

What does the local community want for Dundrum?

Revisiting the community conversations, June 2017

In 2017, Imagine Dundrum hosted an Open Meeting, featuring “community conversations” among small groups of participants. They were asked three questions: ‘Why is Dundrum important to you?’, ‘What are the issues and what needs to change?’, and ‘**Dundrum in the future – what would make it a really great place to live?**’ In their answers to this question, local people expressed their wishes for the future of their Village, and imagined what it would look like. Will the Hammerson-Allianz proposals fulfil these hopes? **Read what locals said here ...**

1. Imagining a future Dundrum village area, redeveloped but still recognisably itself, and successful integrating old and new.

One person’s comment summed up a shared feeling that Dundrum must continue to be itself, even though in a new form. Despite the danger of the wrong outcome, Dundrum has the potential to

“return to being a real place people want to come to, not an artificial, commercial, high-rise, anonymous place, but somewhere green and nature-filled... A place to linger, rest, and relax. It can be vibrant and alive in its own right, not a ...random street.”

Hopes for the future Dundrum included:

- Put the heart back into Dundrum!
- Dundrum should be alive!
- It can be a flagship village with a green economy
- Preserve Dundrum’s history and keep the character and scale of the village
- Citizen input into the design
- Unique, good architecture, attractive buildings, local materials
- Public spaces well maintained
- All areas connected
- An improved civic and social focus
- Make [it] a place in its own right, not a second Dundrum Town Centre!

2. Main Street – at the heart of the village

Many contributions concerned Dundrum’s Main Street, and there was strong agreement on the need to revivify it, while not destroying its unique character:

- Bring life back to the street
- [Dundrum needs] people living on the street
- Keep the village ‘feel’
- Link the pedestrians and the businesses on the street

- Keep the integrity of the street
- Create a continuous and more diverse streetscape, filling the gap where the old Shopping Centre car park is
- Rehabilitate the area between the church and the (Barton Road junction) roundabout

Imagining what the Main Street could be, people suggested:

- A pretty Main Street with cafes, independent shops, outdoor seating
- The greening of the Main Street!
- Mature trees all along the street
- Reduce or eliminate traffic; minimise through traffic
- Take down all the ugly shop fronts and restore the old houses
- Traditional shop fronts
- Wider footpaths
- More refuse bins

3. Shopping on the Main Street and in the new development

The ideal expressed by many contributors was for a variety of small-scale, local businesses, including specialised and artisan-based shops as well as those providing practical necessities:

- Bespoke small businesses
- Small artisan shops, not just multiples
- Encourage local businesses
- 'Proper shops', practical shops, not just coffee shops and clothes boutiques.
- Hardware, greengrocers, haberdashery.

4. Getting around – thoughts on traffic, walking, cycling

In general, the hope was for a fresh and properly planned approach to moving around in Dundrum, which would prioritise walking and cycling, and plan for a major reduction in car parking in the village core:

- A coherent traffic plan
- A people-friendly, pedestrian-friendly place
- A focus on cycling and walking
- Off-street parking; underground parking; accessible parking

But when it came to specific suggestions, there could be opposing views:

- High-level walkways linking parts of Dundrum, to help people move around
- Underground connecting walkways
- Pedestrianise the village! OR Don't pedestrianise it – local businesses will suffer!

5. Facilities for children and young people; sports facilities

It was widely recognised that children's and young people's needs are not catered for in Dundrum at present, and that, in an area with so many young families, this major lack must be addressed. There were many suggestions:

- Children need a playground
- A skate park
- Youth café (with pool tables)
- Safe facilities for teenagers
- Space for sports
- Outdoor gym/ exercise equipment
- Outdoor table tennis

6. Housing

There was considerable agreement that providing new housing in Dundrum would in itself substantially rejuvenate the Village area, as long as it was affordable housing mainly intended for families and older people:

- Bring residents back into the village, especially families!
- A village buzz, with people living there.
- A range of accommodation, suitable for all ages including older people
- 2 storey housing for families, not just high-rise apartments
- Affordable housing and inclusivity
- A balance between living and business

7. Environmental sustainability and 'future-proofing'

The opportunities provided by such a major development, at a time when (unlike 2007/8) environmentally aware and sustainable building technologies are becoming mainstream, were emphasised by several contributors:

- Dundrum could be a flagship green development
- Future-proof Dundrum; respond to environmental concerns
- [let's have] green energy, a local energy co-op
- Solar energy, selling electricity back to the grid

Many wanted a substantial planting programme to bring natural greenery back into the village:

- Trees, green spaces
- Trees please, and green rooftops
- Landscaping, green rooftops

8. Arts, culture and creativity

The population of Dundrum now has the potential to support creativity in a range of arts and crafts, and would appreciate a museum of local history to local people could donate objects and documents about life in Dundrum many years ago:

- An exhibition space

- A crafts courtyard
- Something like Design Yard idea
- Street art (DLR County Council has funding for public art)
- A museum of local history or a heritage centre
- Commission music for the outdoor plaza

9. Public/ communal space

It was widely recognised that Dundrum has to date lacked open spaces and public seating, so the new development is the perfect opportunity to provide them, and create a much more enjoyable built environment which will strengthen social interaction:

- We need communal space, indoors as well as outdoors
- A central plaza which would be a meeting place
- A large open plaza for markets etc
- Somewhere just to sit, breathe, relax, linger
- A civic space with seats, playgrounds, market place...
- A bandstand (for music) and seating
- An off-street community area with trees, seats, a fountain – visually interesting and safe.

10. A purpose-built civic and community centre

There was near-unanimous support for the demand for a new civic and community centre, which could also house cultural activities, in the new Dundrum.

- Dundrum badly needs a civic and cultural centre
- We need a proper civic centre, belonging to the community
- A proper civic centre and community spaces
- A civic/ community space as the focal point of the new development
- We need significant public space for cultural and family activities

And, since much of this would have to be funded by the County Council, there was a practical suggestion, based on the strong case for a re-allocation of Council resources:

- Use the revenue from Dundrum Town Centre!

Other possibilities:

- A kindergarten or small school – there's a growing population of small children in the area
- A hotel - a 'bijou' hotel with garden courtyard, catering for business travel, wedding receptions after local church ceremony, small conferences, and visitors to local residents
- A new library

- A grandstand/ bandstand with uses such as outdoor music, dancing and choirs at the annual Dundrum Festival
