



The Royal Canal

Planning and Development
Strategy for Fingal
Spring 2008



The Royal Canal

Planning and Development Strategy for Fingal Ashtown (Longford Bridge) to Leixlip (Cope Bridge)

Spring 2008

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Executive Summary

- The Vision:
The Royal Canal Corridor will be a high quality, vibrant and attractive linear greenway recognised and protected as a recreational, historic and natural resource.
- The Royal Canal Corridor comprises the watercourse, framed on both sides by a linear canal bank and adjacent land uses. Ownership and responsibility for the management of the canal lies with Waterways Ireland.
- With approximately 6.4 km of The Royal Canal within the County Boundary of Fingal, it represents an important heritage and natural resource for the County. As the Waterways Ireland Restoration Program is now in its final 18 km phase, the canal also presents an opportunity for transformation in regard to making a local and national amenity.
- Under the Wildlife Amendment Act, 2000, The Royal Canal is designated as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA) with a B rating of national importance. The ecological value of the canal lies in the diversity of species along its linear habitats, many of which are further protected under European and National Legislation.

- It is the objective of this report to work in conjunction with Waterways Ireland to identify the ways and means proactive planning can allow the linear park to realize its full potential while respecting the integrity of the canal as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA).

The Strategy

- The main Strategic Objectives of this Study are as follows: -

- Objective 1:** Promote The Royal canal as a site for education and enjoyment of the environment for all
- Objective 2:** Support sustainable economic development that is compatible with the character of The Royal Canal
- Objective 3:** Improve security and safety along The Royal Canal Corridor
- Objective 4:** Promote The Royal Canal as an recreational resource
- Objective 5:** Establish a programme to implement and deliver The Royal Canal Strategy

- Specific works needed within the canal corridor include the resurfacing of towpaths, coppicing of vegetation, removal of graffiti, creation of boat mooring facilities, picnic areas, lighting, improved pedestrian access, restocking fish levels, the appointment of canal warden and the erection of information panels.



Executive Summary

- The gross estimated cost of works required on the Royal Canal (from Longford Bridge to Leixlip) is initially €1,471,680 with an annual cost of €156,608.

Implementation

- The primary mechanism for the realisation of the study objectives and ensuring the protection of this valuable amenity is a variation to the current Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011 to propose a new:

New Land Use Zoning Objective: to rezone the entire length of the Royal Canal and associated towpath as a Waterways Corridor (WC) zoning, that recognises the unique and sensitive nature of the corridor.

Waterway Corridor Zone of Influence: define a zone 200 m from the watercourse as a Specific Objective to ensure all new development adjacent to the Canal considers the natural and recreational resource.

New Local Objectives: to direct funding and works to where they would be most beneficial

- The creation of new development in the vicinity of the canal is an opportunity for planning gain. The instruments to lever planning gain are the Development Plan policies, zoning, local objectives & section 48 Development Contribution

Scheme. As such a new Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme is needed to list the Royal Canal as an amenity requiring investment for specific works.

- A Steering Committee including members of Fingal County Council, Waterways Ireland and local interest groups should be formed to further objectives identified by the Strategy and promote the Royal Canal as both a tourist product and unique local resource.



1.0 Introduction

1.1 The Vision

'The Royal Canal Corridor will be a high quality, vibrant and attractive linear greenway recognised and protected as a recreational, historic and natural resource.'

1.2 The Canal Corridor

The Royal Canal Corridor comprises the watercourse, framed on both sides by a linear canal bank and adjacent land uses. Ownership and responsibility for the management of the canal lies with Waterways Ireland. As shown on Map 1 below approximately 6.4 km of The Royal Canal lies within the boundary of Fingal County.

1.3 Planning Strategy

The Royal Canal is an important heritage and natural resource for the County of Fingal. The canal also presents an opportunity for transformation in regard to making a local and national amenity. Waterways Ireland's 145.6km restoration programme for The Royal Canal is now in its final 18 km phase and will see the canal restored from Spencer Dock on the River Liffey to the Shannon Navigation at Clondra, Co Longford. The scheduled completion date is late 2008. It is envisaged that the Royal Canal will attract a considerable number of boating enthusiasts and tourists of both national and international origin.

It is the objective of this report to work in conjunction with Waterways Ireland to identify the ways and means proactive planning can realize the full potential of the linear park without compromising the integrity of the Canal's natural heritage.



Plate 1: Royal Canal from Collins Bridge



Plate 2: Royal Canal from Callaghan Bridge



THE ROYAL CANAL Planning & Development Strategy for Fingal



Comhairle Contae Fhine Gall
Fingal County Council

Royal Canal Study

Proposed Station	Proposed New Class Rail Line	Royal Canal	Fingal County Council
Existing Station	National Rail	Liffey Valley SAGI	Kildare County Council
Urban Centres	Motorway	Zone of Influence (200m)	South Dublin County Council
Future Urban Centres	River Liffey	Dublin City Council	Meath County Council

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2009/24/2/DMA/Fingal/CountyCouncil	



2.0 Natural Heritage: Legislative and Policy Context

2.1 Biodiversity

The conservation of biodiversity in Ireland is a legislative imperative. Many species of national and international importance have been identified within the Royal Canal. In particular, within Fingal, species identified have included the Otter (*Lutra lutra*)¹, bats² and the Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*)³. Under the Wildlife Acts (1976-2000) the following are legal offences:

- to hunt, disturb, or intentionally kill otters.
- to intentionally harm or disturb a bat's resting place
- harm certain wild birds, such as Kingfisher, or their habitat

The Wildlife Acts were further strengthened by The European Communities (Natural Habitats) Regulations 1997. In particular, it removed all exemptions provided in Section 23(7) of the Wildlife Act relating to Annex IV species, including all species of bats.

2.1.1 Natural Heritage Sites

Under the Wildlife Amendment Act, 2000 the entire Royal Canal is formally designated a proposed Natural heritage Area (pNHA) under site code 002103. The Royal Canal pNHA is defined by the National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) to include the

central channel and adjoining banks, hedgerows, tow path, grassland, open water, related scrub and woodland features. The pNHA designation indicates that the site has a B rating and is of national importance. According to the report accompanying the pNHA designation, the ecological value of the canal lies in the diversity of species along its linear habitats.



Plate 3: Swan on the Royal Canal, Roselawn



2.0 Natural Heritage: Legislative and Policy Context

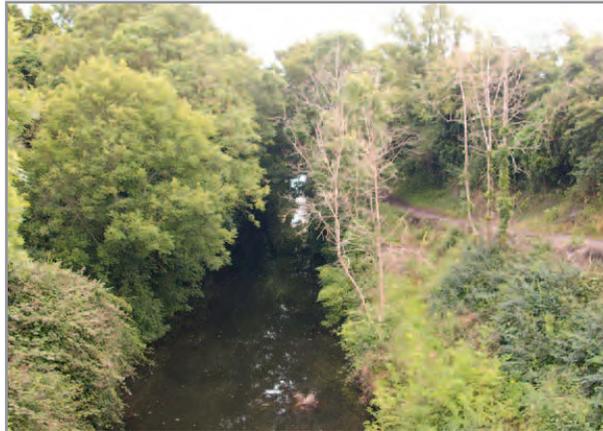


Plate 4: Royal Canal from Kirkpatrick Bridge

From the date they are formally proposed, NHA's are protected under the Wildlife (Amendment) Act, 2000. As such Fingal County Council 'should be aware of a its ecological importance and may be taken into consideration when drawing up County Development Plans' (NPWS; 2008)⁴. Unlike a fully designated site, there is no list of activities which require ministerial consent. According to the National Parks and Wildlife Service (2008) there are no plans to designate any of the proposed Natural Heritage Areas in the immediate future.

2.1.2 The Water Framework Directive (WFD)

The Royal Canal is a closed water system deriving its water supply from Lough Owel Co. Mullingar. As such it is within the remit of The Water Framework

Directive (WFD) (Council Directive 2000/60/EC). The integrated monitoring and management system envisaged by the WFD provides a vehicle for the inclusion of heritage considerations, such as otter conservation, to all water management.

2.2 Planning Context

The National Spatial Strategy 2002-2020

This National Spatial Strategy for Ireland (NSS) is a planning framework designed to set out a vision for the balanced spatial development of Ireland to 2020. The NSS recognises that the environment is a prime ingredient of the potential of the country as a whole. The NSS categorises the Greater Dublin Area as a gateway, where the prime consideration from an environmental point of view is to maintain the distinction between the cities, the towns and the countryside, to prevent the further erosion of the respective advantages of both rural and urban areas.

