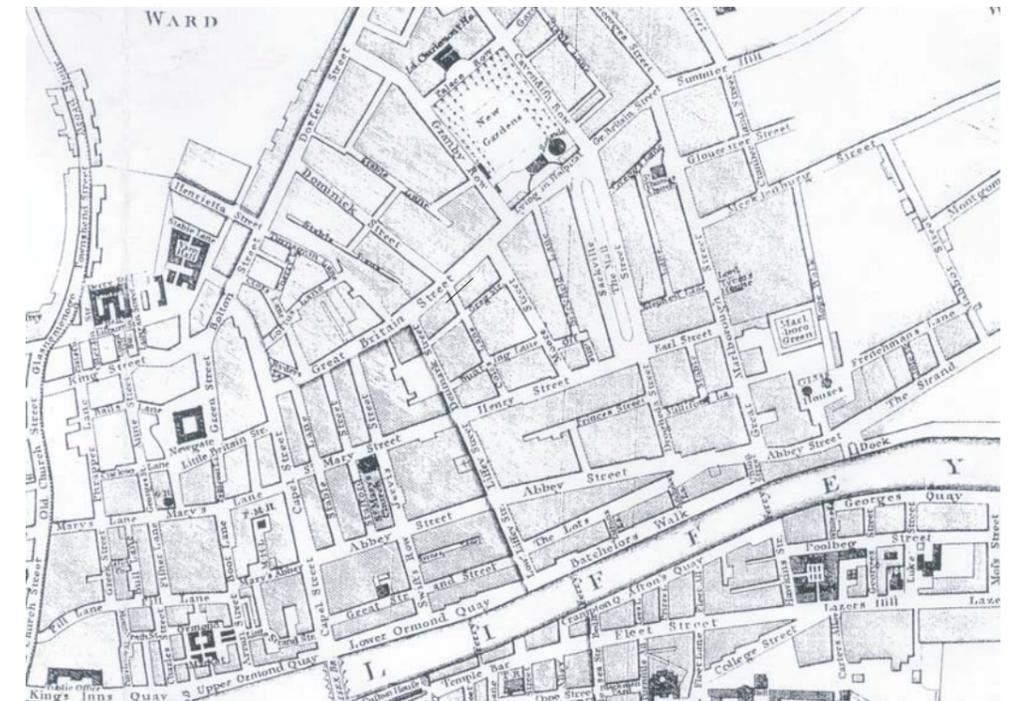
### 4.2 Urban Fabric/Buildings

The urban fabric of the retail core is relatively intact and reflects a considerable variety of architectural character, style and quality, reflecting the various historic periods of change and renewal.

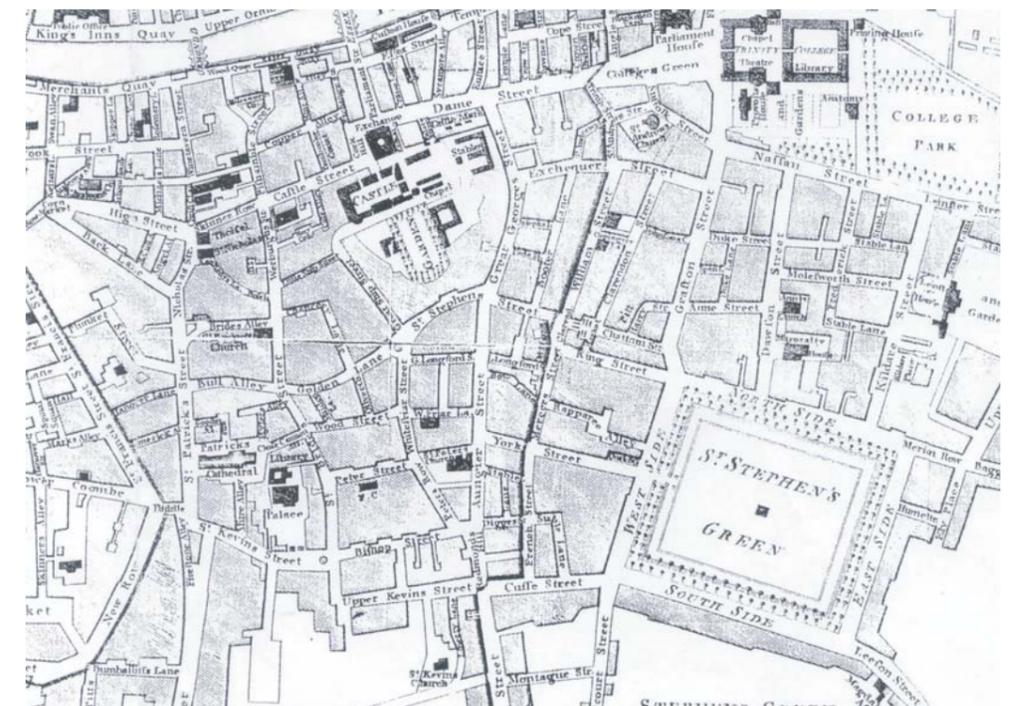
The most significant cluster of earlier Georgian buildings is on South William Street. The buildings were originally designed as three-storey over basement town houses with raised ground levels. Despite years of inappropriate and insensitive uses, the architectural integrity of many of these buildings remains intact and a significant number are on the Register of Protected Structures.

Much of the city's retail building stock dates from the Victorian era, and comprises, in the main, individual four-storey, narrow fronted buildings with tall ground floor shop fronts. The streetscape as a result has a fine grain, which combined with the relatively modest height, provides an attractive human scale. The predominant materials are smooth red brick, a variety of natural stone and painted and unpainted render. One of the more ornate and attractive collections of retail buildings from this period is the 1878 built gothic-style South City Markets, which extends from Georges St Lr. to Drury St.

In addition to the more modest sized traditional shops and markets, the city centre accommodates a number of purpose built department stores, such as Clery's, Arnotts, and Brown Thomas (formerly Switzers). Despite the larger scale of these stores, they integrate successfully into the established streetscapes. By contrast, the late 20th Century shopping centres at the ILAC, Stephen's Green and Jervis St. are large-scale-developments with a predominantly internal focus, which often results in blank street facades and inactive street frontages, reducing on-street activity and vitality.



Henry St. Area-1780



Grafton St. Area-1780



# 4.0 Urban Structure and Fabric

## 4.3 Retail Uses

### Concentration On Main Spines

Dublin's shopping experience is very heavily concentrated on the main shopping streets or 'spines' of Henry Street and Grafton Street, as measured by the intensity of retail activity (specifically fashion) and pedestrian footfall.

Surveys indicate that there is a very sharp drop off in the number and intensity of shops for comparison goods, and in particular fashion as one moves away from Henry Street and Grafton Street. An examination of pedestrian flow figures reinforces this picture. This suggests that people move up and down the two main spines, but do not move onto the adjoining side streets in any appreciable numbers. The net effect of this focus is two confined areas of concentrated retail activity.

