

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 BACKGROUND

The Dublin Docklands Development Authority (DDDA) is required to conduct a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) of the review of the Draft Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan 2008 under the SEA Directive (Directive 2001/42/EC). This is the second SEA carried out for the Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan, the first being carried out for the Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan 2003 at the request of the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government (DoEHLG). The SEA was carried out on a non-statutory basis to pilot the SEA process and to inform guidelines for regional and planning authorities on SEA.

The current SEA is being conducted in tandem with the review of the Master Plan 2008 and will inform the Plan on any significant environmental impacts. The Master Plan area is illustrated in Figure 1 below.



FIGURE 1 MASTER PLAN AREA

1.2 OBJECTIVES AND CONTENTS OF THE DUBLIN DOCKLANDS AREA MASTER PLAN, 2008

The Master Plan is prepared under Section 24 of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act, 1997. In accordance with the provisions of Section 24(2)(a) of the Act, the Master Plan indicates the objectives for:

- The social and economic regeneration of the Dublin Docklands Area on a sustainable basis
- Improvements in the physical environment of the Dublin Docklands Area
- The continued development in the Docklands of services of, for, and in support of, or ancillary to, the financial sector of the economy

The Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan 2008, following public consultation, outlines a strategy for the “sustainable social and economic regeneration of the Area, with improvements to the physical area being a vital ingredient” (DDDA, 2008). The Master Plan establishes the physical, social and economic framework for the redevelopment of the area, identifying key strategic objectives and a range of policies.

Land use policies in the Master Plan 2008 seek to achieve sustainable development with the Authority pursuing a policy of mixed-use development in the Docklands Area with the aim of creating a sustainable environment integrating living, working and leisure. The aims of the Master Plan 2008 are ambitious; existing Planning Schemes will be amended and new Planning Scheme Areas introduced. The Plan will cater for a target population of up to 34,600 by 2013 and up to 47,000 by 2018.

The Master Plan 2008 seeks to promote the development of an integrated public transport system including the provision of cycle facilities and pedestrian routes. The Plan sets out design criteria for new development, seeking to achieve high quality buildings and urban spaces. At the same time, the Master Plan 2008 seeks to conserve essential elements of the built environment which contribute to the character of the area.

1.2.1 DURATION AND TIMEFRAME OF MASTER PLAN

The Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan 2008 establishes a planning framework for a period of 5 years, as required under Section 20(1)(a) of the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act 1997. The development of the Master Plan as a key element of a strategic approach to regeneration will, in effect, produce a vision for the development of the Area. Turning this vision into reality will take time; the Authority believes, therefore, that the Master Plan should be framed for a 10 year time horizon to 2018.

1.2.2 CONTENTS OF THE MASTER PLAN

In accordance with Section 24(2)(b) of the Act, the Master Plan:

- Sets out the economic, social and other issues relevant to the regeneration of the Area, and proposals to address those issues
- Identifies those parts of the Area where detailed proposals and plans for development, redevelopment, renewal or conservation of land in that Area are appropriate
- Identifies those parts of the Area where Planning Schemes under Section 25 would be appropriate
- Sets out urban design guidelines for the Area, including guidelines relating to urban and building conservation, street furniture, and landscaping
- Includes proposals for appropriate renewal, preservation, conservation, restoration, development and redevelopment of the streetscape layout and building pattern of appropriate parts of the Area
- Includes proposals for the development of existing and new residential communities in the Area, including the development of housing for people of different social backgrounds
- Includes proposals for a programme of development or redevelopment of derelict sites or vacant sites in the Area
- Includes proposals relating to the conservation of the architectural heritage of the Area
- Includes transport proposals consistent with A Platform for Change – Strategy 2000-2016, which updated the original DTI Strategy
- Includes an estimate of the costs of the implementation of the Master Plan and an indication of possible funding options
- Estimates the implications for employment, training and education in the Area and for employment, training and education of those residents in that Area, of measures proposed in the Plan

1.3 PURPOSE OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL REPORT

The purpose of the environmental report is to identify, describe and evaluate, taking into account reasonable plan alternatives, the likely significant effects on the environment of implementing the Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan 2008 in line with Article 5 and Annex 1 of the SEA Directive.