

# Chapter 1: Introduction and Context



## 1.0 Introduction and Context

Clondalkin is an historic settlement located within what is now an expanding modern city and suburbs area 11km west of Dublin City (See Figure 1.1 and 1.2). The purpose of this Local Planning Framework (LPF / the Plan) is to provide policy and objectives to guide the sustainable growth of Clondalkin and ensure its continuous success as a vibrant urban village with associated commercial, cultural and community facilities to serve the growing population. This must be achieved while protecting and preserving the important features of the historic village and supporting the strong tourism and service industries which depend on its historic identity. This Planning Framework is being undertaken in the context of DQP14 Objective 3 and EDE4 Objective 14 of the County Development Plan 2022-2028 which state as follows:

'To prepare a LAP for Clondalkin, the extent of the boundary to be defined, which will be guided by the Local Area Plans Guidelines for Planning Authorities, 2013 (Department of the Environment, Community and Local Government) or any superseding guidelines and which will incorporate:

- ➔ A vision for the development of Clondalkin;
- ➔ Wider urban design principles;
- ➔ Framework plans for larger infill sites;
- ➔ A Conservation Plan;
- ➔ A local Green Infrastructure strategy derived from the County GI Strategy;
- ➔ Local Transport Plan.'

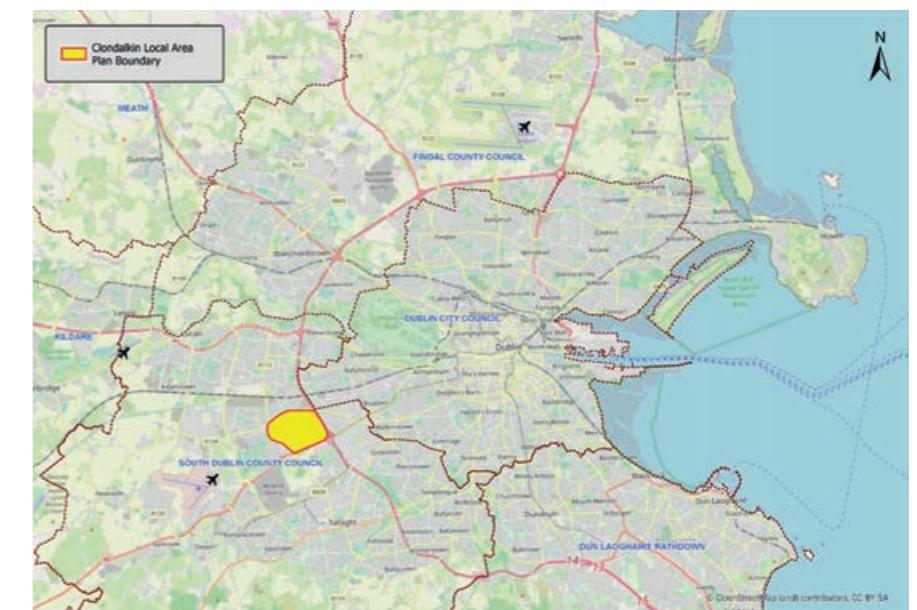


Figure 1.1: Clondalkin LPF location in context.



**Figure 1.2:** Aerial view of Clondalkin LPF boundary.

## 1.1 Legislative Context

This LPF has been prepared at a time of flux in legislation. The Planning and Development Act 2024 was passed into law in October 2024. However, implementation of the various parts of the Act are being rolled out in a phased basis, until which time the 2000 Act applies. Part 3 of the new Act deals with Plans, Policies and Related Matters and is due to commence in Q3 2025. Transitional arrangements for LAPs under the 2024 Act were not confirmed at the time of writing this document. To deliver on the County Development Plan (CDP) objective for a LAP for Clondalkin the Council is including this Local Planning Framework as an appendix to the Development Plan by way of a Variation. The Planning Framework provides for the incorporation of the various considerations outlined in the Development Plan objective and has been developed to align with the themes and subject matters which relate to sustainable planning, and which would previously have been incorporated into Local Area Plans.

The LPF has also been subject to a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA), an Appropriate Assessment (AA) and a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).

