



CHAPTER 5

SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES





5 SUSTAINABLE NEIGHBOURHOODS AND COMMUNITIES

5.1 Introduction

Dundalk can trace its history as a settlement as far back as the neolithic period during the Stone Age. This provides the town with a rich and diverse archaeological and built heritage. Over the centuries the town has continued to thrive and grow. The 2022 Census recorded Dundalk as the second largest town in Ireland with a population of 43,112. The RSES for the Eastern and Midland Region included a population target of 50,000 people by 2031. If the population continues to grow at the rate recorded between 2016-2022 this target will be realised on or before 2031.

This Plan is aligned with the Louth Community Economic Plan 2024-2029 (LECP) which identifies five high level goals and a series of actions pertaining to the development of diverse, healthy, climate resilient communities, which take advantage of the County's strategic location.

This Chapter will provide an overview of the existing character and urban structure of Dundalk. It will also focus on how the Plan will support the creation of quality neighbourhoods and communities and will set out the approach for the delivery of residential accommodation, neighbourhood, social, education, and community facilities which are cross-cutting themes of the LECP.

5.2 Overview of Dundalk

Dundalk is the county town and administrative centre of Louth. There are a broad range of public services available including outpatient and surgical procedures at Louth County Hospital, Louth County Council headquarters, a court service, social welfare office, and education facilities, including a third level institute (Dundalk Institute of Technology, DkIT).

There is a vibrant retail offering in the town centre and in particular along Clanbrassil Street, which is the primary shopping street, secondary shopping areas including the Long Walk and Park Street, and at the Marshes Shopping Centre.

The Plan area also includes the urban village of Blackrock, which is located to the south east of Dundalk town centre. Blackrock, initially developed as a fishing village, is now a vibrant tourist destination with an established and growing residential base. Blackrock provides a focus for local activities in the southern part of the Plan area, enabling sustainable urban living and allowing people access to local shops, services, community services, information, healthcare, amenities and to work locally.

5.3 Urban Structure and Character

Dundalk's town centre has a strong linear core with a fine urban grain comprising deep narrow plots. This pattern of development is particularly evident in the northern section of the town centre. Like many historic towns Dundalk has a network of narrow streets culminating in the wider 'high street', Clanbrassil Street. The prevailing height of buildings along Clanbrassil Street are 2-3 storey.

Dundalk's town centre enjoys the presence of a complex network of streets and back lanes. The basic structure of the historic core of the town follows a "Y" formation made up of:

- Clanbrassil Street,
- Jocelyn Street and Seatown Place, and Hill Street,
- Dublin Street and Park Street.

Parallel to these are The Long Walk and The Ramparts, which converge at Market Square - the civic core of Dundalk.



Y' Formation of Dundalk's Historic Core



Much of Dundalk's historic housing stock is located in the vicinity of the town centre. Residential development subsequently took place to the east of the Inner Relief Road and then in the Castletown/Mount Avenue Area and between the Dublin Road and Inner Relief Road.

The Blackrock and Haynestown area has experienced considerable pressure for development in recent years, resulting in a significant increase in housing and associated residential population in this part of the town.

To the north of the Castletown River the residential areas are concentrated along the Newry Road, Armagh Road and Racecourse Road. The level and pressure for development to the north of the town centre is lower than that to the south of the town centre.

There is strong evidence of the consolidation of the urban core of Dundalk in recent years with a number of projects recently completed, ongoing or having received permission. This includes Cathedral View, a residential development adjacent to The Marshes Shopping Centre that was recently completed, and an apartment development with ancillary commercial uses at Connolly's Field adjacent to the Tesco off Hill Street which is currently under construction (see Fig 5.1).

Permissions have also been granted for infill developments along Rampart Lane, opposite the Imperial Hotel and at Seatown Place. In addition to new builds, permission has also been granted for the conversion and change of use of St. Joseph's Female Orphanage/Industrial School and St. Malachy's Convent, into residential use.

Figure 5.1 – Development at Connolly's Field



This Plan will continue to promote development of infill and brownfield sites to promote compact growth. The Settlement Capacity Audit (Appendix 1) includes a map of the larger infill and brownfield sites in the Plan area.

Recent employment opportunities have largely been concentrated to the east of the town centre on the Coe's Road, and south of the town centre at the IDA Science and Technology Park, Xerox Technology Park and Finnabair Business Park. These employment areas will be complemented by the 'Dundalk North Business Park' located along the Armagh Road to the north of the town centre, which was under construction at the time of writing.

Dundalk boasts a range of historic landmarks including Castletown Motte and the Windmill Tower. Evidence of the town's rich ecclesiastical, mercantile, industrial and rail heritage is peppered throughout. The County Museum was originally part of a distillery, the PJ Carroll's building a former tobacco factory has been incorporated into the DKIT campus, Clarke railway station was constructed in 1894 and remains in use today.



These buildings are a memento of Dundalk's industrial past. St. Patrick's Church is an important ecclesiastical landmark in the town whilst Castletown graveyard dates back to the 12th Century.

One of the town's most prominent landmark buildings is located to the south of the town centre in proximity to DkIT. 'The Gateway Hotel' is 14 storeys high and is Dundalk's most recognised taller building.

Dundalk has a range of natural assets that contribute to the character and setting of the town. The Castletown River is an important ecological and recreational amenity. The intertidal section of the river up to the rail bridge is part of the Dundalk Bay Special Protection Area, a European ecological designation that has been made on account of various waterbird species and wetland habitats.

Dundalk estuary is designated as both a Special Area of Conservation (SAC), a European ecological designation that has been made on account of various habitats and species, and a Special Protection Area (SPA). The Fane River is located just beyond and to the south of Dundalk's settlement boundary also flows into Dundalk Bay.

This Plan seeks to protect and enhance Dundalk's unique character.

Any regeneration or new development proposals will be required to respect the existing character of the town and take account of the intrinsic value of the built heritage, landscape, and natural environment.

5.3.1 Policy Objective

SC 1

To ensure that any development in Dundalk makes a positive contribution to the character, setting, and built and natural environment of the town.

5.4 Urban Design and Placemaking

A key element of placemaking and urban design is the creation of an environment which is attractive to live, work and visit. When designing a development, consideration shall be given to the existing character of the area and how the development will assist in creating a safe, secure, and integrated community and neighbourhood where there is a high level of permeability and connectivity and a strong sense of place and identity.

Figure 5.2 outlines the key principles of quality urban design that should be an integral part of any new development proposal.

The implementation of these design principles will assist in the creation of successful neighbourhoods and spaces where people have access to services and facilities in an attractive and safe environment.