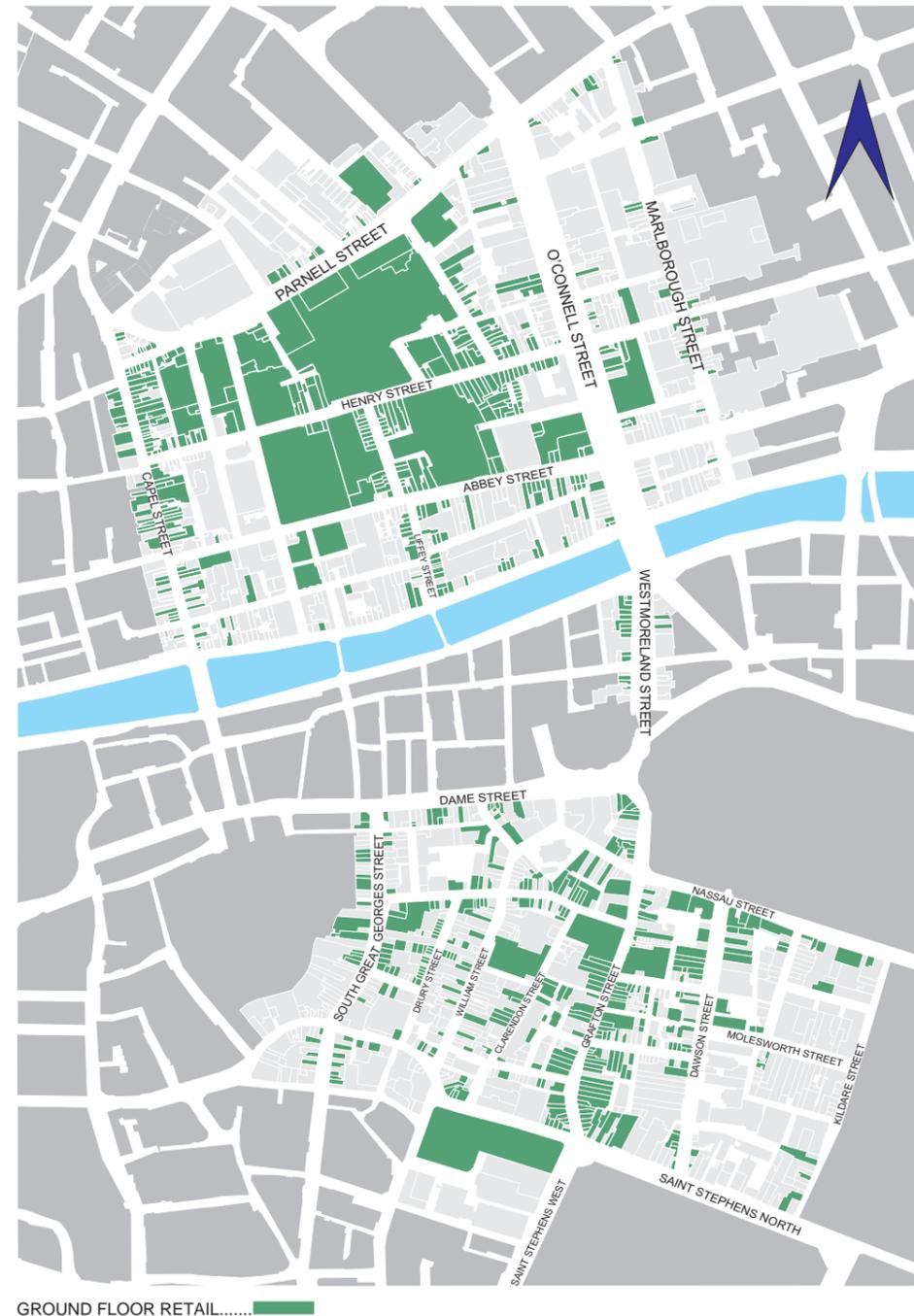
However, while a concentrated pattern is common to both the north and south retail areas: there are marked differences in the type and scale of retail developments found in each of the two areas and on the main pedestrian links between them.

- Henry St

The larger unit sizes in the Henry Street area have attracted several of the key retailers Debenhams, Zara, Penney's, and Marks & Spencers - soon to be joined by the H&M flagship store on Mary Street. These outlets, combined with three department stores (Clerys, Arnotts, and Roches Stores) provide a substantial retail offer in the Henry St. Area.

- Grafton St

There is a notable lack of larger units in the Grafton St area, i.e. units of 550-1500 sq.m. as required by the leading fashion outlets. The development potential of key sites in and around the Grafton Street area has not been fully recognized, and there has been a failure to attract the main international names. Consequently, there are fewer of the larger mainstream fashion outlets in this area and there is a growing concern that the Grafton Street area is not optimizing it's potential as a high fashion street. In addition, increasing rental values on Grafton St are attracting low value/high turnover retail uses. This, combined with the absence of larger fashion outlets, is providing an imbalance in the retail offer in the area.



1. Grafton St - main retail spine



2. Henry St - main retail spine



3. Millennium Bridge - Strategic North-South link



# 4.0 Urban Structure and Fabric

## 4.4 Complementary Uses

In the south city the more extensive street network and finer grain of street blocks and plot sizes has encouraged the development of a rich mix of uses complementary to the dominant shopping focus, including cafes, bars, restaurants, galleries, hotels, as well as a range of educational institutions, offices and other services. It is this mix that ensures that the area works so successfully as an attractive destination for workers, residents and visitors.

By contrast on the north side there is a relatively small incidence of complementary uses. The large plots associated with the department stores and shopping centres tend to have an internal focus and have 'elbowed out' the comprehensive mix of uses, which are so essential for a fully satisfying shopping and leisure experience. The large footprint of many of the existing outlets and their tendency to focus inwards exacerbate's this lack of diversity, further reducing the opportunity to develop an intensity of street based activity. As a result Henry Street is uninviting after close of business.

In contrast and fuelled by a range of regeneration initiatives such as LOTS (Living over the Shop) and the Integrated Area Plans, there has been significant redevelopment along some of the more peripheral streets on the north side e.g. Parnell Street and Capel Street. Since the mid 1980's these streets have benefited from a new residential population, which has generated a demand for convenience shops and services, cafes and bars. This new activity has enhanced these streets giving them a livelier character.

## 4.5 Main Link Routes

Surveys also indicate that there is a lack of strong retail presence on the main routes linking the two prime retail areas of Henry Street and Grafton Street, in particular along the Westmoreland Street to O'Connell Street route.



**COMPLEMENTARY USES MAP**

CAFÉ/RESTURANT .....	CHURCH/COMMUNITY .....	
FAST FOOD .....	CULTURE/GALLERY .....	
PUBLICHOUSES .....	CINEMA THEATRE LEISURE .....	
HOTEL .....	AMUSEMENT .....	
CLUBS(PRIVATE) .....	FINANCIAL INSTUTIONS .....	



1. Cafes/resturants - essential part of a vibrant mix



2. Hotels contribute to the 24 hour life of a city



3. Moore St - colour, character and vitality of existing streets - building blocks for future development



## 4.0 Urban Structure and Fabric

### 4.6 The Public Realm: Streets, Spaces and Shopfronts

Major investment in a number of significant environmental improvement projects such as Henry Street, O'Connell Street, the Liffey Boardwalk and South King Street has been hugely beneficial in securing a high quality street environment. In addition, within the Henry St and Grafton St areas, the implementation of a programme of environmental traffic cells has secured a better balance between vehicular traffic and pedestrians, contributing to the creation of a more pedestrian friendly environment.

However, while significant progress has been made, a survey carried out specifically for this study identified a number of issues related to the quality of the public realm in the Study area.

#### ● Issues Within The Retail Areas

Within the two retail areas the public realm is generally of poor quality. The following issues are of particular concern;

- Uncoordinated design approach to street landscaping
- Poor quality of paving materials
- Poor level of maintenance
- Absence of planting
- Limited seating
- Limited occasional space for planned, or incidental activities
- Visual dominance of on-street car parking
- Inadequate pavement widths
- Clutter of service and other items on pavements



1. Poor quality shopfronts detract from visual amenity of the street

#### ● Issues Between The Two Retail Areas

The survey highlights the degraded quality of the pedestrian connections between the Henry Street and Grafton Street areas - Dame Street, College Green, Westmoreland Street and Liffey Quays. These major arteries are dominated by vehicular traffic and polluted and marred by pedestrian/traffic conflict at key junctions. These characteristics combine to discourage pedestrian movement and to limit the combined strength of the north and south retail areas.

However, the completion of the Port Tunnel in 2006 will present a major opportunity to address these problems. It will take significant traffic pressure from the Quays, ameliorate many critical points of pedestrian/vehicle conflict, and facilitate further improvements to the main pedestrian links between the north and south city retail areas.

#### ● Poor Quality Shopfronts and Sign Design

The quality of shopfronts plays an important role in determining the character and the perception of the shopping street. For many years, Dublin City Council has been pro-active in promoting an awareness of good shopfront design, and has published several design guides, most recently in 2001 and 2003

Despite the commitment of some businesses to the provision and maintenance of high quality attractive shopfronts, too many shopfronts are still poorly designed and maintained. This is a problem exacerbated by unauthorised development, which is an issue which needs to be addressed.



2. Visual dominance of on Street Car Parking



3. High Quality Physical Environment - O'Connell St.



4. Clutter of services and other items on pavement



5. Liffey Quays - area of unique character dominated by vehicular traffic

## 5.0 Transport/Movement Analysis





## 5.0 Transport / Movement Analysis

**“To maximise its potential, businesses and customers using the City Centre must be provided with effective and convenient access.”**

### Introduction

Good vehicular and pedestrian access to and within the City Centre is key to enhancing its position as the main shopping destination. To maximise its potential, businesses and customers using the City Centre must be provided with effective and convenient access.

### Public Transport

The City Centre is well served by public transport-bus, DART, LUAS and mainline rail.