The LPF has had regard to section 28 Ministerial Guidelines and is consistent with any relevant Specific Planning Policy Requirements set out therein. In this regard, since the adoption of the CDP it is noted that the Sustainable Residential Development and Compact Settlements Guidelines (2024) and new Apartment Guidelines (2025) have been published.

## 1.2 Settlement Context

Clondalkin is located 11 km west of Dublin City and a secondary administrative centre for South Dublin County. It is identified as a Level 3 Retail Centre in the Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES). Its historic and wider town centre includes shopping facilities, civic and administrative services and associated commercial, cultural and community facilities. Outside of the centre, the area is characterised by low density suburban neighbourhoods that are based around a network of local centres providing convenience retail and services.

Clondalkin is also within the Dublin City and Suburbs Settlement Boundary and within the Metropolitan Area Spatial Plan (MASP) policy area identified in the RSES. It lies on the northern side of the N7

economic corridor, to the west of the M50 and CityEdge and to the south of the Grand Canal and Kildare rail line and in close proximity to the Clonburris and Adamstown SDZ areas (See Figure 1.5 on next page).

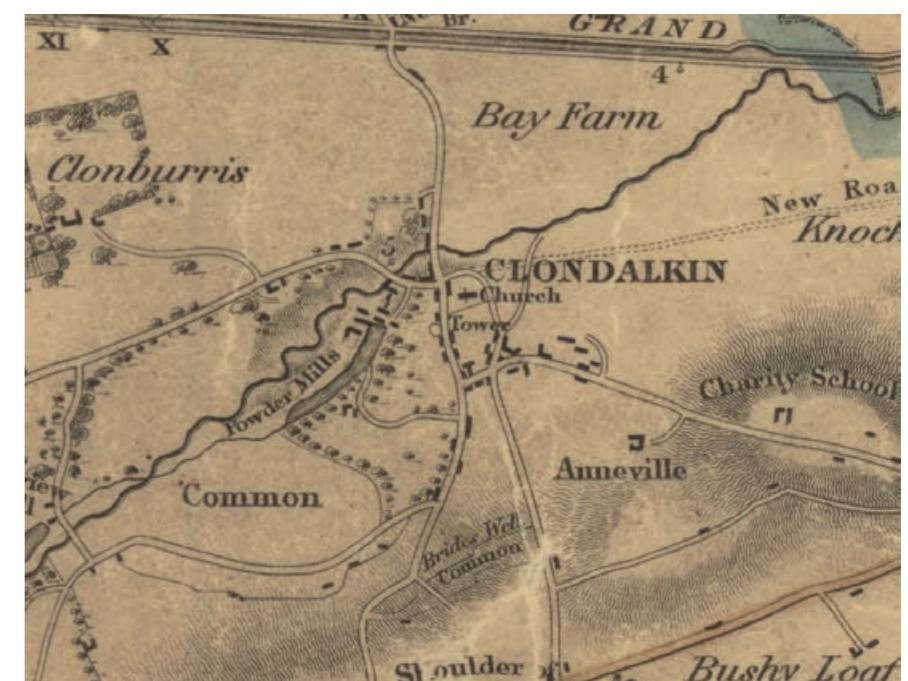
The continued development of the various urban centres in Dublin City and Suburbs such as Clondalkin will provide for new mixed-use development as the engine to drive growth in the urban environment. There is potential for larger development on brownfield lands adjacent to Clondalkin village. Smaller infill sites may also come forward on a case-by-case basis.

A key component of the South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 and of the National Planning Framework (NPF) is to support the consolidation of built-up areas. The alignment of everyday services focused within urban centres will facilitate the 10-minute settlement concept in line with national policy by ensuring that homes and services are proximate to each other. This concept is known as Compact Growth (NSO1).

## 1.3 Historic Context

In addition to its role within the expanding modern city and suburbs area Clondalkin is also a place of historical significance. The Round Tower is the renowned symbol of Clondalkin and dates from c.750AD (See Figure 1.4).