Figure 5.2 – Key Principles of Quality Urban Design



5.4.1 Policy Objectives

SC 2

To promote and facilitate the creation of a sustainable community in Dundalk in a high-quality built environment where there is a distinctive sense of place with attractive streets, spaces, and neighbourhoods that are accessible and safe places for all members of the community to meet and socialise.

SC 3

To develop and support sustainable neighbourhoods and residential developments in Dundalk that facilitate the provision of the required neighbourhood infrastructure such as schools, recreational amenities, community facilities, healthcare and childcare facilities and a suitable mix of housing at an appropriate density in accordance with the 'Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines' (DHLGH, 2024).

SC 4

To promote and encourage universal design for all new buildings, public realm works and changes of use or alterations to existing buildings.



5.5 Compact Growth

The NPF and RSES promote the principle of compact growth. The creation of more compact settlements has many benefits including more efficient use of land, a greater return on public infrastructure investment, better access to services and amenities and facilitating the transition to low carbon living. This Plan supports the creation of a more compact settlement and will seek to deliver at least 30% of all new homes within the existing built-up area of the town.

Within the built-up footprint of Dundalk there are significant tracts of vacant and under-utilised lands of various sizes that have the potential to accommodate mixed use or residential developments. The development of these lands will assist in creating a more compact settlement and achieving the 30% target set out in Policy Objective SC 5. The Settlement Capacity Audit in Appendix 1 includes a map of the larger infill and brownfield sites in the Plan area.

5.5.1 Policy Objective

SC 5

To achieve compact growth in Dundalk through the delivery of at least 30% of all new homes within the existing built-up footprint of the town, by supporting the development of infill, brownfield, under-utilised, and regeneration sites.

5.6 Building Heights

As part of the strategy of securing compact growth and more sustainable patterns of development, this Plan will support an increase in building heights where the design and layout of buildings can contribute to a high-quality public realm and living and working environment. This approach is consistent with national and regional policy, which is set out in greater detail in the *'Urban Development and Building Heights Guidelines for Planning Authorities'* (2018).

5.6.1 Prevailing Building Height

Like many towns throughout the country Dundalk has developed as a predominantly low density, low rise settlement. The majority of commercial and residential developments outside of the town centre are two-storey.

Historically, taller warehouse buildings in Dundalk were located in the vicinity of Clanbrassil Street and were mainly 3-4 storeys.



In the wider urban area of Dundalk there are buildings of height along Racecourse Road and to the north of Bridge Street, on lands zoned for employment uses and in the vicinity of the Port. The silos at Dundalk Port are readily visible from various vantage points when travelling into the town from the North and are a reminder of Dundalk's role in shipping and trade.

Today, the highest and most easily recognisable building of height in Dundalk is The Gateway Hotel, which is 14 storeys high. Located along the Inner Relief Road; it is an important landmark within the town.





More recently, there has been a trend towards higher densities and increased building heights in Dundalk. Planning permission has been granted for taller buildings at Ramparts Lane (5-storey), Francis Street (5-storey) and to the south of the Fairways Hotel along the Dublin Road (2-5 storeys), the latter of which will provide a strong urban edge as you enter the town from the south. A 4-6 storey residential development is currently under construction at ‘Connolly’s Field’.

The mixture of building heights and typologies contributes to a dynamic and varied streetscape.

For the purposes of this Plan, a building of height is considered to be a building that is 4 storeys or higher. Table 5.1 identifies the areas in Dundalk considered to be most suitable for buildings of height. Proposals outside of these locations will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

Table 5.1: Areas Suitable for Buildings of Height in Dundalk

Location	Reasoning
Along the Ramparts and in the Marshes area	Lands are in proximity to existing services and facilities which will support the consolidation of the urban core of the town thereby assisting in the delivery of a more compact settlement pattern.
Lands along the waterfront	There are existing higher buildings in the vicinity of Dundalk Port. These contribute to Dundalk’s wider setting and provide a sense of place. Opportunity exists to provide well designed landmark buildings which enhance the appearance of the waterfront.
Public Transport Hubs, Transport corridor including existing and future bus corridors	Opportunity exists to improve the visual appearance of the main arterial transport routes into and through the town, thus assisting in the creation of attractive entrance nodes and encouraging higher densities where there is access to sustainable transport.
Mullagharlin Employment Generating Area	Potential to provide landmark gateway buildings for employment generating uses. It is essential that any new building makes a positive contribution to the built form of the area.
Town Centre and Regeneration Zoned Lands	Opportunity exists to provide buildings of height on town centre and regeneration zoned lands to support the consolidation of the urban core and to realise the potential of compact growth. Applications will be considered on a case-by-case basis and building height design should have regard to the prevailing context of the surrounding area.

In general, larger sites offer the greatest potential for buildings of height. The grouping of higher buildings in a specific location can assist in the creation of a distinctive neighbourhood with a unique skyline, thereby improving legibility whilst also signalling regeneration. The configuration of any group of buildings of height will be dependent on the characteristics of the site and surrounding area.

There has been a discernible pattern of gradually increasing residential densities on ‘infill’ sites within the built-up area.

Many of these infill developments have been at a higher density and with a taller building height profile than the prevailing local low-rise context.



Successful examples of this form of development are often located along the waterfront, on prominent corner sites, or on sites with frontage onto a wide road. The general approach in terms of building heights in these sites has been to taper height from a high point in the centre, down to the site boundaries where the height of adjacent buildings can often be lower. In all instances a careful design and a detailed analysis is required in order to deliver a quality, attractive development.

A responsive approach will be taken to the assessment of proposals for buildings of height with each application considered on a case-by-case basis. Any application for a building(s) of height will be required to include a design statement that sets out the overall architectural design concept of the proposal and how it responds to its surrounding context and shall satisfy the following criteria:

- **Public Transport** – the site shall be located in an area well served by public transport;
- **Density/Plot Ratio** – the site shall be in an area of the town appropriate for high density development;
- **Building Typology and Use** – the use of the building(s) and the design/style of the building(s) shall positively contribute to the local neighbourhood;
- **Impact on Historic Environment** – historic environments can be highly sensitive to large scale and tall buildings, and careful consideration is required to ensure that they protect and enhance the character and setting of the existing streetscape;
- **Placemaking** – the building(s) shall positively contribute to the local streetscape by utilising height and massing to achieve density whilst also ensuring there is sufficient variety in scale and form to respond to the scale of adjoining developments and create visual interest in the streetscape;
- **Visual Impact** – the building(s) shall successfully integrate into the local neighbourhood, with the design, scale, massing, and finishes taking account of the context and setting and the relationship with any landmark building(s) or protected views. Photomontages and contextual drawings of the proposed building(s) from vantage points in the area shall be included to demonstrate how the building(s) would integrate into the local neighbourhood;
- **Residential Amenity** – an assessment of the potential impact of the development on the residential amenities of existing and proposed residential properties, with a particular focus on potential overlooking or overshadowing; and
- **Microclimate** – consideration shall be given to the potential impacts of the development on the microclimate, such as wind patterns, daylight, air temperature, and humidity.