Of particular importance is a need to;

- create a green setting for cities and towns which will provide people with opportunities for outdoor recreation within easy reach
- conserve and, where appropriate and possible, enhance biodiversity
- protect buildings, structures and other physical elements of the cultural heritage. (pg 115)



2.0 Natural Heritage: Legislative and Policy Context

The National Spatial Strategy identifies “... many parts of the of the canal network, like the Royal and Grand Canals, as being undeveloped tourism areas, where significant potential for tourism based development exists but has not yet been developed.”

Underdeveloped inland waterways offer a different type of resource base. The NSS states that specific spatial responses are needed to maximise the potential contribution of these valuable resources to balanced regional development, while protecting the assets that make these areas attractive for visitors. (pg 99)

2.2.1 Regional Planning Guidelines for the Dublin and Mid-East Regions

The Regional Planning Guidelines for the Dublin and Mid East Regions were published in 2004. The spatial policy for the region reflects the policy requirements of the NSS, and in particular the need to protect the amenity of the Royal Canal. In relation to recreation and open space, the guidance to the Local Authorities is to “extend and enhance the existing open space network, secure landscape and biodiversity and improve access to the coast, river valleys and canals.”

2.2.2 Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011 Land Use Zoning

The importance of The Royal Canal is upheld in the provisions of the Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011. The Development Plan places a High Amenity (HA) Zoning; ‘to protect and improve high amenity areas’, on the Canal from Longford Bridge (Ashtown) to the M50 Interchange. This Zoning Objective seeks to protect these highly sensitive and scenic landscapes from any inappropriate development. Only agricultural uses and low impact amenity uses will be considered where it is shown that the special qualities of these areas will not be eroded by any proposed development. In recognition of the amenity potential of these areas, opportunities to increase public access will be sought. The balance of the canal corridor in Fingal County, from the M50 interchange to the County boundary at Leixlip, is zoned as Open Space (OS); ‘to preserve and provide for open space and recreational amenities’, with a Specific Objective as a Designated Nature Conservation Area.

Development Policies and Local Objectives

The pNHA designation of the Royal Canal is acknowledged in Map C of the Landscape & Natural Heritage Map. Chapter VIII of the County Development Plan aims to improve the amenity and



2.0 Natural Heritage: Legislative and Policy Context

recreational value of the Royal Canal without causing significant disturbance to the Canal's natural heritage. A summary of Development Plan Policy and Objectives specifically relating to the Royal Canal can be found in Appendix 1.

Protected Structures

The effect of Protected Structure status is to seek to retain the special character and features that make these structures significant. The Fingal County Development Plan 2005 – 2011 has identified 13 Protected Structure, including stone bridges, former Mill and former School House within The Royal Canal Corridor (refer to Appendix 2)



Plate 5: Pakenham Bridge, Barberstown



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

Unique characteristics evident within the Royal Canal Corridor comprise a valuable amenity. The strengths of the canal will continue to play a key role in the future enhancement of the Royal Canal as a resource of value. However some limitations or weaknesses currently constrain the potential of the canal and have, in some instances, led to sections of the canal being considered unsafe, unsightly and neglected.

3.1 Strengths

Resources

- High ecological value
- Canal corridor in public ownership under Waterways Ireland
- Good water quality
- Strong historic and cultural heritage

Community

- Royal Canal has recreational uses: walking, jogging, fishing and boating.
- Strong Community Group interest in safeguarding the watercourse (Royal Canal Amenity Group).

Infrastructure

- Reliable public transport to the Canal is provided via the adjacent Longford / Maynooth Railway line with rail stations at Ashtown, Phoenix Park Racecourse, Castleknock, Coolmine, Clonsilla and Leixlip (Confey)

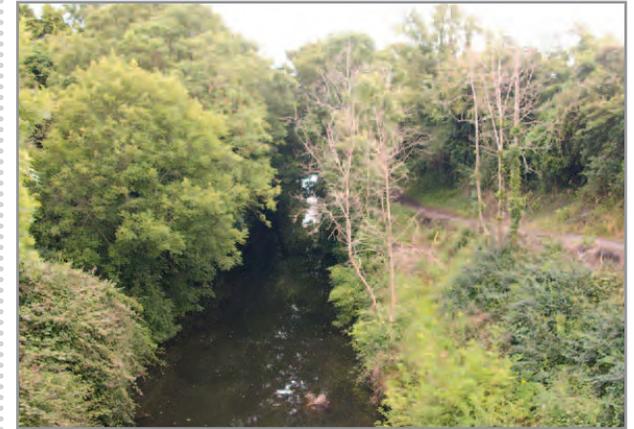


Plate 6: Royal Canal, from Collins Bridge



Plate 7: Adjacent Longford / Maynooth Railway



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

- Dublin Bus No. 38, 238, 239 and 39 provide access to the Canal at Castleknock / Clonsilla
- Boat mooring facility and commercial accommodation / restaurant at the 12th Lock, Castleknock

Policy

- Statutory designation as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (pNHA)
- Fingal County Development Plan 2005 – 2011, Land Use Zoning of the Canal Corridor from Longford Bridge (Ashtown) to the M50 Interchange is zoned as High Amenity (HA). From the M50 Interchange to Leixlip, the Canal Corridor is zoned as Open Space (OS) with a Specific Objective as a Designated Nature Conservation Area.
- European, National and Local policy in support of the promotion of The Royal Canal as a recreational amenity.

3.2 Weaknesses

Resources

- Lack of ongoing environmental study and ongoing management plan
- Lack of specific funding
- Lack of recreational facilities

Community

- Limited local public involvement in maintenance of the canal.
- Limited use of the Canal Corridor by the public.
- Weak public image locally caused by anti-social behaviour.

Infrastructure

- Lack of nearby parking facilities, no facilities for those with impaired mobility.
- Pedestrian access to some sections of canal bank is dangerous due to ground levels, vegetation growth and road layouts. Lack of pedestrian route options adjoining the Canal corridor to connect with adjoining neighbourhoods.
- Deficiency in facilities for overnight mooring, restaurants and convenience shopping.



Plate 8: Diswellstown Road Overbridge



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

Policy

- Lack of co-ordinated strategy for maintenance of The Royal Canal between Waterways Ireland and all Local Authorities.
- Lack of comprehensive strategy for the future development of the Royal Canal within Fingal Development Plan.
- Adequacy of Natural Heritage protection within the current Development Plan questionable.



Plate 9: Clonsilla SW Main

3.3 Opportunities

Enhancement of the canal corridor must be underpinned by proactive policy mechanisms to bring forward new activities together with high quality landscape proposals to animate the canal and allow the linear park to realize its full potential.

Resources

- A number of sites along the canal bank have potential for recreation, leisure, tourism or socio-economic development. Notably sites at Barberstown and Clonsilla offer specific opportunities for overnight mooring and restaurant facilities.

Economic Competiveness

- Spin off tourism products (such as restaurants) to cater for increased numbers of boating / cruising holidays.

Community

- Increased local community involvement.

Infrastructure

- Complete restoration of the canal, linking River Shannon to River Liffey, will create a circular link via the Grand Canal.
- Proposed closure of Keenan Bridge, Porterstown

Policy

- Integrated policy for the maintenance and development of The Royal Canal.



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

3.4 Threats

Infrastructure

- Navan-Dublin Railway
- M50 realignment
- Re-opening of Navan - Dublin Railway with new viaduct traversing the Canal
- Proposed Metro West viaduct at Porterstown

Policy

- Continued promotion of rail services may bring increased noise pollution to the Canal Corridor.
- Increase in the numbers of visitors may negatively impact upon the flora, fauna and character of the Canal.



Plate 10: Keenan bridge, Porterstown



Plate 11: Stone abutments of Old Navan-Dublin Railway

3.5 Strategy Objectives

The Strategy is founded on the following core objectives; -

- Objective 1; Promote the Royal canal as a site for recreation, education and enjoyment of the environment
- Objective 2: Support Sustainable Economic development that is compatible with the character of the Royal Canal
- Objective 3: Improve Security and Safety along the Royal Canal Corridor
- Objective 4: Promote the Royal Canal as an Recreational Resource



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

Objective 5: Establish a programme to implement and deliver the Royal Canal Strategy

Objective 1: Promote the Royal Canal as a site for recreation, education and enjoyment of the environment

Potential users include local residents, Irish and International tourists who may use the canal for walking, jogging, angling or cruising. All users have a distinct set of needs.

Actions Required

Walkers / Joggers

- 1.1** Raise awareness and improve the public profile of the Royal Canal through the publication of a brochure highlighting circular walking routes around Dublin 15 that encompass the Royal Canal.
- 1.2** Upgrade and resurface all towpaths to a high standard.
- 1.3** Create walking route options from the Royal Canal linking with residential areas and public open space, through the development of pedestrian bridges and provision of public rights of way.