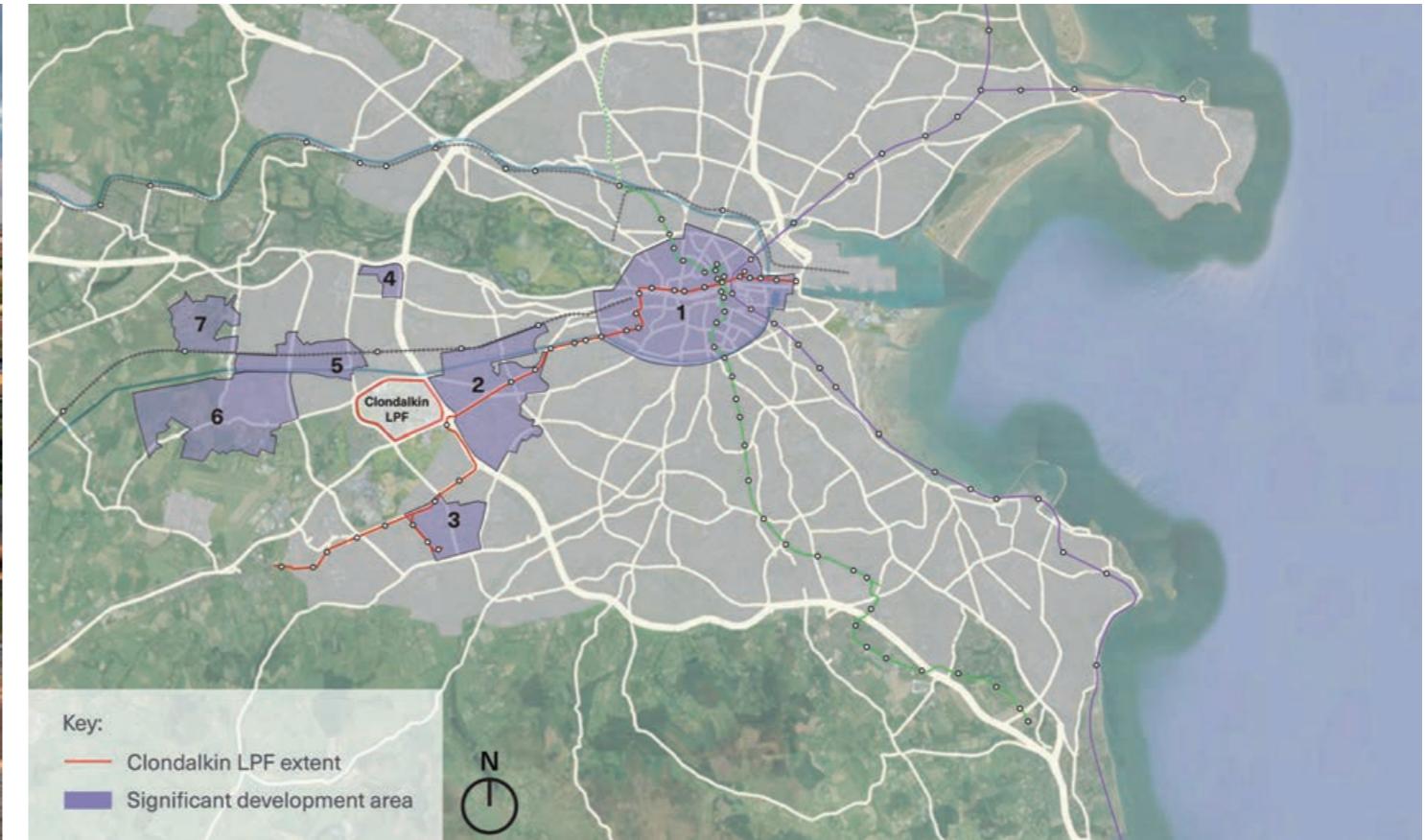
The village retains a significant portion of the original monastic layout, as found in its street network and property division (See Figure 1.3). Clondalkin developed in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries as a typical mixed-use market town for neighbouring farmers and market gardeners, as well as providing housing for the local mill workers, another



**Figure 1.3:** Duncans Map 1821.



**Figure 1.4:** Round Tower in Clondalkin Village.



**Figure 1.5:** Clondalkin's strategic location.

key feature of the area. Clondalkin retains many remnants of its industrial past, associated with the mills, as well as a small number of houses from the nineteenth century.