5.6.2 Policy Objective

SC 6

To support increased building heights in appropriate locations in Dundalk. Any application for a building of height shall include a Design Statement demonstrating compliance with the criteria set out in Section 5.6.1 of this Plan and any other relevant criteria in the County Development Plan or Section 28 Guidelines.

5.7 Density and Plot Ratio

Density is an established method of quantifying the intensity of a development. For developments where there is a mixture of buildings (such as housing, apartments, and commercial floor space) plot ratio would be a more applicable method.



Plot ratios can determine the maximum building floor space area or volume on a given site, but on their own, cannot determine built form. The same area or volume can be distributed on a site in different ways to generate very different environments.

Traditionally, residential development in Dundalk was based on low density suburban type layouts with densities in the region of 25-30 units per hectare, however, more recent developments have tended to be of a higher density. It is recognised that higher densities have an important role in ensuring sustainable land use.

The provision of more compact settlement patterns, at appropriate locations, will support the provision of a critical mass of population which in turn will lead to greater provision of services and will support the viability of public infrastructure projects. Proximity to and the availability of a quality public transport network is an important consideration in the suitability of a site/location for higher density development. Higher density developments in Dundalk tend to be located on infill/brownfield sites within or close to the town centre. Examples of extant permissions for higher density residential developments are along Park Street (340 units/ha), and at Seatown Place (210 units/ha). It is recognised that not all areas of the town would be suitable for developments as dense as this, and in this regard proposals for higher density developments will be considered on a case-by-case basis.

The recommended densities in Dundalk are based on the densities set out in the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines (DHLGH, 2024)*. Table 5.2 sets out the minimum recommended densities in the central and suburban areas of the town.

Applicants and developers are advised that this is a minimum recommended density. Table 3.4 of the *Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlement Guidelines (DHLGH, 2024)* provides a range of densities that shall generally be applied in Regional Growth Centres.

Table 5.2: Recommended Density for Residential Development

Settlement	Recommended Minimum Density Range per hectare	
	Town Centre and Urban Neighbourhood	Suburban area/Urban extension
Dundalk	50 units per ha	35 units per ha

High quality design with a focus on placemaking is a critical element in the development of sustainable neighbourhoods. In this regard it should be noted that whilst this Plan promotes and supports higher density developments, such proposals will only be given positive consideration where the Planning Authority is satisfied that the density is appropriate for its location and would have a positive impact on the neighbourhood and community in which it is located.

5.7.1 Policy Objective

SC 7

To promote development that facilitates a higher, sustainable density in accordance with Table 5.2 of this Plan which will be appropriate to the local context of the town and enhance the environment in which it is located in accordance with the '*Sustainable Residential and Compact Settlements Guidelines (DHLGH, 2024)*'.



5.8 10-Minute Neighbourhood Concept

The 10-minute neighbourhood is centred on the premise that people should be able to meet most of their needs within a short walking or cycling distance of their homes. This concept is an example of integrated land use and transportation planning and, if successfully implemented, would assist in the creation of a sustainable community and reduce dependence on the private car. It is closely aligned with the creation of a compact settlement as set out in Section 5.5 of this Plan and the Guiding Principles for Healthy Placemaking as set out in Section 9.4 of the RSES.

The Local Transport Plan for Dundalk (in Appendix 2) provides further detail on the 10-Minute Neighbourhood Concept.

5.8.1 Policy Objective

SC 8

To promote the concept of a '10-minute neighbourhood', where high quality housing and well-designed, safe and inclusive public spaces served by local services, amenities and sustainable modes of transport are available.

Figure 5.3: 10-Minute Neighbourhood Concept





5.9 Active Land Management

Active Land Management has an important role in achieving compact growth in Dundalk through the re-use and/or redevelopment of vacant or under-utilised buildings and land. The Council will seek to work collaboratively with landowners and stakeholders to facilitate the development of such buildings and land. The Active Land Management strategy for Dundalk includes:

- A phasing strategy to ensure the timely release of residential lands;
- Regular monitoring of development activity in the town;
- Support for the development of vacant and under-utilised buildings and land;
- The proactive implementation of the Derelict Sites Act 1990; and
- Support for funding applications under the Urban Regeneration and Development Fund and other government initiatives that promote regeneration.

The Government has introduced a number of fiscal measures under ‘Housing for All – a New Housing Plan for Ireland’, to address the housing shortage and ultimately increase housing supply and improve affordability:

- **Residential Zoned Land Tax (RZLT):** Introduced under *Section 80 of the Finance Act 2021*, the purpose of this tax is to increase housing supply by activating zoned, serviced residential development lands for housing.
- **Vacant Homes Tax:** Introduced in 2023 and is applicable to properties that can be lived in and have been stayed in for less than 30 days in the previous 12-months. Its purpose is to encourage owners to rent out empty properties.

- **Temporary Time Limited Waiver in respect of Development Contributions:** Introduced in April 2023, it was designed to incentivise the activation of pipeline residential developments¹.
- **Vacant Property Refurbishment Grant:** Provides funding for the refurbishment of vacant and derelict homes to either live in or rent out.

This Plan will support the implementation of these and any future Government initiatives that seek to address issues of housing supply and promote the regeneration of urban areas.

5.9.1 Policy Objectives

SC 9

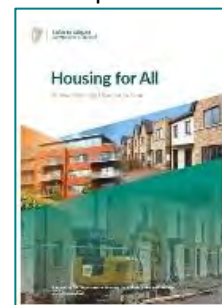
To promote through active land management, the sustainable development of vacant and under-utilised lands throughout the Plan area.

SC 10

To utilise the provisions of the Derelict Sites Act 1990, including the maintenance of a Derelict Site Register and CPO powers to address instances of dereliction and decay and to bring buildings back into active use.

5.10 Housing Mix

This Plan supports the implementation of the government’s action plan for housing ‘*Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland*’, and the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (DHLGH, 2024) with the aim of providing a diverse and innovative mix of housing that can facilitate compact housing and provide greater housing choice.



¹ Residential developments commenced no later than 31st December 2024 could avail of this scheme.



In order to create a balanced community and to aid social integration, it is important that residential developments provide for a mix of house types, tenures, such as Cost Rental, and sizes, to cater for the entire community. This includes social, private, affordable, and specialist housing including housing for students, refugees and beneficiaries of temporary protection.

5.10.1 Policy Objectives

SC 11

To support the initiatives and pathways proposed under 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland' or any future policy document, in providing a suitable mix of housing types and tenures, such as Cost Rental, to meet the housing needs of the community.

