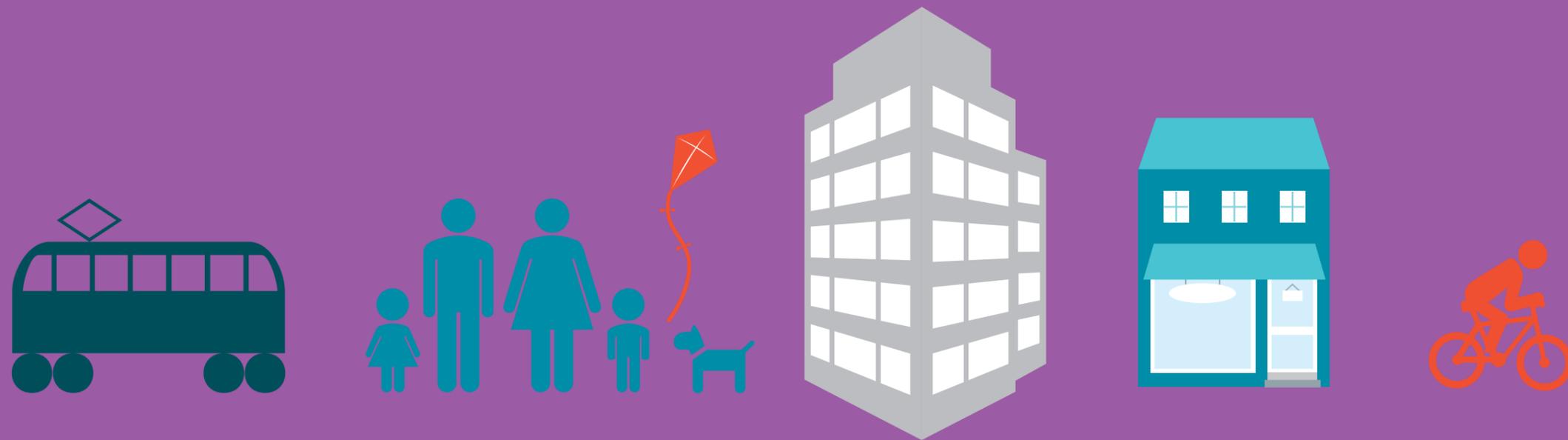


# Swords Masterplans

## Part A: Masterplans for Barrysparks & Crowscastle; Fosterstown; & Estuary West

May 2019





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# Swords Masterplans

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# Executive Summary

## Introduction

Swords is the administrative capital of Fingal and acts as a strategic focus for a range of services. It is home to some of the largest employers in the County. As such, Swords is a high functioning employment centre, where a number of existing business and industrial parks are located. The town has direct links to the national road network (M1 and M50) and is located on the Dublin/Belfast economic corridor. It is also located proximate to Dublin Port via the Port Tunnel, and to Dublin Airport via the M1, two of the most important infrastructural assets in the Country. The Masterplans will provide robust Development Frameworks for the long term sustainable development of the Masterplan lands.



## A Growing Place

Swords has undergone a high level of growth in recent years, nearly doubling in size in the last two decades (+76%). On the basis of the population targets presented in the Draft RSES, Swords is likely to reach 50,000 people by 2031 and may exceed any existing targets as new transportation infrastructure in the form of MetroLink is developed and as strategic employment and residential land banks are developed.

The *Your Swords: An Emerging City, Strategic Vision 2035* envisages Swords ultimately growing into a city of 100,000 people. This level of population growth will result in an increase in the resident worker population of approximately 20,000 people, up to a figure of 45-50,000 people. In order to achieve a neutral flow of workers (and reduce current commuting patterns) the current number of jobs located in Swords will need to triple from approximately 15,300 (2016 census).

The strategic employment land bank at Barrysparks & Crowscastle will play a key role, potentially accommodating up to c. 180,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace and 14,500 - 15,500 additional jobs over a period of 20 years, as well as providing for c. 700 residential units. The proposal for c. 18,000 - 20,000 sq.m of commercial space in the Estuary West Masterplan area will also contribute significantly to the commercial life of Swords, being able to accommodate c. 1,500 - 1,600 workers, or an increase of approximately 10% on the current number of jobs in Swords.

Fingal County Council have prepared Masterplans for the following areas in Swords:

- Barrysparks & Crowscastle
- Fosterstown
- Estuary West

The Masterplans have been prepared concurrently so that the areas were considered in the context of Swords as a whole.

Therefore, the quantum and form of development proposed for each area will complement that of the other sites and work synergistically with Swords more broadly.

The Masterplans have been prepared in response to objectives in the *Fingal Development Plan 2017 - 2023*. In order to ensure consistency across the lands, the objectives to prepare Masterplans for Barrysparks & Crowscastle have been combined to a single Masterplan.

The proposed uses and development typologies for each Masterplan area are a feature of the underlying zoning for each site, an economic assessment of quantum and need, the capacity of existing infrastructure, and the anticipated development of future infrastructure, particularly in the form of MetroLink. The underlying zoning for each site is as follows:

- Barrysparks - Metro Economic Corridor zoning
- Crowscastle - High Technology zoning
- Fosterstown - Primarily Residential Zoning combined with a smaller element of Major Town Centre Zoning to the north of the site
- Estuary West - Metro Economic Corridor zoning

The Masterplans have been prepared by a multidisciplinary team led by Avison Young, working collaboratively with Fingal County Council.

## Document Structure

The Masterplans have been prepared concurrently and the documents have been prepared with a single 'front-end' document (Part A) that sets out the context for the Masterplans and largely focuses on Swords more broadly. Parts B, C, & D present the proposals for each of the Masterplan areas. The 'Key Principles' contained in Part A apply across all of the Masterplan areas. Each Masterplan then contains Objectives for the Masterplan area, stemming from the overarching Key Principles. Part E contains the appendices.

## MetroLink

The MetroLink project is a high frequency/high capacity urban railway service that will run between Swords and the City Centre, connecting important key destinations such as Dublin Airport and the City Centre. While the precise route is yet to be confirmed with public consultation undertaken in late 2018, the development of a high frequency rail link between Swords, the airport, and the city centre will be a key driver of both population and economic growth in Swords.

The preferred route for the MetroLink includes four stations in Swords; Estuary, Seatown, Swords Central and Fosterstown, three of which serve the Masterplan lands. The current proposals would see the line constructed at surface level at the Fosterstown and Estuary stations and in an elevated position at Swords Central and Seatown.

## MetroLink Stations

Based on the current proposed alignment, Barrysparks & Crowscastle will be served by the 'Swords Central' stop located along the R132, while the Fosterstown Masterplan area would be served by the 'Fosterstown' station, also located along the R132, but on the opposite side of the road from the Masterplan area.

The 'Estuary' station is located approximately 1.5 km from the Estuary West Masterplan lands, so ensuring strong pedestrian and cyclist connectivity to the station will be a key part of encouraging usage.

## Environmental Assessments

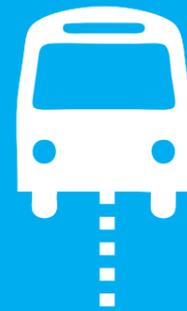
The Masterplans for Barrysparks & Crowscastle, Fosterstown, and Estuary West have been assessed both separately and cumulatively for Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and Appropriate Assessment (AA). The environmental reports are contained within Part E of this document.

## Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) and Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SuDS)

Roughan & O'Donovan (ROD) Consulting Engineers have prepared SFRA and SuDS assessments for each of the Masterplan areas, which are published alongside these Masterplans. The proposed layout of each Masterplan area

has been fully informed by these assessments. All proposed development within the Masterplan lands shall be fully informed by the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and the SuDS Strategy prepared in conjunction with the Masterplan. All developers shall comply with the SFRA Recommendations, the SuDS Protocol and the SuDS Recommendations.

### At a glance...



## Transport

3 Metro stations  
BusConnects to City



## Commerce

Up to 220,000 sq.m flexible commercial floorspace



## Housing

Up to 3,000 dwellings



## Density

Net Densities ranging up to 110 units/ hectare



## Education

2 new national schools



## Open Space

20 hectares of open space

Note: All figures are indicative.

# 1 Introduction

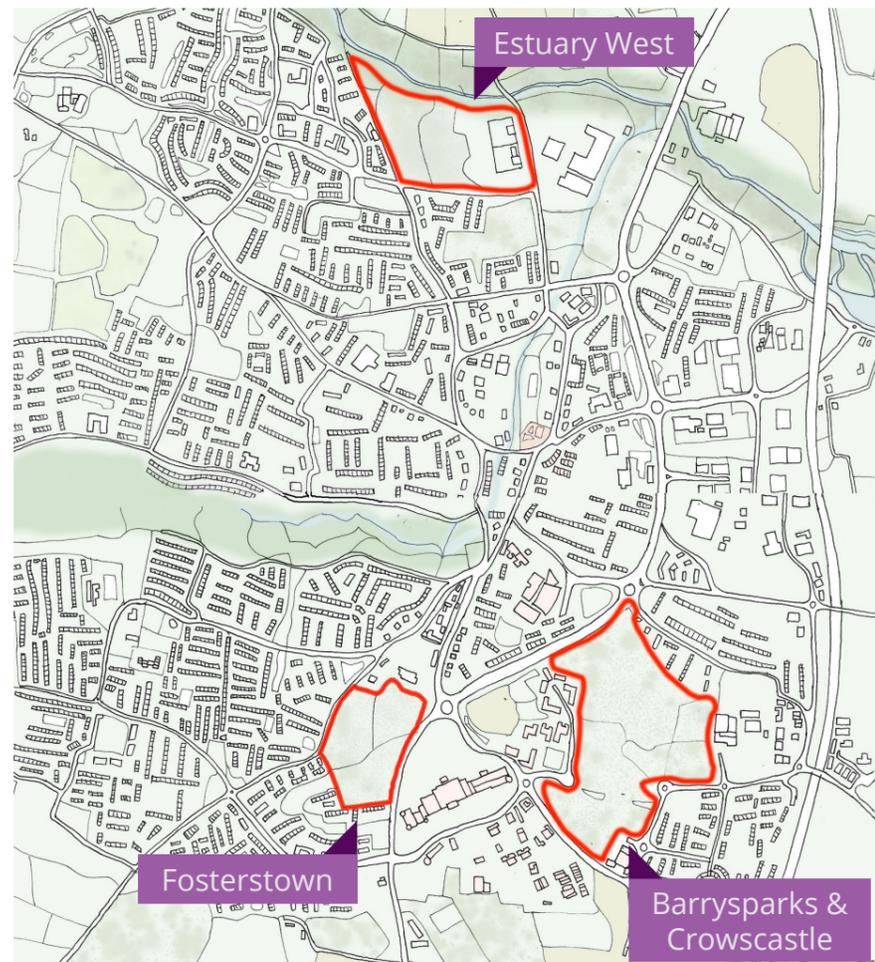
## Introduction

The purpose of the Swords Masterplans are to provide Development Frameworks for the long term sustainable development of major high quality employment and residential quarters in Swords.

