

TOWARDS A LIFFEY VALLEY PARK

ANNEXES



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ANNEX A CONSULTATION REPORT

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This Annex presents further information on the public consultation undertaken during the development of this strategy. The first table presents the

Submissions received during the initial period of June 2005 when requests for information were advertised in the national press. This submission period proved extremely useful and provided important local information on the Liffey Valley.

The second table presents the comments received on the Draft Strategy over February and March 2006. Copies of the executive summary and the Main report were available for inspection and were also available on the ERM Ireland website. Further information on the issues raised in presented in the following sections.

A number of other stakeholders and agencies were consulted over the course of the strategy development. Initially each relevant Local Area Committee, in the four Local Authority areas, was briefed about the project. When the Draft Strategy became available, these committees were again briefed on the main contents of the Draft Strategy.

The study team also undertook a number of meetings with planners, heritage officers, engineers and parks managers within the local authorities. The information gathering exercise was also supplemented by a number of meetings with tourism organisations, fisheries boards and other relevant organisations. Finally, a workshop was held with local authority and OPW staff on 24th September to discuss the baseline findings and identify the best means of managing the Liffey Valley.

The following section outlines the key issues from the comments received on the Draft Strategy and is followed by the submission tables and issues raised at the workshop held on 24th September.

1.2 FEEDBACK FROM PUBLIC SUBMISSIONS ON DRAFT STRATEGY

There was a significant response to the Draft Strategy as issued in February 2006, reflecting the strong interest, both local and national, in the Liffey Valley. A number of submissions related to particular localised issues, however the majority identified three principal concerns:

- The need for wider representation on the Strategy Steering Group to include Elected Representatives;



- The need for a consultative process to facilitate interested stakeholders to contribute to the work of the Liffey Valley Strategy;

The need to consider the creation of a dedicated management unit for the Park.

It is opinion of ERM that these public submissions are of considerable merit. It is recommended that these issues be a key feature of deliberation by the Strategy Steering Group that will oversee the implementation of the Strategy. The following section presents the key issues raised during the public submission process and identifies where it is of relevance to the Strategy.

1.3 PROPOSED MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The majority of submissions received expressed concern about the proposed management structure especially in relation to the lack of a dedicated unit to implement the Strategy and the perceived limitation on public representative and local community involvement. These submissions particularly relate to Objectives One, Two and Three (Sections 3.5 to 3.7 respectively) in the Strategy.

The proposed Strategy Steering Group should therefore consider as a matter of priority the issue as follows:

- The Group's final membership and the need for a more effective consultative process with the wider community.

In tandem with the initial considerations of the Strategy Steering Group, the relevant actions, of the Strategy, applying to the Local Authorities should be implemented in line with the Strategy. Finally the Group could begin to give consideration to the establishment of a dedicated unit when the review of the Strategy is completed as proposed in the Strategy

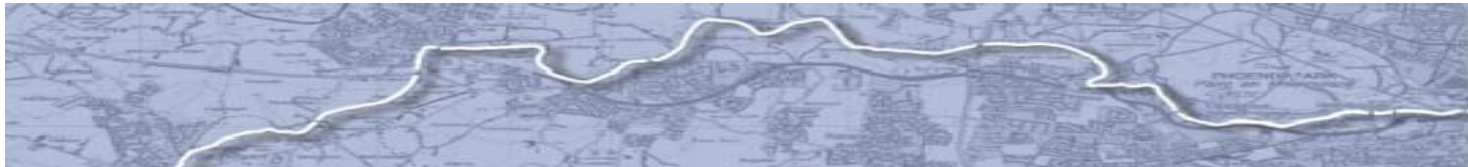


1.4 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM SUBMISSION PERIOD JUNE 2005

Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Robert Grandon, County Carlow	<p>Detailed submission recommending:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate and secured access for the public particularly around Lucan Demesne to Strawberry Beds, Chapelizod and Islandbridge. Long term look at full access along River Liffey. • Enhance habitats but not sterilise them • Biodiversity a key resource to be enjoyed by urban population • Recommend consultation with recreational users of the area to ascertain how they would use it • Tourism and recreational attraction should link between park and areas downstream • Recommend the park should be linked to the source of the Liffey • Importance of partnership approach with OPW and local authorities so park not set in isolation. • A national park scenario for length of Liffey from Wicklow to Kilcullen, edge of Curragh and the Plains, Cellbridge, Leixlip to Lucan <p>Concern raised about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • encroachment by built development around Chapelizod and Islandbridge
Eoin Wrixen, Dublin	<p>Recommends:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A pedestrian cycle route from Phoenix Park Gate at Parkgate Street, through Strawberry Beds to Lucan and St Catherine's (Lucan Demesne). • Benefits of non-car based access route to city • linking Phoenix Park, Porterstown Playing fields and planned pitches next to Castleknock golf and country club for pedestrians/cyclists will enhance benefits to residents. <p>Concerns</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • that from Lucan bridge, past Lucan Mill to Strawberry Beds is currently inaccessible for pedestrians/cyclists due to volume of traffic, limited width of road and lack of dedicated pedestrian facilities.
Michael V Cullinan, Dublin 8	<p>Identifies the urban eighteenth and nineteenth patterns of town/village with larger houses and demesnes circling the village and defining the landscapes.</p> <p>Principal characteristic of the Liffey Valley are these estates and demesnes.</p> <p>Recommends the state as guardians of this landscape and manage this resource for the greater good.</p>
Duncan Crowley, Dublin	<p>Currently working on proposal for a botanic spine for Dublin city, along the inner city to banks of the canals and linking with communities and park in between.</p>



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Joe Williams, Clondalkin	<p>Provides information on Industrial Archaeology along southern bank of river:</p> <p>Mill Race: from New Holland weir at 'Wrens Nest' to point along Mills at Palmerstown, a distance of 3km.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many bridges along this route have been vandalised but could be refurbished as much stonework in the water. • Banks may have to be rebuilt in locations. <p>Iron Bridge - built c.1880 to carry water from Power Station at Mill Lane to Water Tower at Farmleigh</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommend reopening as would allow access to Waterstown Park from Strawberry beds and link South side of Liffey to Phoenix Park <p>Palmerstown Mills and Rettory</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscaping work required at frontage of mills - suggest removing wall between mills and park below Palmerstown House • The 'Flax Steep' within this area is one of few remaining artefacts of Linen Industry in Leinster
Lucan Planning Council	<p>Detailed response providing information on: The background of the organisation. Concerns about attempts to narrow definition of the valley to facilitate housing closer to the river. Full endorsement of Liffey Valley Park Alliance proposals, in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overall, binding plan required to prevent redefinition of valley at every County Development plan review. • Management should be through Park Authority or led by OPW and endorsed by local authorities. • Area requiring protection far larger than that under public ownership. Cite examples of Lagan Valley as good example of new park model. <p><i>Information provided on:</i></p> <p>Amenity and Recreational use:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lucan Demesne much valued for passive recreation. • River well used for canoeing and angling • Publicly owned heritage features tend to be poorly maintained with restricted access. Examples cited of Lucan medieval church, King John's Bridge, Esker Church. Public access to Primrose Hill (privately owned) and limited access to Lucan House, the Italian Embassy.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
	<p>Enhancement proposals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to Lucan Demesne from Lucan and adequate parking to be improved. • Strawberry Beds road (Lower Road) needs to be made safe for cyclists, pedestrians and vehicles. • Lucan area needs more public playing pitches within park. • Support for enhancement of Shackleton Mills by Fingal Co Co. <p>Public Access:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Needs to be created along Strawberry Beds • Needs to be created on south bank of river between Lucan and Palmerstown – Guinness/Iron Bridge already in public ownership. <p>Tourism Potential:</p> <p>Is largely ignored. Some local hotels are very supportive of idea of Liffey Valley Festival linked to Liffey Descent.</p> <p>Linkages to other attractions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OPW link to Phoenix & Memorial Gardens, Farmleigh, Lucan Demesne and Castletown. Common ticketing and advertisements of Ashtown Castle, Aras an Uachtarain, Farmleigh and Castletown.
Lucan Historical Society	<p>Detailed response providing information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full endorsement of Liffey Valley Park Alliance proposals • New concept of park incorporating public, private and institutional lands. <p>Information provided on:</p> <p>Recreation – Lucan Demesne very popular amenity, long use of river for canoeing and angling.</p> <p>Features of historical importance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • King John’s Bridge, medieval churches and castles, 18th and 10th century houses and churches, historic mills. • Welcome proposals for Shackleton’s Mill. • Welcome traffic calming proposes for Strawberry Beds. • Desirable if river banks can have improved public access from strategic purchases of land. • Substantial tracts of land in public ownership provide nucleus for valley park