Clondalkin's growth remained relatively organic until the latter half of the 20th century when significant development interventions occurred that interrupted its gentle growth. The growth and expansion of Dublin, coupled with major road projects, including the widening of the N7, the extension of the M50, and the construction of the New Nangor Road all contributed to 'hemming' in of the settlement and diminishing historical linkages such as those between the religious settlement of Tallaght. Further urban expansion also occurred as Dublin continued to modernise and develop, impacting the traditional character of the area. Clondalkin's strategic context is shown in Figure 1.5 and can be described as:

- 1. Dublin City Centre:** 11km from the centre of Clondalkin Village with direct access by the Grand Canal Greenway and by public transport including Luas and the Kildare rail which is due to be upgraded to a DART line as far as Hazelhatch & Celbridge Station.
- 2. City Edge:** 700 hectares of regeneration land between DCC and SDCC which, in the long term, will support up to 65,000 – 75,000 jobs, homes for 75,000 – 85,000 people, 50% green cover and integrated urban services including public transport.

**3. Tallaght:** The County Town of South Dublin is subject to a 2020 LAP, which aims to support the sustainable intensification of the Town Centre with 8,410 to 11,090 new homes; 7,800 to 15,300 additional jobs; and a population of up to 34,000 people in the long term. This is supported by a new road extension at Airton Road and cycle infrastructure including the Tallaght to Clondalkin Cycle Scheme.

**4. Liffey Valley / Fonthill:** A Level 2 Major Retail Centre for the County. The Centre is developing as a key public transport hub that will facilitate the implementation of BusConnects, allowing for the growth of the existing shopping centre and complementary leisure / entertainment, commercial and other land uses.

**5. Clonburris SDZ:** A planning Scheme, adopted in 2019 to deliver a target of 9,416 new homes, minimum of 7,300 sq.m gross community floorspace, approximately 22,520 sq.m gross retail floorspace and in the range of 30,000 to 40,000 sq.m employment floorspace, in addition to 90 ha of parks and open space and 12.5km of cycleways and walkways. The SDZ also includes two railway stations on the Dublin – Cork railway line and will become a more frequent service with the introduction of the DART+SW.

**6. Grange Castle Business Park:** A key strategic employment area for the county, identified in the MASP as a strategic development area for the promotion of high-tech manufacturing, research and development.

There are currently over 6,500 people employed in companies including Pfizer, Grifols, Takeda and Microsoft. The extension of Grange Castle will allow jobs to continue to grow in the area.

**7. Adamstown SDZ:** A Planning Scheme (amended) 2014, 2020 and 2023 for a population of approximately 25,000. The scheme has progressed at a steady pace since 2016 with the scheme expected to be substantially delivered within the current Development Plan cycle (by 2028). The SDZ includes multiple schools such as Adamstown Community College and St John the Evangelist National School, parks including Tandy's Lane Park and Airlie Park and retail options such as Tesco, Aldi and Lidl.

## 1.4 Policy Context and Local Planning Framework Purpose

The purpose of this LPF is to provide a local framework for the sustainable development and growth of Clondalkin. It provides for change and growth to occur while setting a framework to ensure that the key assets which promote its vibrancy through its historic features, businesses, community and cultural assets are protected.