SC 12

To progress the provision of social and affordable housing for a mixture of tenures such as Cost Rental, through partnership with approved housing bodies, the Land Development Agency, voluntary and co-operative organisations, the HSE and through agreements with private developers.

SC 13

To seek that all new residential developments on zoned lands in excess of 20 residential units provide for universally designed units in accordance with the policy objectives outlined in the Louth County Development Plan and with the requirements of the 'Universal Design Guidelines for Homes in Ireland' developed by the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design (National Disability Authority).

SC 14

To encourage improvements in the environmental performance of buildings by promoting energy efficiency and energy conservation in existing and new developments in line with best practice.

5.11 Social and Affordable Housing

It is recognised that social and affordable housing has an important role in housing provision. Data from Census 2022 indicates that 37% (5,916) of houses in Dundalk are rented, of which 2,211 are rented from the Local Authority.



This Plan will support the delivery of social and affordable housing in Dundalk as well as the management and maintenance of existing social housing stock in the town.

The Council has an important role in the provision of social and affordable housing, through building on local authority owned lands, and through new regeneration programmes and actions.

Examples of ongoing projects includes lands at Mount Avenue, where there is a development of 93 units under construction and at Muirhevnamor where 11 units are to be delivered over 3 separate sites. These developments are due to be completed in Q3 of 2025.



The Council will continue to work in partnership with the DHLGH, Approved Housing Bodies and other key stakeholders in the delivery of social housing and the implementation of Part V of the Planning and Development Act as part of private residential developments.

5.11.1 Policy Objectives

SC 15

To support Government policy and targets under 'Housing for All – A New Housing Plan for Ireland' or any future policy document, and Local Authority actions that contribute to the delivery of affordable housing and social housing, reduction of homelessness and building of homes on public and private lands.

SC 16

To support the delivery of social housing in Dundalk in accordance with Louth County Council's Social Housing Delivery Programme.

SC 17

To apply a social and affordable housing requirement in accordance with the requirements of Part V of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended).

5.12 Homeless Services

There are currently two homeless shelters in Dundalk; the Women's Aid Refuge along Avenue Road and the Simon Community emergency shelter 'The Gatehouse' on Jocelyn Street which provides 10 beds. The 'Community House' is another facility managed by the Simon Community and has 20 bed spaces. These facilities deliver a vital service and provide an important step for people on the path out of homelessness.

This Plan recognises the importance of homeless shelters and will support the provision of same in appropriate locations in the town.

5.12.1 Policy Objective

SC 18

To facilitate the development of emergency accommodation, including hostels for homeless individuals and families, in appropriate locations in Dundalk.

5.13 Housing for Older People

In 2022 13.5% of Dundalk's population (5,821 persons) were over 65. As people are living longer, it is important that there is a suitable choice of accommodation for older persons. The policy statement 'Housing Options for Our Ageing Population' (DHPLG and Dept. of Health, 2020) identifies the need to plan ahead to meet the needs of an ageing population. This Plan recognises the evolving needs of people as they progress through life.



Age Friendly Principles and Guidelines for the Planning Authority

June 2021





All new residential development shall take account of the 'Age Friendly Principles Guidelines for the Planning Authority', (Age Friendly Ireland 2021) and where feasible, be built to 'Lifetime Homes' standard. Furthermore, the Council will support new and innovative approaches to the delivery of a range of housing options including, 'Independent Living', 'Assisted Living' and 'Specialised Living'.

5.13.1 Policy Objective

SC 19

To support the implementation of the Policy Statement 'Housing Options for Our Ageing Population' and the provision of independent, assisted, specialised living for older persons such as purpose-built accommodation, the adaptation of existing properties, and opportunities for older persons to avail of 'rightsizing' within their community at locations that are proximate to existing services and amenities including pedestrian paths, local shops, parks and public transport.

5.14 Specialist Housing

The 'National Housing Strategy for Disabled People 2022-2027' sets out the Government's vision for delivering housing and related supports for disabled people and emphasises the vision of disabled people having choice and control over their living arrangements. This Plan will support the provision of specialised housing to enable everyone in Dundalk to live safe and independent lives in central and accessible locations.

5.14.1 Policy Objective

SC 20

To support the provision of independent and/or assisted living accommodation for persons with disabilities including those with an intellectual disability, psychosocial disability or mental health difficulties.

5.15 Residential Care, Sheltered Accommodation, Retirement and Nursing Homes

With an increased life expectancy and an ageing population there is increasing demand for the provision of residential care, sheltered accommodation, retirement, and nursing homes.

At the time of writing there were four residential care/ retirement/ nursing homes operating in Dundalk. There is also an extant permission for a nursing home in Blackrock.



New nursing homes and age friendly accommodation will be facilitated on lands which are easily accessible to shops, open spaces, medical centres and other services, amenities and facilities.

This Plan will continue to support proposals for this type of accommodation in appropriate locations in the town.

5.15.1 Policy Objective

SC 21

To support the provision of residential care homes, sheltered accommodation, and retirement and nursing homes in appropriate locations in the Plan area.



5.16 Traveller Accommodation

The Housing (Traveller Accommodation) Act 1998 requires that each Housing Authority adopts a Traveller Accommodation Programme for its functional area. This Plan will support the provision of Traveller Accommodation in Dundalk in accordance with the requirements identified in the Louth County Council Traveller Accommodation Programme. The Council continues to support the provision of housing for the traveller community. Ongoing projects include the provision of two units at Hoey's Lane which are due to be completed in Q1 2025. Two units are also to be provided at Clontygora. This project is anticipated to be complete by Q2 2025.

5.16.1 Policy Objective

SC 22

To support the implementation of the Louth Traveller Accommodation Programmes as they relate to Dundalk.

5.17 Social and Community Infrastructure

Dundalk's continued population and economic growth is dependent not only on its attractive physical environment, but also on the creation of sustainable vibrant neighbourhoods in which to live.

The provision of high quality social and community infrastructure is essential for the health and wellbeing of the population as well as the continued economic success of the town. Social and community infrastructure incorporates a broad range of services and facilities. These are broken down on a category basis in Table 5.3.

These facilities provide a platform for community and social interaction which many people rely on for wellbeing. The provision of the requisite levels of social and community infrastructure in Dundalk and Blackrock is vital to support the needs and quality of life of the existing and future residents as well as those residing in the local catchment area.

