

TALLAGHT TOWN CENTRE

PRE-PLAN CONSULTATION

CONTENTS

Tallaght – The Historic Context

Tallaght Town Centre – Current Planning Context

Town Centre Living

Transport and Traffic

Getting Around on Foot

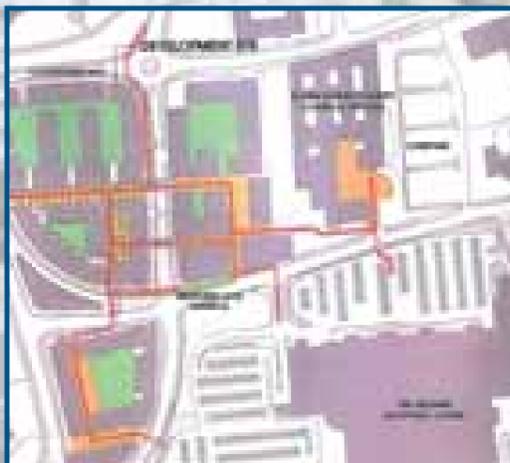
Employment and Work

Parks and Squares

Buildings

Community and Culture

Procedures – What's next



GETTING AROUND ON FOOT



Do you feel safe walking in these areas?

Pedestrians face numerous lonely, uninviting and isolated walking routes in and around the Town Centre. A number of crossings at key intersections can be hazardous and are focused on the movement cars and not pedestrians.



How do we enhance existing pedestrian links?

The number of pedestrian links in Tallaght is limited, however a strong east west link exists between The Square and the old village. Whilst in some sections this link is a good width and has active street frontages (above left), in others it is isolated (above right). Part of the link is currently being improved as part of the redevelopment of the site adjacent to the Abberley Hotel (bottom).



How can existing streets in Tallaght be transformed to provide a safer pedestrian environment?

A well designed street network takes into account the function of the streets and prioritises pedestrian movement over cars. Various design measures can be utilised to slow down cars and provide greater freedom of movement and safety for pedestrians.



Where can we provide new pedestrian streets and links?

Pedestrian streets and links are essential to the establishment of a sustainable and lively town centre. These links can be provided in various forms and locations. Those that work best directly link important destinations and are carefully designed to provide an active, safe and, attractive environment. New links are being provided on IAP sites adjacent to The Square (bottom left image) which will form part of an enhanced pedestrian network.

Prioritising Pedestrian Movement

Tallaght Town Centre was originally designed to primarily facilitate the use of cars. This has resulted in a fragmented, uninviting and hazardous pedestrian network. Getting around on foot is a major problem for pedestrians, who face extended and indirect journeys between destinations. To promote a more vibrant and accessible centre, the focus must shift from the car to pedestrian.

- How can we shift the focus from the motor vehicle to the pedestrian in Tallaght?
- How can we increase the number of pedestrian routes between key destinations?
- What we can we do to improve existing pedestrian routes?



How can access to The Square be improved?

This diagram demonstrates walking distances to The Square. The potential 400 metre catchment is hindered by the large blocks sizes within the Town Centre and the impenetrable nature of the street and open space network.



How can access to the LUAS be improved?

This diagram demonstrates walking distances to the LUAS stations along the western and northern edges of the Town Centre. Whilst a number of households and hospital buildings are within the potential 400 metre walking catchment, residents/staff/visitors face a considerable walk due to the impenetrable nature of the street and open space network.



What are the barriers to getting around on foot?

The major cause of inaccessibility to public transport, facilities and services within the Town Centre are fences and flank walls. These are generally located at the end of cul-de-sacs and around the edges of open space and major institutions.

PARKS AND SQUARES



Can high quality public squares be provided in the Town Centre?

Public Squares provide essential and pleasant areas of open space within a busy town centre environment. Not only do they provide places to relax, they also provide space for civic functions and other activities. The most successful examples of public squares are filled with activity and attractions.



Can we get more out of our parks?

With the exception of the excellent Sean Walsh Memorial park, parks around the Town Centre offer limited amenities. The provision of a wider range of recreational facilities in these parks would enhance them greatly to both existing and future. These areas would also become more active and therefore safer spaces.



Where should public squares and parks be provided and where are they needed most?

There are numerous areas within the Town Centre which have the potential to function as lively and amenable public areas. At present much of this open space is underutilised in the form of car parking. Such areas are readily adaptable to more positive uses, if alternative for the parking of vehicles can be found..