## Context

Swords is the County Town of Fingal, with a population of approximately 39,000 (Census, 2016). It is located approximately 13km north of Dublin City Centre and approximately 4km north of Dublin Airport.

Swords has direct links to the national road network (M1/M50), and is located on the Dublin/Belfast economic corridor. The M1 runs north-south along the east of the town, and links with



the M50 to the south. The R132 links Dublin Airport to Swords and continues north as a secondary route along the M1. Other secondary routes include the R125 which links Ashbourne and Swords to the north-west and the R106 which links Swords and Malahide/Portmarnock to the east.

## What does a Masterplan do?

Masterplans focus on a range of planning and development matters including:

- The economic and employment strategy for an area
- The infrastructure required to support and unlock new development including roads, greenways, and public transport
- The phasing of development and the infrastructure upon which it relies
- The quantum and mix of development
- Community infrastructure including schools
- Appropriate uses and development typologies
- Architectural and urban design guidance

Guidance on the above matters can both unlock and stimulate development and introduce greater clarity and certainty into the planning process. The purpose of the Masterplans are to both inspire confidence in and guide development in the coming years, while safeguarding the amenity of adjoining residents.

## What Status does a Masterplan have?

A Masterplan is a non-statutory document which has nonetheless been framed within the context of EU, national, regional and local development planning policies.

The preparation of the three Masterplans are an objective of the Development Plan and the Planning Authority will have regard to its content in assessing development proposals for the subject lands and adjoining areas as well as in guiding Council's capital spending programme.

## The Masterplan Process

**June-July 2018**

A team of planners, urban designers, transport planners, engineers and environmental consultants were assembled to provide the necessary expertise to prepare the Masterplan.



**August-September 2018**

Pre-draft consultation was undertaken to give people an opportunity to identify local issues and to make suggestions.



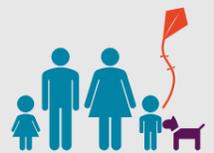
**March-April 2019**

A draft Masterplan was prepared and put on public display to give people a chance to have their say on the proposals.



**April-May 2019**

The draft Masterplan was amended following comments from the public.



**13th May 2019**

The finalised Masterplan was presented to the Elected Members of the Planning Authority for agreement.



## Strategic Location

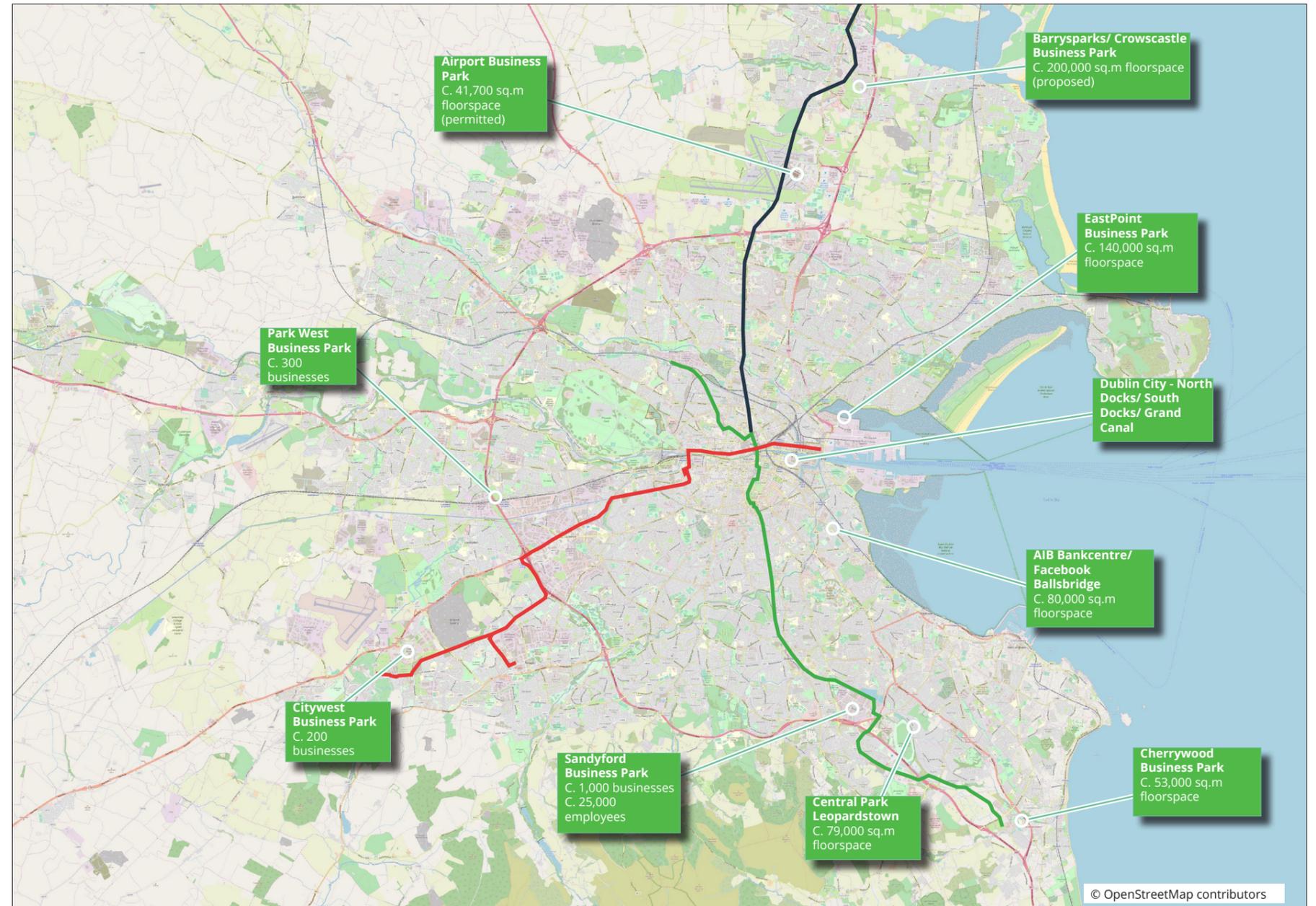
Swords is strategically located close to Dublin Airport and has excellent access to the national road network (M50 and M1). Already home to some of the largest employers in the County, Swords is a high functioning employment centre. The proposed route for MetroLink through Swords will act to enhance and strengthen Swords' strategic location.

The wider Dublin Metropolitan Area is a significant urban centre in the wider European and global context in a variety of ways. Not just commercial and inward investors, but skilled young workers from across the EU and wider afield, find the city attractive.

## Workforce

Swords had a population of 39,248 in 2016, with 19,531 resident workers and 15,338 jobs. As such, it currently has more workers locally than job opportunities available for them to fill. Indeed, Swords is the largest feeder town to Dublin, with nearly 8,000 people commuting. This constitutes a readily available resource who may prefer to work locally and reduce commuting time.

The vision for Swords is that of a settlement which ultimately accommodates 100,000 people, which would result in a workforce of approximately 50,000 people based on the current ratio. Business growth across all sectors require access to employees to fill new jobs that are created, and the expected population growth in the area will strengthen this. The improved connectivity for Swords via the MetroLink and BusConnects services, is also likely to further diversify the employment population and therefore, diversify the skills that are accessible in the area.



## Strategic Commercial Competitive Advantage

The Masterplan lands will accommodate a mix of commercial, community and residential development, which will support Swords as a key economic region, both in the County and the Greater Dublin Area. The strategic employment land bank at Barrysparcs & Crowscastle has the potential to support

c.180,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace and c.14,500 - 15,500 jobs, while the Estuary West Masterplan area has the potential to support c.18,000 - 20,000 sq.m of commercial space along with c.1,500-1,600 jobs. Combined with high quality residential development and strong transport connections in the form of MetroLink and BusConnects, the Masterplan areas will be capable of attracting top-tier employers and playing a key role in the economic life of the Region.

## 2 Strategic Advantage

### Existing Assets

- Direct access to the national motorway network via the M1
- Direct access to Dublin City/ Port via the M1 and Port Tunnel
- Direct access to Dublin Airport, which is located immediately to the south, via the M1 or the R132
- Regional shopping centre in the form of the Pavilions, accessible from Main Street and the R132
- Commercial and employment uses including MSD Biotech, Fujitsu, Ryanair, Hertz, Cityjet and the CSO
- Mature residential areas including the neighbourhoods of Applewood, Rathbeale, Brackenstown, Knocksedan, Rivervalley, Rathingle and Boromimhe, Seatown, Holywell and Drynam
- Strong landscape quality and green infrastructure network due to location at the confluence of the Ward and Broadmeadow Rivers at the head of the Malahide/ Broadmeadow Estuary

### Planned Assets

- MetroLink - The development of the MetroLink project which will provide Swords with direct access to Dublin Airport and onward to the City Centre
- BusConnects - High frequency bus service operating from Swords to Dublin City Centre, interfacing with MetroLink at Pinnock Hill Roundabout
- Proposed upgrade to Main Street and to the cultural quarter centered around Swords Castle
- High quality commercial floorspace in the Barrysparks & Crowscastle Masterplan Area, with associated residential development
- High quality residential development in the Fosterstown and Estuary West Masterplan Areas
- A strategic land bank at Lissenhall East, which will facilitate further commercial development, contributing to a critical mass in Swords



**560 AD**

Founded by Saint Colmcille, Swords' origins date back to 560 AD.