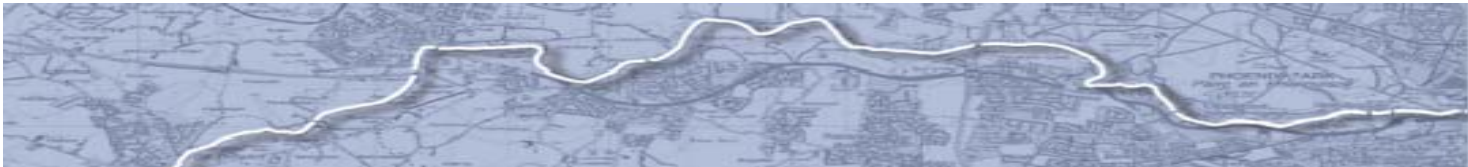
Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Irish Canoe Union, Dublin 12	<p>Proposal submitted for development of Lucan Demesne Sluice Weir as centre of excellence for Olympic Canoe Slalom:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Park administration/ maintenance facility built in area of Sluice Weir to accommodate the following: • Park maintenance and administration; • Toilet and changing facilities • Boat storage and park rescue boat. • Provision of apartment for park Warden and family would add security to building. • Potential for coffee shop on decked area of building and a band stand in appropriate area. • Design of such facility should reflect architecture of Lucan village and share design features of Trinity Boathouse at Islandbridge. • This submission a forerunner of more detailed proposal between stakeholders and ICU
Leixlip and District Angling Association	<p>Information on background to Association.</p> <p>More than 200 members, aims to encourage young people, nominal membership to ensure association is open, and association also active in environmental protection – worked on Three Rivers Project to monitor water quality.</p> <p>Controls the fishing on Rye Water, only spawning area for Liffey salmon downstream of dam.</p> <p>Recognise the recreational opportunity of the park</p> <p>Concerns that access to the river has been eroded by private housing from Leixlip Bridge to Leixlip Wastewater treatment. No longer possible to walk along banks of the river.</p>
Caislean Riada Residents Association	<p>Background to Residents Association.</p> <p>Stating their support for the park, seeking National Park Status, and support the LVPA.</p> <p>Large number of families and although no data, would suggest heavy usage, increased popularity of valley.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediate moratorium of all development should be the first recommendation • Increase in public access, potential tourism amenity should be explored • Balance is the key between peace and recreation • Cites good examples from Canada, Europe.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Paul Gogerty, TD, Lucan	<p>Supports work of Liffey Valley Park Alliance. Provides information on the following:</p> <p>Current usage:</p> <p>Part of the Lucan Demesne under ownership of Italian State – opportunities for integrating Lucan House (Italian Embassy) into National Park in active or passive manner.</p> <p>Land under ownership of Ballymore Properties at St Edmunsbury/Woodville – essential element of any park proposals.</p> <p>Opportunities for enhancement of resources:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pedestrian and cycling links between existing public sites should be enhanced by local authorities • Links between Memorial Park, Islandbridge to Phoenix Park, and new cross river link to Waterstown Park. Safer route to Shackleton’s Mills including traffic managed Strawberry Beds, potential pedestrian bridge to St Edmunsbury links between Lucan Demesne, St Catherine’s, Leixlip and Cooldrinagh Estate and route to Castletown Demesnes. • Such linkages could be established between adjacent undeveloped sites under public and private ownership as part of negotiations. • Mills Lane and Stewarts Hospital land to Waterstown Park, route linking Ballymore Property lands to lands beside St Mary’s BNS and Scout’s Den, Lucan and onto riverbank at Lucan Weir. <p>Public Access Recommendations:</p> <p>Searches to ascertain old Rights of Way, where favourable should be marked in Development Plans and current routes should be closely scrutinised.</p> <p>Access through private land through negotiation whilst protecting owners rights, with two exceptions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Italian State lands – pre 1952 an integral part of Lucan Demesne and local community have fond memories. Continued limited public access should be done in consultation with Italian Embassy • St Edmunsbury – 80% voters in 1998 wanted it to remain undeveloped. Recommend SAAO be extended to all lands from Lucan Bridge to new hospital at Fonthill as bounded by N4 and Lucan road. • State should make serious offer to purchase Ballymore lands in their entirety at agricultural value plus a profit and maintenance incentive.