The LPF will be included within the CDP by way of a Variation and as

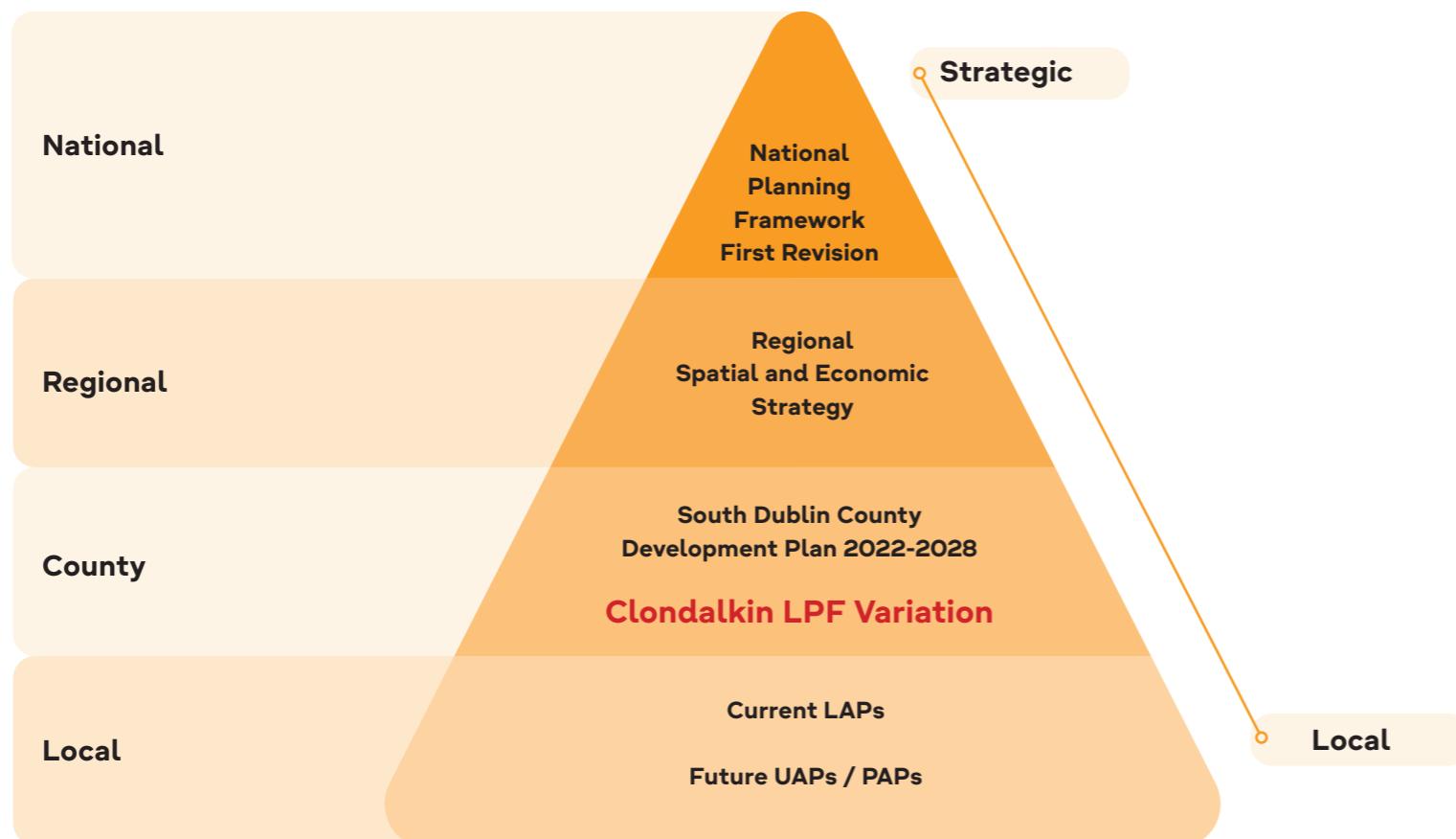


Figure 1.6: Hierarchy of Plans.

such it will allow for settlement specific objectives for Clondalkin to sit alongside the wider county policy context. The LPF will align with the core strategy of the Development Plan as set out in Chapter 6. As part of the CDP, the LPF also aligns with Regional and National Policy, see Figure 1.6 above.

This LPF seeks to deliver high quality housing and well-connected neighbourhood areas with a strong sense of community and social cohesion, as well as to aid the delivery of key services required by the population as it continues to grow and evolve through different life cycles. It seeks to promote prosperity and opportunity in terms of employment, economic development and tourism, while ensuring the conservation of built heritage and the enhancement of green infrastructure. This Plan comprises a vision and framework for the development of Clondalkin using well established urban design principles, individual framework plans for both larger and smaller infill or opportunity sites, a conservation plan, a local green infrastructure strategy and a local transport plan.

Developing this LPF is an opportunity to take a more focused approach to the key physical, social, economic and environmental challenges affecting the future development of Clondalkin. A well-crafted LPF is one that delivers a resilient development framework that both implements quality planning outcomes, whilst also enjoying broad-based community support within a settlement. This consensus-driven approach offers certainty and

clarity for residents, landowners, developers, and investors regarding the future development in Clondalkin.