Table 5.3: Breakdown of the Typical Social and Community Infrastructure in a Town

Category	Facility Type
Education and Training	Primary Schools, Post-Primary Schools, Third Level Institutions and Training Facilities.
Childcare	Registered Childcare Facilities including Full Day, Part-Time and sessional services
Healthcare Services	Hospitals, medical centres, General Practitioners (GPs), Dental Practices, Physiotherapist Services, Pharmacies and Nursing Homes.
Social / Community facilities	Community centres and meeting halls, Libraries, Senior and Youth Centres/ Cafes and Day Care Facilities, Fire Stations, and Garda stations.
Sports/ Recreation/ Open Space	Parks, Playing Pitches, playgrounds, allotments, MUGAs, sports centres and clubs, leisure centres, gyms and training facilities, swimming pools
Faith	Churches, multi-faith centres and other places of worship.
Arts and Culture	Theatres, museums, galleries, performance and outdoor events spaces, other venues including dance studios, art clubs, and music schools.



5.18 Education and Lifelong Learning

Schools and education facilities have an important role in community development. Whilst their primary role is educating and teaching students, schools also enable the integration of students into the community through social interaction and participation in events and activities.



The Department of Education is responsible for the delivery of education facilities and schools. The Council has a role in ensuring that adequate serviceable land is available in appropriate locations, to facilitate the development of primary and post primary schools in Dundalk.

5.18.1 Primary and Post Primary Schools

There are currently 19 primary schools and 8 post primary schools in Dundalk. These schools cater for demand, not only within the town but also from the wider hinterland. Details of the location of existing schools are set out on Map 1 in Appendix 5.

There has been significant investment in both the maintenance and expansion of existing school buildings and facilities and the construction of new schools in recent years. The most recent new school is the Gaelcholáiste secondary school that opened in September 2023.

Figures from Census 2022 indicate that 11.3% (3,842 persons) of Dundalk's population aged 15 or over were still at school or college while 9,373 persons (21.7% of the population) were aged between 5 and 19. 6.4% (2,778 persons) were aged between 0-4.

This Plan has included provision for an additional two primary schools and one post-primary school. Lands have also been zoned to the rear of St. Francis Primary School as 'G1 Community Facilities', which could potentially accommodate an extension to the school. The potential locations for the primary and post-primary schools in the Plan area are set out in Table 5.4.

Table 5.4: Potential Sites for Primary and Post Primary Schools

School category	Location	Site area (ha) ²
Primary Schools	Mount Avenue	1.3ha
	Haynestown	1.7ha
Post Primary School	Haynestown	8.6ha

Louth County Council will continue to work closely with the Department of Education under the 2012 nationally agreed Memorandum of Understanding relating to the proactive identification and acquisition of school sites.

This partnership approach will seek to ensure co-ordination between the various stakeholders in the delivery of education facilities to ensure that both existing and proposed schools are as accessible as possible and that the requisite walking, cycling, and public transport infrastructure is in place to encourage people to travel to school by sustainable modes of transport.

² Where the full extent of the site areas would not be required for a school alternative uses compatible with the land use zoning will be considered on the remainder of the lands.



5.18.2 Special Education Needs

The Council will continue to work in partnership with the relevant bodies to provide access to education for those with special educational needs, ranging from enrolment in mainstream schools to enrolment in specialist schools and further education facilities.

5.18.3 Lifelong Learning

Census 2022 figures show that 46.4% of Dundalk's population over 15 have a technical /vocational or 3rd level education qualification. This is an indication of the pool of talented and educated workers in the town. Continued access to education and training opportunities is an essential part of creating and maintaining a skilled and educated workforce.

Dundalk Institute of Technology (DkIT) is a leading higher education institute in the north Leinster and south Ulster region. It is a diverse campus where international students from across the globe choose to study.

The college provides learning and teaching to over 5,000 full time and 1,000 part-time students across four schools at both undergraduate and postgraduate level:

- Health and Science;
- Business and Humanities;
- Engineering and Informatics; and
- Creative Arts.

DkIT is currently pursuing a trajectory to achieve technological university status. This university status would be a significant boost for third-level education provision in Louth and the north-east of the country.

The Louth and Meath Education and Training Board (LMETB) is responsible for an extensive range of adult services and provide a spectrum of education and training facilities to support and promote lifelong learning.

The LMETB manages the Ó Fiaich Institute of Further Education, the Regional Skills Training Centre, and the Advanced Manufacturing and Training Centre of Excellence which offers various apprenticeships, up-skilling and pre-university courses on both a full and part-time basis.

Permission has recently been granted for an extension to the Advanced Manufacturing Training Centre of Excellence at the Xerox Technology Park, thereby further supporting continued learning and development in Dundalk.

5.18.4 Policy Objectives

SC 23

To support the development of new education facilities and the improvement/expansion of existing facilities for all including those with special education needs. Where feasible multi-educational campuses will be encouraged.

SC 24

To promote and facilitate collaboration with various stakeholders and agencies in the development and provision of training programmes and apprenticeships, that will meet the needs of the community and employers.

5.19 Childcare

Childcare facilities are an important piece of social and economic infrastructure. They help to drive local economies as they facilitate parental participation in the workplace. They also promote education, healthcare, and wellbeing. Childcare facilities should be located in areas where there is a demand, thereby reducing unsustainable traffic movements.



Census 2022 recorded that 2,426 (74.8%) out of a total of 3,241 children aged between 0-14 years were in childcare in Dundalk. 1,053 of these children were aged between 0-4 and 1,373 were aged between 5-14. These figures include paid and unpaid relatives, childminders/au pairs in addition to creche's, Montessori's, and playgroups and are an indication of the high demand for childcare in the town.

Within Dundalk, childcare facilities are well distributed spatially with 31 registered childcare facilities in the town at the time of writing, two of which are managed by community/voluntary organisations. The childcare facilities provided include full day, sessional, part-time, early childhood care and education as well as school age childcare. Figures obtained from Louth Childcare Committee show that in March 2023 there were 1,553 children enrolled in childcare facilities and there were only 85 vacancies.

There is a clear shortfall in the number of childcare spaces for early years. There were no full/part time vacancies in the 0-1 age category and only three part/full time vacancies in the 1-2 age categories. Overall, childcare facilities are currently operating at 95% capacity in Dundalk.

The Louth County Childcare Committee are consulted at either pre-planning or planning application stage, depending on the scale of development, with regard to the current demands on childcare in the area and if the proposed development would assist in meeting the required childcare needs.

Whilst there is a high demand for childcare in Dundalk it is recognised that there may be a scenario where the existing level of childcare provision in a part of the town is adequate to meet the needs of the surrounding population.

Under such a scenario an evidence-based report prepared in consultation with the County Childcare Committee would be required to be prepared and included with a planning application to demonstrate that the childcare needs of the surrounding area are being met and that there is insufficient demand within the wider catchment of the area to warrant any additional childcare facilities.