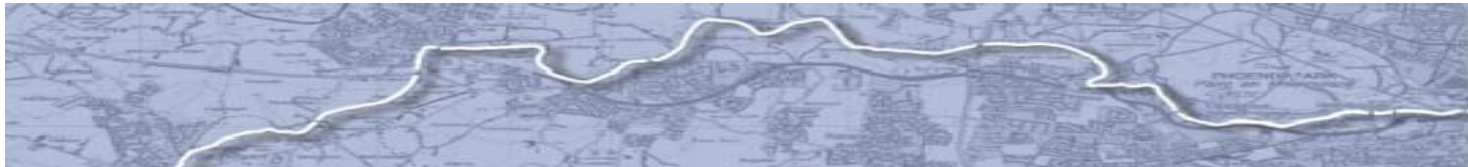
Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
	<p>Neighbouring St Andrews NS needs new premises and could be relocated in 'Bulls Field' or on strip of farmland facing Chalet Gardens. Waterstown park - not heavily used. This part of the park could accommodate more people centred activities with links to Mill Lane, pedestrian bridge to Strawberry Beds, walkway along Liffey through St Edmonsbury and onto Lucan Bridge.</p> <p>Tourism and Active Use potential: Front of St Edmonsbury and Waterstown Park. Rich historical value should be marketed properly - tourist trails, Spa waters at Lucan and Sarsfield's Castle. Big houses and Cellbridge Mill other potential tourism sites. Addition of tea rooms (formerly at Lucan house in 1950s) would be a great attraction. Wooden team rooms at entrance points would draw visitors. Liffey Descent should be promoted more. Cross country racing a potential activity. Primary objectives;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be conservation of Liffey Valley, existing high amenity and agricultural zonings should be enshrined through national legislation. No residential units in perpetuity along the valley. Park related development should be sensitive and sympathetic. • Not necessary to purchase private lands with exception of St Edmonsbury's. Lagan Valley model is put forward as well as Greenways Concept.
Des Kelly, Lucan	<p>Rush of housing provision and lack of facilities and features to enhance quality of life. Government should purchase lands including St Edmunsbury and provide functional park for daily access as alternative to bus/car. SAAO should be extended to ensure no residential development especially at St Edmunsbury. Government should handover land for new site to St Andrew's national school. Recreational and social facilities should be provided to ensure maximum number of users. Measures need to be implemented to ensure park is safe user friendly facility.</p>
Tony McEvoy, Elected Member and Clane Community Council	<p>Detailed response providing information on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations that Open Space and Amenity Objectives (OSA4) of Kildare County Development Plan be extended to Clane (Millicent Bridge) and accompanying St Patrick's well. Norman Mote at Cline a feature and also contains a spring (Sunday's Well). Highly scenic between Millicent Bridge and Cline. • Important to set minimum definite set back lines, for flood protection and landscape protection. A need for this to be strongly enforced centrally.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Strawberry Beds Residents Association	<p>Recommends the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Valley should be treated as a whole from Islandbridge to Clane and further. Boundaries of Park should be clearly defined with no ambiguity Despite aspirations of Development Plans, no realistic budget has been put in place Traffic calming along R109 necessary as dangerous to use as amenity. Separate Authority to administer, develop and manage national park. No need to acquire additional land, just vision and courage to see benefits to community, like the Phoenix Park did 200 years ago.
Gus O'Connell, Elected Member	<p>Unique living landscape that is a Jewel in the Crown of greater Dublin area.</p> <p>Has been overlooked for its amenity, recreational and heritage value due in large part to mushrooming of west Dublin conurbation. New communities lack infrastructure, suffer heavy traffic and lack of essential services.</p> <p>A green lung and cultural landscape of enormous significance.</p> <p>Very early settlement evidenced by stone burial boxes at Waterstown park, around ancient estate at Palmerstown which dates back to Palmers Hospital around 1189, founded by Aldred the Dane.</p> <p>Enhancement Opportunities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Aspirations of County Development Plans noted but fear will not be achieved due to threat of development, lack of funding and to date Irish National Parks in state ownership. Good governance essential and realistic approach to management for public and private lands. Extends SACs and SAAO. Strategic Development Plan required from source to sea of Liffey. A national park can showcase the landscape and accommodate desire of people to live and work. IUCN definition of National Park could be adopted, and important to be called a national park. Key to developing park is through zoning and good management though joint statutory authority possibly in form of park trust with elected members, special interest groups, community groups, business groups and public servants.
Lucan Sarsfields GAA Club	<p>Welcomes study, and endorses Liffey Valley Park Alliance.</p> <p>Particularly interested in :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provision of field sports in park, severe pressure on existing facilities due to huge population growth. Encouraging participation of young people in active sports is key part of government strategy for future health concerns but club has no additional capacity to meet demand. St Edmsbury should be designated. Club owns own grounds at 12th Lock in Lucan and use DSCC pitches at Griffeen Valley and Willbrook but inadequate.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Patrick Guinness, Naas	<p>Comments on differing aims between current study and those of the Liffey Valley Park Alliance –ie: is a linear park proposed for benefit of Dubliners, or conservation of natural resources, or both?</p> <p>Suggests the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study should encompass Wicklow to avoid accusations of being Dublin centred • This facilitates water flow rates to be analysed, a key pressure. • Inventory of government, local authority and semi state owned riverside property should be made available. • Consultation should thereafter start with landowners if areas identified ideally by CPO. • Sensitivities of riverside landowners and their stewardship of the land should be recognised. • Policies should reward and encourage landowners to preserve their environments • Costs should be developed: creating riverside parks and access over private owned lands. • Health and safety considerations for encouraging access to river, suggest new function of River Warden. • General indemnity costs • Time limit (12 hours a day) for visits to riverside otherwise may be unworkable. • Costing for lawyers, public servants, valuers etc. • Alternative to access across private land may be via conducted tours, with landowner paid for each group of visitor (to cover landowner costs such as parking, time, indemnity) • Cites a number of examples of private owned lands that have been preserved by owners along the Liffey Valley.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Dublin and District Salmon Anglers Association Ltd	<p>Provided information on background and membership of Association. Comments made on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liffey within Lucan Demesne provides salmon, trout and coarse angling, but quality has suffered mainly due to declining fish stocks. • Protection and development of fishery especially salmon important and should feature strongly in management • Very supportive of linear park along Liffey. Acknowledges facilitating better access but quality of natural environment should be paramount. Sanctuary for wildlife core management objective and human use viewed within that context. Playing fields, playgrounds etc not appropriate for this type of park. <p>Recommendations for Lucan Demesne:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop as mixed fishing for trout, salmon, coarse angling with greatest emphasis on salmon • Regulation and control of fishing within the demesne required. Since local authority management, fishing has declined and moving towards a 'free for all' • Angling from footbridge should be prohibited, angling should not be permitted along south river bank from footbridge east to 1st gate on path – safety and salmon conservation • Removal of weir remains would benefit fishers improving river upstream and create new pools and flows. Cut limestone could be reused for stands • Access for angler should be provided along both banks of river. • Areas are appropriate for vegetation clearing and for replanting. • Canoeing and boating within demesne should be encouraged but no particular stretch should be solely allocated for single use. • Day tickets and weekly tickets could be available for tourists • Specific sites should be developed to encourage young anglers • Proactive approach needed to monitor water quality especially in relation to wastewater treatment at St Catherine's and water abstraction at Leixlip dam • Not clear that local authorities are most appropriate managers unless a full time manager with appropriate expertise is appointed. Alternatively, lease could be given to an angling club. • Strongly encourage careful consideration of long term management in broader context of park and single fishing entity from City to Leixlip.
Liam Roe, Cellbridge	<p>Concerns about access in grounds of Castletown. Pathways along banks of river and path from Castletown House to back gate at Batty Langley Lodge. Main pathway passed through section of land sold in June 2005. New owners attempted to close access by blocking main entry points, gates at lodge are now locked> this has been used for over twenty five years disappointment that the state did not buy this land and are concerned that this right of way as utilised for over twenty five years be maintained</p>



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
Woods of Ireland	Drawing attention to two schemes that may be relevant to park development: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Native woodland schemes • Neighbourwood schemes.
Ballymore Properties Ltd	Ferguson McIlveen made submission on behalf of Ballymore Properties Ltd and makes the following points: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ballymore owns extensive lands at Woodville/St Edmonsbury and Fonthill, split by Hermitage Golf Course. • Consultants brief to prepare Masterplan with one scenario that much of the land will be developed as public open space. • Previous presentations to South Dublin county Council have indicated an extensive regional scale park could be provided with discreet low density housing on upper level lands close to Old Lucan Road. • Other appropriate developments may also be identified. • Consultants have been commissioned to prepare masterplan for Ballymore Property lands in this area and happy to discuss further
Daughters of Charity	Brady Shipman Martin on behalf of Daughters of Charity for Persons of Intellectual Disability. Information provided on : Land owned by charity are known as Holy Angels, Glenmaroon and extend from Liffey (east and north banks) to Lower Road, Knockmaroon Hill and Martin's Row. Following successful application, a new residential complex is being constructed. To facilitate this, the horticultural training facility (Glen Collage) was relocated to Oznam Villas on east side of Knockmaroon Hill. Operational difficulties particular safety issues associated with crossing a busy road have influenced decision to apply to locate college back within main site area. Application currently with Fingal County Council. Relocation of this unit to the SAAO area would not preclude park development and happy to discuss further Information on resources provided also: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed National Heritage Area • Riparian woodland and Liffey bank • Glenmaroon House, a listed building with landscape features • Remnants of generator/pump house associated with weir.
AG Davidson, Lucan	Submission made in relation to the Weston Aerodrome and Park development, namely: Liffey Valley in flight path for aircraft landing; Flights are in uncontrolled airspace and under control of Dublin Airport and Shannon radars, under no ones control, a requirement of the Irish Aviation Authority Air pollution from aviation fuel Noise impacts of flights Risk of crashes and Liffey valley a daily potential crash site. Development of park should be tempered by public safety concerns.



Organisation/Individual	Information/comments
The Heritage Council Kilkenny	Outlined support for landscape conservation and stated Heritage Council policy position in relation to landscape and landscape protection.
J McBride Straffan Development Association	Outlining support for the aims and objectives of the Liffey Valley Park Alliance and support a park as planned by the Alliance as this would offer huge advantages to the community and assist in achieving social and tourism potential.



1.5 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES FROM SUBMISSION PERIOD MARCH 2006

This table presents an overview of the key issues and recommendations arising from the call for public submissions on the Draft Strategy between the period February to March 2006. Where submissions identified typographical mistakes or incorrect place name references, the changes were made into the Final Strategy and therefore are not included in the table below.

Address/ Organisation	Comments
Joan Bruton TD	
Recommendation	Special amenity area order should be strengthened and enhanced
Issue	A strong and unified management is required for the Special Amenity Area Order, rather than existing situation whereby the relevant local authorities operate independently, resulting in a failure to focus on the integrated needs of the Valley or the recreational or amenity development which it could provide.
Issue	Traffic situation; speeding is at such a level as it makes walking, cycling or other passive recreation almost impossible
Issue	Anxious to see local residents and organisations being involved in the management of the proposed parkland authority.
Issue	Strong criticism of use of term 'Planning gain' referred to in document; the uses such as golf, canoe clubs and sports organisations in the valley is the most appropriate type of development here, to protect the amenity value of the valley for the future.
Issue	A bold strategy is required to acquire further walking areas and further significant land areas as they become available over the years.
Thomas Cummins, UCD	
Issue	Recommendation is weak in that it limits responsibility to the extent of the current statutory mandates. Fails to achieve a commitment to staff and resources.
Issue	Need for a statutory basis for responsibility to guarantee the actions needed to fulfil the objectives of the Valley Vision.
Issue	Current role of OPW is 'limited' (p.52 Strategy). Vague aspiration that OPW will coordinate the project but no credible mechanism proposed to achieve this, no reference to composition of the existing steering group.
Issue	No structure proposed for ensuring 'collective actions'. No specific responsibility assigned and no funding mechanism identified. General responsibility is dispersed so therefore nobody to take on responsibility role, this must be identified as a major obstacle to the effective achievement of the reports recommendations.

