

Motion on Development Plan further to the Managers Report on the Draft Development Plan - That the Manager implement a Local Area Plan for East Wall and surrounding North Docklands areas.

Dear Sir/Madam

In Section 3.3.1 of the Draft Development Plan, the areas for which statutory plans are going to be prepared are set out. This includes Docklands (number five in the list) for which the Masterplan was adopted in 2008 and for which a number of Section 25 planning schemes have been or are being prepared. In Chapter 8 at page 206 of the Docklands Masterplan, the criteria for selection of planning scheme areas are set out, and at page 209, there is an argument for the extension of the North Lotts Planning Scheme to include parts of East Wall, but not the residential areas (see map p.211). In current circumstances, as the energies of Docklands are directed elsewhere, it is unlikely the planning scheme will be extended to any area of East Wall. Moreover the 2004 Area Action Plan for East Wall has been largely ignored.

I refer to the submission to the Draft Development Plan of East Wall Residents number 2747 and fully support the requirement of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for East Wall. I note that at page 35 of the Manager's Report on the Draft Development Plan, it is advised that LAPs, in addition to those set out in the schedule may be prepared, but it is considered appropriate to determine these during the lifetime of the plan on a needs basis and as resources permit.

I request that the manager include all of East Wall and the surrounding areas in the schedule of areas already designated for a LAP. While little significant development can take place in the older, settled, residential part of East Wall, there is potential for major development in the surrounding areas. It is not best practice to promote development in an area and not include existing residential areas, as that would exacerbate the division that already exists between new development and existing residential areas. This division is already evident in the North Inner City between the Irish Financial Services Centre and the residential community walled off beside it, and is not a planning mistake that should be repeated. The planning department will already be aware of the 'invisible wall' that exists between the residential communities north of the quays and any new developments on the quays.

East Wall and surrounding areas are of strategic importance to the city given its gateway location with the port and port tunnel. The entire area suffers, however, from a relative underdevelopment of public domain and quantity of brownfield lands. More open space in the general area eg Fairview Park is not an excuse for failure to develop brownfield sites for the benefit of the community eg pocket parks, community gardens, playing pitches. There are a number of new apartment blocks in East Wall and North Quays areas, but according to the most recent census, the Dublin Central Electoral Area, which includes the North Inner City, has the second lowest number of 0-19 year olds in the country, and the second highest number of 19 and 20 years olds. This means urgent action needs to be taken to make Dublin Central, and particularly the North Inner City, more family friendly. Included in this would be measures to attract families to apartment living. Obviously the new apartment regulations will assist in this regard, but for apartments already in existence that were not obliged to adhere to the regulations, remedial action needs to be taken.

Yours sincerely,

Claire O' Regan
Councillor, North Inner City, 2nd July 2010