**1200 AD**

Swords Castle constructed for the Archbishop of Dublin.

**1960s**

Swords quickly become one of the fastest growing towns in Ireland, with its population consistently growing since 1961.

**1970s**

A significant population boom in the town began in the 1970's following the construction of the Rivialley Estate in west Swords, one of the largest estates in Ireland.

**1980s/ 90s**

Following further years of housing and industrial growth, along with Dublin Airport increasing in size, Swords became a key population centre.

**2001**

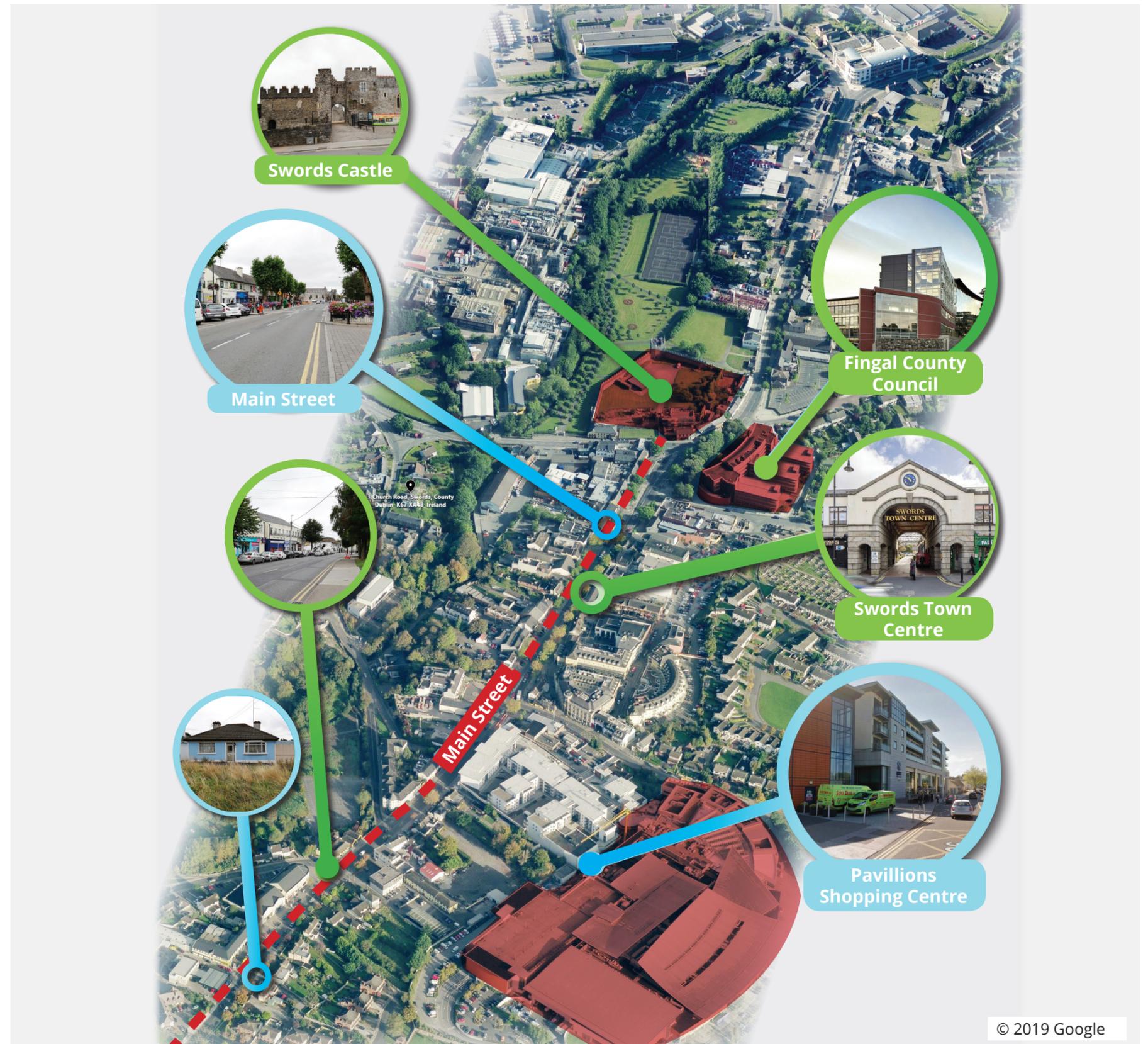
The retail offering in Swords was expanded when the Pavillions Shopping Centre opened in 2001, between the Main Street and the R132.

**2009**

Fingal County Council developed the Swords Vision 2035 and Masterplan 2009 documents setting out the vision for Swords to grow into a settlement with a population of 100,000 people.

**2015**

Fingal County Council developed the Swords Castle Cultural Quarter Masterplan, to energise the town centre by creating a cultural hub focusing on the castle environs. This is an on-going project.



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# 4 Public Consultation

## Consultation and Submissions

The opportunity to make a pre-draft submission was available between the 28th August and 25th September 2018. A Drop-In Information Session was held at County Hall, Swords on the 13th September 2018 between 3pm and 8pm. A subsequent drop-in session was held during the display of the draft Masterplans on Wednesday 20th March 2019. Individual meetings were also held with the main landowners. The drop-in sessions and individual meetings proved an important and informative part of the process and allowed stakeholders to visualise issues, consider solutions and ultimately input into the Masterplans.

In total, 19 no. submissions were received within the pre-draft submission timeframe and a further 90 no. submissions were received during the timeframe associated with the display of the draft Masterplans. A Chief Executive (CE) Report was prepared following receipt of submissions and was considered by the elected members. The CE Report summarises submissions and makes recommendations in response to the issues raised. The Masterplans were subsequently agreed, following consideration of the CE Report, at the Council meeting on 13th May 2019. The main points raised during public consultation have been summarised opposite.

"I am concerned about drainage in the area, and the affect that a major development would have on such a regularly-waterlogged area, particularly the impact construction will have on our nearby property"

"More and faster direct public transport links to the major employment/ study centres - city centre, DCU, along Malahide Rd etc are essential if there is to be large scale building"

**Schools**

Submitters raised the following issues:

- 1 A number of submissions focused primarily on school provision in Swords
- 2 School provision has not kept pace with population growth
- 3 New educational facilities must be included in any future plans for Swords

**Traffic, Transport and Accessibility**

Submitters raised the following issues:

- 1 Concern regarding current traffic and journey times around Swords and impact of additional development on the road network
- 2 Concern regarding access to the Masterplan lands via existing residential areas

**Development design and layout**

Submitters raised the following issues:

- 1 The height and scale of development adjacent to existing residential areas should be appropriate
- 2 Development shouldn't impact negatively on existing residents and their properties
- 3 Concern regarding privacy and light

**Environment**

Submitters raised the following issues:

- 1 Suggestion that a vision of sustainable low carbon development should be pursued
- 2 Concern regarding existing drainage conditions and impact of future development
- 3 Construction process should be mindful of residents and environmental pollution

## Introduction

The preparation of this Masterplan has been informed by a range of background reports and assessments. The assessments were undertaken for all three of the Masterplan areas at Barrysparks & Crowscastle, Fosterstown and Estuary West and pertain to the following:

### Transport

The purpose of the Transport Assessment was to provide a high level, collective multi-modal review of the Swords area and in particular the Barrysparks & Crowscastle, Fosterstown, and Estuary West Masterplan areas. This was a critical piece of work to inform the quantum of development that could be developed in each of the Masterplan areas and crucially, when the development could take place vis-a-vis the delivery of new transport infrastructure, particularly the delivery of MetroLink and BusConnects.

The Transport Assessment utilised the National Transport Authority's Regional Modelling System (RMS) to identify the number of person trips which would be generated by each development, the likely mode of travel for each of these trips (e.g. Car, Public Transport, cycling or walk) and the impact the additional trips would have on the performance of the network. The RMS was used to assess a number of land use growth scenarios – considering both the Masterplan areas and wider growth forecasts for Swords, in combination with various strategic transport schemes (e.g. MetroLink) and local network improvements (e.g. investment in cycle infrastructure). The RMS also tested the impact of varying levels of parking for the developments situated along the MetroLink Corridor.

The results of the modelling assessment informed the level of development which could be accommodated in each of the

Masterplan areas both pre and post-delivery of MetroLink, as well as identifying the necessary short term local transport measures required to ease traffic congestion and encourage sustainable travel. In overall terms, the assessment indicated that approximately 25% of the quantum of development envisaged in the Masterplans could be delivered in advance of MetroLink being constructed, however, the level of feasible development from site to site may vary depending on delivery of supporting infrastructure. Future development will be dependent on the assessment of individual development proposals through detailed Traffic and Transportation Impact Assessments.

### Economics

The purpose of the Economic Assessment was to understand the existing economic context of Swords and to make recommendations for the future. In particular, the Economic Assessment sought to identify the quantum of commercial floorspace that could be supported on the Masterplan lands, how many jobs the floorspace could accommodate and how long it is likely to take for the floorspace to be constructed and occupied. The assessment supported a quantum of commercial floorspace in the region of c. 220,000 sq.m and was undertaken by the international Avison Young Economics team.

