

## **CHAPTER 11: HERITAGE – BUILT, NATURAL AND CULTURAL**

### **11.1. Protection of the Local Heritage**

#### **11.1.1 The Process**

Heritage is an integral part of the identity of South Fingal providing a link with the past and a connection to the historic, cultural and natural inheritance that has been passed on by previous generations. As the current custodians of this heritage, we have a duty to continue this role of guardianship and ensure that future generations may also enjoy their inheritance.

The National Monuments Acts 1930 to 1994 and Part IV of the Planning and Development Act 2000, provide the legislative basis for the protection of the built heritage. The Record of Monuments and Places (RMP), established under Section 12 of the National Monuments (Amendment) Act 1994 lists structures, features, objects and sites known as Recorded Monuments. Archaeological structures may, in some situations, be considered as architectural heritage and, therefore, may appear on both the Record of Monuments and Places (RMP) and the Record of Protected Structures (RPS). This means that these structures are protected by both the National Monuments Acts and the Planning and Development Act 2000.

Planning Authorities are required to incorporate a list of “protected structures” known as the Record of Protected Structures (RPS) in the County Development Plan. Protected Structures must be of special architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest. The aim of Protected Structure status is to retain the special character and features that make such structures significant. Any works that would have a material effect on the character of a protected structure require planning permission. Planning Authorities are also required to incorporate a list of Architectural Conservation Areas (ACA) in all development plans to protect the character of places, areas, groups of structures, or townscapes. Generally, most structures in an ACA are not of sufficient merit to warrant inclusion on the RPS, in their own right, but are nevertheless important in the context of their contribution to the streetscape or area. The protection is placed on the exterior of such areas or structures, and any works that would have a material affect on the external character of the area require planning permission.

In relation to natural heritage the principal national legislation is the Wildlife Act 1976, the Wildlife (Amendment) Act 2000 and Part XIII of the Planning and Development Act 2000. In addition, the European Communities (Natural Heritage) Regulations 1997 give effect to the requirements of the Birds and Habitats Directives. Although there are no designated natural heritage sites within the study area, there are habitats and features which are of particular importance for biodiversity throughout the landscape. It is important that these are maintained and enhanced, including trees, hedgerows, woodlands, scrub, wetlands, rivers and streams. Together all these elements form part of a network of habitats essential for wildlife. They also protect and enhance surface water and groundwater resources.

The information within this Chapter and Appendix 7 is based on discussions with, and contributions from, the Conservation team at Fingal County Council and information in the 1999 County Development Plan. An objective of the County Development Plan is to secure the preservation of sites, objects and other features included in List 1 and List 2

of the Plan (now incorporated into the Record of Protected Structures), which are of architectural, artistic, historic, archaeological or geological interest. These features as identified in the 1999 Development Plan are shown in Figure 1 of the Appendix. The list of Protected Structures is under constant review, and a revised list is included in the draft Fingal Development Plan 2005 - 2011.

During the study Duchas, the Heritage Service (now incorporated into the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government) were contacted but were unable to supply any further information. It was recommended that where development was likely to affect sites of archaeological interest, an archaeologist should be employed to undertake a full appraisal.

### **11.1.2 The Analysis**

#### **Built Heritage**

##### **Architectural Heritage**

Appendix 7 lists the 'Protected Structures'. These must be retained and protected, or need to be considered for protection when assessing any planning application that affects their character or their setting. The 2000 Act provides for greater control than heretofore because even minor alterations can easily impact on a protected structure's special interest. The Appendix also includes further description of historical features from the SRUNA report. At present, consideration is being given to designating Architectural Conservation Areas in Fingal. An initial list of sites is being examined but there are no sites on this initial list in the study area.