The development of a network of Quality Bus Corridors and the opening of the red/green LUAS lines has significantly improved access to the City Centre and has transformed the image of public transportation as a viable alternative to private transport. Planned investments in mainline/suburban rail and DART services will further improve access to the city centre. However, additional major investment in the ongoing development of an integrated public transportation system will be needed to ensure that good and efficient access to/through the city centre is provided in line with the major European cities.

Serving the edge of the two retail cores, the LUAS lines and many of the bus routes facilitate access and encourage pedestrian flow through the areas while minimising pedestrian conflict.

The location of bus stops/termini within the heart of the centre on such streets as College Green/ Westmorland Street, and O’Connell Street is of some concern, as these areas form some of the most important public spaces in the City. The rationalisation on a citywide basis of bus stops/termini is one of the challenges to efficient movement planning and public transport service delivery.

### Pedestrians

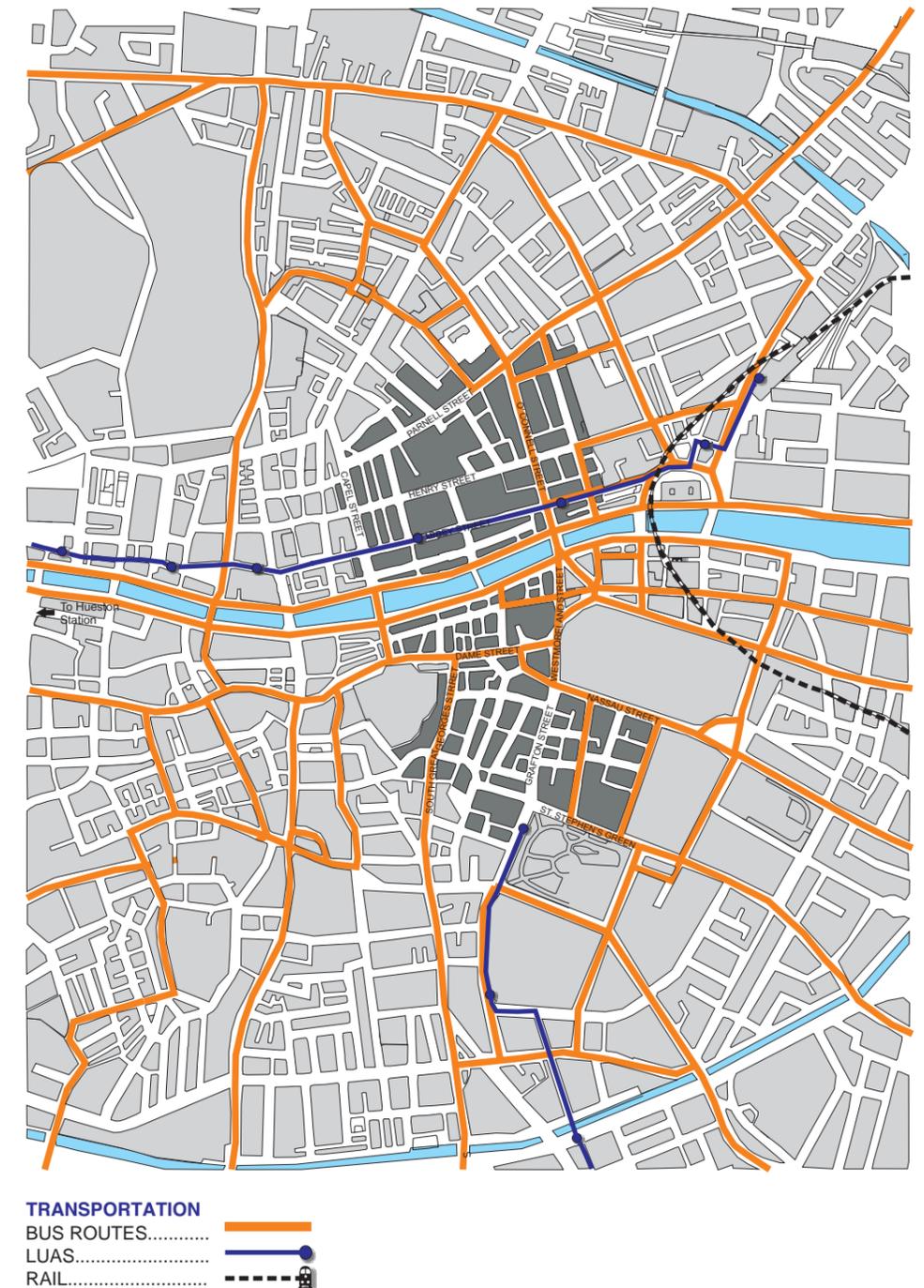
Regardless of their mode of transport or their reason for visiting the city centre, all travellers become pedestrians, at their point of arrival i.e. the bus stop, car park, Dart/train station or LUAS stop. The quality of the pedestrian experience is key therefore to people’s perception and enjoyment of the city centre, and to the economic and social life of the city.

At present, there is significant conflict between pedestrians and vehicular traffic in parts of the retail areas with both competing for the limited available street space. This is particularly problematic on the main routes between the north and south retail areas i.e. Dame Street/College Green and Westmoreland St. A co-ordinated approach to the management of street space and clear demarcation of the space for different users along these routes could significantly reduce the conflict and encourage more pedestrian movement.

The Legible Dublin Study identifies a network of strategic pedestrian routes and spaces, which together with a programme of public domain works provide a framework for developing a high quality pedestrian experience in the city centre. This study will inform all improvements to the pedestrian network in the city centre.

The provision of an enhanced pedestrian environment will be facilitated through the provision of the following;

- pedestrian only streets,
- increasing pavement widths
- creation of shared surfaces and
- decreases in vehicular road space as well as the introduction of cycle lanes, integrated delivery parking bays and bus stops, pedestrian priority at key junctions, and controlling specific on-street car Parking and the hours of access for delivery vehicles.





# 5.0 Transport / Movement Analysis

## Private Transport

The private car remains a popular mode of transport to the city centre. In 2002, the private car accounted for 50% of all travel trips in Dublin, with large volumes seeking access to the city centre.

Vehicular access to the city centre is facilitated by the Inner Orbital Route, which was developed to alleviate traffic congestion within the central area by redirecting unnecessary traffic around the core and facilitating access to designated car parks.

17 public car parks are located inside the Inner Orbital, providing some 8,000 parking spaces. However, in some instances, the central locations of the car parks are pulling traffic into the heart of the retail core, leading to pedestrian/traffic conflict and a poor physical environment. In addition, the central location of car parks mitigates against the expansion of the retail areas in that pedestrian traffic is not encouraged to move beyond the areas defined by close proximity to these car parks.

## Cycling

Walking and cycling, are also important modes of transport, accounting for upwards of 26% of all trips in Dublin. While there is still limited availability of cycle lanes, progress is being made in the provision and development of an integrated network of cycle lanes. It is a policy of Dublin City Development Plan to improve pedestrian and cycle facilities as part of the integrated approach to the management of movement.

## Cycle parking

Cycle parking in the form of stands located on pavements is the main facility for cycle parking in the city centre. From a survey of bicycle parking space the amount of space within the retail areas is inadequate. In addition, much of the on-street bicycle parking is the cause of pavement obstruction and visual clutter. This is also the case for motorcycle parking which appears to be uncontrolled and consequently occupies prominent areas of pavement space. A review of bicycle and motorbike parking should be undertaken as a basis for a satisfactory operational policy.