Spaces for People

The provision of high quality public open space in and around the Town Centre needs to be greatly improved. Whilst there are a number of parklands adjacent to the Town Centre, access to these areas is limited by fences, walls and busy roads. Existing parks could also benefit from the provision of play areas, seating, walking tracks and other facilities. New urban spaces are being created through the development of the IAP tax incentive site's, however a more extensive and connected network will be required.

- How can we ensure an adequate number of public open spaces are provided in the Town Centre?
- How can we provide better access to areas of open space around the edges of the Town Centre for both existing and future residents?
- How can we improve the quality of existing public open space around the Town centre?



What type of public spaces are appropriate for the Town Centre?

Well designed public open space takes into account both active (images to the left) and passive uses (images to the right) and provides facilities to cater for each. This ensures public spaces offer a range of amenities for a diverse population as well as providing an animated and safe environment.



How can we improve access and surveillance of our parks?

Many parks in and around the Town Centre are surrounded by blank walls and high fences (top images). As such they do not present a safe or inviting environment. Parks which are surrounded by developments and roads are the most successful as this provides overlooking and access – creating a safer and more user friendly environment (bottom images).



What type of spaces do we want?

Public open space comes in many shapes and sizes. In addition to large parks, smaller parks, green strips and pedestrianised streets can also form a vital part in the provision of an integrated open space network.

BUILDINGS



How can we ensure that the Town Centre is developed in a distinctive manner?

Creating a distinctive built environment is an important element in establishing a sense of place and identity for the Town Centre. It is also an essential aspect of finding your way around the Town (also referred to as legibility). A legible environment is created through an interesting and varied built form that incorporates recognisable architectural features.



How can we ensure that the final product is of a high quality?

The success of many schemes have been judged by the quality of materials and finishes. The two buildings pictured above are similar in form. However the building to the left is bland and uninspiring. However the building to the right, which is being constructed in the Town Centre, is a much more attractive due to the higher standard of materials and finishes used.



How can we promote buildings with landmark qualities in the Town Centre?

The image of a place is often defined by particular buildings which have landmark qualities. Landmark buildings can distinguish a place on a regional, national or even a global scale. They can be used to promote an area, create a positive image of the place and improve its value as a destination.

High Quality Architecture, Streets and Spaces

Tallaght Town Centre rapidly developed in the 70s and 80s, during an era when different priorities were placed on the design of buildings. This has resulted in few distinctive buildings and a lack of contribution to the character of the area. Furthermore numerous sites are underutilised and characterised by excessive setbacks and vacant lands. However a new more responsive built environment is emerging. This is largely through the development of the Integrated Area Plan tax incentive site's.

- What can be done to ensure that future development is of a high quality?
- What are the most appropriate forms and scale of development in the Town Centre?
- How can we ensure the continued transformation of the Town Centre now that the tax incentive period appears to be coming to an end?



Are these streets?

Often when buildings are set back a distance from the street the space fronting onto the street is used for car parking areas and/or is bounded by high fences and walls. This creates an unsafe street environment that isolates the pedestrian and reduces activity levels. Well designed buildings that address the street require little if any such security treatments.



How can we make the Town Centre more distinctive?

Corner buildings are a mean of creating a strong statement. This can be done by combinations of changes in form, scale, finishes and materials. Well designed corner treatments help define an area and promote a more distinctive sense of place. The bottom two images are of development within the Town Centre.



How can we encourage the creation of better streets & spaces within the Town Centre?

Buildings that address the street create a continuous edge that avoids large areas of inactive lands. Towns and villages are made up of streets. Buildings that open onto or address the street create a continuous lively edge and avoids large areas of inactive land. The bottom two images are of new development currently under construction in the Tallaght Town Centre.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURE



How can we increase community interaction?

For the Town Centre to grow as a community, there must be places where people can interact. Well designed public spaces assist this process. Other measures that promote direct human contact are also necessary, such as community events and festivals.



How can we protect and enhance Tallaght's heritage?

The Town Centre area contains a number of protected structures and a small conservation area. Buildings of heritage significance can become a focal point of the community and promote an area's own unique identity.



