



# 7 Retail



## 7 Retail

**Vision:** To support the future vitality and viability of the main existing retail centres in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and to facilitate a competitive and healthy environment for the retailing industry into the future by ensuring future growth in retail floorspace respects and responds to changing economic circumstances directly impacting on the County.

### 7.1 Introduction

Of all the commercial sectors it is the retail market that has undergone the most significant change over the last seven years – not just in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown but in the wider Greater Dublin Area and, indeed, nationally. Overall retail floorspace in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, for example, nearly doubled in the period 2001-2007 driven almost exclusively by the unprecedented strong national economic growth evident throughout that period, which in turn translated into strong consumer expenditure patterns. The retail fortunes of the County has changed dramatically over that period. In 2001 the Greater Dublin Area Retail Planning Strategy noted a low inflow of retail expenditure into Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown which contrasted with the situation in the other Metropolitan Counties. The 2001 Strategy identified major gaps in the potential retail market on offer in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown and indicated that 45% of the County's comparison goods expenditure was 'leaking' to other retailing centres within the Metropolitan area. The primary retailing objective outlined in the 2004-2010 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Plan was to promote additional retail development with a view to stopping the outflow of comparison goods expenditure from the County. By 2007, however, the retailing position in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County had completely changed. The County is now a net importer rather than net exporter of comparison goods expenditure, largely, it should be noted, on foot of the opening in 2004 of Phase 1 of the new Dundrum Town Centre.

## 7.2 Strategic Context

### 7.2.1 Policy RET1: Retail Planning Guidelines

**It is the policy of the Council to have regard to the *Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2005)* in determining planning applications for retail development.**

The *Retail Planning Guidelines* published by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government in 2005 require the larger urban areas of the Country to prepare retail strategies and policies for their areas. The strategies are to comprehensively address:

- > The retail hierarchy, the role of centres and the size of the main town and district centres
- > Define the boundaries of the core shopping areas
- > Identify additional retail floorspace requirements
- > Provide strategic guidance on the location and scale of retail development
- > Identify relevant criteria for the assessment of retail developments

### 7.2.2 Policy RET2: Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy

**It is Council policy to have regard to the *Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008 – 2016* but to adopt a cautionary position in relation to consideration of future retail floorspace requirements and objectives in light of changing economic circumstances.**

In summer 2006 the Regional Planning Guidelines Office of the Greater Dublin and Mid-East Regional Authorities commissioned consultants to prepare a new '*Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area*' to cover the period 2008 – 2016. While the Strategy is to be used as a basis to help guide and inform the various retail policies and objectives of this Development Plan it is, nevertheless, incumbent that the County Development Plan fully recognises and reflects the fundamental changes in economic and retailing circumstances that have occurred since the *Retail Strategy* was first initiated in summer 2006.

The *Greater Dublin Area Retail Strategy* aims to set out a co-ordinated and sustainable approach to the assessment and provision of retail within the Greater Dublin Area so that:

- > Adequate and suitable provision is made to meet the needs of the changing population patterns, both overall and locally, and provide for healthy competition and consumer choice.
- > Retail in suitable locations is provided, integrated within existing growth areas and public transport investments.

- Significant overprovision, which would place more marginal locations under severe pressure and undermine sustainability driven policies aimed at revitalising town centres, is avoided.

The Strategy sets out a series of policy recommendations which draw on quantitative analysis undertaken as part of the review, examining market patterns, expenditure and future growth projections. By setting out a strategic framework for retail, the Strategy seeks to give guidance on where future retail should be provided and what issues need to be addressed.

Notwithstanding the above, there are dangers inherent in adopting a slavish adherence to the floorspace figures being articulated in the Strategy. The Strategy was initiated at a time when economic growth was still very buoyant. The future growth projections justifying fairly substantial additional floorspace over the period of the Strategy were predicated on a continued Statewide economic buoyancy and a rising consumer expenditure pattern based on relatively significant and continuing population growth in the Region for the duration of the Strategy. In essence the Strategy is based on data largely collated in the Autumn of 2006 – during a time of record housing completions, strong house price growth, high levels of in-migration by non-nationals and historically low unemployment figures. The last two years has seen a significant reversal in all of these indicators. The construction sector is literally in hibernation, house prices have fallen significantly while the unprecedented high

levels in in-migration experienced following EU enlargement have dropped so significantly that nationally in late 2008/early 2009 the migration pattern became one of net out migration. Unemployment levels have effectively doubled in the 12 months to January 2009 while consumer expenditure levels have dropped anything between 10 and 12% year on year depending on what source data is referred to.

While the Strategy does point to the significant lead-in times often associated with the delivery of high quality new retail developments (and had accordingly built-in a 20% addition floorspace ‘headroom’ to reflect retail projects being completed post-2016), the Strategy does stress that “...growth in Irish GDP will slow going forward...” (para 4.4) and that “... there are now definite indications in 2008 pointing to slowing levels of growth in consumer retail expenditure” (para 4.7). The Retail Strategy concurs that future retail floorspace need estimates detailed in the Strategy are based on projected population growth in the Greater Dublin Area as forecast by the *Regional Planning Guidelines* but acknowledges that “...falling population levels and weak economic circumstances will reduce levels of need” (para 5.3.1). The Strategy acknowledges that if lower levels of forecasted growth in retail demand were to become manifest the effects on existing towns and centres could be detrimental. Significant retail overprovision is likely to involve “...increased vulnerability and/or deterioration for weaker centres and towns such as Dún Laoghaire, ... Blackrock, Stillorgan...”. The Strategy identifies the poor retail environment, uncompetitive tenant





mix and inadequate space in Dún Laoghaire and recommends that opportunities for improving the existing environment should be considered. In relation to Blackrock and Stillorgan that Strategy recommends these centres be reinvented and enhanced to bring them in line with modern retailing needs.

