

4 THE DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

4.1 Introduction

The development strategy reflects the aspirations of the vision and strategic objectives as well as the existing and proposed roles of settlements within the plan area.

The strategy establishes the location policy framework for the area for the plan period. The framework should guide detailed decisions about where development should be located, what form it should take and where development would generally be considered unacceptable.

4.2 Role of Development Strategy

The purpose of the strategy is to address the wider location issues and conflicts between development pressures and the conservation of the countryside.

The framework regards Dundalk and environs as a location comprising different and distinct places and plans for them in this manner, and establishes a hierarchical means of promoting and directing development to locations. This is to be achieved through defining growth areas as well as locations suitable for permitting limited development:

- Areas where development is to be concentrated and directed;
- Areas where there should be limited development opportunities; and
- Areas of development constraint;

Promoting integration and connectivity, and creating and building sustainable communities is the key theme within the plan.

4.3 The Main Growth Areas

DS1 Development will be concentrated mainly within the urban boundary and the defined growth areas.

These are defined as the larger settlements that should, through the sustainable accommodation of development, contribute to the future growth of the Dundalk and environs area as the principle residential, social and economic hub of Louth and the Region. The growth areas include:

- The Existing Urban Area.
- The Blackrock Area.
- The South West Action Area.
- Mount Avenue Action Area.

- Residential land Zoned north of Castletown River.

The growth areas set out incorporate over 550ha's of undeveloped zoned residential land - at least four times that which is forecasted to be required to accommodate the plan areas future population during the plan period. This will enable a choice of locations and the flexibility to enable Dundalk to accommodate growth as required. Although there is flexibility, there is a strong requirement that development is provided in a sustainable, comprehensive and integrated manner to meet needs over the plan period.

4.3.1 The Urban Area

DS2 Encourage the promotion and enhancement of Dundalk's role as the principal economic and social growth centre of the region

County Louth contains two significant towns; Dundalk and Drogheda, which rank sixth and seventh in the national urban hierarchy. Drogheda by reason of its closer proximity to Dublin is more closely linked with the capital city in terms of development pressure and accommodating the increased residential growth. Dundalk performs a regional function, being the administrative capital of the Northeast region and the administrative, business and shopping capital of County Louth.

Dundalk is the driving economic force within the region and will be the main focus for the provision of most development and change within the plan period. The plan policies will seek to promote and enhance its role as the regional growth centre.

Dundalk has the potential to act as an important regional shopping and employment destination and can accommodate a considerable amount of further commercial/industrial, retail and residential development. The aim is to encourage redevelopment of brownfield sites and encourage reuse of derelict sites within the confines of the urban area.

Regeneration, conservation and rehabilitation of urban areas will be encouraged through the plan policies to ensure that the development impact on undeveloped or greenfield land is minimised.

A fundamental principle of the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan is to advocate the containment approach (while allowing for expansion and growth commensurate with the role of the town). This involves consolidating much of the proposed new development within the urban boundary and the defined growth areas, enabling more efficient use of existing services and facilities and promoting possibilities for enhancing provision. Key to all policies and proposals is the need for sustainability, integration and connectivity.

4.3.2 The Growth Areas

DS3 *Other than the main urban area, the settlements of Blackrock, South West Sector Area, the defined zoned land to the north of Castletown river and Mount Avenue Action Plan Area are identified as suitable for development in line with policy requirements.*

Development will be permitted provided that proposals meet the requirements of the plan policy and adhere to the neighbourhood principles set out in Chapter 7.

Within the defined growth areas, proposals for new residential development should be considered within the context of the local and wider plan area⁵. In particular, consideration needs to be given to integration, connectivity, infrastructure, services and community facility provision in accordance with the policy objectives. Where appropriate and possible, new development must be well related to the function and location of existing settlements, in line with the neighbourhood masterplanning principles set out in Chapter 7.

4.3.3 The Rural Areas

This policy refers in particular to those areas outside the confines of the built up areas and the proposed new growth areas.