## Delivery Vehicle Access

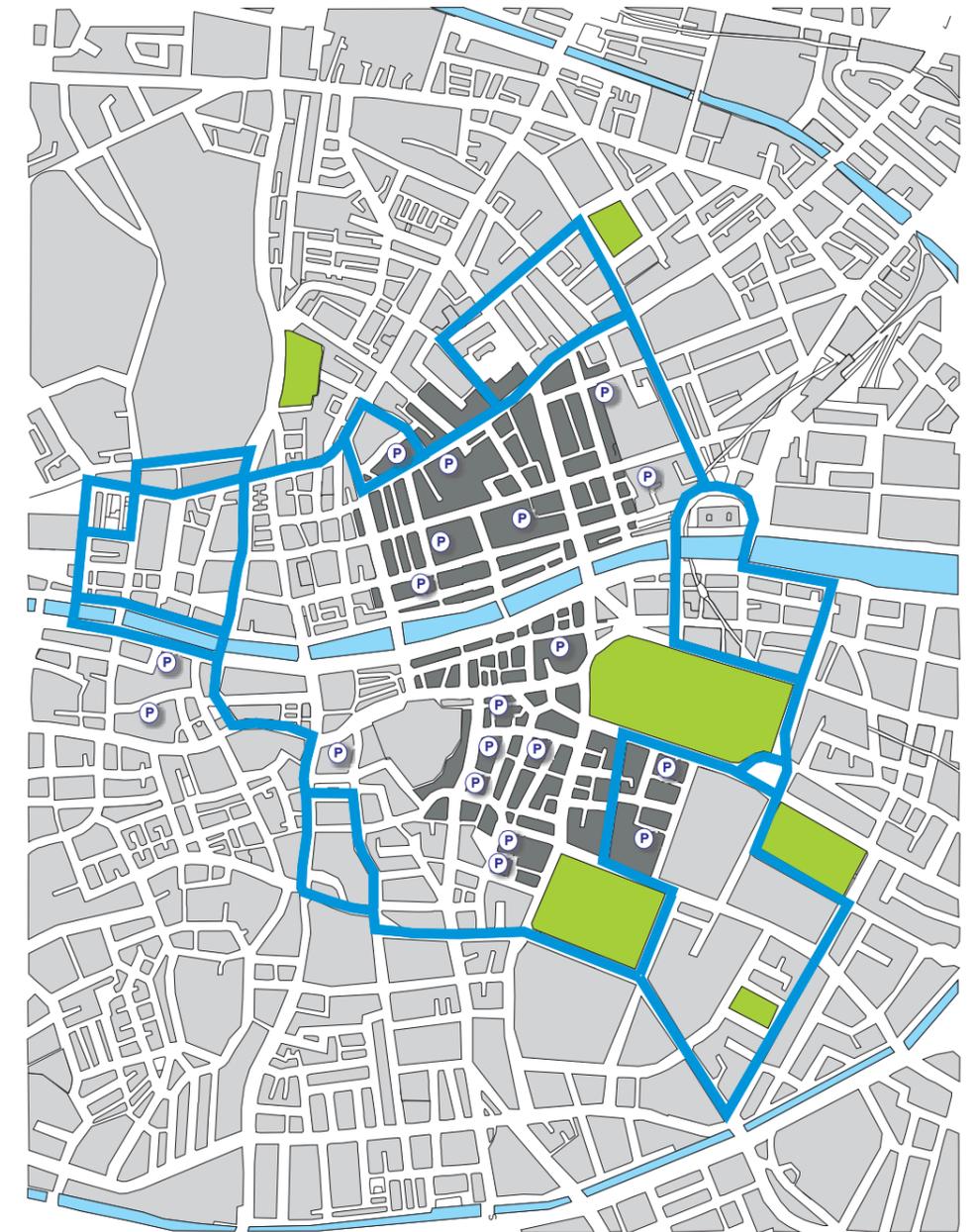
Delivery vehicle access is critical in relation to the servicing of shops. At present the two main retail streets are subject to a restricted service access policy, which works well. However, in other streets servicing can pose problems where it is uncontrolled i.e. congestion, conflict with pedestrian traffic and visual clutter. One of the challenges within the city centre retail areas is to provide for efficient servicing of Commercial units in a way that does not detract seriously from the amenities of the streets.



1. Striking a balance between vehicular access and pedestrian comfort - a priority

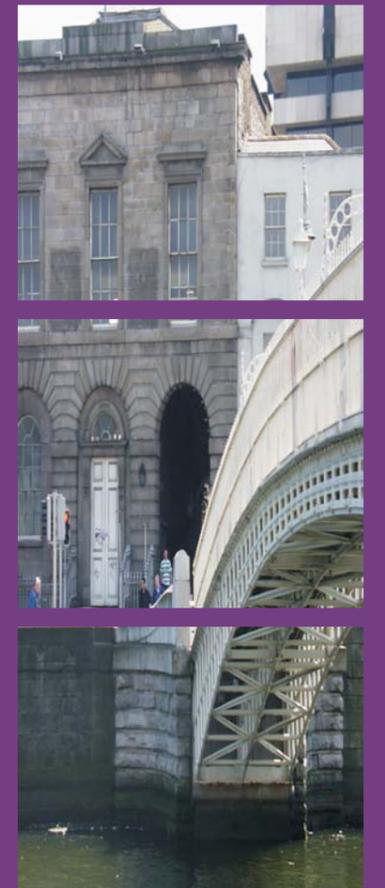


2. Motorcycle parking - needs to be addressed



**INNER ORBITAL MAP**  
INNER ORBITAL ROUTES.....  
PARKING..... P

## 6.0 The Way Forward





## 6.0 The Way Forward

### “The vision of Dublin City Council is to create a world class shopping city.....”

#### Vision

Dublin City Council's vision is to create a world class shopping city, which integrates shopping with a rich mix of commercial, leisure and cultural activities, and capitalises on the unique physical character and strengths of the city centre.

#### The Strengths of the City Centre

- In contrast to many other European cities, Dublin is compact and easily walkable, with a fine-grained street network. As such it has the potential to provide well-defined pedestrian links and ease of movement between and within the different activity areas.
- It also has a distinctive physical identity, which is firmly based on its network of streets, public spaces, and fine-grained historic and contemporary building fabric. This unique physical character provides the setting for a more authentic urban experience than is found in other Regional centres or out-of-town shopping Centres.
- The city centre is the focus of an improving public transport system and a generous amount of centrally located car parking, providing good accessibility for visitors.
- The city centre presents the opportunity to develop a range and intensity of use to serve a 16-hour if not a 24-hour economy.
- It also has the potential to deliver a diversity of rentals, retail providers and accommodation.

#### Key Objectives

Dublin City Council's vision for retailing in the city centre may seem ambitious but is considered critical if it is to remain economically competitive both nationally and internationally.

The realization of the vision is dependant on the commitment of the City Council and key stakeholders to the implementation of a range of radical and creative strategies, to charge the combined energies of the two main shopping areas and to achieve the following key objectives;

- 1.The delivery of a significant quantity of additional retail floor area and in particular the provision of larger retail units
- 2.The creation of a real mixed use environment that can provide a more integrated shopping and leisure experience for residents, workers and visitors
- 3.The improvement of access to and within the shopping areas
- 4.The strengthening of the pedestrian routes linking the north and south retail areas to create a more cohesive and integrated retail core
- 5.The creation of a good quality street environment to provide a safer and more attractive setting for people to move around, enjoy themselves and to do business
- 6.To provide for an architectural expression which is complementary to Dublin's unique physical identity and distinctive urban form

#### Strategies

Four key guiding strategies have been developed to underpin the implementation of the Plan's objectives. In addition there are specific strategies which aim to address and improve seven specific aspects of the retail environment, responding to the issues and character of the two main shopping areas.

#### • Key Guiding Strategies

First and foremost is the need to increase the amount of retail floor space in the city and in particular to provide the larger shop units required by the mainstream fashion outlets. In addition, new shopping development must reinforce, and connect into the principal shopping streets of Grafton St and Henry St. For this reason the emphasis on both sides of the city will be on developing a number of strategically located sites for high fashion and other high value comparison retailing. These developments will act as magnets and encourage pedestrians to move beyond the main shopping streets by using a new series of pedestrian loops.

#### • Creation of Pedestrian Loops

The extension of pedestrian loops beyond the main shopping streets is considered critical to strengthening and consolidating the retail areas. From the starting point of the main retail spine, the loop will allow the shopper to have continuous shopping without the need to retrace their steps. In this way, the extended loops will offer greater variety in the shopping experience, extend pedestrian movement and allow for the expansion of the shopping areas.

#### • Strengthening North South Links

A significant opportunity exists to expand shopping activity along the established links between the two shopping areas, i.e. O'Connell St, College Green/Westmoreland St and the north south routes through Temple Bar. This requires the creation of a high quality pedestrian environment, similar in standard to that achieved on Lower O'Connell St. It will also involve the development of a strong and active frontage at street level, particularly along the east side of Westmoreland St.

#### • Creating a Rich Mix Of Uses

Another central strategy focuses on striking the necessary balance of uses required to ensure, a vibrant city centre - that offers an exciting combination of shopping, leisure and cultural uses. It also concentrates on developing specific retail uses to reflect the diverse characters of different parts of the city e.g. South City Markets Area and South William St.

## 7.0 Response Strategies





# 7.0 Response Strategies

“The scale of these redeveloped sites will ensure they function as magnets for destinations, linked directly to the main shopping streets via a series of short pedestrian loops.”

## 7.1 Development Strategy

### Introduction

A number of development sites have been identified in close proximity to the main shopping streets, to meet the demand for additional floor space, particularly for medium to large-scale shop units. These sites are currently underused or are in uses, which do not contribute to the vitality of the street particularly at ground floor level e.g. office.