In conclusion, and while the County Council is obliged to 'have regard' to the various floorspace targets set by the Retail Strategy, the wisdom of actively seeking to deliver on these targets in the context of a 'softening' economy must be questionable. Based on a number of factors, namely:

- > the unprecedented growth in the quantum of retail floorspace constructed in the County in the last seven years
- > the overall quantum of vacant floorspace associated with recently completed retail/mixed use schemes
- > the quantum of 'pipeline' floorspace i.e. retail floorspace already granted planning permission but not yet commenced construction, and
- > the acknowledged potential underestimation in relation to the future significance of 'special forms of trading' (SFT). (Recent data suggests online and other forms of SFT could constitute up to 14% of the overall comparison goods market by 2016);

It is recommended that the approach to retailing and retailing floorspace in this Development Plan

should be cautionary, particularly in relation to the potential adverse consequences of oversupply.

## 7.3 Retail Hierarchy

### 7.3.1 Policy RET<sub>3</sub>: Retail Hierarchy

**It is Council policy to have regard to the *Greater Dublin Area Retail Planning Strategy 2008 – 2016* in defining the retail hierarchy of the County and defining the role of the retail centres. It is Council policy to promote the viability and vitality of its existing main retail centres while continuing to protect and improve the amenity of surrounding areas.**

At the heart of the Retail Strategy is a hierarchy of retail locations that form the basis for determining the quantum and location of new retail development. The proposed retail hierarchy for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is set out below in Table 7.1.

Table 7.1 Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Retail Hierarchy

| Description                       | Locations   | Overall STRATEGY   |
|-----------------------------------|---|--|
| Major Town Centres                | Dún Laoghaire   | Consolidation and retail expansion encouraged. Refurbishment/ redevelopment of existing fabric to provide larger floor plates. Comprehensive environmental improvement and upgrade of public realm – including laneways. |
|                                   | Dundrum   | Implementation of Phase 2 of Town Centre – to include appropriate level of complementary non-retail uses and activities e.g. recreational, entertainment, cultural. Major environmental upgrade of Main Street.          |
| District Centres                  | Blackrock   | Encourage potential redevelopment of Blackrock and Frascati Shopping Centres as high density mixed-use centre in accordance with proposed Local Area Plan. Limited expansion of retail floorspace.                       |
|                                   | Stillorgan  | Encourage potential redevelopment as higher density, urban mixed-use centre in accordance with general provisions of adopted Local Area Plan. Limited expansion of convenience and comparison retail floorspace.         |
|                                   | Nutgrove  | Encourage potential redevelopment as higher density urban mixed-use centre. Limited expansion of convenience and comparison retail floorspace.   |
|                                   | Cornelscourt  | Limited expansion of retail floorspace on constrained site.  |
|                                   | Cherrywood  | Promote fully mixed-use sustainable town centre in accordance with SDZ Planning Scheme   |
|                                   | Carrickmines  | Net retail sales area in the Park Carrickmines District Centre zoned lands to be capped at 25,000 sq.m   |
| Established Neighbourhood Centres | Various e.g. Ballybrack Ballinteer Sandyford  | Promote mixed-use potential of neighbourhood centres as appropriate, subject to protection of local amenities. Limited incremental growth in retail floorspace in response to population levels.                         |
| New Neighbourhood Centre          | Various e.g. Stepside Ticknock  | Promote mixed-use potential of new and refurbished centres to provide for local need. Expansion in line with planned population growth.  |
| Key Development Areas             | Various e.g. Woodbrook/ Shanganagh, Kiltiernan/ Glenamuck, Old Conna, Rathmichael/ Ferndale, Cherrywood | Development of sustainable mixed-use urban villages in accordance with approved Local Area Plans/SDZ. Retail floorspace in line with planned population levels.  |

In broad terms the Strategy seeks to define the categories and types of services expected within each level viz:

#### Major Town Centres

- Full range of all types of retail services from newsagents to specialist shops and boutiques, department stores, foodstores of all types and a high level of mixed uses including the arts and culture to create a vibrant living place. Centres should be well connected and served by high quality public transport, and should be serving population catchments in excess of 60,000 people.

#### District Centres

- These centres will vary both in the scale of provision and size of catchment depending on proximity to a major town centre but a good range of comparison shopping would be expected (though no large department store), some leisure activities and a range of cafés and restaurants and other mixed uses. They should contain at least one supermarket and ancillary foodstores alongside financial and other retail services. District Centres should generally range in size from 10-25,000sqm net retail sales area catering for a population of between 10,000-40,000.

#### Neighbourhood Centres

- These centres usually contain one supermarket or discount foodstore ranging in size from 1,000-2,500sqm with a limited range of supporting shops and retail services and possibly other services such as post offices, community centres or health clinics grouped together to create a focus for the local population. These centres meet the local day-to-day needs of surrounding residents.

The GDA Retail Strategy, in recognition that there is currently more limited capacity for significant new development to be supported by growth in population and expenditure per capita criteria, cautions that there is a limited quantitative case to be put forward for the provision of new centres outside of those planned in the Regional Planning Guidelines and current Development Plans. This Development Plan fully concurs with that position.

It is considered the well established retail hierarchy in the County is operating reasonably satisfactorily and its overall logic is well understood by the general public, retailers and developers alike.

In summer 2007 there was a total of some 170,000sqm net retail floorspace in the County. Approximately 70% of this is comparison floorspace (including retail warehousing) and the remainder convenience goods space. Some 45% of retail floorspace is located in the two Major Town Centres – Dún Laoghaire (23,000sqm) and Dundrum (34,000sqm). The five established

District Centres – Blackrock, Cornelscourt, Stillorgan, Carrickmines and Nutgrove - had a combined overall floorspace of c.50,000sqm. At the time that the retail statistics were being compiled for the GDA Regional Strategy there was an additional 72,000sqm 'pipeline' retail floorspace in Dún Laoghaire either under construction or with planning permission but yet not commenced.

