

COMHAIRLE CONTAE FHINE GALL

FINGAL COUNTY COUNCIL

Fingal Development Plan 2023-2029

Tuesday, 18th January 2022

Chapter 2 – Planning for Growth, Core Strategy & Settlement Strategy

Motion from Councillor Ian Carey, Councillor Karen Power, Councillor Pamela Conroy, Councillor David Healy and Councillor Daniel Whooley: 74489

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Insert new objective under Swords Key Town Objectives:

"Facilitate the strategic regeneration of open space and recreational amenity within Swords to meet the needs of a growing population, in particular the development of the Ward River Valley Regional Park."

REPORT:

Fingal's open spaces, including its public parks, its demesne landscapes, coastal amenities, playgrounds and other outdoor facilities are prized resources within the County and Fingal County Council promotes an inclusive approach to access and accessibility. The variety of open space comprises a major component of the Green Infrastructure network of the County. The availability of good quality, highly accessible public spaces in close proximity to our homes is a vital local resource and an important element in the establishment of successful neighbourhoods and in fostering a sense of place. Fingal has a well-defined network of open spaces and recreational facilities that are accessible to significant numbers of the County's population. There are a number of policies and objectives in the CE Draft Plan which seek to seek to develop and protect the county's Green Infrastructure, including:

Policy CIOSP13 seeks to *'Continue the development of a hierarchy of multifunctional active and passive recreational open spaces and facilities to serve all age cohorts'*.

Objective CIOSO30 seeks to *'Provide a wide variety of resiliently designed, sustainably managed and accessible public open spaces, including allotments,*

community gardens, parklands and sporting facilities, on a hierarchical basis throughout the County in order to achieve a choice of open space facilities. Best practice Green Infrastructure Guidelines should be used to determine the location and type of open spaces to be provided'.

Policy GINHP2 seeks to *'Ensure that areas and networks of Green Infrastructure are identified, protected, enhanced, managed and created to provide a wide range of environmental, social and economic benefits to communities'.*

Policy GINHP5 seeks to *'Develop the Green Infrastructure network to ensure the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity, including the protection of European Sites, the provision of accessible parks, open spaces and recreational facilities (including allotments and community gardens), the sustainable management of water, the maintenance of landscape character including historic landscape character and the protection and enhancement of archaeological and heritage landscapes'.*

Ward River Valley Regional Park is a linear park on the banks of the Ward River south of Swords town. It covers an area of 89 ha. (220 acres) between Swords town centre and Knocksedan Bridge. This motion requests the inclusion of a specific objective to *'Facilitate the strategic regeneration of open space and recreational amenity within Swords to meet the needs of a growing population, in particular the development of the Ward River Valley Regional Park'.*

Recognising the importance and scale of the Ward River Valley Park to Swords and the wider area and having regard to the strategic nature of the motion, it is considered acceptable to agree with this motion and to include a new Green Infrastructure Map (GIM) based local objective which will address this motion.

RECOMMENDATION:

Agreed. Include a new Green Infrastructure Map (GIM) based local objective for the Ward River Valley Regional Park – GIM28 – stating the following:

Develop a 'green necklace' of open spaces which are linked to each other and to the existing town centre of Swords, and to new development areas, promoting enhanced physical and visual connections to the Ward River Valley Regional Park and the Broadmeadow River Valley Park from within the development boundary of Swords. Develop an appropriate entrance to the Ward River Valley and provide for a comprehensive network of pedestrian and cycle ways, linking housing to commercial areas, to the town centre and to MetroLink stops and linking the three water bodies (the Ward River Valley, the Broadmeadow River Valley and the Estuary) to each other and prepare a Landscape and Recreation Strategy for the Ward River Valley.