Within the study area, it is thought that very few of the Plan proposals will affect existing features of architectural, historical, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social, or technical interest. The key areas where care will need to be taken are:

- **Terminal Building, Dublin Airport:** This has been identified as a building of National Importance. The building was designed in 1937 by a team of young Office of Public Works architects, under the direction of Desmond FitzGerald, and completed in the early 1940s. The building won the Triennial Gold Medal from the Royal Institute of the Architects of Ireland in 1943.

The building is in the "International Style" and is curved in plan with circular ends. The inner curve forms the entrance with its double-height glazed central concourse. The outer curve enabled the maximum number of aircraft to serve the terminal. The outer perimeter is dominated by continuous bands of glazing on each floor, cantilevered viewing platforms, and a glazed central staircase terminated by the control room.

The Terminal Building is an example of "total design", whereby all internal finishes were also chosen by the original architectural team. Thus, all the furniture carpets and lighting, even the cutlery and menu cards for the restaurant, were part of the initial design by FitzGerald and his team.

- The area of search for the heavy rail route suggested by Iarnród Éireann; there are a number of protected features around Kinsaley, and a sensitive landscape containing

several protected structures at St. Doolagh's. It should be noted that this route has not been included in the draft development plan.

- Any further expansion of the parking area south of the main runway, in line with Aer Rianta plans (Chapter 5), may potentially affect a number of features around an area called Newtown.
- The land zoned for development just outside the study area, along the N32. The sites currently zoned for employment both contain features and the proposed industrial (previously residential) area adjacent to Balgriffin has two features on its perimeter.

### **Archaeological Heritage**

The Record of Monuments and Places identifies a number of sites/monuments of archaeological interest in the study area. In addition, it is probable that there are undiscovered sub-surface archaeological sites/monuments in the study area. An archaeologist should be employed to undertake a full appraisal, in relation to any proposals for development likely to affect sites of archaeological interest. Similarly any proposals for large scale development over one kilometre in length; or proposals for development involving ground clearance of ½ hectare or more should include provisions for appropriate archaeological assessment.

### **Natural Heritage**

There are habitats and features of importance for biodiversity throughout the landscape. It is important that proposals for development protect and enhance biodiversity by minimising adverse impacts on existing habitats and by including mitigation and/or compensation measures, as appropriate, which ensure that biodiversity and landscape character is enhanced and ecological function retained

#### **11.1.3 Suggested Policies**

- to ensure that development proposals conserve, protect and enhance the built, natural and cultural heritage
- to take a holistic and integrated approach to the protection and management of heritage
- to promote awareness & understanding among the general public of the built, natural and cultural heritage of Fingal

#### **11.2 The Development and Promotion of Local Heritage**

In addition to preservation, the development and promotion of local heritage is also important. One of the key objectives of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor is to market and promote Fingal, particularly in Northern Ireland, as an attractive tourist destination along the corridor.

The airport receives many foreign visitors each year. Capturing only a small percentage of their spending could channel benefits to the Fingal County economy. At present, the major attractions that inbound visitors will be targeting are Dublin City and more locally, Portmarnock Golf Course. Other than the latter and business tourism to airport hotels, the promotion of local tourism appears to be a missed opportunity in South Fingal.

Cultural heritage policy, in partnership with recreation and leisure policy, could provide the hook to encourage more people to spend their time and money in Fingal. The County has a number of resources that could be actively promoted, through marketing and preservation and enhancement of attractions.

These include:

- Fishing Heritage – Malahide, the estuarine coastline
- Howth “Island”
- Swords Castle (castle, round tower, abbey, holy wells – a possible heritage trail?)
- The long aviation history (possibly an Irish airport/aviation museum?)

Promotion could involve:

- Marketing the attractions at the Airport (arrivals side) itself, working with Aer Rianta;
- Fingal County Council and Aer Rianta working with the tourist industry, hotels, restaurants, car hire groups, tourist offices, other facilities;
- The provision of information - staff education, information booths, posters and maps;
- It could also involve working with those who fund, run and maintain the attractions to enable them to tap-in to this very large potential ‘passing trade’.