### 7.3.2 Core Retail Areas

The *Retail Planning Guidelines* (DoEHLG 2005) require retail strategies to define the boundaries of the Core Retail Areas. The definition of the Core Retail Areas for each of the main centres in the County is summarised below:

- Dundrum Town Centre - Between Main Street and Dundrum Bypass and from Waldemar Terrace to Wyckham Way
- Dún Laoghaire Town Centre - Georges Street (including Bloomfield Shopping Centre) from Library Road to Corrig Avenue
- Stillorgan -Lower Kilmacud Road (including Stillorgan Shopping Centre) from The Hill junction to the Overflow Carpark
- Blackrock - Main Street to Frascati Shopping Centre and from Blackrock Shopping Centre to Carysfort Avenue
- Cornelscourt - As per the 'DC' zoning objective
- Nutgrove - As per the 'DC' zoning objective

### 7.3.3 Policy RET4: Major Town Centres

**It is Council policy to maintain the two Major Town Centres - Dún Laoghaire and Dundrum as the primary retail centres in the County. This will be reflected in the nature and scale of retail and services permitted in these centres and by the range of complementary leisure, entertainment and cultural facilities located there.**

Dún Laoghaire and Dundrum are the two Major Town Centres in the County but clearly they are quite different entities. As Major Town Centres they have a role beyond simply retailing – both have a vital social, cultural and employment function that needs to be catered for in the context of their future growth.

In Dundrum the first phase of the new Town Centre is nearing completion and includes much needed social, cultural and community facilities which helps to energise and animate the new Town Centre both day and night. The commencement of Phase 2, involving the complete demolition of the old shopping centre will follow on. Some 38,000sqm lettable additional retail floorspace is being proposed in Phase 2. Construction could take in the order of five years to complete.

There is recognition that, in retailing terms, Dún Laoghaire cannot, and should not, attempt to



compete with or mimic Dundrum. Any future retailing activity in Dún Laoghaire should focus on consolidation and redevelopment of retail floorspace, upgrading of the wider physical fabric, improved pedestrian permeability and priority all within the context of a considered programme of environmental improvement and the delivery of a high quality public realm.

#### 7.3.4 Policy RET5: District Centres

**It is Council policy to maintain five District Centres at Blackrock, Stillorgan, Nutgrove, Cornelscourt and Carrickmines.**

These District Centres are characterised by medium or large foodstore anchors together with a range of comparison shopping. Stillorgan, Blackrock and, to a lesser extent, Nutgrove accommodate a range of other retail services, leisure facilities and community structures. The District Centres should progressively develop as mixed-use urban centres to include a residential and commercial office component where appropriate. Development Plan and Local Area Plan policies will help guide the form of future development so that they evolve into fully functioning mixed-use, higher density urban centres with enhanced public transport, access and parking demand management. Section 7.8 sets out Specific Retail Objectives for a number of the County's established District Centres.

#### 7.3.5 Policy RET6: Cherrywood (Retail)

**It is Council policy to promote the medium term development of a fully sustainable mixed-use Town Centre in the proposed Key Development Area of Cherrywood in accordance with a proposed Strategic Development Zone Planning Scheme. Retail floorspace to be provided in the Town Centre will be 35,000 sqm in accordance with the provisions of the *Retail Strategy*.**

The *Retail Strategy* states that for areas of intense high density development providing for new towns of over 10,000 population the guideline of a maximum of 20,000sqm net of retail provision advocated for District Centres can be extended by up to 15,000sqm lettable floorspace to reflect the dense urban character of the development and the anticipated high population located within a short walking distance of the centre – where the area is not already served by an existing centre. The Cherrywood SDZ, with a planned resident population of c.32-35,000 clearly fulfils these requirements. There is, however, a degree of uncertainty in relation to when the Cherrywood Town Centre might become operational. This will clearly be driven by wider economic considerations but for the purposes of this Plan it is assumed the Centre will be open by 2016 – at least in part. This will be kept under review.

### 7.3.6 Policy RET7: Neighbourhood Centres

**It is Council policy to encourage the provision of an appropriate mix, range and type of uses - including retail and retail services in areas zoned objective 'NC' subject to the protection of the residential amenities of the surrounding area.**

The function of Neighbourhood Centres is to provide a range of convenient and easily accessible retail outlets and services within walking distance for the local catchment population. The Council considers that, subject to the protection of residential amenities, a number of the larger neighbourhood centres are capable of being promoted as local mixed-use nodes accommodating a range of uses beyond simply retailing or retail services. The introduction of residential and a higher level of commercial office activity, for example, could 'sit' quite comfortably in many neighbourhood centre locations without detriment to local amenity. The Zoning Objective for 'NC' zone (Table 18.6) has been amended to facilitate a more diverse range of uses that has been the case heretofore in previous Development Plans.

In the new Key Development Areas – Woodbrook/ Shanganagh, Kiltiernan/ Glenamuck, Old Conna, Rathmichael/Ferndale Road – the type and range of facilities to be incorporated into mixed-use neighbourhood centres will be promoted through the mechanism of Local Area Plans.

### 7.3.7 Policy RET8: Convenience Shops

**It is Council policy to facilitate the provision of local convenience shops in residential areas where there is a clear deficiency of retail provision, subject to protecting residential amenity.**

Within residential areas, the Council recognises the need for convenience shopping provision and accepts that a neighbourhood centre may not always be available within easy walking distance. When evaluating proposals for such a use, the Council will have regard to the distance from the proposed development to existing shopping facilities and to its impact on the amenity of adjoining dwellings. Local convenience shops shall not have a floorspace greater than 100sqm net. (See also 16.5, 16.5.6(i) and 18.8).