Issue and Recommendation	Nobody will be overseeing its implementation. Need to establish small office, through which authorities can communicate efficiently with the other agencies in a one-stop clearinghouse. Some Central authority is needed in order to achieve the core objectives.
Issue and Recommendation	The suggestion that 'consultative mechanism' which would operate 'alongside the Liffey Valley steering Group' is patronising and anti-democratic. People should be explicitly involve in the Strategy steering group or any other coordinating and planning structure as may be established. This will ensure maximal local knowledge and that negatives impacts are anticipated and offset at scoping and planning stages.
Issue and Recommendation	SEA and consideration of alternatives, not clear that this was done here. It is a plan in the meaning of the SAE Directive, it refers to population permanent and transient, the plan will have environmental impacts.
Issue and Recommendation	Maintenance of the area must not rely on existing voluntary groups. Need a comprehensive baseline assessment, coupled with a commitment to ongoing structured and monitoring. This will require commitment to funding (specialists) . Need a framework of leadership
Issue and Recommendation	Strategy needs to recognise the potential of the area in educational benefits to 1st, 2nd and 3rd level students and researchers. Also should establish long-term ecological and environmental monitoring stations to include specific monitoring of specific topics identified by the EPA.
Issue and Recommendation	Strategy should identify the potential of the archaeology in terms of; unified approach to leisure and recreation but also as an educational source. UCD recently adopted the Lower Palmerstown area as a long-term study site for students for their Masters Degree in Landscape Archaeology course.
Issue and Recommendation	The reference to preserving a 'representative sample' suggests that many could be wilfully destroyed - totally unacceptable. Imperative that inventory on heritage resource would feed directly into a structured heritage management plan.
Issue and Recommendation	Half measures to promote pedestrian use will not be effective here, will only add to stress on roads and queuing. Pedestrian use of the road will require its conversion from a traffic route by preventing through traffic. Need serious commitment from Fingal Co Co and would require public consultation.
Issue	Direction to investors is done through the Development Plan and existing procedures, no mechanism where it is acceptable for individual interests to be served by this process. Thus the 'clearer direction' must be through the established planning mechanism and be fully cognisant of the spirit of the Valley Strategy.
Issue	A truly sustainable vision for the strategy area will integrate all human activities together, industrial, commercial residential. Concept of transferable resource rights, i.e. destruction in one area off set by protection to another, undermines the integrity of the Valley as a landscape unit. Development should be allowed only on the terms of the strategy.
Issue	The Shackeltons mill as a visitor centre is limited in terms of access to the site. However the Palmerstown mills is much better location, although in private ownership, it has no problem with through traffic, close to other areas of interest, support within the old village of Palmerstown. Should consider a change of use of this site.
COVA	



General Issue	Concerned about overall implementation of the plan; narrow composition of representatives, believe it should include reps from City/County Councils, local residents associations and the Liffey Valley Alliance.
Issue and Recommendation	Draft recognises need for a unified policy and engagement of wider community. Considers it is more democratic to have an independent Statutory holistic Authority for the Liffey Valley (such as the one authority pertaining to the Lagan Valley Park).
Issue	No overall responsibility for the River Liffey is questioned? What function does the Eastern River Basin District Advisory Council?
Recommendation	The Dublin and Mid-East Regional Planning Guidelines are to be amended to provide for the preparation of an established of a 'unified policy framework for the Liffey Valley. This can only be achieved through independent Statutory holistic Authority.
Issue	No comprehensive report on the flood plains and stormwater attenuation measures for the Liffey Valley.
Issue	Reservations about alterations at the weir at Islandbridge in light of flood damage.
Issue	The proposed Headquarters for Irish Canoe Union, contrary to the SAAO for the Liffey valley as it is directly on the river bank and a flood plain.
Check in Report	Validity of statement, that stretch between Islandbridge and Strawberry fields is straight (there are four weirs in between)
Recommendation	Walking tracks running through the grounds of the old Guinness Glenmaroon House (believe it is a state property) - it could be restored with sensitive management.
Recommendation	Possibility of area between Glenaulin to Anna Livia Bridge being included in the pNHA from Glenaulin to the Dublin/ Kildare border. It is a small natural oasis in an urban area
Issue and Recommendation	Are the islands actually owned by the developers of the Island Complex? Could be state owned and if so, should have special protection (pNHA). Request that a feasibility study be carried out.
Recommendation	Chapelizod due to location good location for tourist/ heritage centre.
Recommendation	In terms of traffic volumes and restrictions can Martin Row be looked at in same light as Strawberry Beds. Current situation unsafe, a lot of through traffic.
Issue	Facilitate the establishment of festivals, Chapelizod for past 11 years has an annual festival held over 1st week in July
Chapelizod Residents Association	Local issue with OPW about their intention to sell a listed building Liffey Vale, Chapelizod.
Comment	Endorses the suggestion of the Luytens Bridge linking memorial gardens with the Phoenix Park as well as the improvements to Anna Livia Bridge in Chapelizod village.
Issue	Reject the proposal for a footbridge across the Liffey from the Chapelizod Gate of the Phoenix Park, its unnecessary, no demand for it.
Issue	Current proposed footbridge from the Hibernian Gate of the Phoenix Park owes little amenity considerations and is an attempt to move the limit of the village eastwards. CRA with C.Cclrs with oppose this footbridge. No economic merit and will seriously damage the heritage of the area.



Recommendation	Park between Anna Livia Bridge and War Memorial Gardens, rather than the generic title of 'Liffey Valley Park' CRA suggest it be called the Joycean ' <i>riverrun park</i> '.
Dublin West Green Party	
Issue	It is essential that the current green belt between the Liffey and the Royal Canal is maintained also no further development in the areas north of Lucan should be permitted.
Issue	While the financial contributions is fully legitimate it should not result in permission being granted for visually or environmentally inappropriate development.
Issue	Disappointed that there is no creation of a 'Valley Forum' it would enhance the notion that it is a partnership. Also there should be public participation in decision making as Ireland is a signatory to the Arrhus Convention.
Issue	No specific action point included here, for the creation of a wild life corridor that would fan out from the valley.
Issue	The strategy should take into consideration the proposed 'Metro West'. Need to refer to potential impacts on Liffey Valley and this will feed into the consultation process and decision of the preferred route.
Fine Gael, Lucan	
Recommendation	Liffey Valley be given permanent protection as a 'SAC' by way of government legislation
Recommendation	The SAAO pedestrian in length and breath to protect a much greater area of the Liffey Valley and the 5 year renewal requirement to be dropped.
Recommendation	Omit the 'Planning gain' section of the finished Report.
Recommendation	Propose a much stronger and more representative body to manage the Liffey Valley.
Fingal County Council, Project Engineer	
	Need to change map that denotes the former Leixlip Golf Course as being in recreational. It is not in recreational use currently and a number of studies are being undertaken with a view to expanding the Water Treatment works to meet potable demand in the GDA. Given this the land needs to be changed to Water Treatment Works site.
Fingal County Council, Senior Planner	
Issue	Draft is at variance with original proposal circulated. Dilution of dedicated implementation and overall responsibility unit is a backward step and needs to be secured so that objectives are achievable



Fingal County Council Director of Planning, Property and Economic Development	
Issue	The Service level Agreement between Local Authorities to implement the actions of the strategy will not provide the necessary framework for implementation.
Recommendation on Issue	One of the Local Authorities Should have dedicated resources, staff and contributed by each of the local authorities and the Government to set the task to deliver the best outcome for the entire study area.
David O'Connor, Dublin 8	
	An Additional Flagship project should be created to provide a weir at Macken Street Bridge and the 'Boardwalks in the City' Flagship be amended to be called 'The Liffey River Way' or similar with the aim of creating a quality pedestrian - cycle-friendly link between the summit to summit cycle track and the Liffey Valley Park.
	Liffey Valley Strategy should include the River Liffey as it passes through the City and Dublin Bay or else its is a wasted opportunity.
<u>Roger Garland</u>	
Recommendation to Amend	Established public rights of way should be included
Recommendation to Amend	Need to distinguish between clearly between public and private rights of way. Presumably the word 'private' should be inserted in front of 'rights' within the Para.
Recommendation	Existing Public rights of way compiled not only for Fingal and South Dublin (as part of Development Plan) but also in Dublin city and Kildare.
<u>Paul Gogarty</u>	
Recommendation	Purchase of the lands at St. Edmundsbury/ Woodville.
	Extension of Special Amenity Area Order to cover all the lands at St. Edmundsbury/ woodville (with the exception of the field and dwellings at the farm entrance facing the bus stop opposite Chalet Gardens. This would be an ideal site for a relocated school for St. Andrews NS, which is suffering from overcrowding.
County Kildare Archaeological Society	
Issue	Strategy does not address the integrity of the entire area and does not ensure the Valley will be permanently protected.