Anglers

- 1.4** Improve car-parking facilities adjacent to Royal Canal entry points.

- 1.5** To work in co-ordination with Waterways Ireland and the Central Fisheries Board to restock and maintain fish levels in the Royal Canal.

Cruising

- 1.6** Improve facilities for boat users by encouraging development of boat mooring facility, shops and restaurants at specific locations in the vicinity of the Royal Canal.

Tourism

- 1.7** Promote the Royal Canal as a tourism destination in conjunction with Waterways Ireland.
- 1.8** Erect branded interpretative boards at entry points and viewing platforms along the Royal Canal to educate canal users.
- 1.9** Ongoing maintenance works and Stone Cleaning of Bridges

Objective 2: Support Sustainable Economic development that is compatible with the character of the Royal Canal

Sensitively designed development has the potential to enhance the canal corridor by creating recreational and tourism facilities, financial resources, bringing additional lands into public



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

access and providing an opportunity for the canal banks to develop in a sustainable way. The following sites have been identified as being suitable to develop for recreational based activity: -

Barnhill

- Land at Barberstown: between the Longford / Maynooth – Dublin railway and the Royal Canal.
- Clonsilla Village and Railway Station
- Linear piece of land from Clonsilla to Porterstown (zoned Public Open Space).
- Kellystown (Keenan Bridge)



Plate 12: Lands at Barberstown

Actions Required

- 2.1** Promote, encourage and facilitate; -
Overnight boat mooring facility at Clonsilla and Barnhill supported by canal focused development.
Recreational, amenity or community development at Clonsilla, Barnhill, Barberstown, Porterstown and Kellystown.



*Plate 13: Overnight Boat Mooring,
Royal Canal Amenity Group*



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor



Plate 14: Development at Ashtown

Objective 3: Improve Security and Safety along the Royal Canal

CorridorIt is essential that both the actual and perceived sense of safety within the Canal Corridor is improved. A primary mechanism to improve security is to increase both active and passive surveillance through design. The appointment of an official Royal Canal Warden to visibly patrol the corridor will not only add to the security of canal users but will also help legitimising the Canal as a recreational space for Dublin 15 and the County of Fingal. While it is recognised that public lighting can be effective in discouraging anti-social behaviour, regard must be given to the negative impact lighting may have upon flora and fauna. As such, lighting must be confined to a minimum at strategic locations.

Actions Required

- 3.1** Appoint a full time Warden to patrol the Royal Canal Corridor.
- 3.2** Coppice vegetation to improve views into the Royal Canal from all bridges
- 3.3** Provide lighting at Royal Canal entry points, at urbanised sections and at boat mooring facilities.
- 3.4** Encourage future development within the vicinity of the Royal Canal to create passive surveillance through window design.

Objective 4: Promote the Royal Canal as an Recreational Resource

The creation of successful recreational space necessitates the inclusion of a broad range of bodies into the development process. The main target groups include the following; -

- The Royal Canal Amenity Group
- Local residents associations and community groups
- Main community development organisations
- Commercial and trader groups
- Sporting, recreational bodies
- Interest groups, specialist organisations
- Public and semi-public bodies (including Waterways Ireland, FAS, The Heritage Council, National Parks and Wildlife Service of DoEHLG)



3.0 Assessment of Royal Canal Corridor

Actions Required

- 4.1** Fingal County Council to publicise and notify the public as to its intention to bring forward A Planning and Development Strategy for the section of the Royal Canal within the boundaries of Fingal County Council./ Draft Variation of the County Development Plan and invite submissions from the public and interest groups.
- 4.2** The Royal Canal Planning and Development Strategy to be noted as planning policy by the Castleknock / Mulhuddart Area Committee and the Council.
- 4.4** Fingal County Council to work in partnership with Waterways Ireland for the publication of pamphlets and funding initiatives to further the promotion of the Royal Canal as a recreational facility.

Objective 5: Establish a programme to implement and deliver the strategy

Statutory responsibility for the management and development of the Royal Canal rests with Waterways Ireland who administrator the watercourse, towpaths and associated navigational infrastructure. Fingal County Council in partnership with Waterways Ireland will support works to improve the amenity of the Royal Canal for the

benefit of the County.

The Royal Canal Strategy Works Programme includes the upgrading of the towpath surface, coppice vegetation, access points, lighting, information panels, overnight mooring facility at Ashtown, Clonsilla / Barnhill. Improvement works, are to initially focus on the section of the Canal from Ashtown (Longford Bridge) to the 11th lock.

Actions Required

- 5.1** Variation to the Fingal County Development Plan 2005 –2011
- (a)** To re-zone the entire length of the Royal Canal within the Fingal County boundary as WaterwaysProtection (WP): To protect and improve canal,coastal and river amenities. The purpose of this zoning is to protect the amenity of these areas including views and prospects into / out from these areas while recognising their status as both a heritage resource and a recreational amenity.
- (b)** Insert Local Objectives on the Royal Canal
- 5.2** New Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme to include Royal Canal
- 5.3** A Steering group of representatives from Fingal County Council and Waterways Ireland to be established, as the Royal Canal co-ordination management forum.



4.0 The Strategy

The Royal Canal – Overall Objectives

The Canal is a unique and valuable amenity for the County of Fingal. In order to protect the integrity of the Canal Corridor there is a need to identify a Royal Canal Zone of Influence as a specific objective of the Fingal Development Plan. By extending 200 metres out from the watercourse the zone of influence will ensure, where possible, undeveloped land is retained for amenity purposes and any future development / redevelopment adjacent to The Royal Canal recognises and responds appropriately to its highly sensitive location.

It is necessary to resurface the entire towpath on the southern bank from Longford Bride (Ashtown) to Pakenham Bridge (Clonsilla) and the towpath on the northern Canal bank from Pakenham Bridge to Leixlip to create a safe and durable walking surface.



Plate 15: Ecoflex Towpath

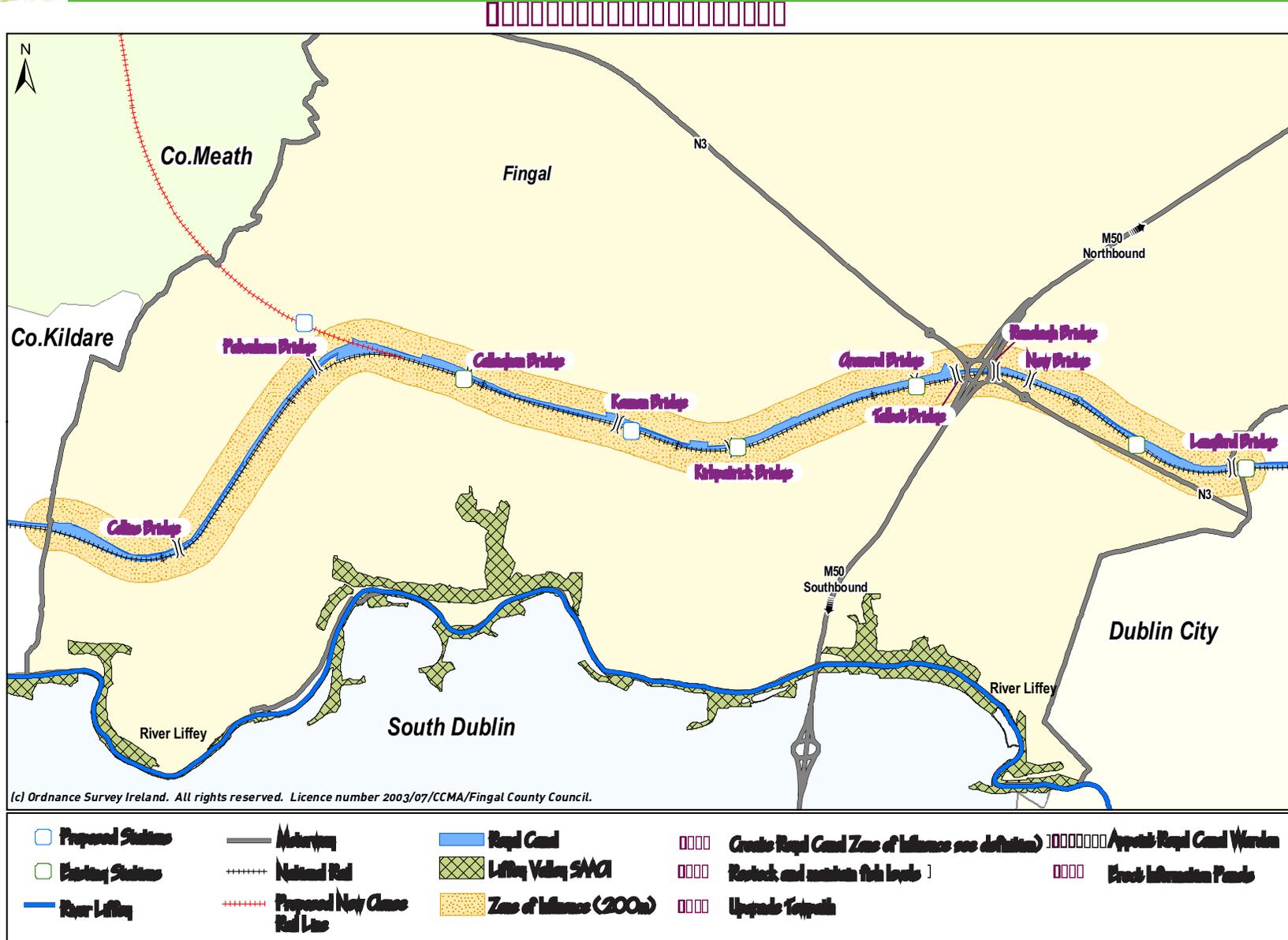
Other overall measures necessary include the restocking of fish levels, appointment of a Royal Canal Warden and erection of branded information panels at canal entry points and viewing platforms.



