



## **Report to An tÁrdmhera and Elected Members**

30 May 2016

### ***Proposed Rezoning of Marrowbone Lane Depot Site and Bridgefoot Street Site***

I am writing to you relation to two land use zoning matters, which you will have to deal with as part of the current Development Plan Review.

#### **Marrowbone Lane Depot Site**

There has been a significant media campaign in support of a proposal to rezone the City Council's Marrowbone Lane Depot site. By way of background I wish to advise you that a detailed review of the City Council's depots has recently been undertaken. The review highlighted the opportunity and need that exists to develop a more efficient depot operating model, which will facilitate the provision of improved working conditions for staff, the delivery of a better service to citizens especially of the South East and South Central areas and the achievement of improved operational efficiencies/cost savings. The review recommended:

1. the development of a major new depot in Ballymun to serve the north city area,
2. the redevelopment/consolidation of the Marrowbone Lane Depot, on a reduced site footprint, to serve the city centre and the south city areas and
3. the closure of a significant number of depots right across the City Council area. Many of these depots are no longer 'fit for purpose', they are poorly located and their use as depots is inconsistent with their current land use zoning. These depot lands will be freed up for more appropriate development.

The current zoning of the Marrowbone Lane Depot site is a combination of Z6 (Employment/Enterprise) & Z10 (Inner Suburban Sustainable Mixed-Use). As part of the review of the Development Plan and in response to representations from Sporting Liberties and other local Groups, the Council passed a motion to rezone these lands to Z9 (Amenity/Open space lands) in September 2015.

In my report to Members on submissions received on the draft City Development Plan I have proposed that the Depot site should continue to be zoned as per the current City Development

Plan - Z6 and Z10 - with a new Z9 (Amenity/Open Space lands) zoning on part of the site adjacent to St. Catherine's Leisure Centre.

This approach will allow the Marrowbone Lane Depot Consolidation Project to proceed. This Project will deliver a well designed consolidated Depot on a significantly smaller footprint (45% of the current Depot footprint) enabling the continued delivery of essential Council services including flood risk management, street cleaning, road maintenance and housing maintenance to the city centre and south city areas. The balance of the site will be given over to the provision of improved recreational facilities, some social housing and new access routes as provided for in the Liberties Local Area Plan.

This approach is consistent with the Liberties Local Area Plan. In 2007 a major public consultation process was undertaken to develop a Local Area Plan and vision for the Liberties area. This is an ambitious plan, the implementation of which has been delayed by the recession. The Depot Consolidation Project will expedite the implementation of important elements of the Liberties Local Area Plan by facilitating the following:

- the provision of additional all weather pitches adjacent to and managed by St. Catherine's Leisure Centre (one 7 a-side pitch: 60mt x 35mt; one 4 a-side pitch: 20mt x 35mt; in addition to the existing astro field),
- the provision of an additional 10,135 m<sup>2</sup> of new residential development,
- an improved active street frontage and public realm along Marrowbone Lane
- improved permeability of the area by provision of 2 new access routes - the Robert Street South extension & an extension to Allingham Street.

An outline of the how the site will be developed is attached.

The Executive of the City Council is very sympathetic to the demands of Sporting Liberties. Officials have met with the Group on two occasions. The proposals for additional sporting facilities on the Marrowbone Lane Depot site were modified in response to suggestions made by the Group. Sporting Liberties have also requested that Dublin City Council examines the possibility of constructing a full sized Gaelic Games pitch on top of the proposed consolidated Depot. We have recently engaged a firm of Consulting Engineers to carry out a feasibility study of this proposal. The Council is also examining other sites within the area, which may have deliver additional sports/playing pitch facilities.

In deciding on this matter Elected Members may wish to reflect on the following:

1. the proposed rezoning of the Depot lands in contrary to the Liberties Local Area Plan, the duration of which you only recently voted to extend,
2. by rezoning the Depot lands you may be putting in jeopardy the future of direct labour service provision by the City Council by frustrating a long overdue and much needed Depot upgrade project and
3. critically a real opportunity to provide significant additional sporting facilities in the South Central Area in the short term will be lost.

If the Depot site is rezoned the Depot use will continue as a non-conforming use while the Council seeks to identify, acquire and develop an alternative city centre/south city Depot site. This could take a very considerable amount of time.

In conclusion, Elected Members need to be aware that rezoning of the Depot site will not result in the provision of a full sized football pitch as suggested by Sporting Liberties in the foreseeable future. However, it will ensure that the opportunity, which is before you, to provide enhanced recreational facilities for the people of the South Inner City in the short time, and to implement significant elements of the Liberties Local Area Plan will be lost.

### **Bridgefoot Street Site**

This site, which is bounded by Bridgefoot Street, Island Street and Bonham Street, is currently zoned Z5 (City Centre zoning). There is a proposal to rezone this site Z9 (Amenity/Open Space so that it can only be developed as a Park or for other recreational purposes.

The City Council is committed to developing a substantial part of this site as a public Park. In response to concerns expressed by local Councillors regarding the deficit of recreational/amenity facilities in this area of the city I am now proposing that a more extensive Park be developed on the site than is provided for in the Liberties Local Area Plan. However, both the City Architect and the Parks Superintendent have recommended the provision of housing around the perimeter of the site to improve the existing streetscape and to provide a degree of passive surveillance for the Park. The extent and nature of this housing will be a matter for decision by the Council. A substantial Park with an element of housing can be accommodated under the existing Z5 zoning but will not be possible under the proposed Z9 zoning. I strongly recommend that Members retain the existing Z5 zoning.

I hope this clarifies my position on these two important matters.

Owen P Keegan  
**Chief Executive**