DS4 *Outside of the urban area and the defined growth areas, it is a high priority of the Plan to protect and enhance the natural environment, its appearance and character.*

There will be a presumption against development unless for the following purposes and in accordance with the other policies in the Development Plan:

- *Agriculture/Forestry.*
- *The preservation of recorded buildings & structures.*
- *The re-use and adaptation of existing buildings.*
- *Flood protection.*
- *The extension and replacement of existing single dwellings. Demolition of existing buildings will only be considered if the building is either a dangerous structure or of no archaeological or heritage interest.*
- *Older buildings, which may be suitable for habitation or use as an ancillary building.*
- *New build employment generating proposals where there are particular environmental or operating reasons for the development not being located in a defined general business, or general development or industrial area and which cannot be suitably accommodated within existing buildings.*

⁵ With regard the South West Sector, this area should be developed in accordance with the Local Area Plan for this area, once adopted.

- ***Community services and facilities that meet a particular proven need of the local rural population.***
- ***Development by statutory authorities or public utility providers.***
- ***Recreation and Tourism.***
- ***Transport and Renewable energy projects.***

It is considered essential that development within the rural areas is controlled to ensure that the intrinsic quality and purpose of the countryside is maintained and enhanced.

4.4 Long Term Development Strategy

The plan area contains a substantial amount of zoned residential land and zoned employment land, which is sufficient to meet the needs of the present, and anticipated future population over the plan period.

To accommodate the future growth requirements, approximately 550 hectares has already been zoned to accommodate new residential development. This substantial amount of zoned residential land offers considerable flexibility in terms of where future growth can be accommodated within the plan area. This substantial area of zoned residential land could accommodate in the region of an additional 35,000-population, to allow for more than double the existing population. In this case, the land zoned already goes a long way towards fulfilling the residential zoning requirements in terms of population projections until 2021. It is therefore most important for the plan to seek to ensure that the existing zoned land can be developed in a sustainable comprehensive manner over time.

This plan takes account of how the area could develop not only during the current plan period, but also takes into account the possibilities for strategic sustainable development over a 20-year period. The development strategy seeks to put in place a framework for development, which respects the long-term strategy for sustainable development.

A policy of containment is advocated to encourage the maximum use of existing services and facilities and promoting renewal and redevelopment as opposed to greenfield developments. The majority of development within the plan period is to be directed to the urban area and the defined growth areas. Promoting integration and connectivity, creating and building sustainable communities is the key theme, not only for this plan period, but also for future planning periods.

The need to control ad-hoc and one off developments in the countryside is recognised nationwide. Such developments are not sustainable or efficient in terms of servicing or desirable in terms of impact on the open countryside. While it is necessary and desirable to allow for the provision of essential dwellings for those working in the countryside in agriculture or forestry, it is desirable to restrict suburban type developments and non-essential one off housing in the open countryside.

4.4.1 Plan Period 2003 - 2008

The proposed growth areas for this plan period will be the⁶;

- Urban Area.
- South West Action Area.
- Blackrock.
- Mount Avenue.
- Zoned land north of Castletown River.

Residential development within these areas is to be based on the neighbourhood approach, integrating new developments with existing communities as far as possible and ensuring that adequate facilities and services are provided.

A Local Area Plan is being prepared to set out a framework for creating a sustainable integrated community within the 'Southwest Area'. This Local Area Plan will accord with the requirements and objectives of the Development Plan.

Land is also proposed to be zoned to the north of Dundalk for residential, business and light industrial purposes. The additional employment zoning should help to promote investment opportunities and stimulate development to the north of the town as well as the south.

Strategic Land Reserves

In addition to zoning land for development within the plan period, there is also a considerable area of land to the north of the town as well as areas to the west zoned as strategic land reserves. This land is to be protected for future plan periods as part of the sustainable approach to land use zoning. Zoning this land as such will help to enable its protection during the plan period and will also allow a certain degree of flexibility with regard zoning in the future.

Protecting this area in the medium term will help to enable emerging requirements and issues to be planned for and accommodated in a sustainable strategic manner. It will help to protect these areas from ad-hoc developments and would help to ensure that where appropriate, such areas may be comprehensively developed at a future date to meet future identified needs.

The strategic land reserve also has a function, which could enable the development of some land within this first period of 2003-2008 in exceptional/circumstances for a specified use, which would be considered of strategic importance to the development of Dundalk as a regional Gateway, and that would this development would be in the interests of proper planning and sustainable development.⁷

⁶ 3 Plans on Possible Future Main Growth Areas follow page 28

⁷ Refer to section 3.4 for details of what exceptional circumstances entail.