Recommendation	Areas west of Celbridge, including the environs of Clane, Newbridge and Kilcullen which are undergoing major development at present should also be included in the strategy at initial stages.
Issue & Recommendation	It would be beneficial that the involvement of The Liffey Valley Park Alliance in the strategy development and implementation phases.
Issue & Recommendation	Urges the appointment of a Liffey Valley Authority who would have overall responsibility for the implementation of an agreed strategy.
Issue & Recommendation	Society proposes a more central leadership role for OPW in the implementation of an agreed strategy for the Valley.
Patricia and Ray Goff	
Recommendation	Would request that the Government put in place a legislative and administrative structure to administer the establishment of a Liffey Valley Park to preserve and conserve the area.
Robert Gandon	
Issue	Flagship Projects: Concerned that the meadow areas would be disturbed - biodiversity must be retained; Recommends active management of pasture lands through grazing by native Irish breeds. Would expect that a thorough a baseline study be carried out. Access to the 'towpaths' on both sides of the river should be accessible to all groups, young, old and disabled.
Recommendation	Encourage use of bridle paths for walkers, horse, cycling throughout the designated areas.
Recommendation	Nothing should be done to detract from the solemnity of the War Memorial Gardens. Better access is required. Also incorporate some other aspects of Edwin Luytens work e.g. Heywood gardens in Co. Laois further along Islandbridge.
Issue	Fear of over development of mills along the river may have negative impact on wildlife.
Recommendation	The setting up of a data base of voluntary organisations both local and national will give greater public ownership as the park develops.
Issue	Over development of the river valley and especially Kildare County Council, development above the bridge in Kilcullen is good example of bad development in an area that is the link between the mountains and the plains. Would like to see the Liffeyprotected from source to sea.
Hermitage Golf Course	
	Concern of the Club should any attempt be made to run a linear park along the south bank of the river at this location.
Lucan Historical Society	
Issue	Failure of the Strategy to define the types of land uses acceptable or unacceptable. They want no further residential development here.



Issue	Land transfer to local authorities in exchange for planning permission would be detrimental to the area. Land north of the N4 and south of the Porterstown Road would leave only narrow bands. Current zoning should be maintained, greater access to the river can be purchased at reasonable rates when land comes on the market.
Issue	Lands at the west of Celbridge are currently subject to strong development pressure and must be included in the initial strategy, future of Celbridge Abbey is of immediate concern. Also riverside lands in Co. Kildare in towns of Clane, Newbridge, etc are under similar pressures.
Issue & Recommendation	The cooperation between the local authorities to implement the strategy is not convincing, some form of over-arching authority is essential, OPW should be given a clearly defined lead role in the short term until something is set up.
Recommendation	Extension of Special Amenity Area Order both east and west
Recommendation	Some mechanism for maintaining similar or stronger zoning on high amenity and agricultural lands adjoining the proposed SAAO. To prevent piecemeal development.
Recommendation	Tree Preservation order throughout the area and advice and grants to encourage woodland management
Recommendation	Publicly owned land such as (FCC) at Cooldrinagh, Leixlip should be included in Flagship projects.
Recommendation	Survey of all building in area with view to adding to the protected structures list, in particular Donacomper, Celbridge.
Leixlip Planning Alliance	
Issue	Deplore the absence of a comprehensive protection of the Valley as a whole.
Issue	Notion of necklace of parks should not be a substitute for a Liffey Valley Park or Regional Park
Issue	Cooldringah should be included in the list of properties in public ownership, It is an important site and has the potential to become an important Heritage park for the entire region
Issue	Notion of 'planning gain' should be removed
Issue	Reject the deferment of protecting lands to the west of Celbridge
Issue	Liffey Valley needs an overall authority, it should be a statutory body similar to that of Dublin Docklands Authority.
Liffey Valley Park Alliance	
Issue	Nature and composition of the co-ordinating body proposed has serious defects.
Issue	Endorse proposal for Shackleston mill as an information centre, more appropriate terminology should be used rather than 'Brand'
Issue	Necklace of parks not sufficient - wish to see establishment of a Liffey Valley National/ Regional Park. It could strangle the



	great ideal of the Liffey Valley Park.
Issue	No mention of the Historic Cooldrinagh Demesne in the existing publicly owned properties. This site could become an unique Heritage Park.
Issue	Fails to recommend an overall permanent protective designation for the Liffey Valley as a whole.
Recommendation	No mention of the Myles Wright Report (35 years ago) which indicated to the government the entirely cost-free procedure for the preservation of the great amenity for the Irish people.
Recommendation	That the Park be designated as a National Park.
Issue	Ambiguity in the document regarding 'necklace' and whole Liffey Valley,
Issue	Concerned about action regarding area west of Celbridge, this area should be protected. Concerns of rezonings past and future. Lands coming under pressure.
	The Draft indicates that farming, tourism and recreation are considered appropriate land uses. The final report should indicate what other activities are considered appropriate.
Issue	The term 'Planning gain' has no legal standing, is a dangerous term and an invitation for developers to 'barter' with the Councils. It should be removed from the report.
Issues and Recommendation	Concerns over proposed authority. Strategy places little value on the actual or potential contribution of voluntary bodies.
Lucan Planning Council	
Issue	Share the concerns raised by the Liffey Valley Park Alliance, of which they are also a member.
Issue	Deplores the failure to hold local consultative meetings on the Draft Strategy as committed to. The Executive Summary is a poor reflection of the full report and differs in some parts.
Issue	Wished the outline of the Park would have been more clearly delineated and especially the inclusion of lands in County Kildare between Celbridge and Straffan.
Issue	Report should have addressed the need for and the nature of the Protective Designation. The failure to do so leaves the question of further speculative development of open lands in the area. The reference to "Planning Gain" undermines the whole strategy.
Recommendation	The SAAO should be extended eastwards at Islandbridge and westwards as far into County Kildare. And widened, to include e.g. St Edmundsbury lands and the riverside lands of Celbridge Abbey.
Issue & Recommendation	Disturbed that the Draft Strategy has not embraced and adopted the concept of a park, composed of public, private and lands owned by corporate bodies. Although not the norm, this multi-ownership approach to a National Park is recognised in other European Communities.
Issue	Needs a suitably statutory body rather than a Steering Committee with representations from Voluntary groups.
ESB	