The scale of these redeveloped sites will ensure they function as magnets for destinations, linked directly to the main shopping streets via a series of short pedestrian loops. These loops will in turn, be revitalised by the arrival of those new anchors, attracting new and additional shopping and leisure uses, thus expanding the retail areas of Henry St. and Grafton St.

The sites, located primarily on the edges of the main retail areas, have the potential to be developed for retail use on at least three levels (i.e. basement, ground and first floor levels) with complementary uses on upper floors. Site briefs for each of the sites will identify the desired mix of unit sizes and specific retail uses.

The area specific development strategies for the two areas are detailed below;

#### • Grafton St Area

A significant number of sites have been identified in this area, extending from Georges Street to Dawson Street (see Fig1. ). Several are in single ownership, including a number of large financial institutions, and are currently in primarily office or wholesale use. A number has some small-scale retail use at ground level but each has the potential to deliver a more significant amount of retail development. The sites are grouped into three distinct areas;

#### Area 1

Several sizable development opportunities have been identified in the area between Dawson Street and Clarendon St. It is envisaged that these sites will accommodate the larger, more mainstream fashion outlets and will build on the vision of Grafton St as a highly competitive, high fashion shopping street. Each of the sites has the benefit of direct connection to Grafton St. And forms part of a clearly defined pedestrian loop.

#### Area 2

Moving westwards, the area between South William St. and Georges St has been identified as an alternative loop or zone to the more mainstream Grafton St area. The focus here will be on the development of a very vibrant mixed-use quarter, accommodating a range of smaller and more specialised retail units complemented by a range of cafes, restaurants and bars. The intention here is to build on the distinctive architectural and land use character of the area established by the likes of the South City Markets on Georges St, to develop a uniquely Dublin experience.

A significant cluster of potential development sites has been identified in the southwestern corner of this area. It is envisaged that this cluster will become a significant new retail destination with good connection to Grafton St. via a new pedestrian route from Fade Street to Harry Street. This street will have a vibrant and contemporary character determined by a lively mix of retail and complementary uses, with buildings and public space designed to the highest modern standards.

#### Area 3

The critical link between the more mainstream Grafton St area and the alternative South City Markets Area is South William St. It is intended to build on the distinctive Georgian character of this street and it's buildings to create a highly specialised, high value, shopping street. The layout and special architectural character of the buildings makes them ideally suitable as exclusive showrooms for individual high fashion designers. The establishing café/restaurant culture in parts of the street will complement this new retail character

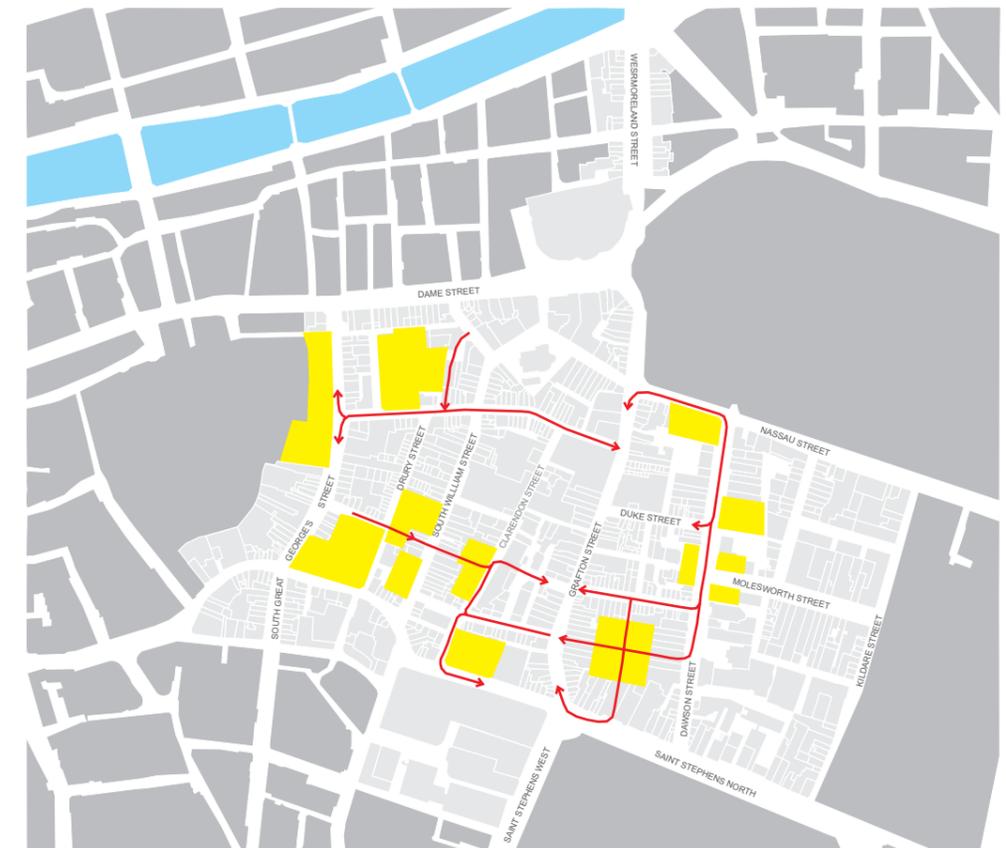


Fig1. Development Strategy - Grafton St. Area

**GRAFTON ST LOOPS MAP**  
POTENTIAL SITES .....   
LOOPS.....



1. South William St. - special architectural character



2. Duke St. - potentially important link



3. Chatham St. - potentially a significant pedestrian route



4. South King St. - development of Eircom site will create strong magnet



# 7.0 Response Strategies

## 7.1 Development Strategy Continued

### Henry Street Area

Again the strategy here centres on the development of a number of key sites and the creation of new pedestrian loops. This strategy is intended to attract people into streets adjoining Henry St., to extend the retail frontage and encourage the mix of uses required to enliven the area. Two main areas are identified.

#### Area 1- North and East of Henry Street

This area includes three key sites the Carlton site, lands to the east of Clerys and Independent House.

The Carlton site has the capacity to provide a very significant quantum of retail floor space and a new street, which will create a direct link between O'Connell Street and Henry Street through Moore St and the ILAC centre. The provision of such a significant amount of retail floor space will not only help to reinforce the eastern end of Henry Street, but will play a major part in re-integrating O'Connell Street, marginalised as a shopping destination, back into a retail loop.

The same is true for sites to the east of Clerys, which will ensure that the east side of O'Connell St. and North Earl St are once more an essential and vibrant part of the Henry St. shopping experience.

The redevelopment of Independent House on Middle Abbey Street will create a new high profile shopping frontage onto the LUAS line on Abbey Street Upper, linked directly with Henry Street via a new street and the existing GPO Arcade.

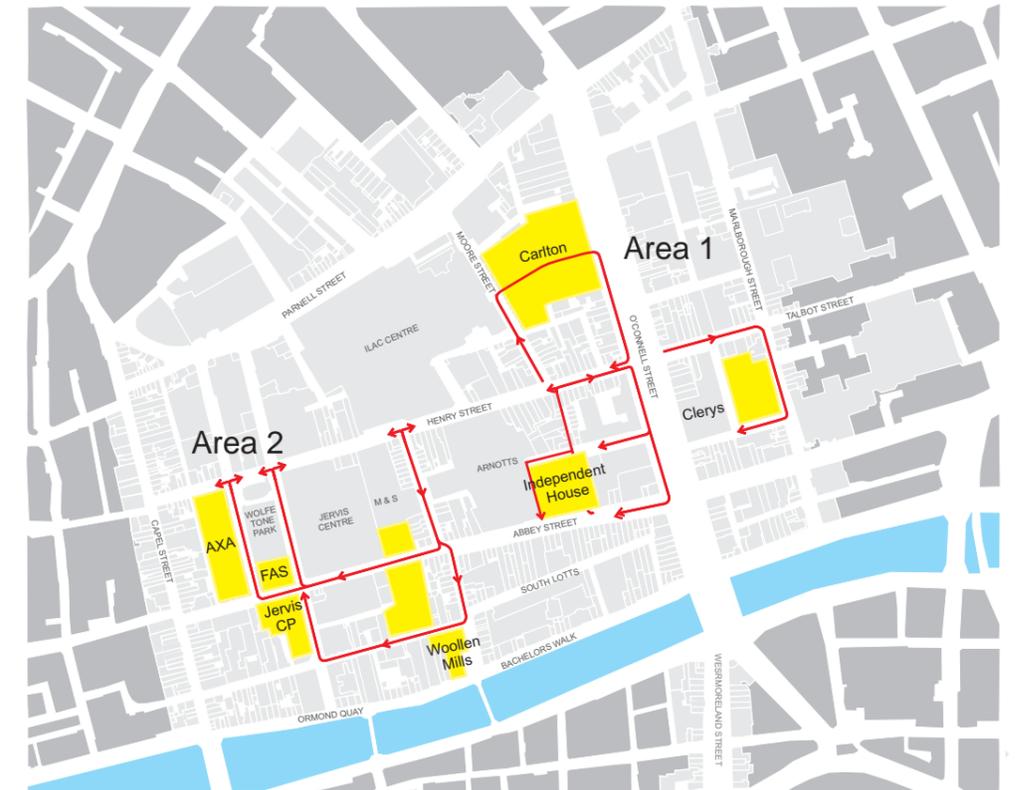
#### Area 2 - South and West of Henry Street

