

Strategic Environmental Assessment

Report pursuant to article 14 a of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004

Consideration has been given to the likely environmental effects of implementing the Stillorgan Local Area Plan, having regard to the criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations 2004.

Assessment of Likely Significant Environmental Effects

Criteria for determining the likely significant environmental impacts (Schedule 2 (A) of SEA Regulations 2004)

1. Characteristics of the Plan

1.1 *The degree to which the plan sets the framework for the projects and other activities, either with regard to the location, nature, size and operating conditions or by allocating resources.*

The Plan will establish a land use framework for the sustainable development of the area, including the location, nature, size and operating conditions. The Local Area Plan will form a statutory document, conforming to the policies and objectives set out in the 2004-2010 County Development Plan and other relevant guidelines and documents. The Plan will identify the existing character of the area and provide a means to influence future development to create a sustainable environment and a place of vitality and viability.

1.2 *The degree to which the plan influences other plans, including those in the hierarchy.*

The policies and objectives of the Local Area Plan will be set within the context of the 2004-2010 County Development Plan. However, as a result of public consultation, it may be necessary to digress from these existing policies. In such cases it may be necessary to vary the County Development Plan in accordance.

1.3 *The relevance of the Plan for the integration of environmental considerations in particular with a view to promoting sustainable development.*

Section 10 of the Local Government (Planning and Development) Act 2000-2006 sets out the content of development plans. It states "A Development Plan shall set out an overall strategy for the proper planning and sustainable development of the area...". The current County Development Plan, just adopted in 2004, adheres to the principles of sustainable development, in accordance with the requirements of the Act. The Local Area Plan will conform to the principles, objectives and policies of the CDP and will, therefore, have a strong emphasis on promoting the sustainable development of the area.

1.4 *Environmental problems relevant to the Plan*

Transport and Movement

The Stillorgan area is subjected to traffic congestion and although the Local Area Plan will encourage the further development and redevelopment of the area, one of the main thrusts of the Plan will be to combat this problem. A LUTS study is currently ongoing, the findings of which will be incorporated into the Local Area Plan. It is anticipated that this LUTS will provide recommendations to alleviate the existing problems, with regards, to traffic congestion and pedestrian safety and provide recommendations for traffic management and for the future development of public transport, cycling routes, car parking and pedestrian safety and permeability. The Plan is, therefore, anticipated to have a positive effect on the environment with regards to issues pertaining to transportation.

Public Realm

The Plan will aim to regenerate the physical environment of Stillorgan. One of the main aims is to improve public realm by encouraging the redevelopment of the brownfield sites to provide a mix of uses and create vitality. It aims to provide civic and open spaces for passive recreation, improve footpaths and create a more attractive, accessible and safe shopping and living environment. In all, the Plan aims to create a “place of distinction”, rejuvenating its role as a District Centre.

Conservation and Heritage

There are no sites of archaeological or architectural heritage or conservation within the Local Plan Area. There are two sites of archaeological interest outside of the LAP boundary, which will be noted and respected in the LAP. There are three separate groups of trees that are the subject of protection/preservation as set out in the 2004-2010 CDP. These trees will again be identified in the LAP and any development will be expected to respect their preservation.

Foul Drainage

A computer model produced for the West Pier Foul Drainage catchment, within which Stillorgan lies, identifies deficiencies. It is necessary to update and rework these models to accommodate new and proposed development.

Water

There is currently no capability of supplying additional water in Stillorgan to any significant extent. It is apparent that a substantial extension to the supply network will be required prior to any significant development or intensification of development in the area.

1.5 The relevance of the Plan for the implementation of European Union legislation on the environment (eg: plans linked to waste-management or water protection).

These plans and legislation are considered under the Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Development Plan 2004-2010, from which the Local Area Plan will derive its context. They will not be specifically addressed within the Local Area Plan.

2. Characteristics of the effects and of the area likely to be affected, having regard, in particular, to

2.1 The probability, duration, frequency and reversibility of the effects.

It is considered that there will be no significant negative effects of the implementation of the Stillorgan Local Area Plan. However, with regards to positive effects, it is considered that the probability of these occurring is high. It is expected that the effects will be permanent and therefore, irreversible, until such time that any new policies and/or objectives are identified in a revised LAP and/or CDP.

2.2 The cumulative nature of the effects

No cumulative negative effects are anticipated given that the LAP will focus on the principles of sustainable development and the considerations of the future, beyond the statutory 6 years of the LAP. It is anticipated that the cumulative effects on the environment will be positive and that with every development and redevelopment, the area will be rejuvenated with an improved physical and visual environment and distinct role as a District Centre.

2.3 The transboundary nature of the effects

The Plan will have no national, regional or inter-county transboundary effects.

2.4 The risks to human health and the environment (eg: due to accidents)

The implementation of the Local Area Plan will not result in any risks to human health. Any future development in the area will conform to the Local Area Plan, of which the fundamental essence is to create a healthy environment in which for people to live, work and undergo recreation.

2.5 The magnitude and spatial extent of the effects (geographical area and size of the population likely to be affected)

The Plan area comprises approximately 16 hectares of land and a current population of approximately 500 persons. Given the existing zonings, in accordance with the CDP, which are mainly 'to protect, provide for and/or improve district centre and neighborhood centre facilities', the majority of the future development will be of mixed use, with an element of residential anticipated on each site. For example on the 'Blakes site' (Permission granted by An Bord Pleanála on 15th December 2005, DLRCOCO reg. ref: D04A/0674) the residential element is 215 units as part of a mixed-use scheme, which would result in an approximate population increase of 623 persons. (based on 2002 Census of population, at 2.9 persons per household). It is anticipated that the resident population of the Stillorgan Local Area Plan will increase significantly relative to its' existing population, however, in real terms this likely increase is not considered to be significant.

2.6 The value and vulnerability of the area likely to be affected due to:

a) special natural characteristics or cultural heritage

There are few areas of natural or cultural heritage within the Stillorgan Local Plan area. The 2004-2010 County Development Plan identifies three groupings of trees subject to protection/preservation within the boundary of the Stillorgan Local Area Plan. There are no protected structures. Two sites of archaeological interests are located just outside the boundary. It is not anticipated that the value and vulnerability of these environmental assets will be affected through the implementation of the Plan, given their status and protection in the CDP.

b) exceeded environmental quality standards or limit values

It is anticipated that environmental quality standards will not be exceeded and that the value of the area will not be limited as a result of the Plan implementation.

c) intensive land use

The Plan will aim to ensure that the redevelopment and development of the Stillorgan area is undertaken with due cognisance to its surrounding environment and that any development and intensification will sustain and improve on existing amenity.

2.7 Effects on areas or landscapes, which have a recognised national, European Union or international protection status

There are no areas or landscapes within the Plan boundary, which have a recognised European or international protection status. As mentioned previously, there are two existing sites that are designated under the Record of National Monuments outside of the boundary. The Plan will ensure that the value and status of these are considered and protected.

Conclusions

Determination of the need for environmental assessment of a Local Area Plan in terms of the provisions of article 14a (5) of the Planning and Development (Strategic Environmental Assessment) Regulations, 2004.

On consideration of the relevant criteria set out in Schedule 2A of the Regulations and on submissions received from the EPA, in accordance with Article 14 A (5), it is considered that the proposed Stillorgan Local Area Plan is not likely to have significant effects on the environment. In view of this it is considered that a strategic environmental assessment is not required in respect of the proposed Stillorgan Local Area Plan.