## 1.5 Climate Action

The South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028 reflects the important role that spatial planning has in the delivery of Climate Action. The CDP supports local and central government actions in addressing maximum co-ordination between the CDP, the South Dublin Climate Change Action Plan and other climate related policies and programmes. The Clondalkin LPF being subject to the provisions of the CDP has a key role to play in delivering the wider strategic climate objectives of the CDP at the local level (See Figure 1.7).

Furthermore, in accordance with Action 165 of the Climate Action Plan 2019, South Dublin County Council has selected Clondalkin in which to establish the Decarbonising Zone (DZ). A DZ is an area that has been identified by a Local Authority as a key area for climate action. In the DZ, creative solutions will be provided to respond to local low carbon energy, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate needs. This will contribute to national climate action targets. The LPF, as a land use plan, will facilitate the SDCC Climate Action Plan to the greatest extent possible. Climate Action objectives are set out further in Chapter 3.



Figure 1.7: A 'layered' approach facilitating a holistic integration of climate action South Dublin County Development Plan 2022-2028.



## 1.6 Local Planning Framework Area and Population

### The Planning Framework Area

The focus of this planning framework is the village of Clondalkin and its immediate surrounding area. However, continuing to link the centre of the village with its wider environs is critical for the village's prosperity and sustainability into the future, whilst allowing new communities to develop a sense of belonging and place.

Figure 1.8 outlines the extent of the LPF area, approximately 286 hectares, which is bordered by the New Nangor Road / Grand Canal to the north, the N7 to the south, the M50 to the east, and Fonthill Road South to the west. While this LPF concentrates on the village and its immediate surrounds, it is recognised that Clondalkin comprises communities outside this immediate area and the LPF is relevant to all and how they move around and use the village.

The interconnectedness of Clondalkin to the wider urban areas within Dublin City and Suburbs, including the newly developing areas of Clonburris, the planned City Edge regeneration area and employment lands to the west is shown in Figure 1.5.

### Population

The 2022 Census of Population indicates the resident population of the area was 12,750 persons in 2022, a 0.64% increase compared to the 12,669 people in 2016 (See Figure 1.9). Examination of Census data points to there being young families in the LPF area, with a slightly higher than national average of children in the 0-5 age cohort and less than the national percentage of primary school and secondary school aged children with this being particularly marked in the secondary school age



Figure 1.8: LPF boundary and key connections to areas outside the boundary.

group. This is reflected by a higher percentage of adults in the 30-44 age cohort. The LPF area is also marked by a lower percentage than the national average in the 65+ age group but as is the case nationally overall the population is ageing with a significant percentage of the total population in the 45-65 age group (See Figure 1.10).

In terms of employment, the dominant industry where the working population is employed is the commerce and trade industry (28%), followed by the professional services industry (21.3%). Clondalkin also has a significantly higher percentage of manual skilled workers compared to national and county averages. Manual skilled is 5.1% higher than national average and 4.6% higher than county average.

### Housing

Clondalkin's housing stock is dominated by 3-bedroom households (49.23%). At just over 16%, there are less four plus bedroom houses than the average for SDCC and the other Dublin authorities (apart from DCC) and nationally. When it comes to the percentage of one and two bedroom homes, Clondalkin has a higher percentage than the national average but below DCC and DLRCC (See Figure 1.11). There is the potential to diversify future types and tenures to ensure an appropriate mix of house type to suit different needs. Currently, 67.1% of households in Clondalkin are owner occupied, 21.9% are privately rented and 5.35% are social housing. Compared to national figures, Clondalkin LPF has a lower proportion of social housing than the national average (10%) but a higher proportion of owner-occupied (65.9%) and privately rented households (18%).

## 1.7 Preparation of the LPF

The Council considered that the opportunities and challenges presented by the particular characteristics of the LPF area would require specialist input in a number of different areas. Therefore, and having regard to the requirements of the CDP objective the following were appointed:

- ➔ O'Mahony Pike and associates urban designers leading a team which included Molloy Associates (Conservation Architects), JBA (Green Infrastructure) and Urban Movement to provide Urban Design services ensuring the integration of conservation, GI and movement considerations into urban design;
- ➔ ARUP was appointed to provide the technical services to carry out the Local Transport Plan;
- ➔ CAAS were appointed to carry out Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA) of the plan; and
- ➔ JBA were appointed to carry out a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA).



Figure 1.9: Population in Clondalkin LPF.