Issue	Concern of Office of Public works as leader in Steering group. Prefer a single body to be set up with responsibility of the administration of the Liffey Valley Park.
Issue and Recommendation	The design of a precast concrete footbridge around the Celbridge areas is out of character with the area and should be replaced with a single span structure (possibly steel) more in keeping with this location. (Diagram attached to submission). Request feasibility study be done to look at best options to enhance this area in particular the footbridge and boardwalk along riverside.
Recommendation	Recommends a wildlife sanctuary on the Salmon Leap Reservoir (creation of an island from the lake bed, off limits to boats and fishermen). This will help redress the balance between people needs and sustaining a viable wildlife population.
Strawberry Beds Residents	
Issue	Consultation should be with all landowners (small and big) directly by the relevant statutory bodies/ authorities.
Issue and Recommendation	The review of the SAAO must be comprehensive, public and carried out in partnership with the community and local landowners. And should address the following issues; since the order 16years ago they believe there has been a deterioration of the physical environment in this time. Community Infrastructure has collapsed also in this time. A lot of development has been allowed in the land covered by the SAAO and within its 'Buffer zone'. The SAAO makes no provision of the local/ rural housing need a blunt and inappropriate instrument in this regard. Approach adopted by Howth SAAO should be adopted here.
Issue	The rights of small holders and housing needs of local people should be factored into all strategies to develop the Liffey Valley.
Clane Community Council	
Recommendation	Preservation of the Landscape of the Valley as in the case in the Lagan Valley. The Lagan Valley should be adopted and given special mention in the report.
Issue	Greater confidence if OPW managed the Valley with appropriate legislative support rather than the local and / central authorities due to past experience.
Recommendation	Feel it should extend to Millicent (Bodenstown), taking in Straffan and Clane and protect floodplains also refers the Clane Development's plan 2002 and the support for extension of the SAAO and development of walking routes along the Liffey.
Issue and Recommendation	It is important to set minimum set back line excluding development from the river banks. 50m was specified in Kildare County Development Plan 1999 but was removed in May of that year. This is important for safety of residents and also amenity itself.
Issue and Recommendation	Reference to valley as prime development site in state is dangerous.



Kieran O'Neill	
Issues and Recommendations	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Liffey Valley report fails to address the issue of designating the area a National Park or provide a clear roadmap of how this objective will be achieved. 2. Management proposals lack accountability, and coordination body is reliant on voluntary efforts by individual county councils. 3. Experience with the existing Liffey Valley management advisory committees have demonstrated little progress with only 5 meetings in the last 15 years. 4. Proposals dilute the community involvement in the existing Liffey Valley management advisory committees, proposed structures need to be amended to include at least 1 community representative (elected by the county community forum) in the main management committee. 5. Community representation needs to be given equal status with the commercial interests representative.
Gus O'Connell	
Recommendation	The Royal Irish Hospital Kilmainham should be included in Liffey Valley Park. Glenaulin House, in Chapelizod should also be included. Reference to Planning gain should be deleted and 'current zonings' across all the Liffey Valley as recommended by Myles Wright.
Recommendation	Strategy need to make a strong case for a Liffey Valley National Park does not put sufficient emphasis on the 'why'. We are not seeking to just preserve a green space, but also a landscape of important historical significance.
Issue & Recommendation	The Strategy area concentrates on the area between Ballymore Eustace to Islandbridge. Urgent need to provide similar report for area from Celbridge through to Ballymore Eustace.
Issue & Recommendation	This submission believes that the strategy would benefit from bullet form points in the introduction and gives examples of some within the submission including issues such as; It is a clear that this landscape is of great scientific and heritage value but also is important for recreational needs of the Dublin and Mid East Region. Need to create a management framework for the whole Liffey Valley Park composed of a wide variety of public spaces and parks intermingled with privately and corporately owned lands. Strategy should create a single Statutory body, The Liffey Valley Authority for leadership and coordinating role.
Issue	By concentrating on the stretch between Islandbridge and Celbridge there is a danger of permitting in appropriate development on the upper stretch of the river. This report should be considered as Volume 1 with Volume 2 from Celbridge to the well of the Liffey.
Recommendation	Need to put more emphasis on the SAAO and pNHA from Glenaulin Weir at Palmerstown to the Dublin/ Kildare Border. Need to provide an overall protection of the Liffey Valley with ongoing monitoring of the landscape across all possible uses and sectors.
Issue & Recommendation	Service Level Agreement proposal is flawed. Need to be a single authority with responsibility for promoting the vision, set out guidelines and targets, standards, and monitor and implement so that strategy is effective.



Issue & Recommendation	Should have a statutory Liffey Valley Authority enabled to receive and disburse both public and private funds for development of the Liffey Valley National Park with wide range of representatives.
Recommendation	Signage should be standard across all local authorities
Recommendation	Palmerstown with its fine landscape, waterside buildings, Mills and races would merit more extensive cover in the report. Restoration of some buildings and condition of water quality, and growth of thick vegetation on both the river and the mill is matter of concern and urgency.
Comment	Regrettable that workshops not delivered
Recommendation	Imperative that strategy recommends a realistic budget.
Issue	Preservation of current zoning designations and the sensitive location of road development within and across the landscape.
Lucan Sarsfields Group GAA Club	
Issue	The proposed “Necklace of Parks” in the context of the Liffey Valley, hardly amounts to a park at all. It would afford no protection to the Valley as a whole
Issue	proposal for “Planning Gain” would, in effect, be a licence for massive development within the Liffey Valley and would inevitably lead to the destruction of that great amenity
Issue	Amazed that no recommendation is made to extend the Special Amenity Area Order. This is the obvious mechanism to provide secure protection for the Liffey Valley. In our view, the S.A.A.O. should be extended from Islandbridge to Celbridge. And should cover all of the St. Edmundsbury Estate.
Issue	Strategy contains no references to boundaries for the Liffey Valley. In this regard, we would suggest that the proposals by the Liffey Valley Park Alliance are a very good guideline.
Issue and Recommendation	Pressure for GAA playing pitches is growing all the time in Lucan as the population approaches 40,000 and St. Edmundsbury would be an obvious location for future playing and recreational facilities.
Issue	Draft Report emphasises that “the imperative is to commence application of the strategy”, yet the proposed strategy is so open-ended that this could easily develop into chaotic development and destruction of the very amenity it is intended to protect
Issue	Strategy is quite general and not sufficiently based on the priority needs of communities and local organisations to ensure the right projects get undertaken in the right priority. GAA growing exponentially but have no capability to acquire land at commercial prices.
Issue	Management structure proposed for the Liffey Valley Park is both inadequate and impractical. Would require at least a couple of full-time people to deal with operational matters and to ensure policy is implemented and wide range of representatives to include voluntary and community organisations. Structure of Lagan Valley Park is a good guide.



Simon Clear & Associates. Planning and Development Consultants in conjunction with Fergus McIlveen on behalf of Ballymore Eustace Properties Ltd.	
Points Raised	Submission concerned with landowners property area, within Islandbridge and Celbridge especially lands at Fonthill House and grounds located between Kings Hospital and Hermitage Golf Club and also lands to the east side of Lucan Village (encompassing the townlands of Woodville and St Edmundsbury other than those occupied by St Edmundsbury Hospital)
Recommendation (This will be presented to South Dublin County Council in due course which reflects the guidance provided in the draft Strategy by ERM)	Believes that the proposal that each local authority take direct responsibility for each area is good. In terms of transport links besides Heuston and Luas Stop there is the Lucan QBC it is an important link into the Liffey Valley which runs along the frontage of the developers land. This submission is a proposal regarding land transfer, where there will be land given over to parkland with proposed cycle and walking paths and bridges across the Liffey (as shown in maps with Submission), as well as Hotel at former Ballyowen Castle site, Low density residential at upper levels adjacent to Lucan QBC. Relocated St. Andrew's National School, Sheltered accommodation complex close to Lucan rd. Craft courtyard and weekly farmers market complex. St. Edmundsbury hospital maintained in situ in its own grounds. Proposal is consistent with the vision, objectives and implementation recommendations
John R Shackleton	.
Recommendation	Preserve the Liffey Valley in its entire length not just Dublin to Celbridge which seems to be focus of the Study. Should be a specific aim to preserve lands within a specified distance from the River. Problems with drinking and drugs parties in the Castletown House lands, so therefore opposed to opening of access to Leixlip Reservoir due to litter and vandalism which is all ready present and besides this area is an area with extensive flora, fauna and wildlife.
Issue	Not happy with suggestion that land can be obtained in exchange for planning permission, not a good concept.
Issue	Do not see how you hope to remove vehicular traffic from the Lower road. Large number of private houses have existing access and also three public houses. The closure of the road would have a sever impact on area and traffic generally.
Issue	Local residents group should be involved in consultations.



John Weld	1: The present condition of the River Liffey especially in Co.Kildare is very poor. The unsightliness of this neglect is obvious. This River Maintenance needs to be put in place urgently to reassure us that the relevant authorities are capable/willing/and desire to properly care for and manage this huge resource. i.e. Much of the River Liffey is already available/accessible/visible to the public but is so mismanaged/neglected that it looks tatty and undesirable to visit.
Issues	2:Fish stock in the River are very poor and recent huge improvements in the pollution of the river have failed to improve this scene.