### Climate Change and Energy

The purpose of this review was to provide a brief overview of the factors contributing to climate change and energy demand, and to highlight the mitigation and adaptive strategies that could be pursued within the Masterplan lands and wider region. The report utilises data, figures and resources assembled previously by Codema.



## Green Infrastructure

The purpose of the Green Infrastructure assessment was to examine the green infrastructure and cultural heritage elements from which Swords currently benefits, as well as the Masterplan areas themselves. Fingal County Council categorises green infrastructure under the following five themes:

- Biodiversity
- Parks, Open Space and Recreation
- Sustainable Water Management
- Archaeological and Architectural Heritage
- Landscape

The identification of such elements, and the potential interactions between these elements, informed a series of recommendations for the Masterplans, including the creation of green corridors, open space, and the treatment of water and drainage (SuDS) areas. The Green Infrastructure assessment was undertaken by Murray and Associates Landscape Architecture.



## Archaeology

The Archaeological Assessment was undertaken to augment the Green Infrastructure assessment and studied the potential effects, if any, of new development on the archaeological, architectural, cultural heritage, and historical resource of the area. The assessment undertaken involved a detailed study of the archaeological, architectural, cultural heritage, and historical background of the Masterplan sites and their surrounding areas, the findings of which have informed the proposed form of development. The assessment was undertaken by IAC Archeology.

## 6 Key Principles

### A Growing Place

- Enable future employers on the Masterplan lands to attract the best talent by creating a quality environment in which businesses will want to locate and staff will want to work.
- Maximise the return on investment in key infrastructure including MetroLink by facilitating development at an appropriate scale.
- Create Masterplan areas with distinctive characters through the use of innovative, high-quality architecture and green infrastructure.
- Ensure that the scale of development is appropriate at the interfaces of existing residential areas.
- Ensure that development is phased to coincide with infrastructural upgrades, to manage the impact of development on the surrounding area.
- Incorporate existing features, such as trees, hedgerows and buildings of architectural merit into future proposals.

### A Connected Place

- Ensure that the Masterplan lands are highly accessible and contribute to the efficient movement of vehicles in the locality and the Swords area more broadly.
- Facilitate safe pedestrian/ cyclist access from and through the Masterplan lands to the proposed MetroLink stations.
- Reduce the need to undertake local car-based journeys through the provision of a high quality walking and cycling network both within and surrounding the Masterplan lands.
- Improve opportunities for off-road movements by providing green routes through Masterplan lands.
- Support the role and function of Swords Main Street by ensuring a high level of pedestrian and cyclist connectivity from the Masterplan lands.
- Ensure that the Masterplan lands are adequately serviced by both car and cycle parking.

### A Green Place

- Ensure that the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout of development on the lands and that proposals connect to and enhance existing green infrastructure assets.
- Mitigate flood risk by incorporating SuDS features into new development and take advantage of the opportunities created to ensure that these areas enhance the landscape quality of the area.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of new buildings by ensuring that development is designed to minimise requirements for energy and water.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the lands in the context of a changing climate and mitigate the resultant risks.
- Ensure existing landscape features such as watercourses, tree groups and townland hedgerows are incorporated into future development proposals.
- Provide green corridor connections between open spaces both internal and external to the site for recreational, environmental and ecological benefits.

### A Place for People

- Ensure that the range of housing matches the needs of future residents and helps to diversify the housing stock in Swords.
- Provide a variety of housing types suitable for people at a range of life stages to take account of the shifting nature of society and its demographics.
- Meet the sporting and recreational needs of the growing population through the provision of appropriate facilities on the Masterplan lands.
- Ensure that new or extended open space networks are designed to facilitate people with a broad range of abilities.
- Facilitate the provision of additional school spaces by allocating appropriate sites for the construction of new national schools.
- Ensure that the existing community in adjacent areas benefit from the development of the lands.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity, both intentional and incidental.



Issues	Opportunities	
<p><b>MetroLink</b> While Dublin Bus and the Swords Express provide services which connect Swords to Dublin City Centre, the provision of MetroLink will significantly improve transport to and from Swords.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide pedestrian and cyclist access to MetroLink stations to encourage usage</li> <li>• Improve local bus services to get people to and from MetroLink stations</li> <li>• Support sustainable commuting and travel patterns by increasing residential densities in proximity to MetroLink stations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create public spaces/ squares around MetroLink stations to form a hub for the local community, including local amenities such as shops/ cafes</li> <li>• Provide new road links through the Masterplan lands, including the Airside-Feltrim Link Road and the Fosterstown Link Road.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Open Space/Recreational Amenity</b> While Swords benefits from open space assets such as those located along the Ward and Broadmeadow River, not all areas are well served or connected to usable open space and the growing population will require more active open space facilities (e.g. playing pitches, mixed use games areas).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate required SuDS features into green space and landscaping areas to create key site features and enhance open space networks.</li> <li>• Create green corridors into Masterplan lands to provide recreational areas and routes for pedestrian/ cyclist movements, linking to surrounding areas.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Incorporate new active open space facilities into the Masterplan lands including playing pitches and mixed use games areas (MUGA).</li> <li>• Incorporate play spaces and/or exercise equipment into open space along the riparian corridor.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Commercial and Employment</b> According to the 2016 census, Swords had a jobs: resident workers ratio of 0.785, indicating a high level of commuters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the requirement to commute from Swords to Dublin City or other areas by providing for more local employment.</li> <li>• Create a high-quality campus-style commercial area with a significant quantum of flexible floorspace in the Crowscastle area to facilitate 'high-technology' uses.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional commercial floorspace in the form of hotel developments with conference facilities in the Barrysparks and Fosterstown Masterplan areas.</li> <li>• Further commercial development and a hotel are envisaged along the R132, taking advantage of the strategic location beside the Metro and Swords Main Street.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Educational Facilities</b> Residential development in the Swords area has increased the burden on the local education system and resulted in a shortage of school spaces for local families.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the provision of new school spaces in Swords by reserving sites for new schools in the Fosterstown and Estuary West Masterplan areas.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Walking and Cycling Infrastructure</b> Swords is currently relatively car dependent with people having limited opportunities for walking or cycling (e.g. the R132 is highly vehicle focussed).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate walking and cycling through all Masterplan areas via both green routes and the internal road network.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitate the provision of improved pedestrian and cyclist facilities at the interface of the Masterplan areas (e.g. along the R132 or the Glen Ellan Road).</li> </ul>
<p><b>Housing</b> It is envisaged that the overall population of Swords could eventually reach 100,000 people. As such, the growing population will require additional housing/ residential dwellings.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide additional high quality residential accommodation that will cater to the changing needs of the current and future residents of Swords.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide a mix of apartments, duplexes and houses with an appropriate range of 1, 2, 3, &amp; 4 bedroom dwellings.</li> </ul>

# 8 A Growing Place

## Introduction

Swords is the administrative capital of Fingal and acts as a strategic focus for a range of services. It is home to some of the largest employers in the County. As such, Swords is a high-functioning employment centre, where a number of existing business and industrial parks are located.

The town has direct links to the national road network (M1 and M50) and is located on the Dublin/Belfast economic corridor. It is also located proximate to Dublin Port via the Port Tunnel, and to Dublin Airport via the M1, two of the most important infrastructural assets in the Country.

The economic value of its strategic location has further increased with the announcement of the indicative route for the MetroLink project. When MetroLink is operational, Swords will be better connected to Dublin City's economic and commercial

### Key Principles

- Enable future employers on the Masterplan lands to attract the best talent by creating a quality environment in which businesses will want to locate and staff will want to work.
- Maximise the return on investment in key infrastructure including MetroLink by facilitating development at an appropriate scale.
- Create Masterplan areas with distinctive characters through the use of innovative, high-quality architecture and green infrastructure.
- Ensure that the scale of development is appropriate at the interfaces to existing residential areas.
- Ensure that development is phased to coincide with infrastructural upgrades, to manage the impact of development on the surrounding area.
- Incorporate existing features, such as trees, hedgerows and buildings of architectural merit into future proposals.

life, and will be better able to leverage investment as a result of improved public transport connectivity to the airport.

## Population Growth

The Draft Regional Spatial and Economic Strategy (RSES) for the Eastern and Midland Region was published for consultation on 5th November 2018, concluding on 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2019. The RSES will come into effect in June 2019 and consequently the Masterplans have relied on the Draft document. The draft RSES is a strategic plan which identifies regional assets, opportunities and pressures and provides policy responses in the form of regional opportunities. The RSES states as follows in relation to Swords:

*“Due to its strategic location in proximity to Dublin city, the airport, national road network and with the planned Metrolink, Swords acts as a Key Town for the Metropolitan area. Swords is the lead town for Fingal, which is one of the fastest growing and the youngest parts of the State, and is a major town centre which provides a strong economic and service function for its catchment. The redeveloped Swords Castle is a key visitor attraction while the Broadmeadow/ Malahide Estuary is an important environmental asset to the east of the town”.*

Under the Settlement Strategy, Swords is listed as a ‘Key Town’ in the Metropolitan Area, along with Bray and Maynooth. However, it is worth noting that Swords is currently the largest of these settlements, with a population of 39,000 as compared to 32,600 (Bray) and 14,585 (Maynooth).

The RSES provides regional population targets, designed to inform the Core Strategies of County Development Plans. Fingal had a population of 296,000 as of the 2016 census and this is anticipated to increase by between 44,000 and 53,000 people in the run up to 2031, resulting in a population of between 340,000 and 349,000 people.

The Fingal Core Strategy currently allocates 21.5% of overall residential units in the County to Swords, which on a pro-rata basis, would result in an increase in population of between 11,000 and 11,395 people, based on the targets contained in the RSES. This would result in a population of approximately 50,000 by 2031.