5.19.1 Policy Objectives

SC 25

To require the provision of childcare facilities as an integral part of proposals for new residential or mixed-use developments. This requirement shall have regard to the 'Childcare Guidelines for Planning Authorities (2001)' and 'Childcare Regulations (2006)' and shall be in consultation with the Louth Childcare committee.

SC 26

To facilitate the provision of childcare facilities in Dundalk in locations that are compatible with surrounding land uses including in buildings/on land in proximity to community or education facilities or in residential areas, subject to complying with the relevant planning criteria.

5.20 Health

There are a range of healthcare facilities in Dundalk to meet the needs of the resident population and wider catchment. This includes a hospital, general practitioners, health centres, dentists, physiotherapists, pharmacies, care and other related facilities. These facilities are provided by both the public and private sector.

The Louth County Hospital provides acute medical services, whilst St. Oliver Plunkett Hospital offers older persons' services.



At the time of writing, there were 22 private/public medical healthcare facilities and GP practices, 10 dental practices, 10 physiotherapists and 21 pharmacies operating in Dundalk. Whilst it is acknowledged that the provision of health care services is ultimately

the responsibility of the Health Service Executive (HSE) along with other private and voluntary agencies, the Council will continue to support the expansion of existing facilities and provision of additional healthcare facilities in appropriate locations.

Figure 5.4: Healthcare Facilities in Dundalk



5.20.1 Policy Objective

SC 27

To support provision of healthcare facilities in accessible locations and where feasible, to encourage the integration of healthcare facilities with new and existing community facilities.

5.21 Social and Community Facilities/Services

Social and community facilities encourage and provide opportunities for social interaction within a community as well as promoting self-development, social inclusion and public participation. These facilities are an important factor in economic and social wellbeing.



A range of projects, initiatives, activities, and events are currently managed and delivered within the various centres including local training initiatives, physical activities, and literacy and language classes.

Several groups and organisations also operate within the town providing support for the mental and physical wellbeing of the local population. There are also a range of emergency services operating within the town serving Dundalk and the wider hinterland.

The Council will support the development of research projects within Dundalk which ascertain the level of awareness amongst vulnerable members of society as to the available public services and the barriers to accessing those.

Louth County Council will actively encourage the development of adequate and safe social and community facilities and services for existing and new residents, particularly those who are marginalised, at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work. It is recognised that where there is a requirement for additional infrastructure and facilities that this should be provided in tandem with new residential development.

Details of existing facilities are set out in the Social Infrastructure Audit in Appendix 5.

The clustering of social infrastructure (such as community centres, health and neighbourhood centres, and sports facilities) and locating them within or in close proximity to residential areas can create a synergy that would encourage the optimum use of the facilities whilst also reducing the need for local residents to travel.

5.21.1 Community Centres

The provision of a range of high quality, fit-for-purpose and easily accessible social infrastructure in existing and developing areas is a key element in the formation of sustainable, healthy communities.

Community centres are important hubs for bringing people together and for building a stronger society. They also offer a space for the management and delivery of a range of projects, initiatives, activities, and events.

There are areas within Dundalk including Cox's Demesne, parts of Muirhevnamor and Ashling Park, which are identified as 'very disadvantaged' in the 2022 [Pobal Map of Deprivation](#). These locations experience higher levels of unemployment and people are more likely to be marginalised due to social and economic disadvantage.

This Plan will continue to support investment and improvements to community facilities in all areas including those that are classified as disadvantaged and will support initiatives which encourage capacity building and access to training and learning.

In recent years the Haynestown area of Dundalk, west of Blackrock and known as Raynoldstown Village has experienced a high level population growth associated with new residential development. In order to support the creation of a sustainable community in this part of the town it is recognised that there will be a requirement for social and community infrastructure to be delivered in tandem with future residential development.

In this regard there is a Spot Objective (Section 3.4.2 of Chapter 3) requiring that permission is granted for a community building prior to the occupation of not more than 1,000 units. This building shall be designed to ensure flexibility as to its future use.

Another key development area is in Mount Avenue, which is west of Dundalk Town Centre. The lands have an area of c.35 hectares and have been zoned for residential development with a Spot Objective on the lands requiring the provision of associated neighbourhood and community facilities.



To ensure the creation of a sustainable neighbourhood, the development of these lands shall be phased in a way that ensures that local services and community infrastructure are provided in tandem with residential development.

5.21.2 Policy Objective

SC 28

To support and encourage the provision of community and social infrastructure facilities to serve existing and future residents, and to encourage shared/dual use of existing and future facilities.

Dundalk’s open spaces are available in a variety of different forms, functions and sizes providing for both active and passive recreation, connectivity and biodiversity. Whilst there are no allotments in Dundalk at present, their importance in providing an opportunity to connect and meet as well as enabling people to grow their own produce is recognised.

This Plan will support the enhancement of existing open space and recreational facilities and will encourage the development of active and passive open space including within or adjacent to new housing developments. The existing areas of public open space in Dundalk are listed in Table 5.5.

5.22 Open Spaces


High quality urban open space is good for the environment, facilitates physical exercise, better mental health and can create a sense of community. It is an important element in enticing people to reside, work and visit the town.

Table 5.5: Dundalk’s Public Open Spaces

Parks/Walkways			
	Name	Description	Area (ha)
	St. Helena’s Park	Open Space, playground and river bank path	4.2
	Ice House Hill	Grassed area, pathways and lake	7.4
	Farndreg	Grassed area, pathways and skateboard park	4.9
	Muirhevnamor	Grassed area, paths, adult exercise machines, tennis court, pitches and running areas (phase 1 – ground has been levelled)	15
	The Fair Green	Landscaped green area	0.12
	Blackrock Park	Grassed area, tennis courts and play ground	2.3ha




Play Areas			
	Name	Description	Area (ha)
	St. Helena's	Play area	Area included above
	Farndreg	Play area	Area included above
	Muirhevnamor, Cox's Demesne, Blackrock Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs)	Multi Use Games Areas	Various
	Play Parks	Various locations associated with housing developments	Various

Amenity Open Spaces			
	Name	Description	Area (ha)
	The Navy Bank	Greenway extends from Mountain View to Soldiers Point along the Castletown River estuary	1.6km
	Castletown River Walkway	Flat grassed area including outdoor exercise equipment.	Not applicable
	Síocháin Peace Garden	Open space to either side of Rope Walk, monuments, and pathways.	0.3
	St. Patrick's Cemetery, Dowdallshill and Castletown Graveyard	Church yards / older cemeteries / graveyards with informal public access.	6.1
	Dundalk Famine Graveyard	Small marker stones and white crosses marking some graves.	0.29
	Areas between St. Nicholas Avenue & Castletown River	Some pathways through green open space.	5.4