Providing for strategic land reserve will help Dundalk achieve its longer-term vision for sustainable growth and development.

4.4.2 Plan Period 2009 - 2015

Within this plan period, it is anticipated that the majority of growth will continue to be directed to the urban areas, and main growth areas, in line with the containment policy. It is expected that the 2009 to 2013 plan period will also incorporate additional zoning for the commencement of phase 2 of the South West sector. There may also be potential to encourage more residential growth to the north of the town in relative proximity to the business/light industrial areas, creating more of an integrated sustainable community to the north of the town.

4.4.3 Future Plan Periods from 2015

It is important to protect the recreational and natural amenities within the plan area while also allowing for additional growth and development in a phased sustainable manner. The north of the plan area is perceived as the medium to long-term strategic growth area and as such much of this land has been zoned as future strategic land reserves. It is important that land is released in a phased manner to enable investment and planned comprehensive development for the benefit of the present and future generations.

As part of the process of protecting and seeking to enhance the attractiveness of Dundalk and improving recreational areas, certain areas within the current plan period have been protected as strategic open space areas. They have been zoned as such in recognition of their significant medium/long-term role as recreational areas or green lungs for Dundalk. The protection of these areas will help to protect views and the future recreational opportunities for Dundalk, not alone in this plan period but also in the longer term.

There are three plans overleaf which display broadly the potential growth possibilities for the plan area in the medium and long term. These plans are illustrative only and may be subject to change and refinement in subsequent plan periods in response to issues arising out of the plan review.

4.5 Policy Priority Areas within the Plan

In recognition of the opportunity for the plan to help further Dundalk's role as the economic driver for the county and indeed the region, policy priority areas are set out identifying where particular types of activities and uses are to be encouraged and enhanced for different areas within the plan area.

The policy priority areas are divided into four main sections -

- Employment/ Enterprise and Innovation.
- Town Centre and Retail.
- Residential and Community.
- Environment.

There are a series of zones identified where there will be a priority for particular uses and developments in accordance with how the Councils see the town and hinterlands developing.⁸

4.5.1 Employment Enterprise & Innovation Policy Priority Areas

Dundalk has a long history of industrial development. However, in line with national trends the town has suffered high levels of unemployment and a decline in the industrial base. The town is strategically located midway between Dublin and Belfast, in the E01 corridor. This corridor has been defined as part of the National Spatial Strategy as being of strategic importance for economic development. There is potential for Dundalk to act as the gateway link, a regional economic growth centre, between the two major cities on the island.

PPA1

Promote and enhance Dundalk's strategic location as a regional employment growth centre, through supporting and enhancing the existing economic base and setting out policy priority areas, and identifying areas suitable for both indigenous industry and inward investment opportunities.

It is a priority of the plan to promote and enhance Dundalk's role as the major employment and innovation centre within the region. This can be achieved through the Development Plan by not only making land allocations for industrial and commercial uses to ensure site availability for enterprises of all sizes, but also implementing policies to promote mixed-use development where people can live work and recreate.

Improving linkages between education and local enterprise will help to encourage the growth of more indigenous industry and improved research and development will help to attract in associated business.

As a broad guideline, the following sectors in Table 4.1 were identified as policy priority areas to help to integrate, develop and promote employment and innovation opportunities in Dundalk. The areas are displayed on the Map 1A Land use Zoning Plan.

Table 4.1 *Mixed Use Priority Areas*

Proposed Mixed Use Zone	Location	Uses which will be considered for permission
Employment and	Zoned land at	Uses to include Industrial/light

⁸ The Draft Development Zoning Plan - Volume II displays the defined policy priority areas