However, if the strategic land banks of employment land at Barrysparks & Crowscastle, as well as the commercial lands proposed for Estuary West and those at Lissenhall are developed, this will make Swords a more attractive location for people to live, which could increase population growth above the anticipated level.

## Jobs

The number of employed persons in Swords as a proportion of the overall population is comparatively high. With a population of 39,200 people in 2016, Swords had 19,531 resident workers. While commuting levels in Swords are also comparatively high with a jobs-to-resident workers ratio of 0.785 (ratios of more than 1.0 indicate a net in-flow of workers and of less than 1.0, a net out-flow), the overall proportion of employed people in the settlement sits at approximately 50%, which is higher than the



Exemplar: Chiswick Business Park, Rogers Stirk Harbour + Partners Architects

Dublin City and Suburbs figure of 44.5%.

The percentage of workers in Swords as a proportion of the overall population is indicative of its current demographic profile, which includes a relatively high proportion of people of working age. While this may moderate over time as the population ages and changes, an ultimate population of 100,000 people in Swords would therefore create a requirement for 45,000-50,000 jobs.

**Attracting Talent**

The National Skills Strategy 2014 sets out the likely skills shortages that Ireland may experience in the period up to 2025. The National Skills Bulletin, published by Solas, the Further Education and Training Authority, provides an update on growth industries and skills shortages. The bulletin (November 2018) indicated skills shortages in the science & engineering, health, and Information and Communications (ICT) areas. These occupations, while varied in nature, would generally be a good fit for the type of development envisaged under the ‘High Technology’ zoning in the Crowscastle Masterplan area. The Bulletin also indicates that filling roles in niche areas, which require a high level of education and experience, is particularly difficult in the current environment, both in Ireland and globally. In order to attract such talent, employers need to be able to offer a range of benefits, potentially including a high-quality working environment. The creation of such a high-quality working environment is a key objective of the Masterplans.

**Commercial Floorspace**

The combined Masterplan areas could potentially accommodate up to c. 220,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace, which, it is anticipated, will be built out over a prolonged time frame (c. 15-20 years), depending on market demand and the delivery of key transport infrastructure. Given the timeframes associated with its development, and the changing nature of the commercial sector, new development will need to be flexible in nature, to

meet the needs of the business sector going forward.

It is anticipated that commercial operators in the Masterplan areas will be varied, ranging from high quality office space, similar to the Ryanair offices close to the Barrysparks & Crowscastle lands, to research and development space akin to the type utilised by MSD Biotech, to other uses such as medical. Indeed, given the time frames associated with the full build out of the Masterplan areas, some of the end users and commercial typologies that will utilise the space in the future may still be in the start-up stages, which reinforces the need for flexible, adaptable design.

**Barrysparks & Crowscastle**

The High Technology zoning area within the Barrysparks & Crowscastle Masterplan lands, combined with a more modest

quantum of commercial floorspace located within the Metro Economic Corridor Zoning area of that Masterplan, could potentially support 16,000 - 17,000 jobs, based on current working arrangements (floorspace ratio per employee). However, requirements may change over time as alternative working practices, such as remote working/ working from home becomes more prevalent due to improved telecommunications capabilities and a push from employers to reduce their rental footprint. Indeed, some employers are now operating models whereby they lease sufficient space for approximately 80% of their workforce and utilise hot-desking/ remote working arrangements to make up the shortfall. While the Masterplan envisages c. 180,000 sq.m of commercial floorspace and 14,500 - 15,500 jobs, given the pace of change in the commercial sector it is vital to keep floorspace requirements under review in order to avoid either an under or over-provision.

**Fosterstown**

It is envisaged that the Fosterstown Masterplan area will play a complementary role to the Barrysparks & Crowscastle area from an economic perspective, primarily by providing accommodation suitable for those working in the proposed business park. The proposed hotel will also provide short-term accommodation and potentially incorporate conference facilities, while the local services based around the public space/ square associated with the Fosterstown Metro station will provide additional local employment.

**Estuary West**

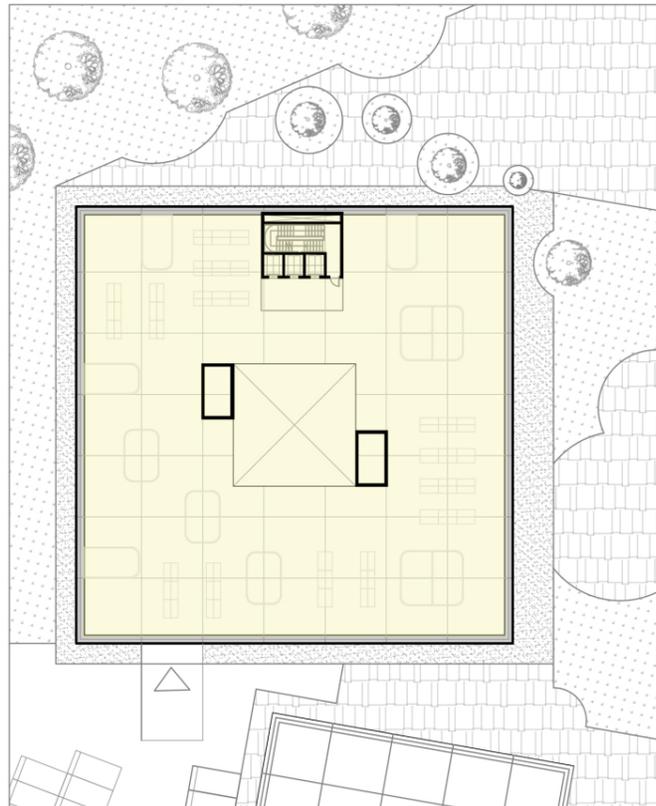
The quantum of commercial floorspace proposed within the Estuary West Masterplan area could potentially support up to 1,500 jobs. It is currently envisaged that this floorspace will take the form of high quality office, medical or R&D space. The quantum of commercial floorspace proposed at this location should be sufficient to create a small cluster of complementary businesses, with both larger and smaller businesses co-locating.



## 8 A Growing Place

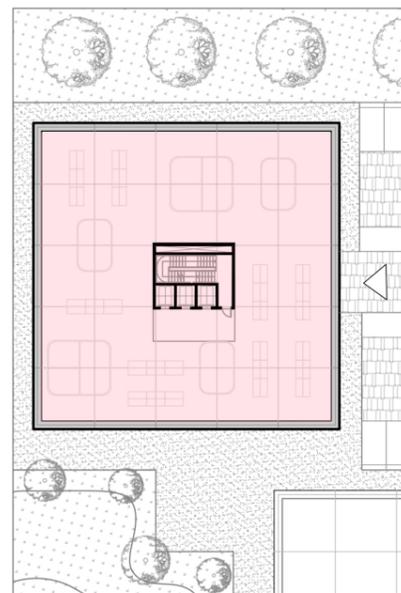
### Commercial/ Office Typologies

While a range of commercial typologies may be utilised in the Masterplan area as the needs of businesses evolve, the nature and scale of typologies envisaged are generally designed around three typologies and should be combined in clusters to create interesting environments. Permanent car parking shall be provided either underground or undercroft and shall not be provided at surface level for any of the typologies, with the exception of disabled parking.



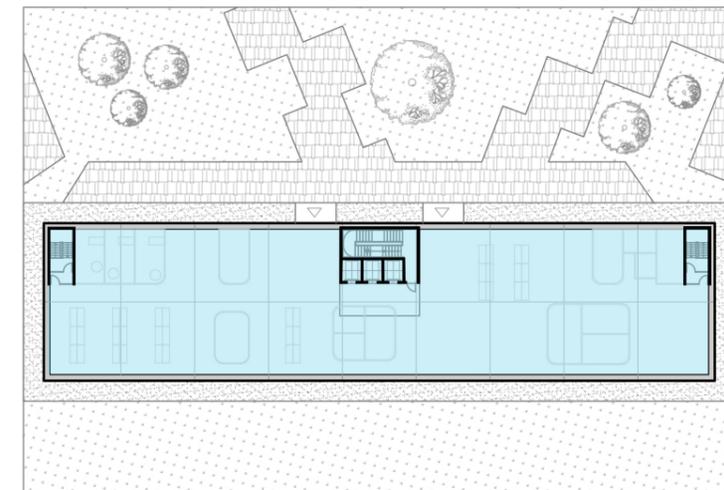
#### Type 1

- C. 1,750sqm, two cores, deep workspace (11-19m) from core to perimeter
- High efficiency of usable area, high flexibility of space



#### Type 2

- C. 900 sqm, one core, medium depth workspace (6-11m) from core to perimeter
- High efficiency of usable area, high flexibility of space



#### Type 3

- C. 540 sqm, two/three cores, shallow depth workspace (4-6m) from core to perimeter
- Optimal daylight intake

**Residential Typologies**

While it is not the intent of the Masterplans to be overly prescriptive or to inhibit innovation, it is envisaged that the Masterplan lands will consist of a range of recommended residential typologies which have been selected to achieve an appropriate mix, given the proximity of the Masterplans to future high frequency transport infrastructure. The recommended typologies range from townhouses to duplex over duplex, to high density apartment style blocks. The individual Masterplan documents set out appropriate locations within each area for the proposed typologies. Private open space associated with future residential development shall be provided in accordance with Development Plan standards.



**Three-Storey Townhouse**

Three-bed townhouse with stacked parking spaces in undercroft location. Private open space in the form of private rear garden.



**Duplex over Duplex**

Two-bed duplex apartment over a 1-bed duplex. Four storey blocks with undercroft and on-street parking. Private open space in the form of rear garden or private balcony.



**Apartment Type 1**

Mix of bedroom sizes, with two to three units per block floor. Block heights range from three to six/nine storeys, with each apartment having a private balcony. Resident parking is provided underground, with ground level visitor parking.