Civic Spaces

	Name	Description	Area (ha)
	Market Square	Pedestrian area with paving, seating and water feature in the heart of town.	0.3
	Area adjacent to St. Nicholas Church and Green Church	Seating area with artwork, soft and hard landscaping.	0.019
	The Demesne	Tree area to the SW of Market Square.	0.27
	Area to the front of Saint Patrick's Church	Steps and hard standing. Railings along the roadside boundary.	0.13

Other External Open Space Areas

	Club/Organisation	Area (ha)	
	Dundalk Stadium	Horse and Dog Racing	4.9
	DKIT walking and running trail	Walking and Running Track	Not applicable
	Dundalk Pitch and Putt Club	Pitch and Putt Club	2.4
	Dundalk Golf Course	Golf Course	5.5
	Blackrock Beach	Beach, promenade & area containing sundial	Not applicable
	Dundalk Cricket grounds	Cricket grounds	0.96

Ideally open spaces in Dundalk should be easily connected through an integrated network of pedestrian and cyclist routes.

Where this is not possible, access to public open spaces could be assisted by way finding and signage, and improved routes to spaces and road crossings.

5.22.1 Policy Objective

SC 29

To provide a hierarchy of attractive parks and public open spaces, which are readily accessible and vary in size and nature and are at a convenient distance from people's home and/ or places of work.



5.23 Sports and Recreation

There are an extensive range of sports and recreation facilities in Dundalk including a swimming pool, Gaelic Games (hurling, Gaelic football, camogie and Ladies football), soccer, athletics/running, pitch and putt, boxing, rowing, chess, tennis and martial arts clubs, all of which cater for a wide range of ages, abilities and interests.

A list of indoor sports grounds is included in Table 5.6 whilst outdoor sports facilities are set out in Table 5.7.



Table 5.6: Dundalk's Indoor Sports Facilities

Name	Description
Aura Leisure Centre	Gym and swimming pool
Dundalk Sports Centre	Used for various activities
Embassy Snooker and Pool Club	Snooker Club
O'Hanlon Park Boxing Club	Boxing Club
Dealgan Boxing Club	Boxing Club
Clann Naofa Boxing Club	Boxing Club
Muirhevnamor Boxing Club	Boxing Club
Gyms and Fitness Classes	Various privately owned gyms and fitness classes throughout the town.
Marital Arts	Various clubs

Table 5.7: Dundalk's Outdoor Sports Facilities

Football Grounds		
	Club Name	Area (ha)
	Glenmuir United Football Club & Dundalk Young Irelands	Playing fields 1.7
	Bay Football Club	Playing fields 2
	Quay Celtic	Playing fields 1.5
	Oriel Park	Playing fields 2.4
	Shamrock FC	Playing fields 0.93
	St Dominic's F.C	Playing fields 1.6
	Muirhevnamor Football	Playing fields Already incl. within park
	Rampart Celtic FC	Playing fields 1.7
	Castletown Bells FC	Playing fields (check if same as Fatima) 1.6
	Rock Celtic FC	Sandy Lane Blackrock 1



Gaelic Grounds			
	Club Name		Area (ha)
	Dundalk Gaels GFC	Playing Fields	2.6
	Clan na Gael GAA Club	Playing Fields	2.7
	Dundalk Young Irelands GAA Club	Playing fields	2.7
	Dowdallshill GAA Club	Playing fields	2.4
	Na Piarsaigh Blackrock (GAA Club)	Playing Fields	2.6
	Naomh Moninne	Playing Fields	2.5
	Sean O'Mahony's GFC	Playing Fields	1.9
	Geraldines GAA Club	Playing Fields	4
Rugby Grounds			
	Club Name		Area (ha)
	Dundalk Rugby Club	Playing fields	1.8
Other			
	Name		Area (ha)
	Dundalk Stadium	Horse and greyhound racing	2.9

5.23.1 Policy Objectives

SC 30

To ensure that existing sports facilities and grounds within Dundalk are protected, retained, and enhanced.

SC 31

To encourage shared usage of existing sports halls and facilities.

5.23.2 Future Provision of Sports and Recreation Facilities

This Plan will support improvements to existing and investment in new sports and recreational facilities in the town. This will assist in creating healthy and sustainable communities whilst also promoting community development and cohesion.

Planning permission has been granted for a new stadium and facilities for the County Louth GAA teams along the Inner Relief Road of Dundalk.

There is Part 8 approval for the provision of playing pitches on the former landfill site north of the Castletown River. At the time of writing the site continued to be subject to monitoring by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Whilst the opportunities for this site as a recreational amenity are recognised such proposals can only be advanced when the Council and other stakeholders, including the EPA, are satisfied that the required remediation works have been carried out and the health and safety issues have been addressed.



An EPA Research Paper ‘Beneficial Use of Old Landfills as a Parkland Amenity’ (2017) sets out the various issues and challenges in converting a former landfill to a parkland amenity and would be an important reference point in the progression of any project or works at the former landfill in Dundalk.

Upgrades to a number of other sport and recreation facilities are also proposed. These are set out in Table 5.8.

Table 5.8: Dundalk Sport Facilities – Planned/Potential Upgrades or Improvements:

Dundalk’s Sport Facilities – Planned / Potential upgrades or improvements:		
1.	Louth GAA Stadium	Planning permission granted for a new stadium with a capacity for c.14,000 people at the Inner Relief Road.
2.	Running track at Muirhevnemor Park	Phase 1 site development works have taken place - site has been levelled. Partial funding available for Phase 2 – laying of track.
3.	Upgrade to the swimming pool facility at Dundalk Leisure Centre	Works include the provision of a ‘changing places’ wet changing room and improvements to the energy efficiency of the building.
4.	Tennis courts at Dundalk Sports Centre	Re-surfacing of various courts and provision of an additional spectator area.
5.	Soccer and Gaelic pitches	Support the relevant organisations to assist with the development of Soccer and Gaelic pitches.

5.23.3 Future Provision of Public and Private Open Space

Provision of public and private open space serving new residential development within Dundalk shall be in accordance with the requirements set out in the County Development Plan. In all instances provision of new areas and upgrades to existing open space shall be easily accessible, well designed, and multi-functional, promote equality and be safe for all users.

The Council will endeavour to ensure that Dundalk’s existing and future residents have access to a variety of open spaces close to their homes that are accessible to all and that cater for their passive and active recreational needs.

It is anticipated that the enhancement of Dundalk’s Green Infrastructure will also benefit those working and visiting Dundalk, additionally it will boost biodiversity and facilitate Dundalk’s transition to a low carbon society.

A number of emerging opportunities to improve and enhance open space provision are listed in Table 5.9.