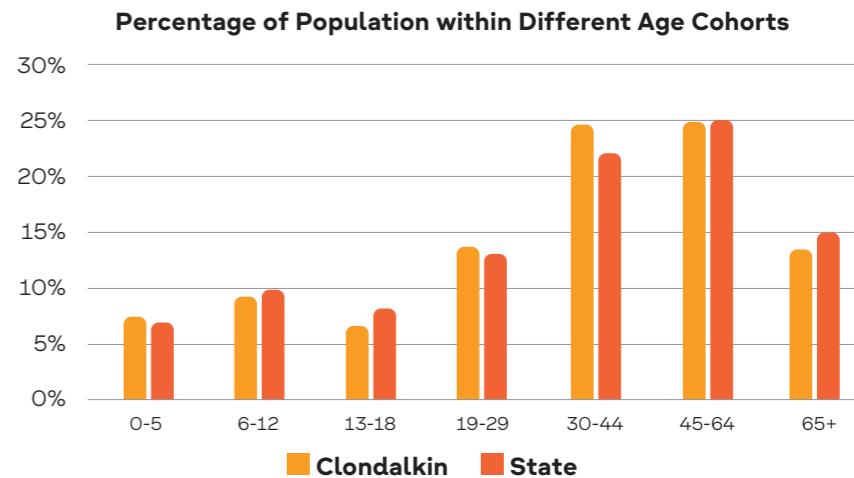


Figure 1.10: Clondalkin LPF age groups profile.

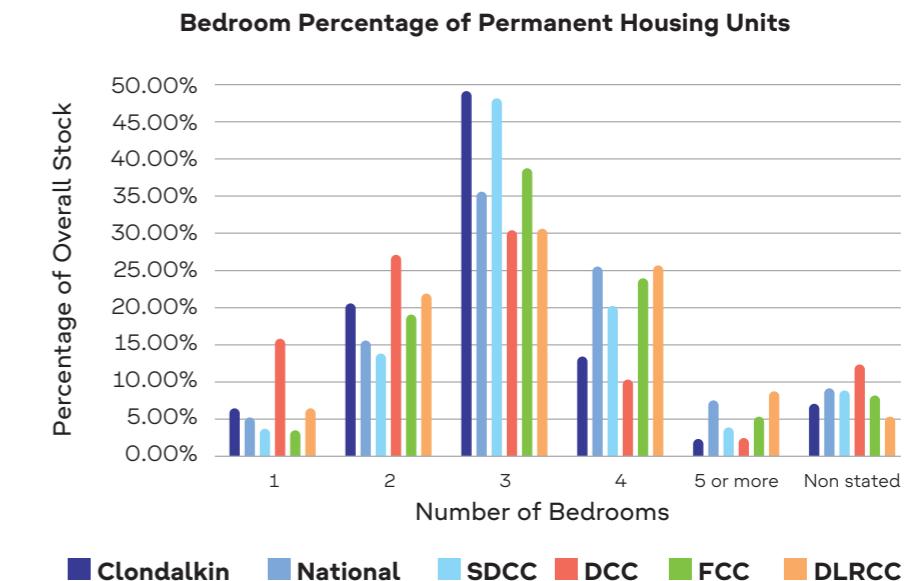


Figure 1.11: Clondalkin LPF bedroom percentages compared to national and Dublin averages.