Plate 16: Local Fisherman



THE ROYAL CANAL Planning & Development Strategy for Fingal





4.0 The Strategy

The Royal Canal: (Fingal)	
Landscape Character Area	Varies
Quality of Character	Varies
Objectives	<p>Create Royal Canal Zone of Influence: were possible the openness of undeveloped lands is to be retained for amenity purposes, any new development / redevelopment within or adjacent to the zone is to be of high quality design, sympathetic with the amenity context of Canal lands.</p> <p>Restock and maintain fish levels within the Canal</p> <p>Upgrade towpath</p> <p>Appoint Official Royal Canal Warden</p> <p>Erect branded information panels at Canal entry points and viewing platforms</p>

Section A – Ashtown (Longford Bridge to 11th Lock)

Description

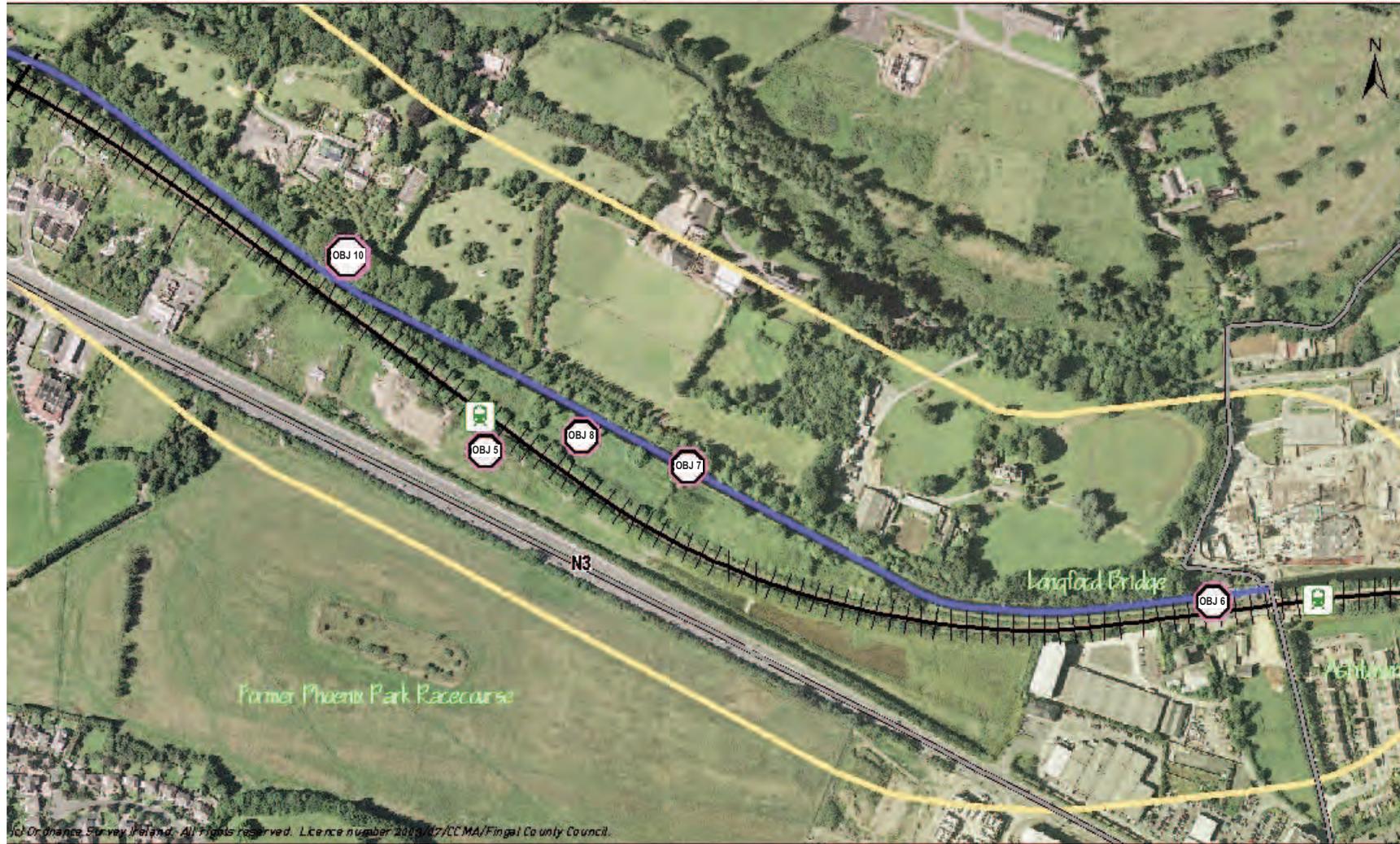
As the canal passes from Dublin City into Fingal, it enters an area of natural beauty, visually defined to the north by a linear strip of mature woodland and to the south by the Dublin to Longford / Maynooth railway line and the new Phoenix Park Racecourse rail station. Despite the close proximity of this section to both the N3 and the M50 roadways, noise levels are not overtly intrusive and there is minimal visual disturbance. The relatively flat nature of the towpath running along the south bank allows access for pedestrian and cyclists.



Plate 17: Royal Canal, Phoenix Park



Section A : Ashtown (Langford Bridge to 11th Lock)



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Legend	Royal Canal	OBJ 6 - Improve Access from Langford Bridge	OBJ 8 - Create Internal Plaza Area	OBJ 10 - Retain linear wooded feature
Zone of Influence (200m)	OBJ 7 - Create Park Meeting Facility	OBJ 9 - Pedestrian Access from Rail Station		



4.0 The Strategy



Plate 18: The 11th Lock, Royal Canal

Section A : Ashtown	
Landscape Character Area	Rural in Urban
Quality of Character	Strong
Objectives	<p>Improved access for pedestrians, cyclists and maintenance vehicles from Longford Bridge to the Canal towpath.</p> <p>Create boat mooring facility</p> <p>Create informal picnic area</p> <p>Provide pedestrian access from Phoenix Park Racecourse Station</p> <p>Encourage the retention of linear woodland feature on the north bank of the Canal</p>



4.0 The Strategy

Section B – Transport Interchange (11th Lock to Talbot Bridge)

Description

The Canal negotiates this intersection via an aqueduct passing directly under the M50 roundabout. At present the visual quality of this section is extremely poor and is dominated by the presence of the M50 Interchange and associated road bridges. As part of an M50 upgrade, the National Roads Authority has commenced works on this section of the M50 in 2008. Major works and numerous road realignments are proposed for this major junction, representing both a challenge and an opportunity for the amenity of the canal.



Plate 19: N3 Underpass

Section B: Transport Interchange (11th Lock to Talbot Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Urban Character Area
Quality of Character	Weak
Objectives	<p>Provide for planting where appropriate to protect the amenity of the Canal</p> <p>Provide for planting where appropriate to protect the amenity of the Canal</p> <p>Provide for planting where appropriate to protect the amenity of the</p> <p>Maintenance work required on the underpass, including the removal of graffiti.</p>



Section B : Transport Interchange (11th lock to Talbot Bridge)

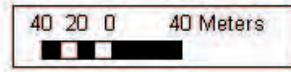


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Legend
 Royal Canal
 Zone of Influence (200m)

OBJ 11 - Provide for planting
 OBJ 12 - Provide for planting

OBJ 13 - Provide for planting
 OBJ 14 - Maintenance and removal of graffiti





4.0 The Strategy

Section C – Castleknock (Talbot Bridge to Granard Bridge)

Description

This section of Canal has been urbanised to a high standard, mainly due to the development of the “12th Lock” Hotel and Restaurant and the creation of an overnight mooring facility by Castleknock Marina Ltd on the south bank of the canal. The towpath on the south bank has been resurfaced with concrete and upgraded to over two metres in width. A flat concrete towpath is also accessible on the north bank, which runs by the landscaped area of Public Open Space and the (Castleknock Mills) residential apartments which visually dominate the north bank of the Canal.