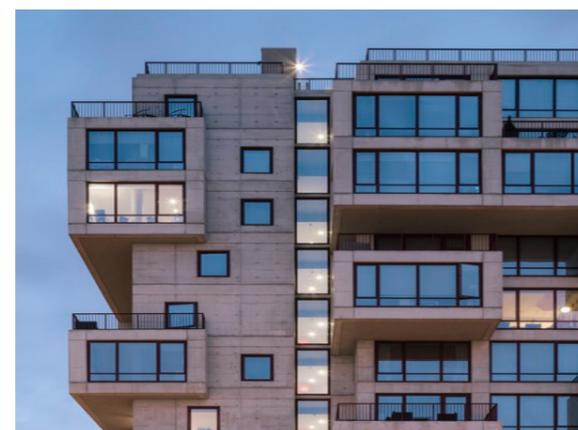
**Apartment Type 2a/2b**

Mix of bedroom sizes, with two to three units per block floor. Block heights range from three to six/nine storeys, with each apartment having a private balcony. Resident parking is provided underground, with ground level visitor parking.



**Apartment Type 4**

Mix of bedroom sizes with five or six units per floor. Block heights range from three to six/nine floors, with private open space in the form of balconies. Resident parking is provided underground, with ground level parking for visitors.



**Apartment Type 5a**

Mix of bedroom sizes with approx. five units per floor. Block height will range from three to six/nine floors, with private open space provided by balconies for each unit. Parking for residents provided underground, with on-street parking for visitors.



**Apartment Type 5b**

Mix of bedroom sizes with approx. five units per floor. Block height will range from three to six/nine floors, with private open space provided by balconies for each unit. Parking for residents provided underground, with on-street parking for visitors.



Both Dublin Bus and the Swords Express have bus stops located along the R132 and R125, a reasonable walking distance from both areas. Estuary West is served by both Dublin Bus and the Swords Express along Glen Ellan Road.

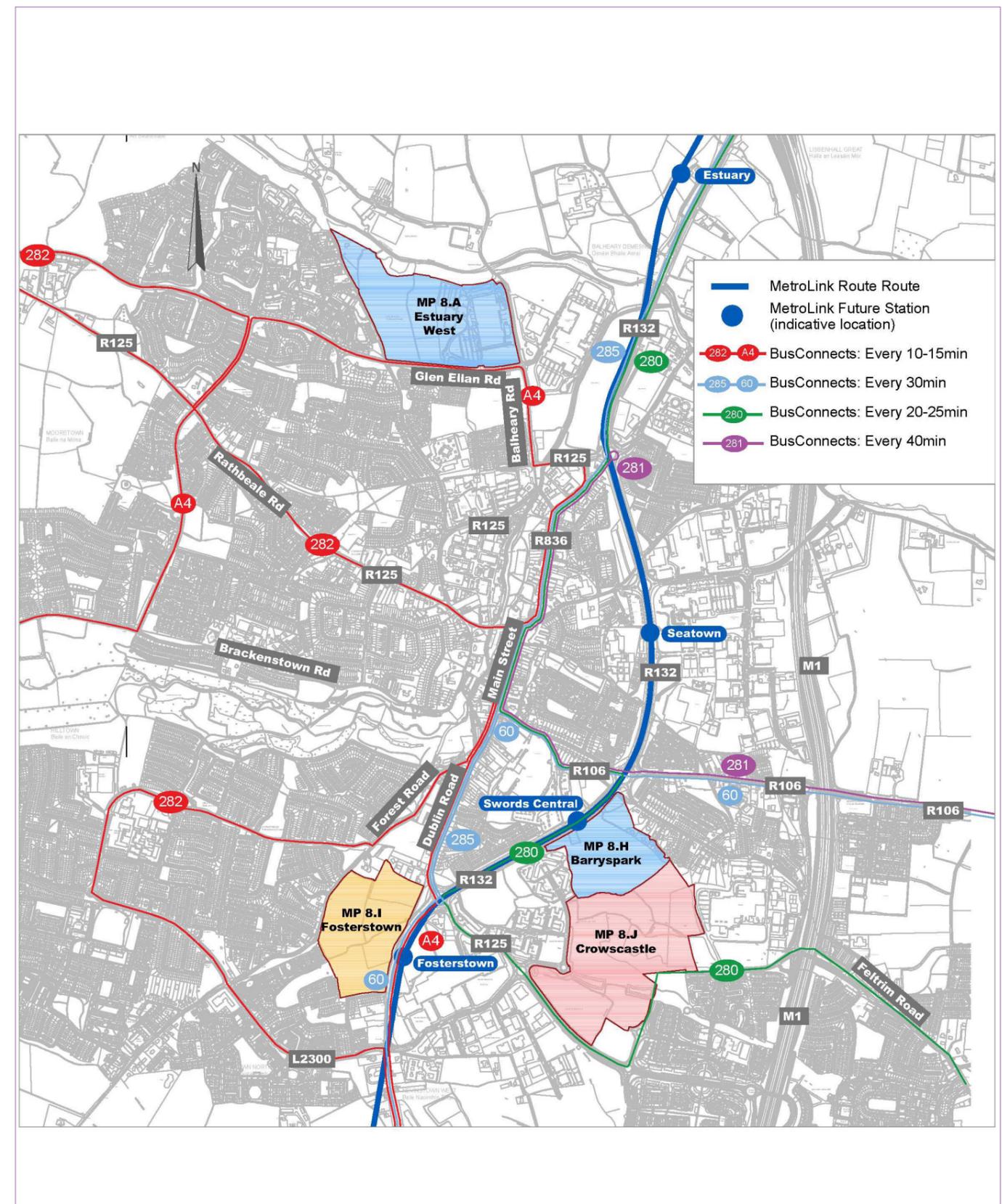
Movement and permeability, especially for pedestrians and cyclists, between the Masterplan lands and the wider Swords area is an important element of the Masterplans. Ensuring connections are created between the Masterplan lands and the existing streetscapes of Swords has been a priority. Whilst existing pedestrian/cyclist infrastructure exist in part around Swords, significant improvements can be made in order to create a more efficient, connected and safe environment for all to use. Improvements in existing desire lines, quality of infrastructure provision and location of same can be undertaken alongside the provision of new connections to create a connected network within Swords

**MetroLink**

The MetroLink project is a high frequency/ high capacity urban railway service that will run between Swords and Dublin City Centre, connecting to important key destinations such as Dublin Airport en route.

Following the publication of the preferred route for MetroLink and associated public consultation the key principles of full integration with the Masterplan lands, creating an attractive urban elevation and ensuring good connectivity are crucial to the delivery of all MetroLink Stations and Masterplan lands across Swords.

Appropriate pedestrian and cyclist links should be provided from the Masterplan areas to the Metro stops, in order to attract users.



# 9 A Connected Place

## BusConnects

BusConnects is a public transport improvement programme that aims to overhaul the national urban bus system. As part of the draft Dublin Area Bus Network Redesign, a number of new routes are proposed for Swords, with the aim to provide more frequent and efficient networks and increased bus services. A number of services are proposed to run every 10-15 minutes, providing high frequency all-day services through Swords.

Additionally, a Core Bus Corridor is proposed along the R132 Swords Road and the N1, to link Swords with the City Centre. The Core Bus Corridor will provide high-quality continuous bus lanes, segregated cycle lanes, and high-quality bus shelters.