Visitor Facilities

- Tourism-need to package more than one feature. Linked attractions e.g. industrial archaeological trail
- Provision of visitor facilities including restaurants and other passive based leisure facilities
- Create a single focused visitor facility
- Encourage extensive usage for future park
- Young and growing adjacent population excluded from amenity with enormous 'edge' potential
- Signage and interpretation of the historic liffey villages
- Need for more adventurous environment
- Interpretation of range of heritage facets
- A Flagship project needed
- Reinvention of Lucan village as a 'Dalkey'
- Location of the flagship project
- Need for a feasibility study for the location of the flagship
- Integrated approach to provide facilities along the river valley
- Strategy to promote the use of derelict/redundant buildings
- Necklace of connectivity reflecting the local within the wider area
- Hierarchy of facilities
- Tourism trails i.e. extensive cycle and walking networks along river and connection of historic features

Ownership

- For many people the name 'Liffey Valley' means the shopping centre
- Fragmented public ownership
- Privatisation and commoditizing of landscape (hospitals, golf courses/hotels and shopping centres)
- Explore tourism potential

Heritage-Natural

- Catchment connection and wild life corridors
- Connection of separated ecological areas
- Poor connectivity between ecology and recreational demands so need to be improved



- Wildlife corridors and naturalness
- Linkages i.e. physical, policy, standards and identity
- Sufficient ecological data?
- Sufficient for action on the ground?
- Loss of diverse habitats
- Conservation of 'special habitats'
- Areas for the people to interface with wildlife-know where all sites are to be found
- Protection of wildlife and biodiversity
- Protection of river corridor and riparian vegetation-buffer zones
- Climate change and implications for pressures on the water resource itself
- Linkage to education
- Visual intrusion of building agglomerations fragmentation of visual units
- Pollution and water quality
- Role of weirs
- Water quality and management
- Landscape
- Develop heritage and not just demesnes
- Preservation of vegetation corridor
- Tranquillity and impact of noise-loss of aural perception of rural river valley.
- Loss of bird songs
- Clearance of in stream vegetation
- Avoidance of loss of habitat
- Need for adequate on-going monitoring.

Social problems

- Undesirable activities
- Hostile land uses-example of concrete factories near Anna Liffey mills
- Inappropriate industrial legacy
- Vandalism
- Neglect/nuisance
- Drink etc.
- Closure of facilities
- Staff/people questioning why parks are needed given certain ongoing unsocial activities
- Link to management



- Visibility of security/park rangers
- Need to link with local communities
- Anti-social behaviour has implications for access
- Dumping problems are very evident at low tide
- Need to translate economic value of the parks
- Conflicts between users e.g. anglers and rowers
- Structured neighbour hood watch and volunteerism
- On going liaison with wardens
- Resource management
- Rural character detracted due to on-going urbanisation
- Avoidance of creeping erosion
- Need for hard statements on the value of the park
- Active interface between parks and community depts and the community needs
- underpinning
- Capital funding availability and application to designated areas
- Public awareness to lead to political awareness to lead to institutional awareness
- Back turned to rivers tradition so planning policy to retain rights of way
- Neglected look at the bridge crossings
- General scruffiness
- Need to set definite physical boundaries
- Use of water heritage day
- Lack of clear responsibility on bankside erosion
- Arterial draining

Access

- Poor access to river banks so need walks united by access and river crossings
- Lack of public access
- Opposition to people having access to/coming to valley
- Availability of carrots/planning gain/negotiation on land
- Do we need absolute access to the entire river?
- Avoid development where appropriate
- Give sense of where the bits fit
- Fundamental problem is that we are seeking to conduct people from/to the edge of the city
- Valley sitting there waiting to be unlocked
- Need for core single entity



- Balance in providing access and maintenance of the natural environment
- Connectivity between the city and country
- Need to acquire land
- Cycle routes/sli na slainte particularly along the Strawberry beds
- Sustrans routes for commuters to the city and between villages
- Alternatives to car access
- Encouragement of cycling/cycle route network
- Public parks also to act as through routes for sli na slainte/ cycle ways
- Safe continuous pedestrian/cycle access along river
- Access issues and traffic management
- Restrictions on commercial traffic
- Lack of alternatives to private transport
- Creation of an ambiance similar to the phoenix park
- Speed limits
- Traffic rat runs
- Recreational traffic
- Traffic management between the tree counties required
- Phoenix park used as a rat run
- Boundary treatment
- Las need to set good example of management of public land
- Public/private institutions need to give public leadership
- Cycle ways along the river separated from pedestrian walks
- Disability access
- Horse trekking
- Car parking
- Casual trading
- Traveller's unofficial parking
- Need to identify suitable parking access
- Boat clubs have facilities

Recreation and Exercise

- Explore linkage of Liffey Boardwalk in city centre and wider liffey access
- Facilities
- Horse riding and other sporting activities
- Pedestrian routes
- Encouragement of active lifestyle
- Provision of passive recreation



- Difficulty in resolving environmental and cultural objectives vs amenity and recreational objectives
- Building design with new buildings needing to be sympathetic with river/rural landscapes

Development Pressures

- Do not undermine the SAAO in any way
- Flood mitigation
- Impact of proposed/likely development along the river on flooding to be accessed jointly
- High development pressure
- Need for better protection of important lands
- Liffey Valley Castletown to Ballymore how feasible is it to expect it to be protected from inappropriate development
- Sensitive development required to enhance amenity of the river
- Power stations
- Conflicting pressures
- Gradual development encroachment
- Land ownership
- Development control
- Land zoning

Funding and Resources

- Concern that Castletown to Ballymore seen as less important as has greatest potential in terms of land ownership
- Compensation for rezoning
- Central government commitment
- Create common approach/values among public authorities
- Clear management objectives to facilitate recreational demands and conservation
- Sufficient consultation with stakeholders
- Maintenance resources and coordination and management need for a park management structure
- Funding prioritised to facilitate key attractions and sites
- Management plans with owners of private land-how realistic any workable models?
- Funding
- Liaison between landowners
- Public v private issues in public land management
- Lack of overall management



- Draw a line around the defined area
- Encourage communications between all river users
- Establish who is responsible for what within the river corridor
- Four independent local authorities

Education/Awareness

- Limited public awareness of Resource
- Need to establish relevance
- Management of public spaces to promote both amenity and environmental attractions
- What is the role?
- Effective public engagement/consultation
- International connectivity
- Buy in! Need to get buy in from interest groups such as the anglers and canoeists etc.
- Tie in with NGO's
- Reinforcing use of the Liffey
- Use of on site cultural activities
- Branding the area good web site
- Opportunities for eco education
- Tie in with new curriculum
- Liffey as a resource for teaching as a park and a resource
- Education possibilities recreation of the link to ecology etc.
- Look at whether there is an association of European rivers
- Need to generate political will and awareness raising for the park

Cultural Heritage

- Priority what is in danger of being lost in terms of understanding value?
- Policy on management of demesnes
- Vikings
- Bridges
- Country houses and estates
- Churches
- Abbeys
- Millstreams
- Holy wells
- Mottes
- Village architecture
- Old bridge in strawberry beds
- Arts and crafts cottages



- Sites associated with historic buildings or events
- Promotion of major buildings and other structural features within the study area
- in the public domain
- Historical and literary associations
- Town houses
- Graveyards
- Role of national trust
- Heritage history
- Spa and spa architecture
- Early Christian monasteries
- Weirs
- Bridges that are around village centres
- Need to improve the public realm

The Park and its Structure

- Legislation required?
- Lack of a clear identity of the River
- Name has been co-opted by a shopping centre
- SAAO-a holding mechanism against the worst excesses only
- Specific park designation and land use zoning objectives required for the park to develop
- Lack of special status
- Define a Liffey valley entity
- Public and institutional awareness
- Strong coherent development plan policies
- Resources for local authorities to manage areas in its ownership
- Pressures and impacts
- Water supply and treatment
- Lack of political will to devote major resources to Liffey Valley Park
- Political support
- Raise profile through public awareness
- Public access
- Extend the current liffey valley park to include Chapelizod
- Adopt strategy to implement e.g. designations, ownership, planning conditions r.o.w.s
- Need to have a clear strategy for upper reaches of the liffey re park status
- Clear vision for the future
- Need for a strong policy to maintain landscape of valley
- Possibility of designating area as a landscape character area?