### 7.3.8 Policy RET9: Discount Food Stores

Discount food stores are suited for location in Major Town Centres, District Centres and mixed use Neighbourhood Centres where they complement the multiplicity of uses.

### 7.3.9 Policy RET10: Casual Trading Areas

**It is Council policy to designate sites as Casual Trading Areas in suitable locations where deemed appropriate.**

In the implementation of this policy the Council will have regard to the terms of the Casual Trading Act 1995 (or as may be amended from time to time). It is also Council policy to promote organic producers and producer-only products through the provision of its 'CoCo Markets'.

### 7.3.10 Policy RET11: Non-Retail Uses

**It is Council policy to control the provision of non-retail uses at ground floor level in the principal shopping streets of Major Town Centres and District Centres and also within the shopping parades of Mixed-Use Neighbourhood Centres.**

This policy will be operated through the development management process. It is considered necessary to control the amount of non-retail floorspace at ground level within shopping centres in order to protect the retail viability of the centre, and to maintain the visual character of the streets which can be adversely affected by the impact of 'dead frontages'. Corner sites in Major Town Centres and District Centres are considered pivotal in creating a sense of vibrancy; the nature of the use of ground floor corner retail units will be required to reflect this in the design of their frontages, the use of the premises, and where feasible, their hours of opening.

### 7.3.11 Policy RET12: Retail Warehousing & Retail Parks

**It is Council policy to strictly control and limit additional new retail warehousing/retail park floorspace in the County for the duration of the Plan. The preferred location for any limited new retail warehousing will be on lands zoned Objective 'E' – "To provide for economic development and employment" where the site has good access to a suitable road network and has access to integrated public transport. Where considered appropriate some very limited retail warehousing may be open for consideration in or near the edge of lands zoned Objective 'MTC' – "To protect, provide for and/or improve Major Town Centre facilities", but only where it can be demonstrated that the proposal will add to the centre's overall attractiveness for shopping. Any application for retail warehousing will require to demonstrate that the proposal will not impact adversely on the vitality and viability**

**of established retail centres in accordance with the criteria set down in DoEHLG "Retail Planning Guidelines for Planning Authorities" 2005.**

The Retail Strategy 2008–2016 comments on the very significant increase in retail warehousing park schemes in the Greater Dublin Area since 2001. This trend has been mirrored in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown with the overall quantum of retail warehousing effectively doubling over the period from 28,000sqm to 52,000sqm. In terms of spatial distribution the heaviest concentrations of retail warehousing are to be found at:

- > Nutgrove
- > Sandyford Business Estate/Stillorgan Industrial Area
- > Carrickmines
- > Sallynoggin

The Retail Strategy comments quite forcibly on the reduced demand for new retail warehouse floorspace over the coming years and the need for careful consideration in future planning for this sector of the market. The Development Plan will give heed to the cautionary sentiment outlined in the Retail Strategy and will consider carefully any new proposals for additional retail warehouse floorspace in terms of potential retail impact both in existing centres and established retail warehousing cores. In addition, proposals will require to demonstrate that they are accessible by public transport and that there is sufficient capacity in the local road network to accommodate the development.

## 7.4 Additional Retail Floor Space

### 7.4.1 Policy RET13: Additional Retail Floor Space

**It is Council policy, while having regard to the Retail Strategy for the Greater Dublin Area 2008 – 2016, to nevertheless adopt a cautionary position in relation to the provision of significant additional retail floorspace in the County for the duration of the Plan – in recognition of the dramatic slowdown in the economy resulting in lower than expected in-migration levels and consequent lower growth in overall consumer expenditure.**

The Retail Strategy projects a 'Convenience Goods Need'<sup>1</sup> for the County up to 2016 of c.28,000sqm. Projected 'Comparison Goods Need' is in a range between c.96,000sqm (Low Projection) and c.130,000sqm (High Projection). (The difference between Low Projection and High Projection is a function of the proportions of comparison floorspace to be provided, or not, in the form of retail warehousing). To build in 'flexibility' into the Strategy to facilitate retail schemes that may not come on stream until after the end date of

<sup>1</sup> Gross Lettable – includes all areas available for let bar common mall areas/ circulation areas

2016 the Strategy also proposes that the 2016 floorspace need totals be 'adjusted' upwards by a maximum of 25% for comparison goods and 20% for convenience goods.

The authors of the Retail Strategy readily acknowledge the difficulties in preparing projections over long time periods and that the need figures referred to above should be reassessed at regular intervals *"...in light of both the scale of population growth in the County and whether it is above or below the Regional Planning Guidelines figures used in the Strategy and the levels of economic activity both nationally and locally which impact, in turn, on the retail spend by individuals in any catchment area"*.

Based on the analysis previously set out in paragraph 7.2.2, and to give credence and substance to the need for a cautionary approach, it is considered that, in the current climate, the upward 'adjustments' of 20% and 25% set out in the Strategy are overoptimistic and untenable. Indeed, even the validity of the High Projection 'Comparison Goods Need' figure of c.130,000sq.m seems questionable in the context of lower than expected population growth figures and contracting consumer expenditure levels.

In attempting to calculate realistic levels of needs it has to be borne in mind that, while the Strategy figures were inclusive of retail commitments as of summer 2007, existing grants of permission not yet commenced have not been subtracted nor have new retail completions since 2007. Notable among these latter figures is the c.36,000sqm Phase 2 at Dundrum. While there is a question mark in relation to the timing of the delivery of Dundrum Town Centre Phase 2 it would appear prudent to subtract the 36,000sqm allocated to Dundrum from the overall calculation.