Plate 20: Granard Bridge

Section C: Transport Interchange (11th Lock to Talbot Bridge)

Landscape Character Area	Urban Character Area
Quality of Character	Strong
Objectives	Provide public lighting from Granard Bridge to Talbot Bridge Create informal picnic area



Plate 21: Residential development at 12th Lock



Section C : Castleknock (Talbot Bridge to Gerard Bridge)

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4.0 The Strategy

Section D – Laurel Lodge (Granard Bridge to Kirkpatrick Bridge)

Description

From Granard Bridge the canal begins to enter an area known as 'the Deep Sinking'; a narrow 3.6km corridor defined by heavy vegetation on steep banks. The irregular surface and high level of the towpath along the south bank makes this section dangerous for unaccompanied walkers or children. The canal itself is obscured from the towpath for the majority of this section.

Heavy vegetation has reclaimed the majority of north canal bank creating a semi-woodland character.

Although there is no longer an official towpath on the northern bank, it is accessible at Kirkpatrick Bridge and via the Brompton Estate and is used as an informal play area by local teenagers who have created a matrix of rough tracks throughout the bank. Anti social behaviour along this section of the canal has led to an accumulation of litter, old trolleys and empty drinks cans.

At the rear of the Roselawn Road, Castleknock, a number of properties have encroached upon the north canal bank. This unauthorised development

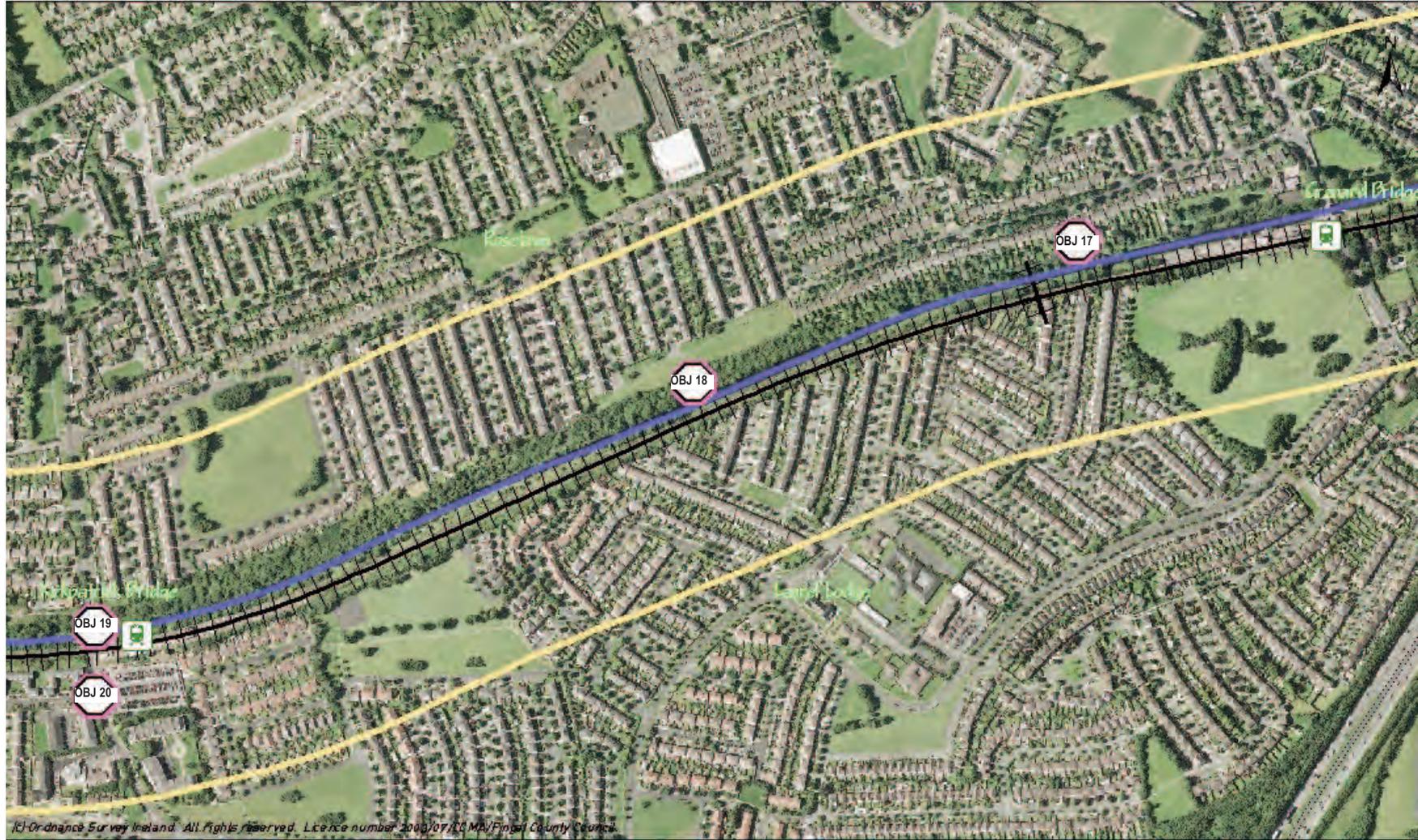
has a significant negative impact on the character and unspoilt nature of this section of the canal.



Plate 22: Royal Canal Roselawn



Section D : Laurel Lodge/ Roselawn (Granard Bridge to Kirkpatrick Bridge)



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Legend

-  Royal Canal
-  Zone of Influence (200m)

- OBJ 17 - Restore encroachment onto public lands
- OBJ 18 - Create pedestrian route options

- OBJ 19 - Create viewing to Canal from Bridge
- OBJ 20 - Improve access to towpath





4.0 The Strategy

Section D: Laurel Lodge (Granard Bridge to Kirkpatrick Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Deep Sinking: Canal bankc begin to rise
Quality of Character	Medium to Weak
Objectives	<p>Restore encroachment on Royal Canal Bank to public ownership</p> <p>Create pedestrian route options (Bridge to Residential areas)</p> <p>Create viewing window into the canal from Kirkpatrick Bridge by clearing vegetation</p> <p>Improve pedestrian access from Kirkpatrick Bridge to the towpath</p>

Section E – Coolmine / Porterstown (Kirkpatrick Bridge to Keenan Bridge)

Description

This section of the canal shares in the character afforded by the Deep Sinking. Visibility is restricted on this stretch of the canal by the railway line, which sits at a higher level south of the towpath, and the heavy vegetation traversing the steep sides of this

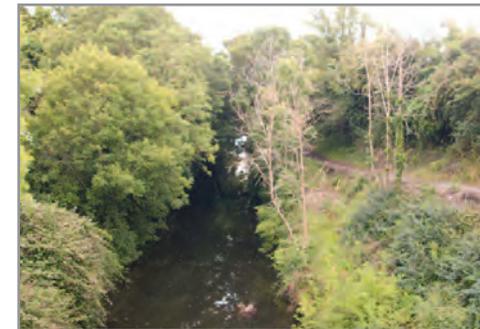


Plate 23: Royal Canal from Kirkpatrick Bridge



Plate 24: Diswellstown



4.0 The Strategy

landform. The towpath begins to level as the canal approaches Keenan Bridge. At Keenan Bridge the official towpath crosses to the northern bank of the Canal, requiring walkers to negotiate a hazardous roadway, with poor visibility and no footpaths.

