

IMAGINE DUNDRUM

OUR VILLAGE, OUR COMMUNITY

IMAGINE DUNDRUM is a coming together a group of concerned local residents of Dundrum and surrounding areas. We are working for a community-focused vision for the renewal of Dundrum's core built environment, in collaboration with the County Council, with developers and with all interested local organisations, businesses and individuals. We hope this document will help start a wide-ranging conversation on the future of Dundrum, and look forward to supporting and engaging with it fully.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The context for our initiative is the imminent redevelopment of the extensive 1960s Shopping Centre site, including most of the west side of the Main Street, all of which is now owned by Hammerson plc. Published recently, the *Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022* proposes a Local Area Plan for Dundrum. We hope this LAP will be prioritised by the Council, thus providing vital guidelines for all new development.

DUNDRUM'S RECENT HISTORY

Following the large-scale housing expansion of the 1960s and 1970s, the Dundrum area developed a strong new sense of community and locality, based around its historic village core. In recent years, however, local people have experienced a progressive sense of loss resulting from the visible down-grading of much of our local environment. Significant change came from Dundrum's designation as a Major Town Centre, the construction of the new shopping centre and the bypass. Then, during the recession years, we have witnessed the gradual physical deterioration of our Main Street as a whole.

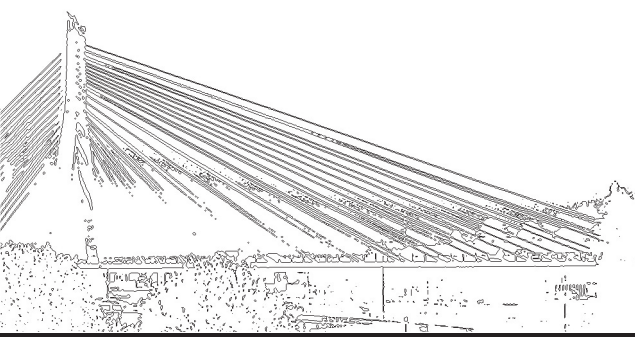
As a result, we have lost a unique place with an individual character and living history, which had nurtured social cohesion and a sense of belonging for local residents, many of them feel that in the last few years, 'the heart was ripped out of Dundrum'.

DUNDRUM'S FUTURE?

Imagine Dundrum members are convinced that these lost qualities can be restored to Dundrum, if there is good planning, sensitive awareness of the social and community dimensions of urban redevelopment, and adequate and timely consultation with local communities and businesses. The proposed redevelopment of Dundrum's built environment has the potential to restore that strong sense of community for locals, while creating a thriving, varied, and authentic place attracting workers and visitors alike.

To contribute to this future Dundrum, we have drawn up a set of **fundamental design principles** applicable to the re-development of the old Shopping Centre site, and to the restoration of the Main Street. We also drafted preliminary architectural sketches to illustrate our ideas and hopes for our locality, which means so much to so many people.

We especially want to highlight the need to integrate **well-designed public space** and a **civic, community and cultural dimension** in the new development, as these have the potential to make Dundrum a truly liveable environment. The new *County Development Plan* states (Ch 8) confirms that, 'the location and provision of community facilities' are 'a pre-requisite for ... viable, enjoyable, sustainable and attractive local communities'. Dundrum, with its long social and cultural history, needs these facilities as much as any brand-new urban development in the County.



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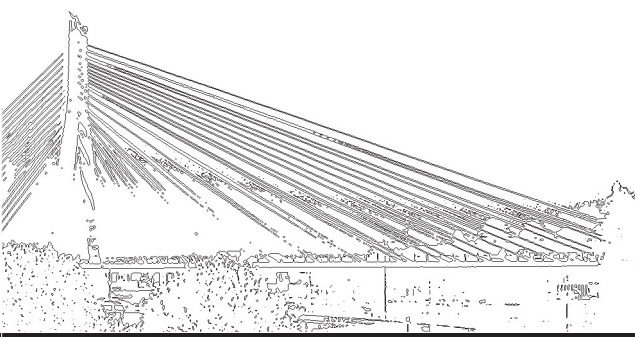
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FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES FOR THE RENEWAL OF DUNDRUM

The new *County Development Plan 2016-2022* outlines five basic Urban Design Principles for successful new development: **permeability** (a place which is 'easy to get to and move through'); **vitality** (a place which is 'vibrant, safe, comfortable and varied'); **variety/diversity** (offering 'a mix of activities to a wide range of possible users'); **legibility** ('a place that has a clear image and is easy to understand') and **robustness** (a place useable by different people for different purposes and with the 'potential for change and adaptation...over time').