## 7.5 Retail Strategy and Sustainability

Both the *Retail Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area* and the 2008-2016 Retail Strategy stress the importance of establishing the optimum location for new higher order (Major Town Centre/District Centre) retail developments which are accessible to all sections of society particularly by public transport and in a location which encourages multi-purpose shopping, business and leisure trips on the same journey. For lower order centres (Neighbourhood Centres and Convenience shops) these should be readily accessible from the local catchment by sustainable forms of transport – walking and cycling.

Contextually, Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is spatially very small. The urban core of the County stretches no more than 5-6 kilometres north-south while east-west along the coast

the extremities of the core are approximately 12 kilometres apart (Boosterstown and Shankill). The 'crow flies' distances separating the various Major Town Centres and District Centres are very small – Blackrock and Stillorgan, for example, are only 2 kilometres apart. Few parts of the County are more than 10-15 minutes travel time to a District or Major Town Centre. In terms of the sustainability agenda Dún Laoghaire Town Centre is located proximate to the DART line and forms the terminus to the most successful QBC in Metropolitan Dublin. Dundrum lies astride Luas Line B, Blackrock is well serviced by the DART and various bus routes while Stillorgan and Cornelscourt are adjacent to the N11 QBC corridor.

In terms of accessibility to lower order facilities few locations within the built-up area are significantly removed from neighbourhood centres, local convenience shops and/or petrol filling stations to satisfy day-to-day shopping requirements.

## 7.6 Monitoring and Review of Strategy

The Retail Planning Guidelines advise the relevant planning authorities to regularly monitor trends in their area and update retail policies as appropriate. A monitoring system will be put in place to ensure that any necessary adjustments in policy can be made. The quantum of new retail development proposed by the Strategy is based on revised population targets set in 2007 by the Greater Dublin Area Regional Planning Authority to further the implementation of the National Spatial Strategy. The Retail Strategy will require to be monitored and, if necessary, reviewed to take account of any further slowdown in the economy resulting in lower than expected immigration and consequent lower growth in consumer expenditure.

## 7.7 Assessment of Retail Development Proposals

### 7.7.1 Policy RET14: Assessment of Retail Proposals

**It is Council policy to ensure that applications for new retail development shall accord with the retail policies of the Plan and Government Guidance in the form of the 'Retail Planning Guidelines' (2005).**

Applications for new retail development shall:

- > Provide a detailed retail impact assessment to accompany the application where appropriate.
- > Demonstrate the need for the additional retail space.

- › Be of a high quality and incorporate layouts that encourage active and engaging frontages where appropriate.

## 7.8 Specific Objectives

### 7.8.1 Stillorgan District Centre

- › To promote the future redevelopment of Stillorgan as a multi-faceted, mixed-use sustainable District Centre having regard to the broad objectives of the adopted Stillorgan Local Area Plan.
- › The regeneration and redevelopment of Stillorgan District Centre should create an urban context in respect of scale, design and layout.
- › Good quality residential development shall be encouraged to ensure vitality and animation both day and night.
- › The creation of quality spaces and enhanced public realm will be a prerequisite.
- › Priority movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport should be ensured. The influence and impact of the private car on the environs of the District Centre to be moderated.
- › Residential amenity of established residential areas on the fringes of the District Centre to be protected and, where possible, enhanced.
- › Net retail sales area<sup>2</sup> in Stillorgan District Centre zoned lands to be 25,000sqm.

<sup>2</sup> Net retail sales area – the net sales area of a shop or store which is devoted to the sales of retail goods exclusive of staff and storage areas

### 7.8.2 Blackrock District Centre

- › To promote the future redevelopment of Blackrock as a sustainable mixed-use District Centre.
- › To prepare a Local Area Plan for Blackrock.
- › To manage the potential redevelopment of the Frascati and Blackrock Shopping Centres to improved linkages and pedestrian permeability across the Bypass.
- › To examine improved car parking facilities (multi-storey and/or underground) at Frascati Shopping Centre.
- › To actively promote good quality residential development into a broader mix of uses.
- › To prepare detailed traffic management plans for Blackrock – to be incorporated as an integral component of the proposed Local Area Plan.
- › To seek renewal of the area between Blackrock DART Station and Main Street opening vistas to the shoreline.
- › To ensure that any future development in the environs of Main Street respects the height, scale and mass of existing structures and reflects the importance of the seashore as a public facility.
- › Net retail sales area<sup>2</sup> in Blackrock District Centre zoned lands to be 25,000sqm.



### 7.8.3 Nutgrove District Centre

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- › To promote the regeneration and redevelopment of Nutgrove District Centre as a sustainable, multi-faceted mixed-use District Centre.
- › To encourage a broader range of uses into the District Centre including good quality residential, leisure and commercial office floorspace.
- › Net retail sales area in Nutgrove District Centre zoned lands to be 25,000 sqm.

### 7.8.4 Cornelscourt

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- › Net retail sales area in the Cornelscourt District Centre zoned lands to be 25,000 sqm.

### 7.8.5 Carrickmines District Centre

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- › Net retail sales area in the Park Carrickmines District Centre zoned lands to be capped at 25,000 sqm.

A nighttime photograph of a grand, multi-story building with a prominent central tower. The building is illuminated with warm yellow lights. A large, bright pink light projection is cast across the facade, featuring the text "FESTIVAL OF WORLD CULTURES" in white, bold, sans-serif capital letters. The projection is slightly tilted and overlaps the building's architectural details. The sky is dark, and the overall atmosphere is festive and cultural.