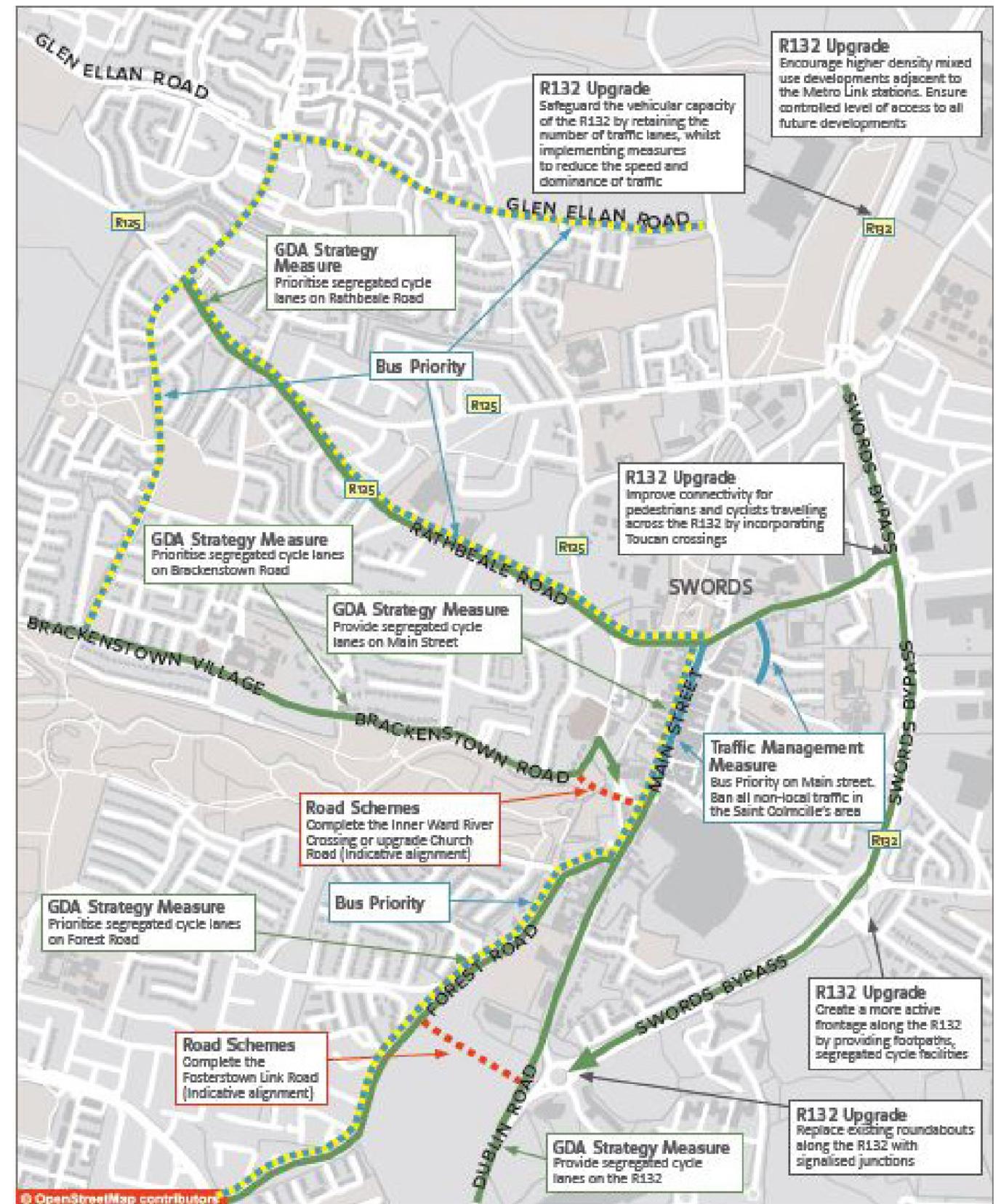
## GDA Cycle Network Plan

A comprehensive cycle network is proposed for Swords town within the GDA Cycle Network Plan. The 2a route is a primary GDA route connecting Swords to the Airport and the City Centre. The plan proposes a fully connected network of A/A+ Quality of Service routes throughout Swords, which would generally consist of a two-abreast cycle lane (per direction) that is 2 to 2.5m wide with minimal conflicts along the route.

## Road Improvements

The Development Plan seeks to implement the following:

- Swords Western Relief Road
- Swords Western Distributor Road
- R125 Rathbeale Road Improvements
- Swords-Brackenstown Link
- Completion of Airside to Feltrim Link Road
- Fosterstown Link Road
- Forest Road Improvements
- Green Link across the Ward River Valley



**South Fingal Transport Study (SFTS) Recommendations**

The SFTS is a study of the transport network in South Fingal recommending key transport infrastructure and outline levels of land use development that will enable its sustainable growth leading up to the delivery of MetroLink and beyond. Listed below are some of the recommendations relevant to Swords:

- Traffic Management: Implement Bus Gate Traffic Management Measure in Main Street.
- Traffic Management: Ban all non-local traffic in the Saint Colmcille’s area.
- The GDA Cycle Network Plan should be implemented in Swords, prioritising routes on Rathbeale Road, Brackenstown Road, Glen Ellan Road, and Forest Road.
- R132 Upgrade to create a more active frontage by providing footpaths and segregated cycle facilities.
- Replace existing roundabouts along the R132 with signalised junctions.
- Construction of Fosterstown Link Road
- Completion of Airside-Feltrim Link Road

**Car Parking**

Through the development of a compact urban form centred on the MetroLink stations, coupled with strong pedestrian and cycle links to neighbouring centres; the Masterplans have sought to reduce the need for car-based journeys. Parking is an effective tool in managing travel demand which will also help encourage modal shift and reduce the impact of congestion on the network.

Within areas highly accessible to public transport (800m to a QBC or high quality bus service, or 1600m to an existing or planned Luas/DART/Metro/Rail station), the Fingal Development Plan seeks to encourage a mode shift in favour of public transport, by reducing the maximum car parking standard by 50%. In the case of commercial uses, this reduces the maximum parking ratios from 1 parking space per 30sq.m of commercial GFA,

to 1 parking space per 60sq.m. It should be noted that these parking standards are still a ‘maximum’ and that further reductions in the provision of parking may be feasible within the Masterplan, subject to access to sustainable travel options and when supported by a Mobility Management Plan. Further reductions in parking provision will be at the discretion of the Local Authority.

To minimise the visual impact of parking, development parking will be provided in underground/under-croft parking. A quantum of parking will be permissible at surface level to facilitate visitors and disabled parking only. Hard and soft landscaping and appropriate lighting will be required around surface carparking areas.

Prior to the delivery of MetroLink, it is acknowledged that the initial phases of commercial development will require parking in line with the maximum car parking standards set out in

the Fingal Development Plan. In this interim phase, 50% of the commercial parking requirement will be permitted in the form of temporary surface parking, adjacent to the buildings, with the remaining 50% accommodated in underground/under-croft parking. When the Metro becomes operational, temporary surface parking areas will be reverted to designated green open spaces or alternative permissible uses.

**Cycle Parking**

Secure cycle parking is to be provided at each Metro Station to enable efficient interchange. Secure and easily accessible residential cycle parking is to be provided for each residential and commercial block in accordance with the minimum standards set out in the Fingal Development Plan. The design of cycle infrastructure and cycle parking should be in accordance with the National Cycle Manual.



# 10 A Green Place

## Introduction

Green Infrastructure is the term used to describe the interconnected networks of land and water, which sustain environmental quality and enhance the liveability of an area. It operates on many scales, from national to local level.

The challenge for Swords is to manage growth and urban expansion, while continuing to ensure that its Green Infrastructure networks are protected. Green Infrastructure policies allow for biodiversity and ecosystems in the wider landscape to be maintained.

The Fingal Development Plan approaches Green Infrastructure through five themes: biodiversity; parks, open space and recreation; sustainable water management; archaeological and architectural heritage; and landscape. The Masterplans have considered each of these themes in order to ensure networks of green infrastructure are protected and enhanced, and to provide for a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits.

### Key Principles

- Ensure that the provision of green infrastructure is a key component of the design and layout of development on the lands and that proposals connect to and enhance existing green infrastructure assets.
- Mitigate flood risk by incorporating SuDS features into new development and take advantage of the opportunities created to ensure that these areas enhance the landscape quality of the area.
- Reduce the carbon footprint of new buildings by ensuring that development is designed to minimise requirements for energy and water.
- Ensure the long-term sustainability of the lands in the context of a changing climate and mitigate the resultant risks.



**Green Infrastructure Network**

The proposed Green Infrastructure network has been formulated to link through and around the Masterplan lands and to connect to surrounding areas, as well as back to Swords Main Street. All future development within the Masterplan areas will be subject to the environmental standards as set out in the Development Plan.

**Barrysparks & Crowscastle**

- Central north-south spine through the Masterplan area connecting pedestrians and cyclists from Holywell to the Pavilions.
- Secondary east-west elements connecting into the central spine.
- Localised green areas centred around SuDS features.
- Playing pitches and mixed use games areas.
- High quality landscaping throughout.

**Fosterstown**

- Green route centred around the existing stream network through the Masterplan lands, running east-west.
- Additional green route running north-south and linking the proposed Fosterstown Link Road to the east-west green corridor.
- Green routes to contain pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure.
- Playing pitches associated with the proposed school.
- A public space/ square associated with the MetroLink station to be set in a high-quality landscape, with trees and planting incorporated.

**Estuary West**

- Proposed extension to the Broadmeadow Park immediately adjacent to the northern boundary of the Masterplan lands.
- North-west open space connections through the Masterplan lands from the Broadmeadow River Park to the Glen Ellan Road.
- Playing pitches associated with the proposed school.

- A SuDS strategy to protect the river from negative impacts arising from the development of the lands.

**Connectivity**

Significant existing green infrastructure corridors in Swords include the Ward River Valley and Broadmeadow River Valley. Additional large areas of land surrounding the town have been zoned as Greenbelts. Major green infrastructure assets are located at Ward Valley Park, Forest Little Golf Club, the proposed Regional Park at Oldtown, and other major areas designated as Public Open Space within newly developed and established residential areas. These are complimented by smaller local green infrastructure assets including recreation grounds, informal green spaces and footpaths/cycleways. The Masterplans aim to facilitate public open spaces throughout the lands, creating a series of spaces connected by green linkages.

**Fingal Climate Change Action Plan**

The Fingal Climate Change Action Plan (prepared by Codema in conjunction with the other Dublin Local Authorities) was agreed in May 2019 and contains a range of measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and improve energy efficiency.

The Council aims to achieve a 33% energy efficiency improvement by 2020 and a 40% reduction in Greenhouse Gas emissions by 2040.

Through the integration of public transport infrastructure, building typologies that minimise the use of energy, SuDS management initiatives and a significant quantity of open space, the Masterplan lands will create a form of development that has a smaller carbon footprint and is more climate resilient than traditional development forms.



Indicative view of the Broadmeadow River Park extension

# 11 A Place for People

## Introduction

People want to live and work in places that have a range of community infrastructure facilities available and it is important that these facilities are provided in a timely manner where new development is constructed. This ensures that people have the amenities required for a good quality of life, without the need to travel long distances.

### Key Principles

- Ensure that the range of housing matches the needs of future residents and helps to diversify the housing stock in Swords.
- Provide a variety of housing types suitable for people at a range of life stages to take account of the shifting nature of society and its demographics.
- Meet the sporting and recreational needs of the growing population through the provision of appropriate facilities on the Masterplan lands.
- Ensure that new or extended open space networks are designed to facilitate people with a broad range of abilities.
- Facilitate the provision of additional school spaces by allocating appropriate sites for the construction of new national schools.
- Ensure that the existing community in adjacent areas benefit from the development of the lands.
- Increase opportunities for physical activity, both intentional and incidental.

## Housing

The population of Swords increased rapidly over the past 20 years, almost doubling in size (+76%) and outstripping the growth rate of Dublin, which increased its population by 23% over the same period. Rapid population growth in Swords has resulted in notable demographic differences from that of the national average.

Swords is characterised by a higher proportion of young to middle age persons (25-44 years old), as well as a high proportion of young children (under 12 years old), suggesting an attractiveness for young families.

The housing typologies currently in Swords reflects this trend, with a significantly higher proportion of detached/ semi-detached housing (c. 80% of total housing), as compared to Dublin and its suburbs (c. 69%) and significantly lower proportion of apartments at 15% of housing stock as compared to 25% in Dublin. As a result, there is a relatively low level of housing diversity in Swords by comparison.