The main development opportunities in this area centre on a number of sites around Wolfe Tone Square, including;

- The AXA site west of Wolfe Tone Park
- The FAS site south of Wolfe Tone Park
- Jervis Car Park north of the Morrison Hotel

The proposal is to generate shopping activity around Wolfe Tone Square, developing a new pedestrianised street on the west side of the square. There will be a strong emphasis on shopping on the western side to complement the café/restaurant in St. Mary's Church and the ground floor cafes and shops proposed for the Fas site. The upgrading of the western façade of the Jervis St Shopping Centre to incorporate active uses fronting onto the eastern side of the square will further enliven this new shopping destination.

The implementation of this strategy is already boosted by the LUAS, which stops within a minute's walk from the Square. The pedestrianisation of Mary Street and Wolfe Tone Street between Abbey St and Mary St will facilitate a free flow of pedestrian movement onto an extended Wolfe Tone Square.



Development Strategy - Henry St. Area  
POTENTIAL SITES .....  
LOOPS.....



An extended Wolfe Tone Square



## 7.0 Response Strategies

### 7.2 The Land Use Strategy

- In order to increase vitality in the Henry St Area and encourage people to spend more time in the area, it is a key strategy of the plan to introduce a greater diversity and mix of uses including evening time activity.

A range of complementary uses will be actively encouraged to locate in this area (excluding the main spine of Henry Street). These uses will include cafés, restaurants (excluding takeaways and fast food outlets) and bars. Strict controls will be applied when considering proposals for these uses in order to achieve an even spread of such uses and prevent them from dominating any street frontage.

In assessing development proposals, the following will be taken into consideration:

The impact of the proposed use on the character of the street frontage and the level of shopping provision, taking into account both the current levels of non-retail use and the current levels of the specified use already established within each individual street block. In this matter the Planning Authority will seek to ensure that any proposed development would not result in the non-retail use being over dominant by virtue of its size, location or relationship to other uses.

- In order to reinforce Grafton Street's reputation as the premier shopping street in the city, it is planning policy that higher order retail outlets will be the principal use sought at basement, ground and first floor levels, including fashion outlets (multiple and independent stores), 'flagship' stores, niche and specialist retailers including home furnishings, beauty products, camera equipment, jewellery and books. There will be a presumption against granting permission for uses that detract from the essential character of the street, displace retail uses or interrupt the shopping frontage.

In support of this policy, it is an objective of the Plan to prevent the encroachment or proliferation of retail outlets that detract from the essential character of Grafton Street and its environs. Planning controls will be introduced to limit the number and location of lower value or convenience outlets including convenience shops, newsagents and discount stores and other uses such as chemists and mobile phone shops already well represented on the street. In this regard consideration will be given to the preparation and implementation of a Scheme of Special Planning Control.

- Active encouragement will be given to developers and property owners to re-develop key development blocks, create new street frontages, and new connections in the Henry Street area, and provide additional shopping and leisure opportunities.
- The City Council will actively promote the re-development of sites identified in the Grafton Street area to deliver the necessary quantum of development and the large retail floor plates necessary to broaden the retail base and expand the retail quarter.
- The development of sites located on and to the east of Westmoreland St and O'Connell St will also be promoted. This is to provide a continuous retail frontage and encourage pedestrian movement along key connections between the Henry St and Grafton St. areas and to ensure the greater integration of Westmoreland St, O'Connell St and North Earl St. into the Grafton St./Henry St. retail cores



# 7.0 Response Strategies

## 7.3 Public Space Strategy

This strategy focuses on the pedestrian experience and on creating clearly defined, safe, and attractive walking routes between and within the two main retail areas.

The aim is to create a network of attractive streets and spaces where the pedestrian can walk with ease and enjoy a range of planned and unplanned activities, free from traffic conflict. To meet this objective a range of interventions is proposed;

### 1. Strengthening North-South Connections

Three main routes are critical to forging greater unity between the north and south retail areas. These are;

- College Green/Westmoreland Street/ O'Connell Bridge
- Andrew St/Central Bank/Crown Alley/ Ha'penny Bridge/Liffey Street Upper & Lower
- Georges St Lower/Eustace Street/Millennium Bridge/Jervis Street

The objective will be to facilitate ease and quality of pedestrian movement along each of these routes and to encourage retail outlets to locate along their frontages. This will be achieved through creating wider pavements, improved crossing points, using high quality materials as in O'Connell St., stylish lighting and street furniture, seating, planting and public art.

The delivery of this objective will be supported by detailed landscape proposals for each route.

### 2. Creation of New Street Links

A number of new streets are proposed to provide essential links between established retail streets and clusters of proposed retail developments. These new streets will have their own distinctive character, providing new street frontages, a range of new shop units and complementary uses. The main links proposed are;

#### (i) O'Connell Street to Moore St. (via Carlton Development)

This route creates the opportunity to anchor the proposed new shopping and leisure destination on O'Connell St Upper within the established retail area centred on Henry St. It also strengthens the potential of Moore St to contribute to the vitality of the north city retail area. This can be further strengthened by an imaginative environmental improvement scheme for Moore Street to create a high quality setting for this bustling street based food market.

#### (ii) Henry Street to Abbey St (via Independent House development)

This new route has the potential to strengthen the existing retail link between Henry St and Abbey Street and to support and promote the extension of the retail area to Abbey Street.

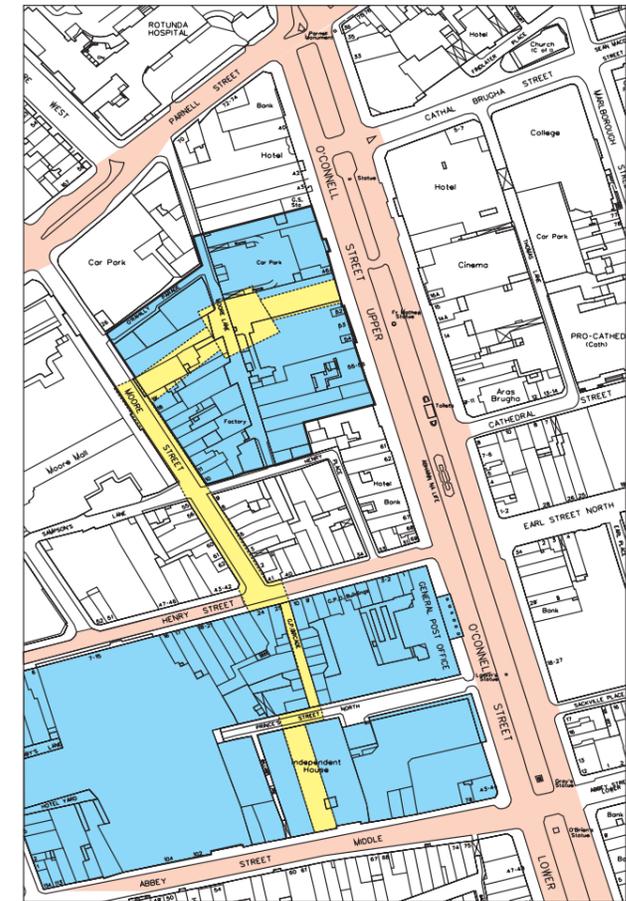
This link can over time be extended to the south city via Bachelors Walk and a pedestrian bridge across the Liffey into Temple Bar and Fosters Place, forging a strong and alternative pedestrian link between O'Connell St and the Grafton Street area.