Imagine Dundrum wants the following comparable principles incorporated in plans for the redevelopment of the old shopping centre/ village area, and in the Local Area Plan:

- 1. The restoration and reinstatement of a recognisable and thriving Dundrum Main Street.** Pedestrian- and cycle-friendly, it should respect and retain existing historical and cultural buildings and landmarks, and reflect the original scale and style of building. [A human-scale streetscape need not preclude high-density development overall, but will add to the attractiveness of the whole.]
- 2. The provision of a substantial public focal point** for the new Dundrum - ideally a civic/ community/ cultural centre within the main development, opening onto a restored and reinvigorated Main Street.
- 3. Maintaining a proper balance between residential, commercial and public/civic spaces,** both along the Main Street and within the overall development. This will help restore the original qualities of Dundrum's core area.
- 4. The new Dundrum must be a connected environment,** with easy movement within and between its different parts. The provision of social and community facilities, open and green areas, clear walking and cycle routes, and easy links to public transport, can all support this connected-ness.
- 5. Small and medium-sized local, independent businesses must be encouraged** in the new Dundrum to ensure variety and authenticity in the commercial landscape of Dundrum. New possibilities could include cafes/restaurants, art and craft studios, and not-for-profit social enterprises, and a local heritage centre celebrating the many facets of Dundrum's long history.
- 6. The new Dundrum must be inclusive,** so the buildings and facilities within the new development must be open and accessible to all population groups – including older people, children and young people, people with disability, and the widest range of local residents and visitors from the wider County and beyond.
- 7. The highest environmental and energy-efficient standards** must be applied by the County Council to the design and carrying out of all new building work in Dundrum, thus ensuring that this major new development is 'future-proofed' and a flagship model for other developments.



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WORKING WITH THE COUNTY DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2016-2022

Imagine Dundrum welcomes the *Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-22*, and its clear overall intention, not just of reviving a moribund retail area in Dundrum, but also of restoring and re-energising it as a living community and a satisfying urban environment for locals and others.

In particular, Special Local Objectives 149 and 150 in Chapter 9 of the Plan make a commitment to ‘take[s] cognisance of the character and streetscape of the Old Main Street’, and we welcome their explicit commitment that ‘cultural, community and civic uses’ will be part of the redevelopment envisaged for ‘Dundrum Phase 2’.

We were also pleased to find that in the *Urban Framework Plan* for Dundrum, there are several elements envisaged for a re-invigorated Dundrum ‘core’¹ which accord with *Imagine Dundrum’s* own thinking, based on the lived experience of long-term local residents. In relation to the redevelopment of the old Shopping Centre site, these elements include the creation of ‘internal town squares or open spaces’, and a recognition of the potential for appropriate residential accommodation and cultural amenities.

Concepts for a renewed Main Street include: creating a pedestrian- and cyclist-friendly environment; removal of on-street parking; retention of historic buildings and use of materials and building scales and styles to reflect the distinct local character of the street; increased connectivity by means of pedestrian walkways and bridges linking the main nodes of the core area; the potential for community-friendly amenities in Sweetmount Park; and the creation of a northern ‘focal point’ and ‘gateway’ in the area around the Luas bridge.

We trust that these design concepts, envisaged by County planners and endorsed by the Council will be key elements in the re-development of Dundrum, and that a civic/ community/cultural centre will be provided because it will be seen as crucial to the coherence and viability of the new and revitalised urban area

1 Dún Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2016-2022, Section 1.3.4.10

The members of **Imagine Dundrum** hope this vision statement will be the beginning of a conversation on the future of Dundrum, which is ‘our village, our community’. We are committed to playing an active part in all forthcoming consultations and citizens’ forums, both those concerning the redevelopment of the old Dundrum Shopping Centre site and those which form part of the devising of the Local Area Plan for Dundrum.