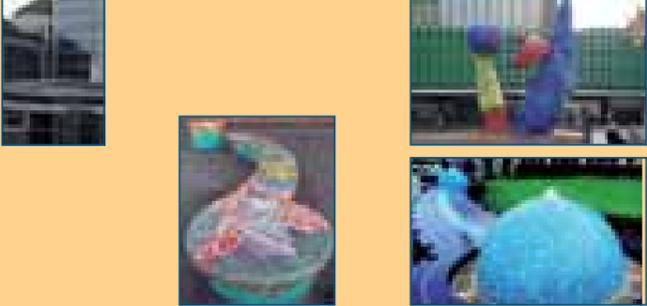
How can we promote the Town centre as a multicultural centre?

The cultural make-up of the Tallaght area is becoming increasingly diversified. If this could be reflected in the built environment of the Town Centre it could provide a sense of vibrancy and experience. Cultural quarters have huge drawing powers which promote a centre as a destination, bring with it employment and economic opportunities.

An Enhanced identity

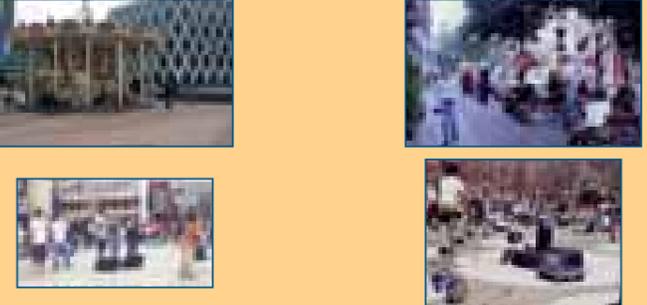
For a Town Centre to thrive it must have a sense of community and promote a sense of culture. At present the Town Centre has a very small population. The fragmented nature of the built environment has also hindered the establishment of a positive cultural identity. The development of the IAP sites will assist in addressing these issues by providing an increased population, enhanced built form and additional community and cultural assets. However further measures are needed to enhance Tallaght's reputation and promote its own unique sense of identity.

- What is unique about Tallaght and how can this be reflected in the Town Centre?
- What types of cultural and community uses could be successful in the Town Centre?



How can we express culture through the Town Centre's built form?

All aspects of the built environment can be used to express an area's identity. One of the most effective ways is through the provision of public art, particularly if it is produced by the local community. Public art can not only serve to decorate an area but can also be more functional or educational in its purpose.



Can a vibrant street life be achieved in the Town centre?

The culture of an area is also reflected in street activities. Part of this relates to open air performance and other exhibitions. However it also relates to day to day activities which are promoted by the quality of public space and adjoining land uses.



What type of cultural and community attractions are needed and could be provided in the Town Centre?

The Town Centre contains a number of cultural and community draw cards, such as the library and Civic Theatre. New facilities such as an art centre are also being developed. As the Town Centre develops there will be opportunities for the creation of further facilities.

TOWN CENTRE LIVING



Can home privacy be provided in a town centre environment?

Town centre environments will always find it difficult to compete with suburban areas when it comes to home privacy. However well designed buildings can ensure that good levels of privacy are achieved. Numerous design elements can be utilised to achieve this, such as maintained adequate separation levels, the careful arrangement of windows and internal space and the incorporation of screening devices.



Can good access to light be provided in a town centre environment?

Higher and bulkier buildings are associated with overshadowing and diminished light levels. However buildings can be designed to minimise these impacts. Overshadowing can be minimised by carefully considering building height, orientation and layout. Light within apartments can be maximised by providing dual aspects and open plan layouts.



How can residents gain access to larger areas of open space which provides a degree of privacy in a town centre environment?

Semi-private or communal courtyards are often used to meet private open space requirements. These are best provided in the centre of development and surrounded by dwellings. These areas offer secure spaces that are overlooked with access limited to residents and their guests.



How can a town centre environment compare with a traditional residential street environment?

The traditional suburban or village street is characterised by front yards and individual entrances to dwellings. This promotes an active and safe environment. In the recent past apartment developments have tended to be accessed internally through single entrance points and ground floor openings hidden behind walls and other screening devices. However a shift has occurred where own door entries and alternative ground floor treatments are prevailing which reflect a more traditional street.

Quality of Life

To promote a liveable town centre, emphasis must be placed on the provision of amenities to residents and visitors. An attractive built form, high quality public open spaces, well connected streets and pedestrian ways, easy access to shops and services all contribute to a liveable centre. However amenity must also be offered on a more personal level, in terms of internal living space and private open space. Greater housing choice must also be made available to suit individual needs and promote diversity. There is a misconception that town centre living cannot compete with suburban living in this regard. However this is not always the case.