Section E: Coolmine / Porterstown: (Kirkpatrick Bridge to Keenan Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Deep Sinking: Canal at extremely low level, while banks and towpath rise steeply
Quality of Character	Medium
Objectives	Proposed transportation node to connect to the Royal Canal Utilise proposed closure of Keenan Bridge for recreational / educational node

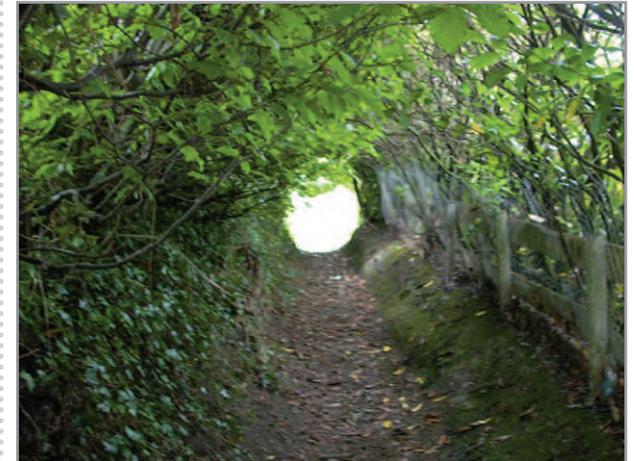


Plate 25: Pedestrian access from Clonsilla Rd

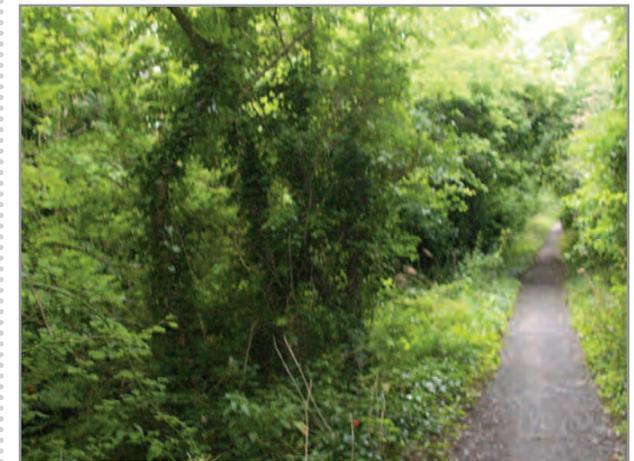
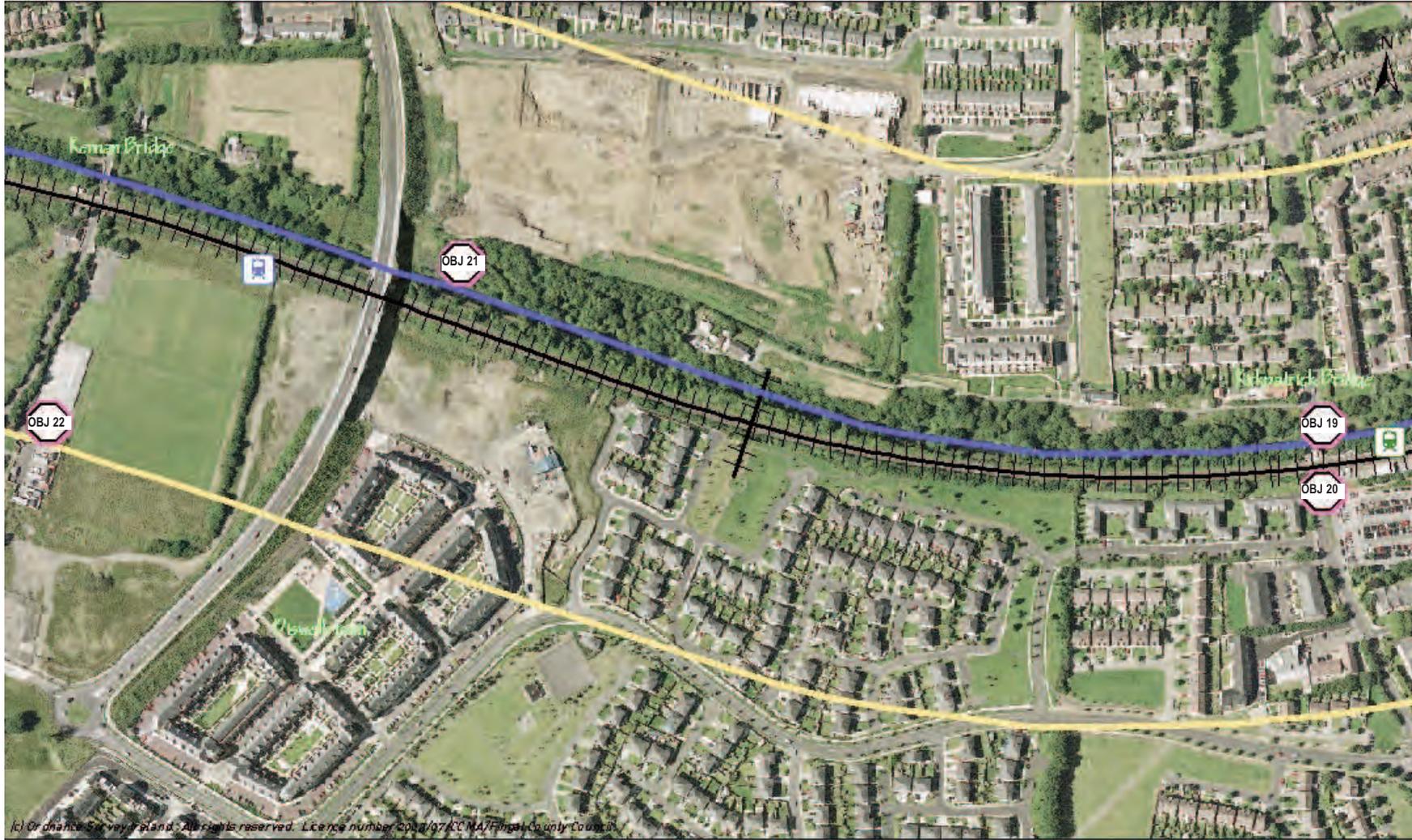


Plate 26: Towpath at Clonsilla



Section E : Coolmine (Kirkpatrick Bridge to Keenan Bridge)



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Legend

- Royal Canal**
- Zone of Influence (200m)**
- OBJ 19 - Create waiting area Canal from bridge**
- OBJ 20 - Improve access to transport**
- OBJ 21 - Proposed transport to connect with RC**
- OBJ 22 - Utilise Keenan bridge for recreational/ educational facility**





4.0 The Strategy

Section F – Clonsilla (Keenan Bridge to Callahan Bridge)

Description

The final section of the Deep Sinking stretches from Keenan Bridge to Callahan Bridge. The steep bank and dense vegetation limits visibility out from the towpath to the north, while to the south visibility is sharply defined by the railway line. A canopy of vegetation frames the relatively flat towpath along this section of the canal, adding to feelings of enclosure and separation from the suburban areas of Clonsilla.



Plate 27: Clonsilla Signal House

Section F: Clonsilla (Keenan Bridge to Callahan Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Deep Sinking: Canal bank begin to level out
Quality of Character	Strong
Objectives	<p>Promote sensitively designed development that opens onto and provides active frontage to the towpath.</p> <p>Provide for a right of way from Clonsilla Village to the Royal Canal bank to be extended, via a pedestrian bridge, across the canal to Kellystown.</p> <p>Promote the development of a restaurant / accommodation facility</p> <p>Improve pedestrian access from Callaghan Bridge to the towpath</p>



Section F : Clonsilla (Keenan Bridge to Callaghan Bridge)



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Legend

- Royal Canal
- Zone of Influence (200m)

- OBJ 22 - Utilise Keenan bridge for recreational/ educational facility
- OBJ 25 - Promote sensitive development opening to Royal Canal
- OBJ 24 - Pedestrian link from Clonsilla Village to Killystown

- OBJ 23 - Promote Restaurant/ accommodation development
- OBJ 26 - Improve access from Bridge to Canal Bank

70 35 0 70 Meters





4.0 The Strategy

Section G – Barnhill (Callaghan Bridge to Pakenham Bridge)

Description

As the canal moves from Callahan Bridge it enters an area of distinct rural character, with agricultural lands bordered by mature hedgerows to the north of the canal. The disused abutments of old Navan Rail-Line are a picturesque feature of this section of the canal, however as the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) plan to re-open the Navan Railway in the coming years, a new rail crossing will be constructed at this site.

As the canal moves past the old Navan Railway abutments and turns to the south-west, the railway line takes a tighter angle to create a large open field between the cordons. This field, currently vacant, adds to the unspoilt character of the area.



Plate 28: Pakenham Bridge

Section G: Barnhill (Callaghan Bridge to Pakenham Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Rural Buffer Area
Quality of Character	Strong
Objectives	<p>Upgrade existing pedestrian access</p> <p>Upgrade visual appearance of Clonsilla SW Main</p> <p>Provide landbridge for pedestrian / cyclist movement across the Canal from Barnhill and Hansfield SDZ to Beechpark public amenity lands</p> <p>Encourage the creation of overnight Boat Mooring Facility at Barnhill</p>



Plate 29: Royal Canal from Old Railway Abutment, Clonsilla



4.0 The Strategy

Section H – Leixlip (Pakenham Bridge to County Boundary at Leixlip)

Description

As the canal moves from Callahan Bridge it enters an area of distinct rural character, with agricultural lands bordered by mature hedgerows to the north of the canal. The disused abutments of old Navan Rail-Line are a picturesque feature of this section of the canal, however as the Railway Procurement Agency (RPA) plan to re-open the Navan Railway in the coming years, a new rail crossing will be constructed at this site.

