

Uimhir Thagarta Uathúil: SD-C195-281

Údar: Dublin Friends of the Earth

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Submission:

Priorities and suggestions from Dublin Friends of the Earth

Comhairliúchán:

Draft South Dublin County Development Plan 2022 - 2028

Chapter 6: Housing

Caibidil: Volume 1: Written Statement » Chapter 6:

Housing

Quality housing and sustainable neighbourhoods are very important. An equally important factor is how these houses and neighbourhoods are going to be constructed. Eleven percent of carbon emissions globally are as a result of embodied carbon. Upfront embodied carbon refers to the emissions associated with all the activities of procuring, mining, harvesting raw materials, transforming these materials into construction products, transporting them to site and incorporating them into a building, and subsequently maintaining, replacing and removing and disposing at the end of their life.

In Ireland currently there is no legislation on embodied carbon (the sum of all the greenhouse gas emissions (mostly carbon dioxide) resulting from the mining, harvesting, processing, manufacturing, transportation and installation of building materials). High carbon materials such as concrete and steel are the norm in the construction of housing in Ireland. Embodied carbon needs to be mentioned in this development plan and hopefully, in the next 5 years legislation will exist for embodied carbon. This is needed if we are to bring down emissions to a safe level. Last year emissions globally went down by 6.4 percent. To reach the Paris Agreement 1.5 degrees limit, we need to reduce emissions by 7.6 percent pa. Just observing how much society was closed down during the pandemic, in relation to travel and work really shows how much more effort and legislation needs to be in place to reduce the catastrophic effects of climate change. An important note for housing is how we can use existing building stock in SDCC and transform it into housing. A lot of this stock is owned by SDCC and the most sustainable building is the one that already exists.

We would again like to mention aspects on tree management concerning new development work as we did in chapter 4:

Has SDCC considered implementing a type of 'tree balance sheet' that could be required for new developments? The balance sheet would clearly indicate what the size, condition, and species of trees/hedgerows to be removed for any development and similarly include what new trees (numbers, size and species) are to be planted within the development. This would ensure that existing mature trees and hedgerows of good condition would have to be replaced with high quality specimens of similar size and appropriate species.

We believe guidance and hard standards for the specification of trees to ensure that they are of decent size and quality should be introduced. Standards and quotas (like what is done for bicycle or car parking within most planning grants) could also be set to achieve a minimum number or area (if providing mass planting of young forest/woodland) of trees/whips, therefore future canopy cover, for new developments. Obviously the number and size of trees that can be planted within each development will vary due to site constraints, but this will at least ensure that applicants requesting permission for new developments (public and private) will have to argue a case for a reduction in specification and numbers and probably most importantly, it will focus the minds developers and design consultants during the planning process.

Documents Attached: Níl