- How can we ensure that apartments built within the town centre are of a high quality?
- Can high quality apartments be provided without out pricing large sectors of the market
- How can we ensure all residents have access to amenable levels of privacy and open space?



Can amenable private open space be provided in the town centre environment?

The key to providing a usable area of open space is related to their size, orientation and position. Generally these areas should be large enough to allow a number of items to be placed on them. They should also be orientated to receive direct sunlight for a good portion of the day through the warmer months and be directly accessible from living rooms.



Can more liveable spaces be provided in a town centre environment?

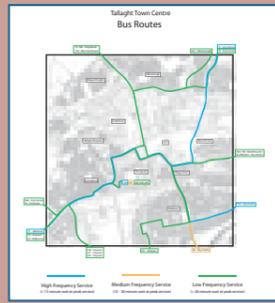
Unfortunately a number of recently developed schemes offer residents little in terms of living space and personal amenity. Separation distances between blocks is minimal. Communal areas offer only basic amenities and are often filled with parking. Private open space is limited in size and usability. However market demands and Council development standards are resulting in a shift away from these types of buildings.



What type of dwellings can be offered in the Town Centre?

There is a tendency for dwelling types to be mass produced throughout apartment blocks. Often these tend to be designed in a 'cut and paste' manner and little consideration appears to have gone into their actual liveability. Due to market demands and Council requirements, a greater range of apartment types are becoming available. However there is still a reluctance to diverge from the status quo.

TRANSPORT AND TRAFFIC



How can we improve bus services to the Town Centre?

The Town centre is served by a number of bus services of varying frequency. As the Town centre grows, greater demand will be placed on existing services. Provision will also need to be made for new services, particularly in the northern sections of the Town Centre which are currently only serviced by a limited number of low frequency services.



How can we build upon the potential of the LUAS line?

The LUAS line represents a major investment in the provision of public transport within the south west Dublin area. It has the capacity to move large numbers of people into and out of the Town Centre in quick time. It also provides people with the option of living in the Town Centre and travelling into the City Centre or other destinations with relative ease.



How can we better manage public transport within the Town Centre?

The demand for improved and additional public transport services in and around the Town Centre, will require the provision of new and upgraded facilities, such as bus shelters. Bus services should also be integrated with the LUAS and other destinations, such as Old Bawn, West Tallaght and Clondalkin to facilitate the Town Centre as a transport interchange.

Shifting The Focus Away From The Car

The growth of the Town Centre and surrounding area has seen it take on a regional role in terms of employment and service provision. This has resulted in large numbers of people travelling into and around the Town Centre. Access to the Town Centre and the circulation of traffic around it are major issues which need to be addressed. To reduce private vehicle dependency, and therefore congestion levels, priority must be given to facilitating the provision of public transport into and around the Town Centre.

Consecration must also be given to the management of private motor vehicles, particularly in terms of their impact on the Town Centre landscape.

- How can we facilitate the growth of public transport within the town centre?
- How can we control and manage traffic congestion in and around the Town centre?
- How can the impacts of the motor vehicle on the Town Centre environment best be managed?



How can we better manage cars?

The availability of car parking makes an essential contribution to a vibrant town centre. However the demand for parking within the Town centre has resulted in large areas of surface car parking. Used extensively these areas detract from the character of the Town Centre and hinder the development of a quality urban public domain.



What are the alternatives to surface car parks ?

Car parks are not attractive places and should be hidden from view where possible. The best option is for the development of basement areas. However due to the cost implications, it is not always possible to locate parking underground. Multi-storey car parks provide an alternative option. However they can have a major visual impact on the surrounding area. As such the design and location of multi-storey car parks is an issue which needs careful consideration .



Should on street parking be increased in the Town Centre

For many businesses, the provision of near by parking is essential to their viability. This can be extremely important for smaller shops, who rely heavily on passing trade. Small short term parking areas located directly outside shops allow people to pull over in front of shops which are of interest.

TALLAGHT - The Historic Context



Village:

Tallaght remained a rural village until the 1960's consisting mainly of the Main Street/ Blessington Road and the Old Bawn Road. It was connected to Dublin City by the Blessington tram.



Monastic Settlement:

Tallaght had its origins as a monastic settlement founded by St. Maelruan. The religious function was continued by the Archbishop of Dublin who built his residence in Tallaght. Tallaght was also of importance as a defensive outpost along the Pale boundary.