A lack of housing diversity means that it can be difficult for people to go through all of life's stages without leaving Swords. Where a person is born into a detached/ semi-detached dwelling, it is unlikely that they will be able to rent or purchase a similar property alone as a first home. Instead, they may move into shared/ group accommodation in their 20's or 30's, perhaps move into an apartment or terraced house if they choose to do so with a partner and potentially have children and subsequently move into detached/ semi-detached family home as their family grows. In the event of relationship breakdown, they may subsequently wish to move into a smaller dwelling at some point, or become 'empty-nesters' who may want to downsize in the event that suitable accommodation

can be found. They may then live alone as an elderly person due to death or divorce or enter an assisted living arrangement. Whatever path a person's life takes, they will require a range of different accommodation types throughout their lifetime.

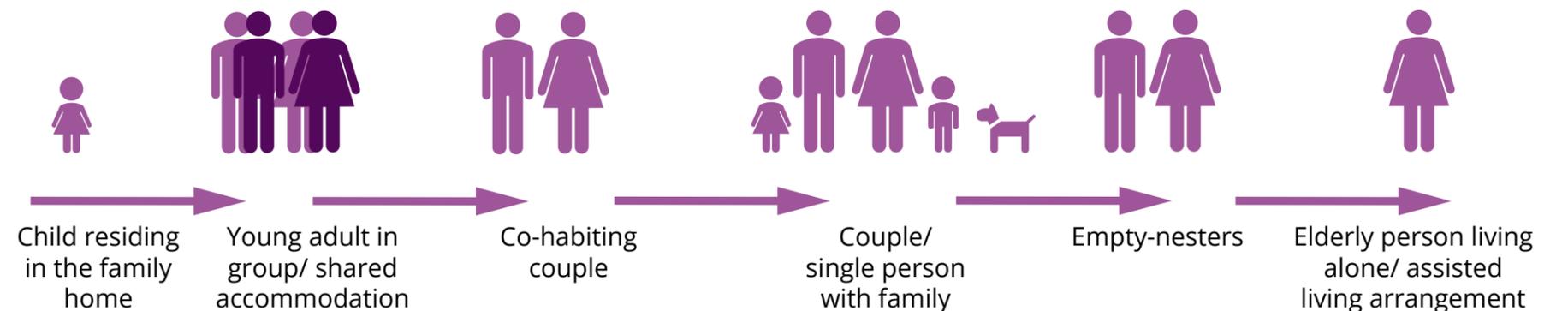
It is currently difficult to do this in Swords, given the current focus on detached/ semi-detached dwellings and resultant lack of diversity in the housing market.

Due to its growing and aging population, it is important to identify opportunities to provide additional housing to meet overall demand (quantity) as well as changing preferences and needs (dwelling type and size).

*Your Swords An Emerging City Strategic Vision 2035* envisages Swords growing into a settlement of c. 100,000 people. This would make it one of Ireland's largest settlements by today's standards with a population approximately the size of Limerick's. In order for Swords to function as a self-sustaining settlement, rather than as an extended suburb of Dublin, it will need to diversify its housing stock in order to meet the needs of the growing and changing population.

The proposed housing typologies and mix of units are designed to help Swords respond to these challenges by diversifying its residential mix.

### Person/ Housing life-cycle



The Masterplans envision developments that can adapt and grow with the changing needs of its community. To facilitate this, a mixture of houses (and type of houses) and apartments are proposed to accommodate the differing familial and housing requirements of its future residents.

## Build to Rent

Build to rent (BTR) describes a form of development that delivers purpose-built residential accommodation, generally owned and managed by an institutional investor. Given the current shortage of rental properties in the Dublin market, the high level of demand and the resultant increase in rents, this form of development has become more attractive, with planning permission for a number of such schemes currently being sought in Dublin.

According to the *Design Standards for New Apartments, Guidelines for Planning Authorities 2018* this form of development may appeal to tenants for whom home ownership may not be a priority, people starting out in their careers and/ or those who frequently move between countries in the pursuance of career and skills development in the modern knowledge based economy. The Guidelines go on to set out specific development requirements for BTR, which could be viewed as less onerous than those for typical build-for-sale properties.

Given the form of commercial development envisaged within the Masterplan areas and in particular in the Barrysparks & Crowscastle Masterplan area (high technology), this form of development may prove to be an attractive proposition for developers.

However, given the potentially more transient nature of tenants in these developments, it could be more difficult to establish a settled community in the locality. For this reason, BTR units will be monitored and assessed to ensure that they form an appropriate proportion of the overall development of residential units within each development area.

## Education

Educational facilities play an important role in developing sustainable communities and encouraging families to live in an area, as well as supporting existing residents. The provision of educational facilities in the Swords area was a significant element brought up during the public consultation period in the preparation of the Masterplans. While Swords currently has 12 primary schools and five secondary schools, recent capacity issues have become prevalent in its primary schools.

Recent population growth in Swords has resulted in limited school places for families in the area. It is therefore proposed that two new national school shall will be provided, in conjunction the Department of Education and Skills, within the Fosterstown Masterplan area and the Estuary West Masterplan area, to serve the growing population of Swords.

## Crèche Provision

It is a requirement that the provision of appropriate purpose-built childcare facilities form part of residential developments. The Fingal Development Plan requires that in large developments of residential, community, commercial or retail, the appropriate childcare services are also provided. The document *'Childcare Facilities Guidelines for Planning Authorities' (2001)* requires a minimum of 20 childcare places per approx. 75 residential dwellings.



Indicative view of new housing fronting onto Jugback Terrace

# 12 Environmental Assessments

## Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA)

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is the process by which environmental considerations are required to be fully integrated into the preparation of plans and programmes prior to their final adoption. The requirement for SEA derives from Directive 2001/42/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council 'on the assessment of the effects of certain plans and programmes on the environment' and the objectives of SEA are to provide for a high level of protection of the environment and to promote sustainable development. An Environmental Report was prepared as part of the SEA of the Masterplan (Appendix E) and the drafting of the Masterplan is an iterative process, informed throughout by the SEA process.

Notwithstanding the SEA process, proposals for future development projects within the Masterplan lands will require screening for the requirement for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) under Directive 2014/52/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council, which amends Directive 2011/92/EU (on the assessment of the effects of certain public and private projects on the environment), and implementing national legislation. An Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIAR) shall be prepared for projects where the requirement for EIA is mandatory, where the project meets or exceeds stated thresholds, or where it is determined that the project is likely to have significant effects on the environment.

## Appropriate Assessment (AA)

A Natura Impact Statement (NIS) was prepared in order to inform the Appropriate Assessment (AA), required under Article 6(3) of the EU Habitats Directive 92/43/EEC, of the Masterplan (Appendix E). It is a requirement of the Habitats Directive that any plan or project likely to have a significant effect on Natura 2000 sites (hereafter referred to as "European Sites")<sup>1</sup>, either individually or in combination with other plans or projects, shall undergo an AA to determine its implications for such sites. The drafting of the Masterplan is an iterative process and

is informed throughout by the NIS of the Masterplan. The NIS therefore informs the content of the Masterplan and seeks in the first instance to avoid significant impacts on European sites. It proposes mitigation measures necessary to avoid or reduce negative significant effects on European sites and these mitigation measures will be incorporated into the Masterplan before its finalisation.

The following mitigation measures contained within the NIS of the Masterplan will inform the consideration of any future planning application arising from the Masterplan and will ensure that there are no adverse effects on the integrity of any European sites arising from the implementation of the Masterplan:

- Surface water run-off during operation will be treated using appropriate SUDS measures (e.g. green roofs, permeable paving, petrol interceptor, silt trap) prior to discharge to any surface water features in order to protect the receiving aquatic, estuarine and marine environment.
- Development applications will be accompanied by an Appropriate Assessment Screening Report and/or Natura Impact Statement (NIS), as required. These assessments will be informed by:
  - An appropriate level of survey and supporting scientific data on SCI (Site of Community Importance) bird populations of European sites, which will include information on:
    - (a) if, and how, any SCI bird species utilise habitat areas within the Zone of Influence (Zoi) of the proposed development site;
    - (b) whether any SCI bird populations present within the Zoi of the proposed development are linked to, or support, any SCI bird populations;
    - (c) Where effects on SCI bird populations are predicted or likely, appropriate mitigation measures, which will be designed and implemented to ensure that the integrity of any SPA sites, either alone or in

combination with other plans or projects.

- A survey confirming the presence/absence of non-native invasive plant species listed on the Third Schedule of the European Communities (Birds and Natural Habitats) Regulations, 2011 within the proposed development site and if present, how these species will be managed to ensure non-native invasive species are not spread or introduced to any European sites.
- Specific and detailed measures, provided as part of the planning documentation for a planning application within the Masterplan area, which will outline how surface water run-off, especially in relation to the release of silt and other pollutants, will be controlled during construction in order to ensure the receiving aquatic, estuarine and marine environments is protected.

<sup>1</sup> Natura 2000 sites are defined under the Habitats Directive (Article 3) as a European ecological network of special areas of conservation composed of sites which host the natural habitat types listed in Annex I and habitats of the protected species listed in Annex II. The aim of the network is to aid the long-term survival of Europe's most valuable and threatened species and habitats. In Ireland these sites are designated as European Sites – defined under the Planning Acts and/or Birds and Habitats Regulations as (a) a candidate site of Community importance, (b) a site of Community importance, (c) a candidate special area of conservation, (d) a special area of conservation, (e) a candidate special protection area, or (f) a special protection area. They are commonly referred to in Ireland as Special Areas of Conservation (SACs) and Special Protection Areas (SPAs).



Indicative view of SuDS feature incorporated into open space within the Barrysparks & Crowscastle Masterplan area