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Recreational Mixed Use Areas.	Coe's Road and Finnabair Retail Estate.	industrial/offices/ warehouses/storage and distribution/ recreation/ leisure and amenity uses.
Non Food Retail/ Bulky Goods/ Leisure and Recreation.	Zoned land at Finnabair Retail Park.	Uses to include industrial/ light industrial/ storage and distribution/ recreation/ leisure and amenity/ non food retail warehousing of bulky household and D.I.Y goods of which are not more than 10 percent of gross floor area and only used for ancillary non- bulky goods retailing.
Education, Recreation Enterprise and Innovation.	Zoned land at DKIT and Carroll's site.	Educational and institutional uses to include research and development/ enterprise units/offices and start up units along with leisure and recreational uses.
Leisure, Recreational and Residential.	Zoned land south of Racecourse and Dublin Rd. Blackrock.	Leisure recreational and residential and ancillary associated uses.
Mixed Business Zone.	Zoned land adjacent Golf Course/Opposite Carroll's – New.	Mixed Business Use to include offices, workshops, hotels, motels, guesthouses, public houses restaurants, light industrial and residential to include apartments flats.
Industrial and Regeneration Area.	Guinness Packaging Plant & Adjacent Industrial Land along Railway Line.	New mixed-use development in this area incorporating commercial, industrial and ancillary uses. Such uses should seek to reuse and redevelop where possible, and conserving the protected structures. There may be potential for reuse and renewal for a tourist related non-food retail factory outlet centre ⁹ .
Business Parks North of Dundalk.	Zoned land to the north of Dundalk.	Business/office/ light industrial/ storage and distribution.

It is a priority of the plan to seek to foster Dundalk's position as the major economic driver within the region. This is to be achieved through encouraging the provision of additional suitable land to accommodate investment needs for

⁹ Subject to feasibility of the site to accommodate this use and in keeping with the guidance set out in the Retail Strategy for County Louth - Chapter 6 provides additional information on the tourist related factory outlet centre

commercial development and prioritising the requirement of meeting local business needs.

The plan will seek to encourage the mix of uses identified within the particular areas outlined above, to seek to achieve balanced sustainable development during the plan period. However, the mixed-use employment zones would not seek to preclude uses within these areas that would accord with the plan policies and help to achieve the strategic objectives of the Development Plan and would not have detrimental impacts upon the areas.

In each case, ancillary associated uses may also be permitted within each of the mixed-use zones, provided that such uses would accord with the plan policies.

4.5.2 Town Centre and Retailing Policy Priority Areas

Dundalk town centre is the primary retailing centre for the County of Louth and for the Northeast Region and plan policy will seek to enhance this role within the wider regional area.

PPA2

The Council will seek to maintain and enhance the status of Dundalk as the principal shopping destination within the County and the wider regional area.

Plan policy will encourage the improvement of the retail environment within Dundalk to make it the prime retail destination within the wider region. Policies will seek to prioritise the shopping experience within the town centre, emphasising the need for variety, quality of environment, connectivity/integration, as well as encouraging redevelopment/regeneration to enhance the vitality and viability of the town centre.

Role of Local Centres;

Within the urban area and the defined growth areas of Blackrock, South West Sector and Mount Avenue the district centres will be encouraged to perform a wider role including commercial, community, leisure and employment uses commensurate with the defined role of the centre.

PPA3

The Council will encourage the enhancement and widening of the roles of the defined neighbourhood/local centres and village centres, where appropriate, to include additional commercial, leisure and community facilities, commensurate with the roles of the centres and the other plan policies.

The village, neighbourhood and local centres offer differing levels of service provision and play a key role in providing a community focus. A primary aspiration of the plan is to enhance and widen the role of these centres, in a hierarchical manner, in accordance with the other plan policies. Achieving

integration and connectivity between these centres and the wider community is a key policy objective.

Map 6 identifies the locations of local neighbourhood centres and section 6.3 details the policies in relation to local centres.

4.5.3 Residential and Community Policy Priority Areas

The population of the plan area is expected to increase from an estimated 39,137 in 2002¹⁰ to 45,542 in 2008, representing an additional 6,405 additional population. In addition to the increased population, the average household size is falling from 3.05 to 2.8, which will lead to an additional requirement for residential accommodation from the existing population.

PPA4

Encourage the development of sustainable integrated communities.

The Plan will prioritise the need to develop sustainable integrated communities rather than residentially zoned land. Key to this will be the need to connect and integrate local centres and transport nodes with the existing and proposed communities through adopting the neighbourhood planning principles and seeking the masterplanning of new neighbourhood areas. It is a key requirement of the strategy to ensure that the new residential areas are properly integrated with the existing residential areas, services and facilities.

PPA5 Neighbourhood Masterplanning principles;

The integrated sustainable development of the main growth areas will be encouraged through the adoption of the neighbourhood principles, which will require the masterplanning of the Blackrock Development Area, the Mount Avenue and the South West Action Area Plans, the Rockview Farm Local Area Plan and the zoned lands north of the Castletown River.