#### (iii) Fade Street to Harry Street

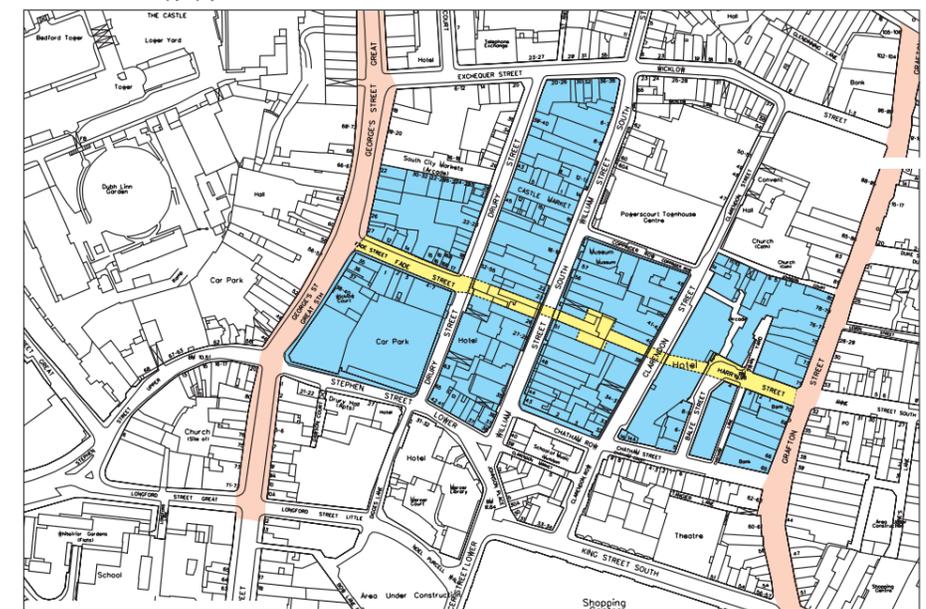
This new street has the potential to act as a catalyst for the redevelopment of a number of earmarked sites to the south east of Grafton St. The precise line of the route is dependant on its incorporation into a number of potential development proposals including the Westbury Hotel complex. It is envisaged that the route will incorporate a number of small public spaces

#### (iv) Grafton St to Dawson Street

This new route opens up substantial backlands with the potential to create a new shopping/recreational/cultural hub centred on both the new street and on an upgraded Anne's Lane. A link from the Lane through to St Stephens Green provides the possibility of a further pedestrian loop. It is envisaged that this new route will also incorporate new public space.



(i) (ii)



(iii) (iv)



# 7.0 Response Strategies

## 7.3 Public Space Strategy continued

### 3. Creation of New Public Spaces

Continued investment in the development and upgrading of public space is considered critical to creating a distinctive, attractive and coherent physical environment in the city. Good quality public spaces provide an opportunity for people to take a breather from the hustle and bustle of the city, to watch the world go by and to enjoy a variety of street entertainment.

Following on from the recent major investment in a number of high profile environmental projects in the city i.e. O'Connell St, Henry St, The Boardwalk, Smithfield, the Plan proposes the creation or strengthening of the following public spaces;

#### (1) Stephens Green/Grafton St

This space is envisaged as a major urban plaza marking the northern entrance to the Grafton St retail area and providing generous space for a range of activities, including street based entertainment.

#### (2) Mercer St/South William Street

The junction of these two streets provides the opportunity to create a distinctive public space, to provide for comfortable pedestrian crossing in an attractive landscaped setting to include an art feature.

#### (3) Grafton St/Nassau St

The proposed design treatment of this space should address the issue of pedestrian and traffic conflict, reduce the extent of pavement clutter, and create an attractive 'resting' point for pedestrians.

#### (4) Georges Street Lower/Dame Lane

This space presents a unique opportunity for a well designed pocket park providing seating and planting, a tranquil break from the more hectic shopping streets.

#### (5) Woollen Mills Space

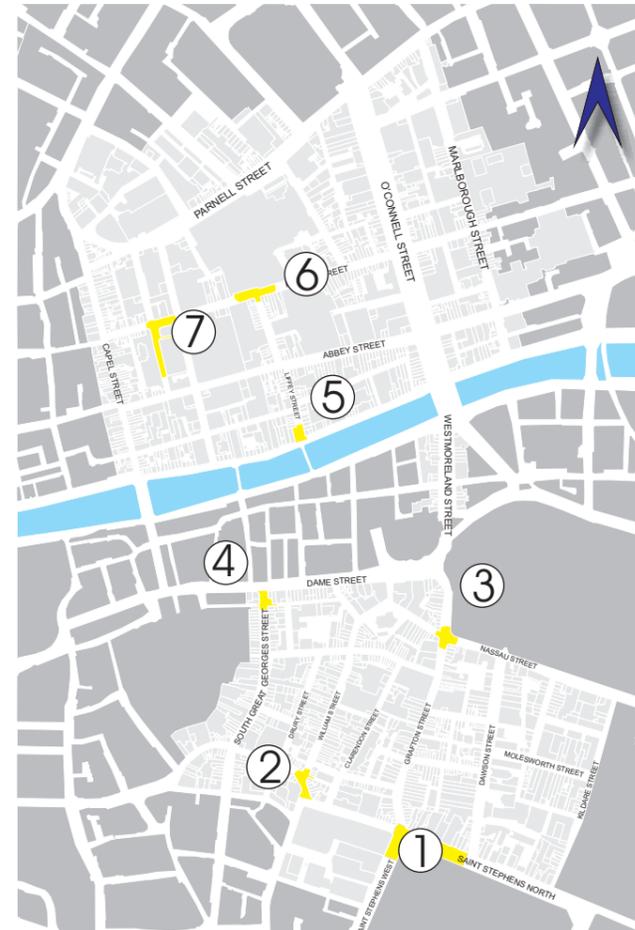
This space, located prominently on the northern side of the Ha'penny Bridge, on one of the main north-south pedestrian routes, provides an ideal spot for a vibrant hub incorporating lively ground floor uses, seating, planting, and performance space.

#### (6) Henry St/Liffey St Lower

This space marks an important junction in the Henry St/Mary St Shopping Area. To mark it's significance, it should be redesigned as a small plaza, incorporating special paving, planting and seating.

#### (7) Wolfe Tone Square

The redevelopment of buildings around Wolfe Tone Park and the pedestrianisation of part of Wolfe Tone Street creates an opportunity to enhance this urban space and to develop a new shopping and leisure destination .



Stephens Green/Grafton St. Space



Woollen Mills Space



# 7.0 Response Strategies

## 7.3 Public Space Strategy continued

### 4. Refurbishment and extension of Key Pedestrian Street Network

#### (i) Repaving

Grafton Street Pedestrian Spine (incl' adjoining pedestrianised streets), Liffey Street Upper and Lower

#### (ii) Extension to Pedestrianised Street Network

Anne St South, Duke St, Chatham St. (part of) Harry St., Wicklow Street (part of), Liffey St Lower (from Lotts to Quays), Wolfe Tone St (part of) Mary St.