## 1.8 Pre-Plan Consultation

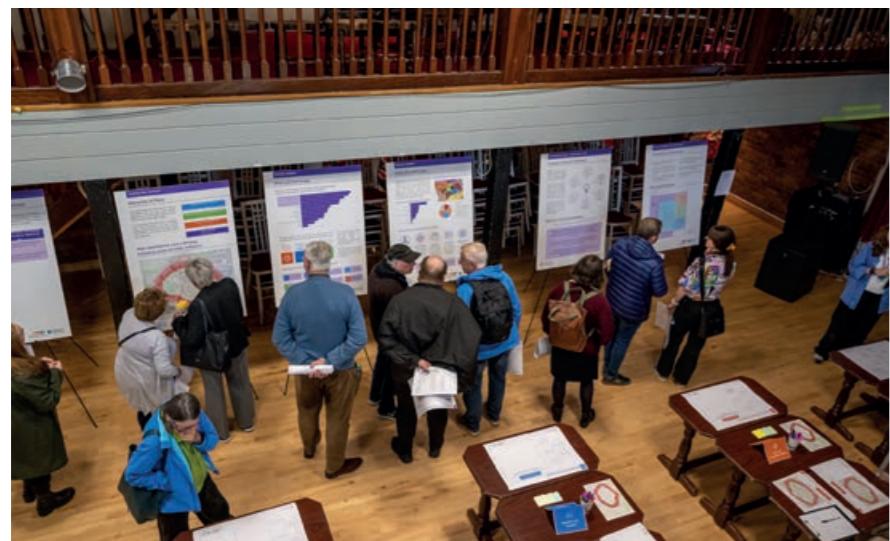
### First Round

In March 2023, the Planning Department of South Dublin County Council (SDCC) embarked on what was then the preparation of a Local Area Plan (LAP) for Clondalkin with a public consultation engagement with the Clondalkin residents, community groups and other stakeholders during the period March to May 2023. This initial consultation was facilitated by Connect the Dots, stakeholder consultation specialists, and sought to understand, by way of face-to-face workshops (See Figure 1.12), surveys and engagement with schools and different groups, what the different perspectives and views were on Clondalkin. Overall, the finding from this public consultation exercise was that the community of Clondalkin is concerned about preserving the village's character and heritage, whilst enhancing community facilities, green spaces, and accessibility for all residents. There was also a call for a focus on traffic management solutions to alleviate congestion. The report from the first round of consultation was published on a dedicated Clondalkin website.

### Second Round

The second round took place to follow up from the initial public consultation which had taken place in early 2023. The findings of the first round of public consultation, taken in conjunction with investigations and research carried out by the planning team with consultants during 2023 and early 2024, brought forward four clear themes, identified as:

- ➔ Movement and Transport
- ➔ Social and Community Facilities
- ➔ Culture and Heritage
- ➔ Environment, Biodiversity and Planting



**Figure 1.12:** Face-to-face workshop during the first round of public consultation.

These themes culminated in the preparation of drawings and proposed measures focused on three growth scenarios for Clondalkin: 1) Local Vitality, 2) Healthy Environment; and 3) Built Heritage. These scenarios were the subject of the second round of public consultation in March - April 2024, preceded by a student council workshop in February (See Figure 1.13).

This second round of consultation also put forward a potential solution to traffic congestion, involving significant changes to the existing traffic circulation. Given the extreme concern of the public generated by the option shown for transport it was agreed to run a third public consultation.

### Third Round

This third round of public consultation was facilitated by KPMG during the period November 2024 to January 2025 and focused on areas of possible agreement on the transport approach. One-to-one meetings were held followed by a presentation and discussion at four public workshops (See Figure 1.14). The outcome was a broadly agreed consensus on the transport options.

The reports from the first, second and third rounds of the consultation process were published on the dedicated Clondalkin website.

The feedback from the consultation process has informed the drafting of this LPF.



**Figure 1.13:** Second round of consultation which put forward three options for growth.

## 1.9 Structure of the LPF: How to use the document

This LPF follows the layered approach taken by the CDP, building on the different elements of plan making chapter to chapter through relevant objectives. These are then carried forward into the Urban Design chapter which allows for a focus on principles for development taking account of what has gone before and the need for the integration of the different elements.

The LPF should be read as a whole as the objectives and measures combine to provide a holistic and sustainable approach to development.

The LPF is accompanied by a Conservation Plan, ACA character appraisals and the Local Transport Plan. Each of these documents has informed the relevant chapters within the LPF.

The LPF was also informed by the environmental assessments in the form of the accompanying SEA, AA and SFRA.

The LPF is intended for use by all stakeholders with an interest in Clondalkin and its development. This includes but is not limited to residents, interest groups, the local authority, landowners and developers to gain an insight into what is required to be considered as part of any future changes or proposals within the village and the wider Plan area.

As a variation, this LPF will come into immediate effect once adopted and will be part of the CDP until that plan expires. The objectives complement those of the CDP, as such the provisions of the CDP shall be complied with throughout the implementation of the LPF.



**Figure 1.14:** Picture taken from the third round of public consultation.