As the canal moves past the old Navan Railway abutments and turns to the south-west, the railway line takes a tighter angle to create a large open field in-between the cordons. This field, currently vacant, adds to the unspoilt character of the area.

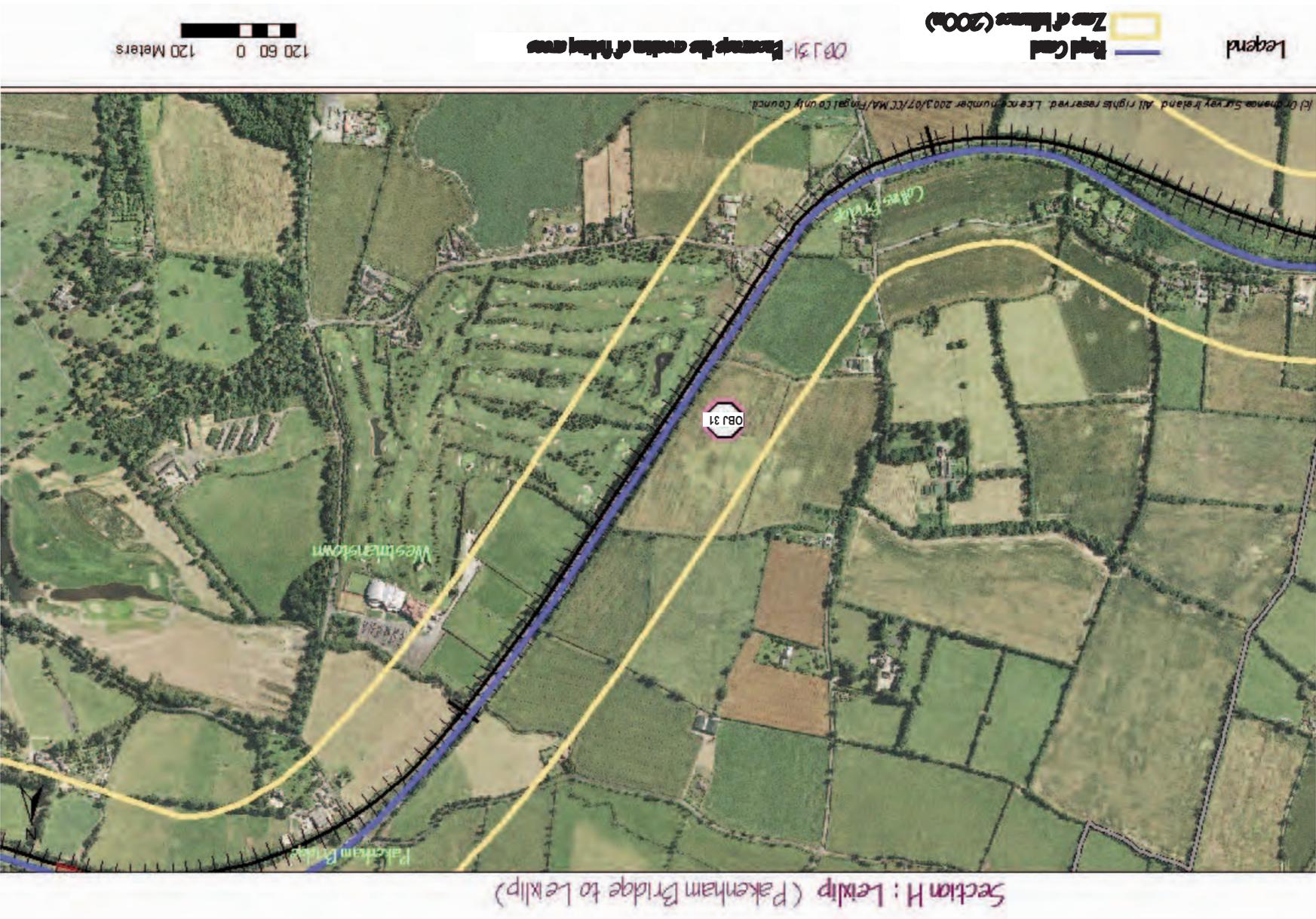


Plate 30: RCGA

Section G: Barnhill (Callaghan Bridge to Pakenham Bridge)	
Landscape Character Area	Rural
Quality of Character	Strong
Objectives	Encourage the creation of angling points



Plate 31: Royal Canal from Pakenham Bridge



THE ROYAL CANAL Planning & Development Strategy for Fingal





5.0 Capital Expenditure – Estimated Works

The estimated expenditure will include the improvement of access to the Canal (towpath re-surfacing, two pedestrian bridges, the enhancement of user security lighting, foot patrols and active surveillance) and the provision of user facilities (seating, picnic areas, boat moorings, fishing areas, service facilities). The estimated initial capital cost is €1.5m & ongoing annual cost estimated as €160,000. These figures do not include the cost of a project leader.

Estimated Works & Financial Expenditure,	Quantity,	Cost per unit,	Initial Year 1 Cost (approximate),	Ongoing Cost per annum (approx 10%),
Resurfacing existing towpaths,				
Section A (Ashtown) Longford Bridge to 11th Lock,	1389m,	€100 per metre,	€138900,	€13890,
Section B (Transport Interchange) 11th Lock to Talbot Bridge,	1046m,	€20 per metre,	€20920,	€2092,
Section C (Castleknock) Talbot Bridge to Granard Bridge,	274m,	€100 per metre,	€27400,	€2740,
Section D (Laurel Lodge) Granard Bridge to Kirkpatrick Bridge,	1536m,	€40 per metre,	€61440,	€6144,
Section E (Coolmine / Porterstown) Kirkpatrick Bridge to Kennan Bridge,	912m,	€40 per metre,	€36480,	€3648,
Section F (Clonsilla) Kennan Bridge to Callaghan Bridge,	1218m,	€40 per metre,	€48720,	€4872,
Section G (Barnhill / Barberstown) Callaghan Bridge to Pakenham Bridge,	1245m,	€100 per metre,	€124500,	€12450,
Section H (Leixlip) Pakenham Bridge to Leixlip (Confey) ,	2952m,	€60 per metre,	€177120,	€17712,
Total Ashtown to Leixlip,	10572m,		€635,480.00	€63548,
Pedestrian Bridges				
Provision of pedestrian bridge over the Royal Canal from Clonsilla to Kellystown	1 No.	€250,000 per bridge	€250,000.00	€750.00
Provision of pedestrian bridges from Hansfield/Barnhill to Barberstown/Beech Park	1 No.	€250,000 per bridge	€250,000.00	€750.00
Total			€500,000.00	€1,500.00



Estimated Works & Financial Expenditure,	Quantity,	Cost per unit,	Initial Year 1 Cost (approximate),	Ongoing Cost per annum (approx 10%),
Seating, Picnic Tables, Bins				
Provision of 2 No. picnic benches at Ashtown		€500 per item	€1,000.00	
Provision of 2 No. Picnic Area at Castleknock		€500 per item	€1,000.00	
Provision of Bin at Ashtown		€50.00	€50.00	
Provision of Bin at Castleknock		€50.00	€50.00	
Total			€2,100.00	€200.00
Ongoing Operating Cost per annum	2 hrs per week	€15 per hour	€1,560.00	€1,560.00
Total			€4,200.00	€1,760.00
Public Lighting				
6 No. lights from Granard Bridge to Talbot Bridge, Castleknock	6 No.	€2000 per light + 30 metres Duction	€12,000.00	
Total			€12,000.00	€150.00
Ongoing Cost of Lighting				€650.00
Coppice Vegetation				
Initial clearance, cutting back, removal and general tidying up on entire length of the Royal Canal		6 people at €30,000 per annum plus machinery and equipment	€200,000.00	
Ongoing Cost per annum				€50,000.00
Park Warden				
Appoint a park warden to the Canal Corridor			€30,000.00	€30,000.00
Boat Mooring Facility				
Boat Mooring/Timber Jetty (18m ²)	1 x 3	30,000	€90,000.00	€9,000.00
Gross Total			€1,471,680 *	€156,608 *



6.0 Sources of Funding

Available Resources include; -

- Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme
- Waterways Ireland
- National Lottery Grants
- National Parks and Wildlife Service of the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and Local Government
- Bord Failte
- FAS
- Blanchardstown Area Partnership
- Blanchardstown Chamber of Commerce
- An Taisce
- Residents Associations / Canal Interest Groups
- Other Private Donations



Plate 32: Development at Ashtown with upgrade of towpath, Dublin City Council.



7.0 Implementation

7.1 Variation to the current Development Plan

A variation to the current Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011 is required to propose: -

- (a) New Land Use Zoning Objective
- (b) New Local Objectives

(A) Development Plan New Zoning Objective

A Draft Variation to the Fingal County Development Plan 2005 – 2011 under section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), to be brought forward at the Council Meeting November 2008, the existing 'HA' & 'OS' zoning objectives to be replaced by Waterways Protection (WP) zoning of the canal corridor, as defined in map 1.