Table 5.9: Dundalk Open Spaces – Planned/Potential Upgrades or Improvements:

Dundalk Open Spaces – Planned/Potential Upgrades or Improvements		
1.	Louth Coastal Way Dundalk to Blackrock Greenway	This will provide a traffic free movement corridor enabling the protection and enhancement of biodiversity, as well as providing a local and regional tourism asset. Consideration will be given to the development of the Louth Coastal Greenway in conjunction with the Dundalk-Blackrock flood alleviation scheme.
2.	Castletown Motte	To provide a multi-functional heritage park as part of the development of the residential lands in the Mount Avenue Masterplan area, which allows for the creation of open space whilst retaining the sites intrinsic cultural heritage value.
3.	Former landfill Site	Potential for public open space incorporating walkways, pitches, enhancement of biodiversity and connections to greenway.
4.	Dundalk Famine Graveyard	To improve pedestrian connectivity with existing informal walking routes that adjoin the site and investigate the possibility of integrating heritage features as part of any future works.
5.	Balmer's Bog	There is the potential to preserve and increase the biodiversity value of this unique urban wetland.
6.	Area between Red Barns Road and Coast	Potential to create a large urban park whilst preserving the ecological value and character of the lands and providing appropriate recreational and amenity facilities.
7.	Mount Avenue Key Development Area	Provision of Heritage Park at Castletown Motte, play pitches and open space dispersed throughout the area.
8.	Mullagharlin Employment Generating Area	Open Space intertwined through the public and private domain
9.	Riverside Walk	Development of Riverside Walk to the west of the town with potential links to Castletown Cemetery and Motte / open space at Toberona. Riverside walk to the east of the town linking to the Navy Bank and Soldiers Point.
10.	Provision of pitches and the development of a public park at Toberona	Provide outdoor multi purposes pitches and a create an urban parkland.
11.	Navy Bank/ Point Road Park scheme	Development of an area of public open space.



5.23.4 Policy Objectives

SC 32

Louth County Council will continue to work alongside government departments, the Health Service Executive, state agencies, education bodies and sports clubs to support and facilitate the provision, improvement and expansion of sports and recreational facilities.

SC 33

To protect and enhance existing public open space and to support the provision of additional public open space thereby meeting the passive and active recreational needs of all sections of the community whilst also improving the biodiversity potential of the town.

SC 34

To provide public and private open space in accordance with the provisions for new residential developments in accordance with Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Guidelines for Planning Authorities (DHLGH, 2024).

SC 35

To engage and work closely with the Environmental Protection Agency and other stakeholders in determining the feasibility of utilising the former landfill at Dundalk as a recreational amenity and to support any remediation works required to enable the former landfill to be utilised as a recreational amenity.

5.24 Dundalk Library Service

Louth County Council is the authority responsible for delivery of the library service in Dundalk. The 'Louth Library Services Development Plan 2020-2025' outlines the strategies for strengthening and widening of the library service throughout Louth, including Dundalk.

Dundalk's library is centrally located at Roden Place and provides an important and essential service to the community. The library works closely with various groups and schools, offering a wide range of services and events to cater for various ages and needs.

Those utilising the library can benefit from free Wi-Fi access and have the opportunity to avail of 'hot desks'.

The mobile library service also visits those who are housebound and those in less advantaged areas, thereby attempting to address inequality.

Dundalk was selected as one of seven global pilot cities for the Varcities Project and is the only one in Ireland. The vision of the Varcities Project is to implement visionary ideas to improve the health and well-being of citizens. The Varcities Project for Dundalk is located in the open space area of Dundalk Library/Museum Quarter and provides an outdoor learning hub comprising of an outdoor learning pod, sensory garden with enhanced seating and public lighting and, the installation of new bike stations. The project was officially unveiled in June 2024.



5.24.1 Policy Objective

SC 36

To support, expand and promote library services in Dundalk and to encourage an integrated approach to the delivery of library, arts and other related services.

5.25 Emergency Services

Dundalk's Fire Station is located along the Ramparts Lane and operates on a full-time basis. Dundalk Garda station is located at The Crescent.

There is an ambulance station adjacent to the Louth Hospital. This Plan will continue to support the development, improvement, and maintenance of facilities and buildings necessary to support the provision of emergency services in Dundalk and the wider area.

Dundalk Fire Station



5.25.1 Policy Objective

SC 37

To support the provision of efficient and effective emergency services in Dundalk and any buildings and/or infrastructure required to provide these services.

5.26 Places of Worship and Burial Grounds

A total of twenty-three places of worship and four funeral homes were identified in Dundalk. There is a concentration of older churches and associated buildings in the town centre area.

This Plan recognises the importance of places of worship in providing religious services and also functioning as a focal point and meeting place for the population.

The Council also acknowledges the valuable contribution that places of worship and multi-faith centres have in a community context and in meeting the diverse religious and cultural needs of Dundalk's citizens.

Planning permission has been granted for a crematorium at Dowdallshill. This Plan will support the expansion of existing or new burial grounds in appropriate locations in Dundalk where a demand has been identified. The development of appropriately sized and suitably designed columbarium walls will be considered.

Planning applications submitted for places of worship, crematoriums, graveyards, columbarium walls, and funeral homes will be assessed on their own merits in accordance with the proper planning and sustainable development, regard should be had to the following issues :

- Suitability of the subject site;
- Design of the proposal;
- Traffic issues including sightline and public transport connections;
- Impact on residential amenity;
- Landscaping arrangements and boundary treatments and minimum space requirements (crematorium only);
- Water, wastewater and drainage arrangements;
- Appropriate assessment and potential Impact on European sites.



Change of use and conversion of churches shall be in accordance with the relevant provisions of this Plan and the County Development Plan.

5.26.1 Policy Objectives

SC 38

To support the development of places of worship/places of assembly and multi-faith facilities at appropriate locations in close proximity to residential communities subject to compliance with relevant planning and environmental criteria.

SC 39

To support the development of new or extended burial grounds, including natural burial grounds, and crematoria at suitable locations in Dundalk, subject to appropriate safeguards with regard to environmental, noise and traffic impacts, and residential amenities.

5.27 Arts

Dundalk has a vibrant cultural heritage with an arts centre, gallery, theatre, library, and various music venues, all of which contribute to a thriving arts and cultural scene. In addition, various festivals and events take place through the year including Frostival, Christmas Markets and Pride.

Arts and culture are essential for building community, supporting development, and nurturing health and wellbeing.

This Plan supports the progression of a strategic plan for the development of opportunities in the arts, culture and sports, specifically those aimed at and involving young people.

5.27.1 Policy Objective

SC 40

To support and facilitate the provision, development and sustainability of accessible arts and cultural infrastructure at appropriate locations in Dundalk.