## 8 Social, Community & Cultural Development

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**Vision:** To integrate the sustainable growth and planning of the County with its social and cultural development by promoting Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown as a socially inclusive County by providing for the needs of its citizens whilst ensuring the timely delivery of a wide range of social and community services and facilities that are readily available to all sectors of its population.

### 8.1 Introduction

Successful and inclusive planning is about promoting the development of balanced and sustainable communities where the needs of the community are properly catered for in terms of the provision of necessary services and facilities which are within easy access. Fostering a sense of community and delivery of quality services and facilities that are responsive to the identified needs of local communities is a key factor in the enhancement and development of “quality of life”.

The Council has an extensive ongoing commitment to the delivery of additional social and community infrastructure throughout the County - funded through a combination of its own financial resources, channelling of specific development levies and in conjunction with developers. In working towards delivering the vision of establishing viable and sustainable communities, it is important to ensure that the Plan is underpinned by policies and proposals that are fully socially inclusive.

In seeking to secure a balanced social, community and cultural infrastructure in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, the broad objectives of the Plan will be:

- › To facilitate the delivery of goals identified in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown *County Development Board Strategy 2002 – 2012*.
- › To develop and support sustainable neighbourhoods into the future through the commensurate and proper integration of housing with quality social and community infrastructure such as schools, amenities and childcare facilities - all in accordance with the

“Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas”, (2009) Guidelines document.

- › To ensure a balanced and equitable provision of social and community facilities throughout the County.
- › To facilitate the provision of accessible facilities and services through a participatory community development process that is responsive to the identified needs of the local community including the provision of local community/resource centres, recreational amenities and sporting facilities.
- › To engage with key stakeholders, including community groups, to develop a shared responsibility for social, community and cultural development in the County.

### 8.2 Community Support and Social Inclusion

#### 8.2.1 Policy SCC1: County Development Board Strategy

**It is Council policy to promote and facilitate the participation of key stakeholders in the delivery of the County Development Board’s, “Integrated Strategy for Social, Economic and Cultural Development, 2002 – 2012” and in doing so, reach a shared vision for the long-term social, economic and cultural development of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown.**

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Development Board (CDB) “*Integrated Strategy for Social, Economic and Cultural Development*” was adopted in 2002 for the period of 2002-2012. That Strategy was reviewed in 2008 and the priorities for future social, economic and cultural development of the county assessed.

The County Development Plan and the County Development Board Strategy effectively operate parallel to one another with the County Development Board Strategy providing the social, economic and cultural vision for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown whilst the Development Plan provides for the proper planning and sustainable development of the County. It is a symbiotic relationship that delivers a strategic and operational framework to plan and create viable systems for living and working in the County.

By working with agencies tasked to deliver social services in the County, as well as with the community and voluntary sectors and other social partners, the Council will assist in the delivery of the social, economic and cultural development goals of the County Development Board Strategy.

### 8.2.2 Policy SCC2: Social Inclusion and Participation

**It is Council policy to progressively reduce all forms of social exclusion that can be experienced because of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community.**

One of the overall goals of the County Development Plan is to promote social inclusion. Social inclusion is defined in many different ways but one of the most common understandings is that through acting inclusively, society can ensure that everyone feels able to participate in, and contribute to, community life – regardless of their age, ability, nationality, religion or any of the many other characteristics which makes society diverse.

At the local level the Council, through considered policies in relation to housing, community facilities, childcare, public transport, employment opportunities and accessibility will encourage and actively promote an ethos of social inclusion.

### 8.2.3 Policy SCC3: Safer Living Environment

**It is Council policy to facilitate the promotion and delivery of a safe environment for both the residents of, and visitors to, the County.**

Ensuring personal safety and promoting an environment of security within the community enhances overall quality of life. It is an objective of the Council to develop secure environments through the promotion of natural surveillance within the public realm, public walkways and

open spaces by encouraging supervised people-centred activities in these areas, supplemented by increased use of targeted lighting and CCTV cameras in liaison with An Garda Síochána. An environment of natural surveillance will also be encouraged in newly planned areas through high quality and sensitive urban design.

The establishment of Joint Policing Committees will enable closer co-operation between communities, policing services and the Council to identify safety and security issues in neighbourhoods and develop appropriate interventions.

### 8.2.4 Policy SCC4: Estate Management

**It is the Council's policy to support, as resources allow, the continued development of Estate Management structures and programmes in areas identified with a high proportion of Council-owned properties.**

The Estate Management programme seeks to enhance the role of neighbourhood development within specific areas. It involves collaboration and participation between residents, the Council and other relevant agencies in the exchange of information and ideas - all with a view to generating a greater sense of involvement and responsibility among residents in the decision-making processes directly impacting on their areas.





## 8.3 Community Facilities

### 8.3.1 Policy SCC5: Community Facilities

**It is Council policy to support the development and provision of a wide range of community facilities distributed in an equitable manner throughout the County. In order to help prioritise resource allocations for future spending, the Council will produce a comprehensive audit of all community and social facilities in the County within the lifetime of the Plan - the audit to include crèche facilities, libraries, schools, health care centres and community centres.**

The new “*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*” (Guidance document published by the DoEHLG in 2009) stresses the need to integrate housing with the provision of supporting community and social infrastructure. The Guidelines acknowledge that community facilities should be located within, or close to neighbourhood centres and be well served by public transport.

Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Council recognises that the facilities that cater for social and community needs are an essential component in designing for sustainable communities. Meeting halls and community centres, along with schools, health centres, doctors surgeries, libraries and churches provide a communal resource through which the residents of a neighbourhood can gain information, education, medical or welfare assistance and social contact. The Council acknowledges a particular deficiency

in the provision of youth facilities for teenagers and will seek to address this. The Council will ensure that an appropriate range of community facilities are provided across the County to ensure that the vitality and sustainability of residential neighbourhoods in Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown are fostered.