Zoning Objective "WP" Waterways Protection	
Objective: To protect and improve canal, coastal and river amenities	
Vision: The zoning objective seeks to protect the amenity of Waterways Corridors, including views and prospects into / out from these areas.	
Use Classes Related To Zoning Objective	
Permitted In Principle	Community Facility, Golf Course, Open Space, Restaurant / Cafe, Recreational Facility, Sports Clubs
Not Permitted	Abattoir, Advertisements/Advertising Structures, Aerodrome/Airfield, Agri-Business, ATM, Bed & Breakfast, Boarding Kennels, Betting Office, Car-Park-Multi-Storey, Residential Caravan Park, Cash & Carry, Wholesale Outlet, Concrete/Asphalt etc., Plant, Childcare Facility, Night-Club, Doctor/Dentist etc, Enterprise/Training Centre, Funeral Home, Health Centre, Heavy Good Vehicle Park, Holiday Homes, Hospital, Household Fuel Depot, Extractive Industry, Light Industry, General Industry, Special Industry, Logistics, Major Waste to Energy Uses, Motor Sales Outlet, Offices, Park'n'Ride, Petrol Station, Public House, Residential Care Home, Refuse Transfer Station, Refuse Landfill, Residential, Residential Institution, Retail Warehousing, Science And Technology Campus, Scrap Yard, Service Garage, Neighbourhood Shop, Major Sales Outlets, Take-Away, Tele-Services, Transport Depot, Veterinary Surgery, Warehousing



7.0 Implementation

(B) Development Plan: Additional Local Objectives

Draft Variation to the Fingal County Development Plan 2005 – 2011 under section 13 of the Planning and Development Act 2000 (as amended), to also propose the insertion of the following Local Objectives into the Fingal Development Plan: -

Additional Local Objectives	
RC1	Royal Canal Corridor Zone of Influence within which existing openness of undeveloped lands, to be retained for amenity purposes. New Development/Redevelopment, on existing uses, to be of quality design, sympathetic with the amenity context of Canal lands.
RC2	Improved access for pedestrians, cyclists and maintenance vehicles at Longford Bridge to the Canal towpath.
RC3	New Development/Redevelopment on adjacent uses, to be of quality design sympathetic with the amenity context of the Canal
RC4	Preserve the open undeveloped character of lands north of the Canal, within the Zone of Influence from Longford Bridge to New Bridge (name of Bridge) for a Canal side pathway system.
RC5	Upgrading surface finish of towpath
RC6	Provide a picnic area with hardstand, seats, and tables (stainless steel)
RC7	Provide enhanced access to towpath, new planting and the retention of trees, hedgerows and woodland groups
RC8	Provide new decorative Public lighting from Granard Bridge to Talbot Bridge
RC9	Restore encroachment on Canal Bank lands, to public ownership
RC10	Create viewing windows into the Royal Canal Corridor
RC11	Improve pedestrian access from Kirkpatrick Bridge to towpath
RC12	Improve pedestrian access at Kennan Bridge to towpath
RC13	Orientate new development to overlook and include access and frontage to the Royal Canal including the provision of restaurant, small hotel accommodation
RC14	Provide for pedestrian right of way from Clonsilla Village to the Royal Canal towpath and new landbridge across the Canal for pedestrians and cyclists Canal bridge to Kellystown
RC15	Provide for boat moorings/facilities
RC16	Upgrade visual appearance of Clonsilla Surface Water Main
RC17	Provide landbridge access for pedestrian/cyclist movement across the Canal from Barnhill and Hansfield SDZ to Beechpark public amenity lands



7.0 Implementation

7.2 New Section 48 Development Contribution Scheme

Investment into public infrastructure works and facilities for The Royal Canal Corridor will benefit the public, current and future businesses and landholders in the area. It is necessary to review the current Development Contribution Scheme made under Section 48 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000 (as amended), to include the proposed the Royal Canal in the new listing of projects to benefit from the contributions.

7.3 Monitoring and Evaluation

A Steering Group to be established, including representatives from Fingal County Council, Waterways Ireland and local interest groups, to further The Royal Canal as an amenity resource, a tourist product, promote the objectives of this Strategy and achieve the required works identified in Section 4.

Following completion of restoration works on the Canal, and in the interest of creating a national amenity, the Steering Committee is to expand and collaborate with representatives from all Local Authorities and interest groups that share responsibility for the promotion and protection of The Royal Canal Corridor.



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Appendix 1

Development Plan Policies and Local Objectives

The following table summarises policies and Local Objectives of the current Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011 that specifically relate to the Royal Canal: -

Natural Heritage	
HP13	To protect the original structures of the Royal Canal in association with Waterways Ireland and to ensure that development along its banks does not have a detrimental affect on the character of the Canal.
HP14	To protect the historic bridges, harbours, railway and roadside features (such as historic milestones, cast-iron pumps and postboxes) and street furniture of Fingal.
H024 (Objective)	To draw up a Management Plan, in conjunction with Waterways Ireland, for the maintenance and enhancement of the Royal Canal and associated structures within Fingal’s jurisdiction.
H025 (objective)	To carry out an audit of all historic rail and road bridges in Fingal and liaise with Iarnród Eireann, the National Roads Authority, and the Water Services and Transportation Departments of the Council to draw up guidelines for their repair and maintenance.
HP24	To protect, conserve and enhance the County’s natural heritage including its biodiversity, landscapes and geological heritage.
HP25	To encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County’s natural heritage.
HP26	To encourage and promote access to and understanding of the natural heritage of the County.
HP43	To ensure that proposals for development protect and enhance biodiversity, wherever possible, 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.
Inland Waterways	
HP49	To protect rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, to maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora.
HP52	To ensure that, wherever possible, local rivers, streams and watercourses provide amenity and recreational benefits for the local community.
The Royal Canal	
HP57	To protect and enhance the built and natural heritage of the Royal Canal and its setting
HP58	To encourage and promote access to and understanding of the Royal Canal.
HP59	To ensure that development is strictly controlled in the vicinity of the Royal Canal, and does not cause significant adverse impacts to the built and natural heritage or to the recreational potential of the Canal.


The Royal Canal

HP60	To seek to provide enhanced public access to the Royal Canal through the acquisition of lands for public rights-of-way for pedestrians and cyclists, parking and lay-by facilities, where appropriate.
H053 (objective)	To undertake a study of the Royal Canal corridor during the lifetime of the Plan which will provide a basis or the management of the Canal corridor for the benefit of all.

Clonsilla

Objective CLONSILLA 2	To require that new development in the village is designed to maximise the Royal Canal as a local heritage resource and public amenity
Objective CLONSILLA 5	To secure lands adjacent to the Royal Canal for public access and public open space



Appendix 2

Protected Structures

The following table summarises Protected Structures of the Fingal Development Plan 2005 – 2011 that lie within The Royal Canal corridor: -

RPS	Structure Name	Address	Description
691	Mill	Ashtown Road, Ashtown	Former Mill on the bank of Royal Canal at Ashtown
692	Mill Pond	Ashtown Road, Ashtown	Associated with former Mill at Ashtown
693	Longford bridge	Royal Canal, Ashtown Rd, Ashtown	Stone arched bridge over Royal Canal at Ashtown Railway Station
694	Ranelagh Bridge	Royal Canal, Blanchardstown	Stone arched bridge over Royal Canal, just before M50 on closed off section of road
695	Talbot Bridge	Royal Canal, Old Navan Rd, Blanchardstown	Stone arched bridge over Royal Canal, known as Old Bridge
697	Granard Bridge	Royal Canal, Castleknock Rd, Blanchardstown	Stone arched bridge over Royal Canal
598	Kirkpatrick Bridge	Royal Canal, Coolmine Rd, Diswellstown	Stone arched bridge over Royal Canal
699	Keeper's Cottage	Porterstown Rd, Clonsilla	Rail Keeper's Cottage at rail crossing
700	Former Clonsilla School	Porterstown Rd, Clonsilla	Three-storey former school building
706	Callaghan Bridge	Royal Canal, Clonsilla Rd, Clonsilla	Bridge over Royal Canal
707	Clonsilla Signal House and Overbridge	Clonsilla Rd, Clonsilla	Station demolished and replaced by modern structure. Original bridge and signal house remain
711	Packenham Bridge	Royal Canal, Barberstown Lane, Barnhill	Stone single arched bridge over the Royal Canal at Barberstown railway crossing
713	Collins Bridge	Royal Canal, Barnhill Cross Rds, St Catherine's Park	Bridge over Royal Canal



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