Myles Wright:

In the mid 1960's the Irish Government commissioned the well known British planner Myles Wright to devise an expansion plan for Dublin City. His strategy, which was broadly adopted, was the creation of four new towns to the west of Dublin City, Blanchardstown, Lucan, Clondalkin and Tallaght.

Tallaght New Town: The 1970's

Unlike new towns in the UK or the United States, there were no development corporations created to develop the Irish New Towns. The primary responsibility fell to Dublin County Council who bought land, provided road, water and sewerage and open space infrastructure and along with Dublin Corporation engaged in a major housing programme. Numerous other State agencies were also involved in the provision of infrastructure such as schools, industrial estates and public transport. The major private investment was in housing, employment and retail. The planned population for the New Town was 100,000 and the expectation was that the car would be the predominant means of transport.



Tallaght Town Centre: The 1980's

By the mid 1980's the majority of the New Town was built, apart from the Town Centre. The development brief (1979) advanced a framework which would facilitate a wide range of development decisions. It recognised that a low-density form of development was likely until the demand for land in the centre reached a certain level. While the brief contains guidelines on the various Town Centre components and uses, circulation and access, public transport, pedestrian routes, squares and spaces, building form and materials, a notable aspect in the brief is the absence of the word "street". However, it required the first Urban Renewal Tax Incentive Scheme to kick start the development. The Square Retail Shopping Centre at the time one of the largest in the State, opened in 1990.



A New County: The 1990's

Following Local Government re-organisation in 1994, South Dublin County was created with Tallaght designated as the County Town. The development of the Council Headquarters along with the 3rd Level Tallaght Regional College (now the Tallaght Institute of Technology), followed by Tallaght Hospital completed the first major phase of the Town Centre development.

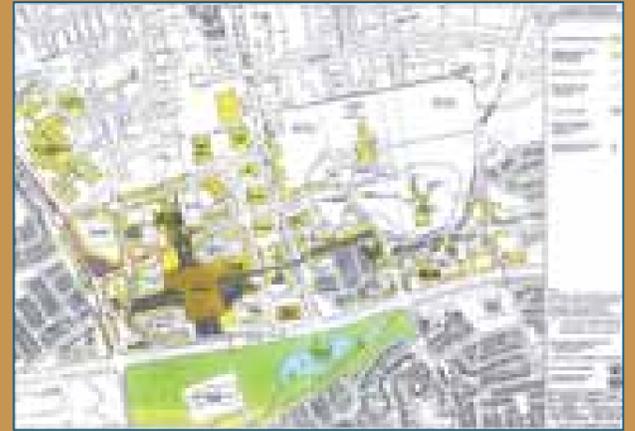
TALLAGHT TOWN CENTRE The Current Planning Context



Tallaght Town Centre 2000 Plan : (1996)

In 1995 the Council, following extensive consultation, launched a new development model for the Town Centre moving away from a car dominated urban form. The vision for the Town Centre was "Tallaght Town Centre will be a modern town centre with a much increased residential population and workforce with the following characteristics;

- an upgraded urban form
- people intensive uses
- much improved accessibility for all
- significant environmental improvements".



Completed Town Centre Projects

New section of East West Street constructed at Belgard Square North.
New North South Street under construction at Belgard Square West.
New Pedestrian Streets/Public realm under construction
Covered Pedestrian Link between The Square and High Street.

Courthouse built

High density residential development in the Town Centre (3 schemes built, 3 under construction).

Master-plan for Tallaght Institute of Technology agreed
Plaza Hotel built.

LRT - Line and terminus in operation.

Public Transport Interchange at design stage.

Accessibility Action Plan implemented.

Traffic Circulation "Box" completed

- Cookstown/Towncentre Road
- Greenhills Road Extension



Urban Design Framework 1998:

The Urban Design Framework further advanced the vision of the Town Centre 2000 Plan by indicating a series of development opportunities i.e. the Millennium Square, the public transport interchange, the Courthouse Square. It also showed how the new streets could be created on the undeveloped /redeveloped sites of the earlier phase.

