

# STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN SOUTH DUBLIN

Having celebrated its 25th anniversary in 2019, South Dublin County Council is now firmly focused on the future, and Chief Executive Daniel McLoughlin is quick to acknowledge the “enormous achievements” during that period, such as the development of Tallaght Town Centre, an expanded transportation network, plus the many business parks and retail hubs in the county.

Over the last 25 years, there has been a major transformation of the transportation network, with the roll-out of the Luas to Tallaght and City West, together with a major increase in the number of libraries, community, leisure and recreational facilities provided by South Dublin County Council (SDCC).

The current and future challenges are to improve the quality of life and socio-economic opportunities of the 280,000 residents in the county, whilst also providing a pathway and infrastructure to accommodate and integrate the anticipated 150,000 additional population in the medium to long term.

Notwithstanding the challenge, SDCC’s Chief Executive Daniel McLoughlin sees it as “an opportunity and a privilege” for the entire organisation. “We have a great team of elected representatives and staff who collectively get it. There will always

be speed bumps along the way, but we are very clear in our ambition and resolve to make South Dublin County a better place for everyone, present and future generations.”

## POPULATION GROWTH

Given its edge of city location, the South Dublin administrative area will play a critical role in accommodating the “compact growth” scenario outlined for Dublin in the National Planning Framework. The Framework envisages Dublin city and its suburbs, growing by up to 290,000 in the timeframe to 2040.

The current South Dublin County Development Plan residential zoning will accommodate up to 110,000 people, while future regeneration opportunities are likely to raise that figure to 150,000. The Council is well advanced in the preparation of land use and settlement strategies in this regard.



South Dublin has completed the master planning of 2,500 homes it will provide on its lands within the Clonburris SDZ

Located on the Kildare rail line and adjacent to Lucan/Clonalkin, the Clonburris SDZ accommodates 11,000 homes and 25,000 new residents. The Council is a significant stakeholder as its lands within the SDZ will support 2,500 homes, primarily social and affordable.

The principal landowners, including the Council, have formed a development company (Clonburris Infrastructure Ltd) to plan, design and develop a common

infrastructure. It is anticipated that enabling works will commence in 2020.

## REGENERATION OPPORTUNITIES

A new Tallaght Local Area Plan, which is currently out to public consultation, provides a framework for the development of the town centre area comprising 270 hectares. It is expected to accommodate more than 10,000 new homes and a potential population of 38,000.

The government has backed plans for the consolidation and regeneration of this central area, having approved funding of €15m for a range of projects including new link roads, an Innovation Centre, a transport hub, a series of public plazas and public realm improvements.

This funding is coming from the €2bn Urban Regeneration and Development Fund. The fund is also supporting the master planning of what McLoughlin says will be “an exemplar for regeneration and compact growth” which will contribute significantly to the government objective of delivering at least 40% of all new homes, within the existing built-up footprint.

The Naas Road, Ballymount, Cherry Orchard and Park West Master Plan, which incorporates 590 hectares, is currently out to tender for land use planning consultants. Phase one of the process, being led by South Dublin County Council, will deliver a Framework Regeneration and Planning Strategy for the area by late 2020.

## THE HOUSING CHALLENGE

These plans are critical to the future growth of Dublin, but there is also an acute awareness around the current priority of housing delivery. It dominates the Council’s agenda, and the Chief Executive agrees with its order of priority.

“Challenges of housing delivery and tackling homelessness are our primary focus and likely to remain so, in the short term. In 2018 we provided 1,200 housing solutions between new build, purchases and HAP rental arrangements. In 2019 this figure was 1,500. Currently, we are progressing a €1bn investment programme of 4,500 homes,” noted McLoughlin.

The first 1,000 of those homes have just received planning

## GRANGE CASTLE IS A LEADING BUSINESS PARK

*The South Dublin County Council-owned Grange Castle Business Park has been promoted in association with IDA Ireland to attract major investment to South Dublin. Grange Castle has become a location of choice for world-class multinationals and is considered one of the leading business parks in Ireland.*

*It is home to international companies such as Pfizer, Takeda, Microsoft, Grifols and Google, and provides employment to around 5,400 people. Over the past two years, the Council has purchased an additional 500 acres of land, which it has master-planned and recently tendered for the laying of initial service infrastructure.*

*This will double the size of Grange Castle Business Park to 1,000 acres, which will ultimately support up to 10,000 jobs. The park is strategically located within 15 minutes of the city centre and is adjacent to the Adamstown and Clonburris SDZs.*



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*South Dublin County Council recently completed a five-year Playspace Programme that invested €2.5m in 33 fully inclusive playspaces.*

approval from An Bord Pleanála. The Council has received a commitment of €18m in financial support from the Serviced Sites Fund, to facilitate the construction of an initial 500 affordable homes across three sites. The plan is for 2,500 new housing units, and the Council recently opened a web portal to invite expressions of interest from potential purchasers of these homes to support its thinking and ambition.

### SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

There are many challenges to proactively managing this rapid population growth, including the development and integration of communities and neighbourhoods. While quality planning and design are fundamental, so too is the concurrent provision of social infrastructure that binds communities together, as well as enhancing the quality of life in the area.

South Dublin is well advanced in the accelerated provision of a wide range of community, recreation and sporting facilities to meet this objective. The Council has just completed a children's Playspace Programme, having invested €2.5m in 33 inclusive play spaces that further aim to have a play space within 15 minutes of all households.

It has now moved on to a Teenspace Programme, which has been developed in consultation with teenagers in the county. It is aimed at 12-16-year olds who want to "hang out" in an adapted environment, designed to this thinking. The location and nature of the first five spaces have been agreed and are now at the procurement stage.