Dundalk has in the region of 550ha's of residential zoned land, which has yet to be developed¹¹. To help ensure the sustainable development of this land in a phased manner, growth areas have been identified. These include the urban area, the South West Action Area, Mount Avenue and Blackrock.

It is a priority of the plan to encourage the sustainable integrated development of the main growth areas. In order to have greater control over the development of zoned land, the Council will require that the development of each of these areas will adhere to the neighbourhood principles. In Chapter 7 there are a series of principles set out. The principles broadly require that new developments are masterplanned. The areas should be designed and laid out in a manner which respects the local area, the existing topography, and

¹⁰ Preliminary census reports in July 2002 have indicated that the population has not grown as substantially as was forecasted and in 2002, the population for this area is estimated at 36,151

¹¹ this figure does not include the land zoned as premature for residential development within the South West Sector Local Plan area

should be properly integrated and make sufficient provision for services in terms of social commercial and community to cater for the future community of the area. In all cases the provision of adequate and appropriate infrastructure and services is a prerequisite.

Masterplanning will be required for each of the defined neighbourhood areas within the growth areas of Blackrock, the defined zoned land to the north of the Castletown River and the South West Local Plan area and Mount Avenue Action Area.

PPA6 The Blackrock Area;

To help ensure a sustainable pattern of appropriate residential growth is created and maintained and to significantly reduce piecemeal development, the Council will seek all new development to be masterplanned in accordance with the neighbourhood principles for the future development of the Blackrock area.

Limited infill may be permitted in cases where such development is in keeping with the neighbourhood principles and that it would not prejudice the future development of the area.

Masterplanning will help to ensure that the areas are planned and developed in a comprehensive, integrated and sustainable manner. The neighbourhood principles set out broad principles and design guidelines for the development of the areas, including general details on sectoral development - density, design, and need for integration.

PPA7 Requirement for Masterplans for New Residential Development;

Masterplans will be required for all new residential developments in the Blackrock, Mount Avenue, South West Area, the Rockview Farm area and the zoned residential area to the north of the Castletown River.

Limited infill may be permitted in accordance with the neighbourhood principles and the other policy requirements of the plan.

Zoned Residential Lands to the North of the Castletown River;

Any new residential development within this area will be required to comply with the neighbourhood masterplanning principles. While the south of Dundalk has witnessed considerable expansion in recent years, the north of Dundalk has seen much less investment. It is a priority of the Plan to seek to encourage new growth to the north of Dundalk, within the zoned residential lands and this can be achieved through setting out a framework for how the area should develop by means of a Local Area Plan.

PPA8 Northern Dundalk;

The Council will encourage the enhancement and development of the zoned land to the north of the Castletown River through examining potential for a Local Area Plan to help promote the development of integrated neighbourhoods with adequate community facilities.

This policy prioritises the need for an examination of the potential of the zoned residential lands to the north of the Castletown River. The Plan should seek to where appropriate; promote enhanced community services and facilities in this area, just north of the river on the Newry road. There will also be a strong requirement to encourage integration with the north of the town centre. The role of the north end of the town has been changing with the southwards shifting town centre and there is potential for regeneration and rejuvenation of the northern sector of Dundalk.

The Mount Avenue Action Area;

The Council adopted an Action Plan in 2000 for the Mount Avenue area. The Development Plan reflects the main land use zoning of the action plan and will require that the lands be developed in accordance with the masterplanning principles.

PPA9 Proposed Local Heritage Area;

The Council will seek to protect the Castletown Motte and Bailey as a proposed Local Heritage Site.

There is a considerable amount of land zoned for residential development within the adopted action area plan - in the region of 150ha's. Subsequent to the production of this action plan, preliminary plan proposals were drawn up for a new inner relief road. This provision of adequate new road links is a prerequisite, which is required to be addressed as part of the overall masterplanning of the area and will need to be agreed with the Council to ensure the proper planning and sustainable development of the area. There are also amenity considerations, which need to be addressed - the area contains one of Dundalk's most significant historical symbols - the Castletown Motte and Bailey which should be preserved and promoted – this is now proposed to as a natural heritage area.