Development Plan 2004 - 2010

The recently adopted Development Plan includes aims to intensify and expand the Town Centre area and to facilitate the development of the extended town centre subject to a Masterplan. It is intended that the new Town Centre Masterplan shall provide, in particular, for;

- new streets and civic spaces
- better linkages to existing areas
- conservation of the historic quarter of the
- people-intensive uses appropriate to a Town
- the provision of safe and convenient pedestrian and cycling facilities
- development of a particular character for the town-centre (urban branding) through design of streetlighting, landscaping, paving, signage;
- intensification of the existing urban core
- phasing and implementation, including relocation of existing uses;
- the development of the Luas and a high quality public transport interchange;
- provide guidance to restrict the height of new development or redevelopment along Old Bawn Road, Blessington Road and Main Street

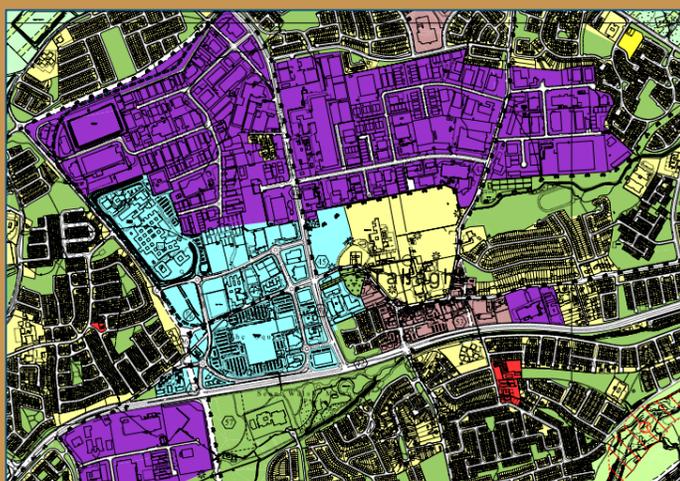


Tallaght Integrated Area Plans /Urban Renewal Scheme 1998

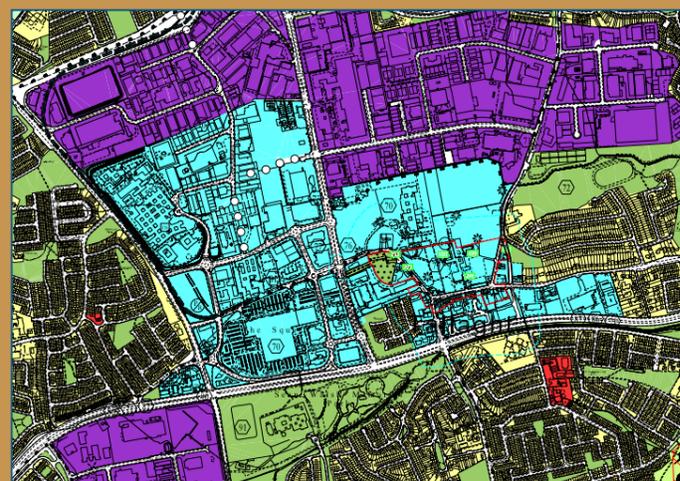
In 1998 the Council, in partnership with a number of local development groups, produced the Integrated Area Plans (IAP) for both Tallaght. The plan was produced in the context of addressing the physical, economic, social and environmental regeneration of the Town Centre and in the adjoining disadvantaged residential areas.

The Tallaght IAP provided the mechanism to achieve the vision for the Town Centre as set out in the Tallaght Town Centre 2000 Plan. It involved the creation of a new urban streetscape, lively commercial uses, a significant residential population (over 2,000 apartments) and the creation of a number of new public spaces linked by a high quality pedestrian network.

Twenty vacant, derelict or under used sites were designated in the Town Centre for a range of tax incentives. The IAP included site briefs for each of these sites.



1998 South Dublin County Development Plan

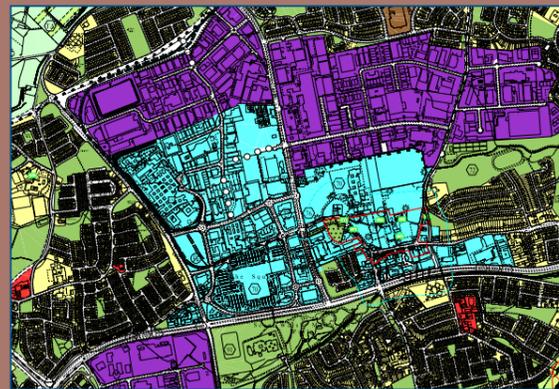


2004 South Dublin County Development Plan

EMPLOYMENT and WORK



A Prosperous and Growing Town Centre



Extract from South Dublin County Development Plan 2004-2010 showing expanded zoning for Tallaght Town Centre

The Town Centre Zoning expanded to the north taking in the southern part of Cookstown Industrial Estate. Also the old village area was rezoned Town Centre from District Centre along with the lands around the Institute of Technology and Priory. This expanded Town Centre Zoning will provide greater opportunities for employment creation within the Town Centre.