Clubs and sporting organisations across the county currently benefit from the 170 Council-owned playing pitches. This provision is to be significantly augmented with the recent completion of its Playing Pitch Strategy, focused on the adequate provision for future generations.

An estimated €4m investment has been earmarked for ten new pitches, half of which will be all-weather and multi-use facilities. When it comes to playing facilities, the Council is most proud of Tallaght Stadium, the only wholly-owned municipal stadium in the country. Having completed the south stand in 2019 and added 2,000 additional seats, the final

### EXPANDED TALLAGHT STADIUM TO SUPPORT NEW EVENTS

*South Dublin County Council has immediate plans to extend the seating capacity of the Council-owned Tallaght Stadium to 10,000, with the building of the North Stand. The Council also plans to develop the West Stand to incorporate a high-quality corporate area. This work follows the expansion of the stadium in March 2019, with the opening of the South Stand.*

*In conjunction with these plans, South Dublin County Council intends to promote Tallaght Stadium as an events venue to include music, festivals and all aspects of community events. With stadium seating and temporary on-field seating, the venue will accommodate up to 20,000 people.*

*In advance of the building of the North Stand, South Dublin County Council has contracted Core Advertising to provide an analysis of both advertising and branding opportunities for Tallaght Stadium. The analysis is expected to be completed at the beginning of 2020 and will inform future advertising naming rights and marketing plans for Tallaght Stadium.*

*The development of Tallaght Stadium and the advertising and marketing strategy comes on the ten-year anniversary of the stadium opening in 2009 and following a very successful 2019.*



*South Dublin County Council has plans to expand Tallaght Stadium and develop it into a 20,000 capacity events venue.*

phase of the development will bring total capacity to 10,000 together with corporate/VIP areas.

This work is due to commence construction in late 2020 at a cost of €6m and it will bring the stadium up to UEFA Category 4 status, approved to host matches at every level, up to Champions League. The stadium is home to Shamrock Rovers, the Irish Ladies Senior and Men's underage teams.

### SIGHTS SET ON NEW GREENWAYS

Other major initiatives in the pipeline include two new libraries in Clondalkin and Tymon/Tallaght, which will open in March 2020. Lucan Pool and Leisure Centre is currently under construction and will open its doors in February 2020 at a cost of €13m. Expanding communities will benefit from new community centres in Saggart, City West, Newcastle and Balgaddy, all of which are at the design stage.



Clondalkin's Round Tower has become a major tourist destination in Dublin following its redevelopment and opening in 2017.

Physical activity and general mobility around the county will be significantly enhanced by the development of two new Greenways with links to the city centre. Phase Two of the Dodder Valley Greenway will commence construction early in 2020 and on completion, will result in €18m investment in a quality cycle connection between the Dublin Mountains and Grand Canal, in the city centre.

In conjunction with Waterways Ireland, a looped cycleway along the Grand Canal, via Lucan village and returning to the city centre via the Royal Canal, will go to planning in March 2020.

All this development is ongoing and planned in the context of sustainable principles. A comprehensive mobility planning and delivery exercise is underway in conjunction with the NTA, including the Bus Connects Programme, the development of an extensive cycle network and the upgrading of the Kildare rail line. The Council launched its Climate Action Strategy earlier this year and will reach the 2020 public sector energy efficiency target of 33%.

Among the more innovative projects being advanced under the strategy is the



Tallaght Town Centre will benefit from €15m urban regeneration funding.

**FACTFILE – Daniel McLoughlin,  
Chief Executive, South Dublin  
County Council**

*Daniel McLoughlin has worked in the local government sector for his entire career, including 18 years as Chief Executive in Leitrim, Westmeath, and currently South Dublin. He has also served in Sligo, Wicklow, Offaly and Meath County Councils, in addition to the former Urban District Councils of Trim, Arklow and Bray where he was Town Clerk. He holds a BA in Public Administration and a MA in Local Government Management from the Institute of Public Administration.*



development of a District Heating System in Tallaght Town Centre, which will benefit from €4m funding from the Climate Action Fund.

The project is predicated on the capture of surplus steam from the nearby Amazon Data Centre and its conversion to hot water for circulation around the planned district. The recently-established Tallaght District Heating Company will oversee the contract, with construction set to start in March this year.

**BUSINESS SUPPORT FUNDS**

Another critical element of sustainability is job creation, and South Dublin's Chief Executive is keen to point to the value of overseas and indigenous spend from an economic perspective.

"We work very well with our local Chamber to develop and promote local business, including the provision of a €1m

annual Business Support Fund. Our recent acquisition of 500 acres to expand Grange Castle Business Park will attract FDI and indigenous enterprises and will be the source of 10,000 jobs in the future," he added.

Anxious to support micro-enterprise and innovative start-ups, the Council has just contracted Oxford Innovation as its operator for a new €8m Innovation Centre currently under design adjacent to its headquarters.

### 'DUBLIN OUTDOORS' BRAND

The other interface of domestic and overseas spend that South Dublin is anxious to capitalise on is tourism. The Council prepared its first Tourism Strategy in 2015 and has since developed its 'Dublin Outdoors' brand. The 2018 completion of the €5m Clondalkin Round Tower Visitor Centre is the first in a range of tourism infrastructure projects planned, or underway.

Its flagship project is the planned €15m Dublin Mountain's Visitor Centre, currently with An Bord Pleanála for adjudication. It has recently completed a €5m Village Enhancement Programme and intends to redevelop Rathfarnham Castle Stables, Corkagh Park camping and glamping experience and Lucan Village as the gateway to the Liffey Valley. Its short-term plan is to help create 5,000 additional tourism-related jobs.

So, with the future certainly looking bright for South Dublin, its citizens, visitors and its economy, the Council's Chief Executive remains confident the plans will happen. "They are carefully considered, aligned strategically with national, regional and local policy and most importantly are fully funded."