South West Local Area Plan;

It is an objective of Dundalk Town and Louth County Council to prepare a Local Area Plan for the development of the South West Sector of Dundalk. The Plan will be based primarily on the neighbourhood masterplanning principles, to enable Dundalk to achieve balanced development and sustainable growth in line with its status as a Gateway and anticipated city status.

Prior to the adoption of the local area plan, any proposed development that would conflict with this objective will not be permitted. However, subject to the availability of services, some limited development in line with the zoning provisions of the development plan that would not jeopardise the overall comprehensive development of the area, may be permitted, in accordance with plan policies.

The majority of the South West Sector falls within the Town Council boundary with the more western extremities being located within the Louth County Council area. The whole of the quarter is within the Dundalk and Environs Development Plan area. The development plan provides the framework and development strategy for the area, setting out the broad land use zoning objectives and general principles for development. The residentially zoned areas should be masterplanned in accordance with the neighbourhood principles. This requires the comprehensive integrated development of the identified parcels as new neighbourhoods, incorporating the necessary services and facilities. In addition areas are also identified for mixed uses as well as commercial and employment development.

The majority of the South West Sector is constrained in terms of development potential because of the lack of infrastructure; this includes drainage, water, sanitary services and roads infrastructure. The provision of adequate services and infrastructure is a prerequisite to enabling development in this area. In the interim, the development plans identifies the majority of the area as premature for development pending the provision of adequate infrastructure and services. This includes public mains drainage scheme as well as roads.

As part of the overall consideration for developing the area, the Council anticipate that there will be a requirement for co-operative working to deliver the servicing of the area. The Council will therefore consider making a Section 49 Scheme to examine the long-term issues regarding need for infrastructure.

While Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act enables the Council to detail a scheme of contributions to make provision for the payment of different contributions in respect of different classes of development, a separate scheme will be detailed under Section 49 to enable co-operative working to deliver the servicing of the area. The planning authority will set out a supplementary development contribution scheme for the South West Sector. This will specify the area that it relates to and the public infrastructure project or service to which it relates. This scheme may also make provision for the payment of different contributions in respect of different classes or descriptions of development.

With regard to implementation, the Planning Authority can when granting a permission (under Section 34) include conditions requiring the payment of a contribution in respect of any public infrastructure service or project that benefits the development to which the permission relates. This scheme will enable the funds collected within the South West Sector to be utilised solely for the development of the infrastructure and services within this area.

PPA 10 The South West Sector;

The Council will produce a Local Area Plan for the development of the South West Sector to encourage sustainable development for neighbourhoods and mixed-use development.

The provision of the necessary facilities and infrastructure, in accordance with a scheme of contributions and other relevant policies is a prerequisite to any development.

4.5.4 Environment Policy Priority Areas

There is a wealth of natural and historic assets within Dundalk, from the flamboyant Dundalk street frontages seen on Clanbrassil Street to the mythological Castletown Motte and Bailey. It is a priority of the plan to protect and enhance the natural and built environment. Dundalk Bay is an important natural heritage asset for the town and environs; it is designated as a proposed candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) and Special Protection Area (SPA) under European designations. It is also designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) under National designations.

PPA11

Protect and enhance the natural and built environment and heritage of Dundalk and where possible increase opportunities to access amenities within the plan area for all sectors of the community. Refer to policies NE12, NE13 and BE6.

Dundalk has grown substantially over the past decade. However the provision of community facilities, leisure and recreational facilities has not kept apace with this growth. The need for additional amenity and recreational areas within Dundalk and the environs is recognised. There are opportunities for the development of leisure and amenity facilities, and the zoning plan displays the potential areas.

In appreciation of the existent shortage of leisure and amenity space and facilities within the plan area to meet the existing and projected needs, it is a plan priority to ensure that sufficient amenity and recreational lands are provided. Two new areas have been identified for recreation and nature conservation.

Nature Reserve Conservation, Recreation and Amenity;

It is a priority of the plan to protect the area of land to the north of the Castletown River, incorporating the Dundalk Bay area for nature conservation and amenity. This area also incorporates the Dundalk Racecourse and the landfill site, which is shortly to be decommissioned.

This area is of significant interest from an ornithological, ecological and nature conservation interest point of view. In recognition of the wealth of wildlife and the need to protect the area from adverse development, The Irish Heritage Council - under the umbrella of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government has added this area to the list of areas proposed as

Natural Heritage Areas. The purpose of this designation is to preserve habitat areas of National importance.