It is also important to note that the lands coloured purple were formerly zoned as Industrial lands and were rezoned as Enterprise, Employment and Related Uses.

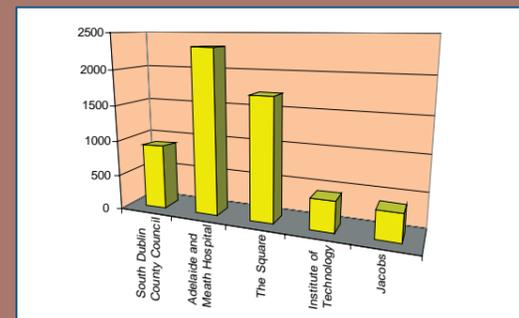
A Prosperous Centre of Enterprise

There are 9137 people employed in Tallaght Town Centre (Zoned Area). This breaks down into a variety of sectors. The largest employment areas are Office employment, the Retail Sector and the Health Sector.

- 2443 people (27%) are employed in Offices, with 1467 people employed in South Dublin County Council
- 2399 people (26%) are employed in the Retail Sector, with 1718 being employed in The Square.
- 2326 people (26%) are employed in the area of Health, with 2316 being employed in the Adelaide and Meath Hospital.
- 927 people (10%) are employed in Manufacturing/Warehousing/Distribution type employment.
- 565 people (6%) are employed in education, with 431 of those being employed in Tallaght Institute of Technology.
- 246 people (3%) are employed by Financial Institutions.
- 166 people (2%) are employed in the Community Sector.

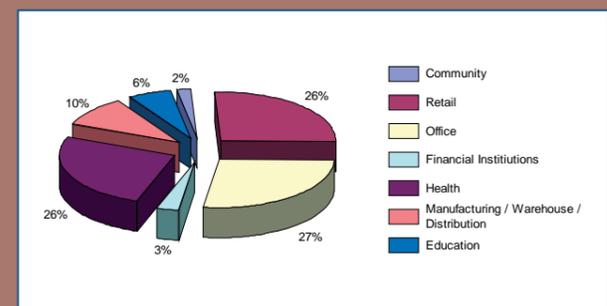
Traditionally Tallaght has been associated with Manufacturing/ Warehousing/ Distribution Industries. However, there has been a change in employment profile in recent years and traditional industries now comprise only 10% of employment make up in Tallaght.

- What kind of employment should be encouraged in Tallaght in the Future?
- Should there be a mix of employment types including manufacturing and warehousing?
- Should we be competing for office based employment?



Who are the Main Employers in Tallaght?

- South Dublin County Council employ 1467 people (whole time equivalent).
- The Adelaide and Meath Hospital employ 2316 people (whole time equivalent).
- The Square employs 1718 people (whole time equivalent).
- The Institute of Technology employs 431 people (whole time equivalent).
- Jacobs employs 389 people (whole time equivalent).



Employment in Tallaght Town Centre



What are Tallaght's main competitive advantages?

Tallaght offers a wide range of opportunities for future employment growth.

- The location of the Town adjacent to the M50 Motorway and along the LUAS is an enormous advantage.
- There is a large amount of development potential in Tallaght due to the availability of brownfield sites and underutilised sites.
- Major Institutions such as the Adelaide and Meath Hospital and Tallaght Institute of Technology already exist in Tallaght and these should aid in the expansion of Tallaght's employment base.
- A stable residential population exists in Tallaght and added to this will be an increasing population, both within Tallaght and in the environs, which will provide the work force for an expanding economic base.



Who are Tallaght's Competitors for Investment Opportunities?

PROCEDURES - WHAT NOW

CONSULTATION MEETINGS - February

Written Submissions to 24th March

**Formal Consultation - Late Summer
Draft Plan on Display (6 weeks)**

**Report on Consultation to Council
with recommendations (6 weeks)**

Council Determination (6 weeks)

**Possibility of further display, reporting
and determination (14 weeks)**

ADOPTION OF PLAN