In designing for new facilities it is essential to ensure that they are adaptable over time to meet the changing needs of the population and to provide potential for maximising their dual usage during evenings/weekends/school holidays. When considering proposals for development, the Planning Authority may take into account benefits to the public in the form of community facilities.

Where new social and community facilities are being retrofitted into established neighbourhoods, the issue of potential adverse impacts on residential amenity and increased pressures on limited on-street car parking spaces will require to be addressed in a sensitive manner.

In terms of direct provision, the Council has an extensive on-going development programme focused on the provision of additional social and community infrastructure. New facilities either recently constructed, or currently in train, include the Samuel Beckett Civic Campus at Ballyogan, the Meadowbrook Leisure Centre and the multi-functional community centres at Cois Cairn, Sallynoggin, Ballyogan, Lambs Cross, Shanganagh, Meadowlands, Stonebridge Road, Stepside and Ballaly.



In relation to the provision of other strands of community infrastructure- education, social services and health care facilities - the Council's role is somewhat more marginal and largely confined to the reservation and securing of sites. (See also Sections 5.5.1, 5.5.4 and 16.5.5).

### 8.3.2 Policy SCC6: New Development Areas

**It is Council policy to ensure that proper community infrastructure and complementary neighbourhood facilities are provided concurrently with the development of new residential growth nodes in the County.**

The Government's recent "*Developing Areas*" initiative seeks to ensure greater coordination and integration of infrastructure and service delivery at strategic growth centres and key development sites. The Initiative emphasises that the roll out of infrastructure should not only match, but should anticipate, development and that improved integration between the provision of housing and essential supporting community and social infrastructure - such as schools, community amenities and child care facilities - should be a pre-requisite.

The planning and implementation of various growth/redevelopment areas in the County-identified in Chapter 3 - are being advanced through various mechanisms including Local Area Plans, Urban Framework Plans and/or Proposed Strategic Development Zones (Cherrywood). The detailed assessment of community and social infrastructure needs associated with each of these growth nodes - and the specific programming and phasing of same - will be undertaken as part of these planning processes. (See also Sections 5.3.1, 16.3.7 and 16.12).

### 8.3.3 Policy SCC7: Libraries

**It is Council policy to promote and develop the County Library Service in accordance with the national objectives laid down in the report "*Branching Out: Future Directions 2008-2012*" of the Department of the Environment and Local Government. The Counties network of Carnegie Libraries shall be retained for public and community use.**

The Council Library Service operates full-time branches located at Blackrock, Cabinteely, Dalkey, Deansgrange, Dundrum, Dún Laoghaire, Shankill, Sallynoggin, and Stillorgan. There is a part time branch in Glencullen.

The implementation of the County's overall library policy will be in accordance with the objectives and agreed priorities identified in the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Library Development Programme 2004-2010 which seeks to expand the existing branch network to those areas currently without a branch library or to where the need for and improvement

of existing facilities and services have been identified.

### 8.3.4 Policy SCC8: Schools

**It is the policy of the Council to ensure the reservation of primary and post-primary school sites in accordance with the requirements of the relevant education authorities.**

In the context of increasingly unsustainable commuting patterns by students, the Guidelines on "*Sustainable Residential Development in Urban Areas*" (DoEHLG, 2009) draws particular attention to the need to plan for future schools provision and advocates timely consultation between the planning authorities and Department of Education and Science.

A new "*Code of Practice on the Provision of Schools and the Planning System*", prepared jointly by the DoEHLG and the Department of Education and Science provides new guidelines for the forecasting of future planning for schools nationally. The Code of Practice is built around three core objectives:

- School provision should be an integral part of the evolution of compact sustainable urban developments where the opportunities to walk or cycle to school are maximised.
- The provision of new schools should be driven and emerge from an integrated approach between the planning functions of the planning authorities and the Department of Education and Science.
- Planning authorities will co-operate and co-ordinate with the Department of Educational and Science in ensuring the timely delivery of schools.

The County Development Plan makes provision for educational facilities through the identification and reservation of potential school sites. The Planning Authority already has well-established lines of communication with the Department of Education and Science in relation to future school provision and the reservation of sites. In the allocation of sites, consideration needs to be given both to the co-location of childcare provision and the potential use of school facilities by the wider community outside of school hours and during school hours. Future provision within new growth areas specifically should be planned and implemented in tandem with residential development, especially where the overall scheme is being promoted through the mechanism of Local Area Plans/Strategic Development Zones or similar.

### 8.3.5 Policy SCC9: Third and Fourth Level Education Facilities

**It is Council policy to support the development and ongoing provision of third and fourth level institutions in the County including University College Dublin, (Belfield and Carysfort campuses); Institute of Art, Design and Technology; Sion Hill, Blackrock and Dún Laoghaire Senior College.**

It is recognised that education is a critical driver of economic success and social progress in modern society. The provision of quality third level education and training is central to the high skills, knowledge and innovation based economy that will underpin ongoing and future prosperity. Improved access to education and training opportunities are also crucial to helping achieve the objectives of a more sustainable and inclusive society.

The importance of third and fourth level education to Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is fully recognised. The primary Third level institutions are University College Dublin and the Dún Laoghaire Institute of Art and Design and Technology.

#### **University College Dublin (UCD)**

University College Dublin occupies a 132-hectare site and is only 4km south of the city centre. The affiliated Michael Smurfit Graduate School of Business, located in Blackrock is Ireland's leading business education and research centre.