PPA12

Seek to produce an action area plan, to enhance opportunities for recreation and amenity and promote opportunities for regenerating the Port and Harbour area while having regard to the sensitive nature of the area and the nature conservation interests.

The area which includes the River and the land to its north, along with the port and harbour, has been identified for the production of an action area plan to ascertain opportunities for enhancing the port and the lands to the north for commercial/leisure and recreational interests while also ensuring the protection of the nature conservation interests. This will help to ensure that development can proceed whilst protecting nature conservation interests and allowing access for the local community to enjoy the amenity interests of the area.

Recreation /Leisure & Tourism;

The area of land outlined, east of the Blackrock Road is zoned agricultural and the 1996 Development Plan seeks the retention of the area in its natural and unmodified state, free from development. The area is closely related to the town. Access to the area needs to be improved significantly as and it is envisaged that, in the future this area will play a significant role in meeting the town's recreational needs and will be more closely linked to the town, the Castletown River and the Navvy Bank by means of a walkway from Soldiers Point.

The Dundalk Marshes is an area of high amenity value and it is a priority of the plan to maintain and enhance its amenity value through zoning this area as a Strategic Recreational Area. Uses permitted within this area would include recreational, which would enhance and maintain the openness of the area and permit recreational use of the land.

PPA 13

Seek to protect and enhance the area identified to the east of Blackrock Road as a Strategic Recreational Area, uses permitted include recreation and amenity uses, which would maintain the openness of the area.

4.6 General Land Use Zoning

This section sets out the details regarding land use zoning and should be read in conjunction with the land use Zoning maps 1A and 1B.

To provide for Employment Mixed Use Zone.

Colour Code: Brown.

Industrial/ light industrial/ offices ancillary to industrial/ warehousing/wholesale warehousing/ storage & distribution/ car showrooms/ motor sales outlets/ car parks/ heavy vehicle parks/ petrol filling stations & services stations/ recycling facilities/ service industries [as defined under the Industrial Development (Service Industries) Order 1998; to include but not exclusively, software development; data processing and electronic commerce; technical and consulting services; commercial laboratory services; administrative centres; co-ordination and headquarter services; research and development services; media, multimedia and recording services; entertainment and leisure services; training services; publishing services; international financial services; healthcare services; construction related services; environmental services; and logistics management services].

Offices, which are normally found in town centre areas, such as professional services and practices that would normally be visited for business purposes by people living in the local community will not be permitted.

To provide for Employment, Retail and Recreational Mixed Use.

Colour Code: Orange.

Industrial/light industrial/storage and distribution/recreation/leisure and amenity/non-food retail warehousing of bulky household and D.I.Y goods of which no more than 10 percent of gross floor area may be used for ancillary non bulky goods retailing.

To provide for Education, Recreation, Enterprise and Innovation.

Colour Code: Mustard.

Education and Institutional uses, research and development/ enterprises/offices ancillary to / start up units/ leisure/ recreation and amenity.

To provide for Leisure, Recreational and Amenity Uses.

Colour Code: Cherry.

Hotel, motel, guesthouses, leisure facilities, public houses, local shop/facilities and residential dwelling units/houses/apartments.

To provide for General Business Uses.

Colour Code: Light Blue.

Offices/professional and financial services, technology park, hotels, motels, guest houses, public houses, restaurants, light industry, recreational buildings, car parks, open spaces and dwellinghouses (including flats or apartments).

To provide for Port and Related Uses.

Colour Code: Rust.

Activities and uses directly related to the Port and associated ancillary industrial and commercial uses.

To Protect and Enhance the Vitality & Viability of the Town Centre.

Colour Code: Purple.

Shops, offices, residential, hotels, motels, guesthouses, pubs, restaurants, discotheques, night clubs, dance halls, public, cultural, recreational and religious workshop buildings, light industry, taxi bases, take away restaurants, petrol filling stations, restaurants, repair garages, car showrooms and ancillary uses subject to compliance with plan policy.

To Protect, Provide and Improve Community, Education, Sport and Recreation Facilities.

Colour Code: Grey.