#### (iii) Pavement Widening

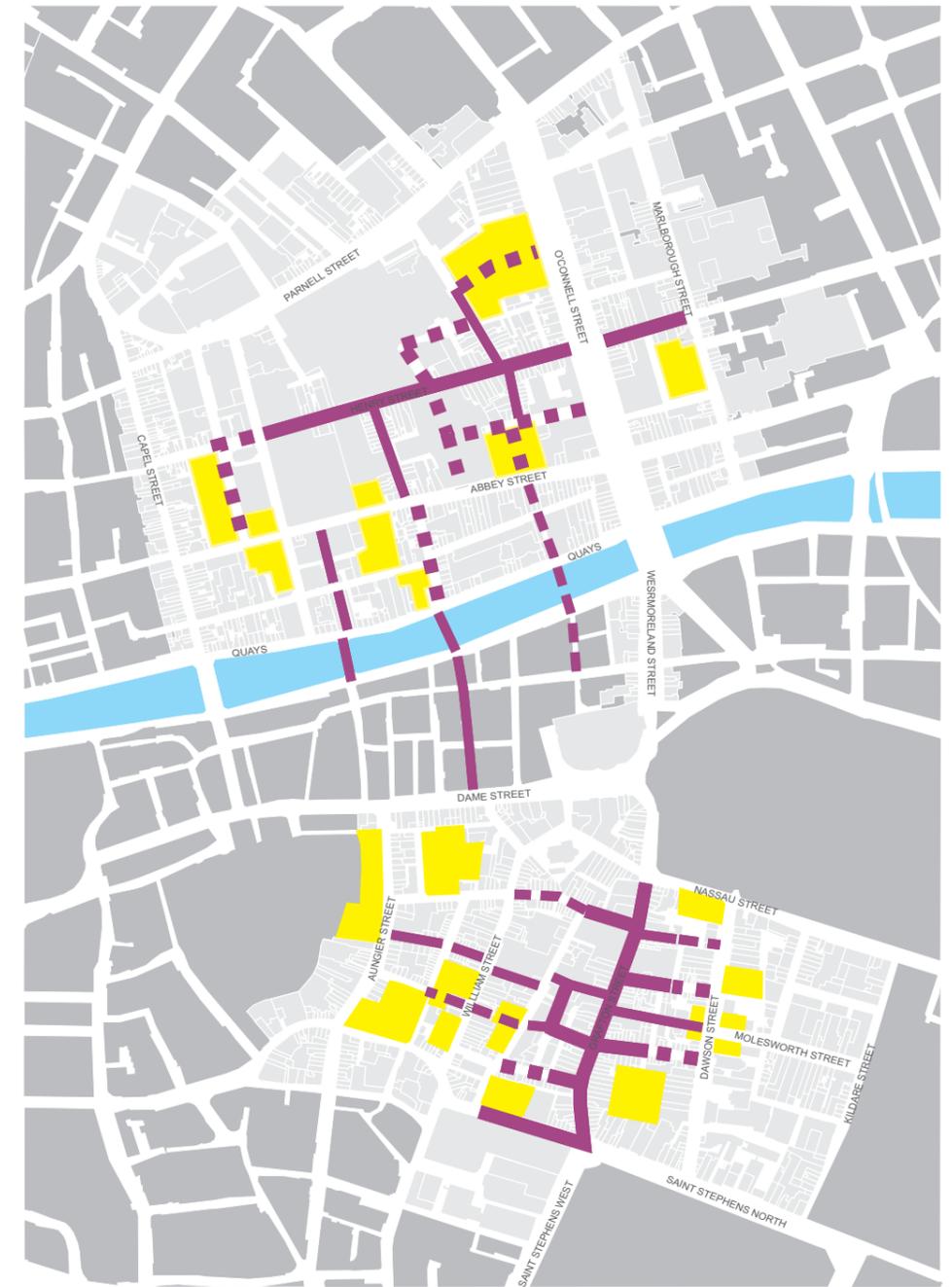
Nassau Street from Dawson Street to Suffolk Street, Suffolk Street, Church Lane, Trinity Street, Wicklow Street, South William Street, Liffey Street Lower (from Abbey Street to Lotts).

#### (iv) Removal Of On Street Car Parking

Duke Street, Anne's Street South, Nassau Street from Dawson Street to Suffolk Street, Wicklow Street, Clarendon Street, Clarendon Row, Balfe Street, Chatham Street, South William Street, Mary Street, Jervis Street and Wolfe Tone Street.

#### (v) Shared Surface Streets with restriction on vehicular access:

Wicklow Street, Clarendon Street, Clarendon Row, Balfe Street; Chatham Street, Chatham Row.



Existing and proposed Pedestrian Streets  
POTENTIAL SITES .....  
EXISTING PEDESTRIAN STREETS .....  
PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN STREETS .....



## 7.0 Response Strategies

### 7.4 Movement and Linkage Strategy.

● **To ensure a competitive city and reinvigorated retail area, efficient access must be provided to the city centre, in particular for public transport and service vehicles.**

- To review the Inner Orbital Route to reflect the expanded city core (Point Depot to Heuston Station and Iveagh Gardens to Dorset Street/North Circular Road), so that it integrates with the locations of both existing and proposed public transport termini and car parks;
- To identify appropriate car parking sites at the edge of the expanded centre city to facilitate the physical expansion of the retail core, reduce conflict with pedestrians and allow for better co-ordination with the Inner Orbital route.
- To review the locations of bus termini in the city centre in order to ensure efficient access while relieving over concentration on key streets and adjacent public spaces; this will involve identifying appropriate alternative locations for arrival/departure public transport hubs with access to car parks, and retail service areas.
- To provide for delivery vehicle access in a manner that ensures an effective service while minimising pedestrian/vehicular conflict and protecting/enhancing pedestrian amenities.

● **To develop stronger connections between the two shopping areas of Henry Street and Grafton Street and with other key destinations.**

- To provide good quality pedestrian links between points of arrival (train, DART, LUAS, bus stops and car parks) and the main shopping areas.
- To encourage the connection of the two LUAS lines, from St. Stephen's Green to Abbey Street, close to the retail core, such as, through College Green and Westmoreland Street.
- To reinforce the main pedestrian links between the north and south shopping areas and other key destinations by prioritising pedestrian movements at key vehicular junctions, especially along the route of the Civic Spine.
- To implement the proposals for O'Connell Bridge, as set out in the *O'Connell Street Integrated Area Plan* (DCC 1998), in order to facilitate pedestrian movement.

● **To create a more pedestrian friendly environment within each of the two shopping areas and encourage greater pedestrian movement.**

- To facilitate pedestrian movement by introducing, where appropriate, pedestrian only streets, shared surfaces and wider pavements.
- Provision of integrated loading bays and bus stops, removal of on-street car parking and limiting hours of access for delivery vehicles.
- To give pedestrian priority at the key junctions within each shopping area, such as, at the intersections of, Grafton Street with Nassau Street, Mary Street with Jervis Street, Dawson Street with Anne Street, Duke Street and Molesworth Street, South Great Georges Street with St. Stephens Street, Fade Street and Exchequer Street, and Capel Street with Mary Street and Abbey Street.
- To review the amount, type and location of bicycle and motorcycle parking and to make provision for convenient parking at the edge of the retail loops which will not encroach on pedestrian/ pavement space.



## 7.0 Response Strategies

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### 7.5 Urban Design Strategy

Creating attractive cities in which people want to spend time and do business

- To prioritise the street network as the primary focus for all development
- To maximise linkages within the individual shopping areas and between the core functions and adjoining character areas
- To build on the inherent characteristics and distinctiveness of the existing urban structure
- To create a series of focal points in the retail area by the enhancement of public spaces
- To achieve an appropriate height, scale and massing of buildings to define the street space or space
- To acknowledge context in new development i.e. to complement the grain, height and scale of established streetscapes
- To maintain a fine grain in the street pattern where it exists and to refine coarse grain where opportunity arises
- To maintain a fine grain in the street pattern where it exists and to refine coarse grain where opportunity arises

### 7.6 Buildings/Architecture Strategy

- To achieve the highest standards of contemporary architecture buildings that are crafted, and designed with care
- To exploit the potential of protected structures and other buildings of architectural merit to contribute to creating a unique identity
- To develop a range of contemporary building models which provide for the larger retail and office floor plates and complement the established fine-grained pattern of development (particularly at ground level).
- To create a strong visual connection between new buildings and established buildings within the streetscape
- To establish and enforce high standards in shop front design

## 8.0 Implementation and Phasing





## 8.0 Implementation and Phasing

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### 8.0 Implementation and Phasing

#### Introduction

The phasing and implementation of the Plan involves linking new development with key interventions in the public domain. While new development and redevelopment depends on the private sector, many of the public domain interventions depend on the public sector, especially Dublin City Council. In order to encourage private investment, a message of confidence and long-term commitment to the regeneration of the City Centre retail core will underpin the Council's policies and investment programmes.

The implementation of the Plan is over a 5-8 year period.

#### Implementation

The City Council will adopt a proactive approach to the Plan by committing resources to the implementation of public domain projects. It is essential that the commercial, leisure and cultural communities support the City Council's vision of creating a world class shopping city a retail experience surpassing all others in the country and comparable with any other European city.

The following steps are proposed as the basis of a coherent preliminary programme;

#### 1. Consultation

It is intended to carry out a broad consultation process with all the key players. In addition to consulting with the Elected Representatives, it is proposed to initiate a consultation process with a wide range of stakeholders from the business, arts, culture and leisure sectors, and their representative bodies.

#### 2. Planning Policy

It is proposed to designate Grafton Street as an Architectural Conservation Area and prepare a special planning control scheme, with particular attention to retail dominated development, large scale formats and permitted uses on the street.

#### 3. Detailed Guidance on Identified Sites

To develop detailed design and development briefs for the key development sites; with regard to uses, urban form, spatial legibility and enhancement of the public realm.

#### 4. City Centre Public Domain Team

This area-based team will have responsibility for all works, lighting, cleansing, signage and maintenance of the public domain (areas taken in charge) including lighting, waste collection and cleaning, street furniture and works by utility companies in the City Centre.