On the basis of the current known population of UCD - 24,491 in total, comprising 16,062 daytime students, 2,323 evening students and 6,106 staff and post-graduate - and the proposed new developments in Belfield, it is anticipated that the total campus population will increase to c.27,890 by 2012 and c.30,400 by 2015. The number of research staff is expected to grow over the next 5 years with the planned construction of additional research buildings. These buildings include the NIBRT (Bio- Processing Research and Training) Building, Science Centre redevelopment (Centre South and East), Charles Institute and Systems Biology, White Oaks Science Enabled Facilities, Sutherland School of Law, Belfield Innovation Facilities, Rosemount Facilities, IHI (Informatics 2) Building, CRID 2 (Medical Microbiology Research) Building and the MRBS (Health Sciences Laboratory).

The County Council recognises the significant role that UCD plays in the County and the contribution its education, and research and development activities make to the attractiveness of the County for investment. In addition, the Council recognises the strategic importance of UCD for employment creation at regional and national level, as evidenced by the UCD-TCD Innovation Alliance to create the National Innovation Zone.

The UCD Campus Development Plan 2005-2010-2015 sets out aims and priorities for the future direction of the University. This plan includes a

vision for world-class architecture, a network of pedestrian walkways and a transformation of the academic infrastructure to reflect the ambitions of a leading European university.

The primary aspiration of the Plan is the advancement and promotion of UCD as a modern university, one that excels in both academic achievement and the built environment. UCD seeks to promote itself as a sustainable, healthy and living campus through the development of both academic and non-academic facilities, increased on-campus residencies and the promotion of knowledge based industry-linked research facilities.

#### **Institute of Art, Design and Technology (IADT)**

The Institute of Art, Design and Technology, established in 1997, occupies a 12 hectare site some 3 km from Dún Laoghaire Town Centre.

IADT has seen major expansion in recent years including a new incubation facility, known as the Media Cube, which is specifically focused on the Digital Media sector. Outline planning permission was also granted in 2008 for the provision of a collection of stand-alone campus buildings including a second Digital Media building, a consolidated workshop and a sports hall.

The National Film School at IADT is a centre of excellence for education and training in film, animation, broadcasting and digital media and a new National Film School building is proposed to be completed by Spring 2010.

The growing academic and administrative needs stem primarily from the growth in student numbers, estimated to increase from 1500 (Year 2003/2004) to 2000-plus full time students and 800 part-time students.

An IADT Master Plan, produced in 2004, seeks to promote the Institute as the leading Irish educator within the knowledge, media and entertainment sectors. It is envisaged that the Plan, aimed at developing a substantial campus infrastructure, will ensure that the growing needs of the Institute can be met whilst at the same time improving the overall character and sustainability of the campus.

### 8.3.6 Policy SCC10: Health Care Facilities

**It is Council policy to support the Health Service Executive and other statutory and voluntary agencies in the provision of appropriate healthcare facilities including the development of both the system of hospital care and the provision of community-based care primary facilities. It is Council policy to encourage the integration of appropriate healthcare facilities within new and existing communities.**

Provision of public health care services for Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown is the responsibility of the Health Service Executive (HSE). At present



there are three acute public hospitals in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, in addition to the National Rehabilitation Centre and four privately operated hospitals. There are also ten public health centres and twenty-six nursing homes distributed throughout the County.

The Health Service Executive (HSE) currently seeks to rebalance its approach with a shift from secondary care to primary care provision. The primary care model promoted has a stronger emphasis on working with communities and individuals to improve their health and well-being. Building on the National Health Strategy “*Quality and Fairness- A Health System for You*”, the Primary Care “model” aims to ensure everyone has ready access to a broad spectrum of care services through a local Primary Care Team. (See also Sections 5.4.3 and 16.5.5(ii)).

The ability of Primary Care Centres to provide local and integrated facilities in line with the Government’s Primary Care Strategy, is acknowledged by the Planning Authority. Such facilities will be sought on suitably zoned lands and in close proximity to new and existing residential areas to allow communities access to multi-disciplinary health care in easily accessible locations throughout out the County.

### 8.3.7 Policy SCC11: Childcare Facilities

**It is Council policy to encourage the provision of childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential developments. Generally, one**

**childcare facility with places for 20 children shall be provided for each 75 dwellings. The Council will encourage the provision of childcare facilities in a sustainable manner to encourage local economic development and to assist in addressing disadvantage.**

There continues to be a growth in demand for childcare services and the provision of good quality and affordable services close to local communities is important. The primary policy basis for the provision of childcare facilities is the “*Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities*” (DoEHLG, 2001). In the interest of promoting sustainability the Guidelines advocate that suitable locations for the provision of childcare facilities include residential areas, employment nodes, large educational establishments, major towns/district/neighbourhood centres as well as areas convenient to public transport networks. Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown fully supports the development and delivery of accessible, high quality and affordable childcare facilities to address the overall development needs of the County.

The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown County Childcare Committee, a standing committee of the County Development Board, regularly surveys and analyses the needs for childcare provision in the County. The County Development Plan will have regard to the recommendations arising from the 2009 Strategic Mapping Exercise and any subsequent Mapping Exercises the County Childcare Committee conduct.



Detailed requirements and standards in respect to childcare provision associated with development projects are set out in the Development Management Section of the Plan. (See also Section 16.5.5(i)).

### 8.3.8 Policy SCC12: Arts and Culture

**It is Council policy to facilitate the continued development of arts and cultural facilities throughout Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown in accordance with the County Arts Strategy.**

The existing arts and cultural infrastructure of Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown includes theatres, performance spaces, galleries, art centres and outdoor event spaces. Despite the range of existing facilities, the Council recognises that there remains a deficit of cultural and arts provision in the County. The Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Arts Strategy 2007-2010 recognises the Council's pivotal role in the promotion and encouragement of the arts and culture and seeks to redress any obvious deficiencies in the arts generally while prioritising direction for future development and investment. The Council will continue to support and facilitate the Irish language and the aims of the Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown Arts Strategy 2007-2010.