Education Institutions and uses ancillary to, and associated with, the use of land as such including playing fields, car parks, research and development facilities and developments involving employment generating linkages with educational institutions, Hospitals, Community Halls and Buildings of worship, health and buildings related to community welfare, cemeteries, recycling facilities, public landfill sites, public installations for the treatment of water to the Town as well as public installations for the treatment and disposal of sewage.

To Protect, Provide and Improve Residential Amenities.

Colour Code: Yellow.

Houses, apartments, flats, community and public service facilities, including schools, places of worship, halls, community and health centres, open space, playgrounds, crèche facilities, car parks and private garages and to allow for improved local/neighbourhood centres in the areas identified for such uses, local and neighbourhood centres should be small scale local facilities to cater for daily needs of local community and can include one or more of the following uses; local shops – from corner shop/newsagents to a small-scale local supermarket, Grocery/Butchers, Post Office/Bank, Public house/restaurant, Pharmacy, Health centre/GP Facilities/ Dentist, Professional Services – Solicitors/estate agents, Childcare Facilities, Educational Facilities – Primary/Secondary Schools, Community Hall/Training Centre, Office space for professional services etc., Recreational/Open space areas.

These local centres can provide a mix of uses to serve everyday needs such as a shop/public house or post office and possibly surgery. The size and diversity of uses will depend on the area in question, its proximity to other centres and the size of the local population and the demand for such services.

Premature for Residential.

Colour Code: Hatched Yellow.

This zoning also includes substantial areas, which are premature for residential development pending the satisfactory provision of a public mains drainage scheme.

Small scale Economic Activity

This category would also enable the use by the owner or occupier of his/her primary residence for a small scale economic activity where the proposed use would not result in the residential element of the dwelling being reduced to such an extent that it could no longer reasonably be used as the primary residential accommodation of the owner and occupier of the dwelling and where such development would not detract from the residential amenities of the area.

In exceptional circumstances, a general convenience shop not exceeding 100 sq.m. gross floor area in areas where the Planning Authority considers there to be a definite lack of such a facility in the area, and such provision would not undermine the local centre or neighbourhood facilities or have a negative impact on the commercial core of the Town.

To Protect, Provide and Encourage the use of the Strategic Recreational Areas.

Colour Code: Green.

- a) *Active open space/recreation uses* – these include children's play areas, playing pitches, running tracks, tennis courts, cycling tracks, rowing and boating facilities and other major sports facilities.
- b) *Passive open space/recreation uses* – these include parkland, ecological corridors, nature reserves, civic spaces, coastal walk, and pedestrian walkways and other associated uses related to passive open space.
- c) *Agricultural uses* – agriculture and uses related to agriculture.

To Preserve Agricultural Land.

Colour Code: Dark Green.

To protect and provide for agriculture and uses related to agriculture such as open space and playing fields, dwellings only in exceptional circumstances.

To Protect and Provide for Amenity Open Space and Recreation.

Colour Code: Light Green.

The locations of the areas zoned for open space, amenity, recreation and heritage are shown on the Land-Use Zoning Plan Map 1. The hierarchy of open space, amenity and recreation is specified in Map 2.

The uses, which will normally be permitted within the zones, are as follows:

- a) *Passive recreation* – as outlined in section 9.2.1

- b) Active recreation – as outlined in section 9.2.1
- c) Associated Buildings and Car park Facilities.

To Preserve Strategic Land Reserve.

Colour Code: Dark Pink.

To preserve the openness of land for future development requirements while allowing for agricultural/amenity and recreational uses which would maintain the openness of the land and would not prejudice the future development of the area.

In exceptional circumstances, there is a possibility to permit a use or development which would in the opinion of the local planning authority be considered of strategic importance to the development of Dundalk as a regional gateway, and that would this development would be in the interests of the proper planning and sustainable development of the wider area.

Uses, which are considered of strategic importance to achieving the vision for the future development of Dundalk would include; educational/institutional uses/leisure of a regional scale; a factory outlet centre and a major employment use. When considering if a use would accord with the exceptional circumstances for permitting development within a strategic land reserve, the use should, in the opinion of the local authority;

- *be of strategic importance to achieving the vision for Dundalk.*
- *should be for one of the uses identified above.*
- *should accord with the strategic objectives and the other plan policies.*
- *be of a scale, nature and design befitting of a strategic use which would accord with the aims of achieving the proper planning and sustainable development of the area.*