- Catchment management
- How to define in cultural, ecological, economic terms
- Break into sections
- What do we mean by a park?
- Need to fit in with existing legislation/
- Unlikely to see a new Liffey valley authority
- SAAO committee not a model
- The key challenge is money
- Use of fixed contributions
- Input of local communities
- Locals inputting to running management
- Need to look within own remit
- Need for leadership/co-ordination
- Distinguish between day to day management and the policy process
- OPW as a senior partner?/coordination role?

The Park

- The management Structure
- Regional Park beyond the current twelve
- Core aspiration for publicly owned land with private owned land under policy remit
- Proven sound work needed on planning policies that would apply
- Water framework a model?
- “Liffey Valley Regional Heritage Park”?
- Set aside of an annual budget for the facility like Morton Stadium
- Quantify exp on purchased properties-Shackleton Mills
- Piggy back on recreation development etc.
- Question re on-going cost and the contribution of the State

Must Have

- Follow through on political commitment
- Identifiable entity first priority with a commonality of approach across the local authorities
- Greater public awareness
- Resources to manage what we have
- Integrated planning control policies in the dev plans
- Protection of currently at risk heritage.



OVERVIEW

The length of the River Liffey, from Ballymore Eustace in County Kildare to Islandbridge in Dublin City, forms the focus of this baseline study.

This corridor forms a valuable resource to many varied stakeholders, including residents of the local area, potential investors, and also tourists. The area offers a variety of recreational activities and a rich cultural heritage, in addition to areas of exceptional scenic value and ecological diversity.

At present the Liffey Valley corridor is largely the responsibility of various Statutory Agencies, with limited coordination or focus. Many interests have recognised that there exists an opportunity to instigate a more integrated approach to managing the future usage and development of this corridor.

As a result, in 2005 the Office of Public Works, in association with Dublin City Council, Fingal County Council, South Dublin County Council and Kildare County Council, commissioned ERM Environmental Resources Management Ireland (ERM) to undertake this audit.

**PURPOSE OF THIS STUDY**

The purpose of this audit is to provide guidance on means by which to enable the sustainable and integrated management of the River Liffey and adjacent public and private lands.

This aims of this report are to set out the findings of the audit as follows:

1. the ecological and cultural resources of the Liffey Valley;
2. the current types of recreational and amenity usage of the Liffey Valley; and
3. how the Liffey Valley is managed from an institutional and policy perspective.



In preparing this Baseline Report, the following activities have been undertaken:

Public Submissions and Consultation:

An advertisement was placed in national newspapers on 25th May 2005 seeking submissions from the public on:

- the natural and cultural heritage features of the Liffey Valley;
- information on recreational and amenity activities; and
- seeking views on how the study area should be managed.

Further consultation was also undertaken in the form of meetings and telephone conversations with a number of interested agencies and organisations. These have included:

- Office of Public Works;
- Local authority staff;
- Eastern Regional Fisheries Board;
- Irish Canoe Union;
- Irish Amateur Rowing Union;
- Ballymore Eustace Trout & Salmon Anglers Association;
- Kilbride Anglers Club;
- North Kildare Trout & Salmon Anglers Association;
- Dublin Trout Anglers Association
- Dublin & District Salmon Anglers Association
- Leixlip & District Angling Association;
- Leixlip Angling Development Society; and
- The Kildare Hotel & County Club.

A summary of key issues raised in written submissions is presented in *Annex A Consultation Report*.

Literature and policy review

A literature review of available information pertaining to the study area has been undertaken from an ecological, historical and planning perspective.

In addition to the literature review, all relevant County Development Plans, national and regional policy documents relating to natural resources, cultural resources, recreation, tourism and amenity have been reviewed and analysed, and are summarised in *Chapters 2 and 3* of this Annex.

Site Walkovers and Fieldwork

A series of site visits to, and fieldwork within, the Liffey Valley have been undertaken by study team ecologists, cultural heritage specialists, landscape architects and planners.



Reporting

The information gathered in the above exercises has been assembled and presented in the Baseline Report. This information has formed the basis of the analysis required to prepare the Strategy and Action Plan.

1.4 REPORT STRUCTURE

The remainder of this audit is presented as follows:

- *Chapter Two: Planning in the Liffey Valley*, a presentation and analysis of the current planning regimes that cover the study area including institutional analysis of the existing management regimes.
- *Chapter Three: Policy Review*, a presentation of relevant national, regional and local policy in relation to active and passive recreation, tourism and amenity provision.
- *Chapter Four: Natural Heritage of the Liffey Valley*
- *Chapter Five: Cultural Heritage of the Liffey valley*
- *Chapter Six: Recreational and amenity use along the Liffey Valley and potential Park users.*



2.1**INTRODUCTION**

The planning policy framework within the Liffey Valley comprises a hierarchy of relevant documents at national, regional and local level. The National Spatial Strategy (NSS) is intended to guide the spatial development of Ireland for the next 20 years. It focuses on the concept of balanced regional development, with a view to integrating with the existing suite of planning and strategy documents and regional and local levels. The Regional Planning Guidelines (RPG) for the Greater Dublin Area provide a long term, planning framework for the development of Greater Dublin to 2016, whilst the County Development Plans of the four Planning Authorities, as well as a number of local area plans, set the land use planning framework at the local level.

The four councils of relevance to this study are:

- Dublin City Council;
- South Dublin County Council;
- Fingal County Council; and
- Kildare County Council.

The County / City Development Plans of the above councils, as well as the national and regional policy context in which they sit, are reviewed in detail in this chapter.

2.2**PLANNING POLICY IN THE LIFFEY VALLEY**

Planning policy in the Liffey Valley is driven by the County/City Development Plans, within the context of the National Spatial Strategy and Regional Planning Guidelines.

The following documents are reviewed in this section:

- The National Spatial Strategy for Ireland 2002 - 2020 (NSS);
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area (RPG);
- South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2004 - 2010;
- Kildare County Development Plan 2005 - 2011;
- Fingal County Development Plan 2005 - 2011;
- Dublin City Development Plan 2005 - 2011;
- Local Area Plans (Dublin City - Chapelizod, Kildare - Celbridge, Kilcullen, Leixlip, Newbridge, Sallins, and Straffan).



2.3 THE NATIONAL SPATIAL STRATEGY FOR IRELAND

The NSS was launched in November 2002, and sets out a vision for the spatial development of Ireland to 2020. It provides guidance for a range of Government policies as well as regional and local plans, with a view to delivering “...more balanced social, economic and physical development between regions.”

For the Dublin region, the NSS highlights a number of key requirements of policy. Of particular relevance is the need to ensure “...a strong green structure that maintains the distinction between urban and rural areas, and provides a green setting for everyday living with opportunities for outdoor recreation within easy access.” The NSS further states that the continuing health of Dublin is critically dependant on “...protecting Dublin’s outstanding natural setting...surrounding rural hinterlands, river valleys like the Boyne and Liffey, and physical amenities such as parks.”

A clear message emerging from the Strategy is the need to ensure that the sustainable growth of Dublin City does not encroach into the valuable hinterlands and surrounding counties.

2.4 REGIONAL PLANNING GUIDELINES FOR THE GREATER DUBLIN AREA

Published in July 2004, the RPG for the Greater Dublin Area superseded the previous Strategic Planning Guidelines within the overall spatial vision established in the NSS.

The spatial policy for the Greater Dublin Area reflects the policy requirements of the NSS, and in particular the need to protect the Liffey Valley. In relation to recreation and open space, the guidance to local authorities is to “...extend and enhance the existing open space network, secure landscape and biodiversity enhancement and improve access to the coast, river valleys and canals.”

2.5 DUBLIN CITY COUNCIL

2.5.1 *Dublin City Development Plan 2005 – 2011*

The Dublin City Development Plan came into effect on 14 March 2005, and proposes “...a sustainable and vibrant city in the context of the strategy for the development of a Greater Dublin” focusing on creating a “...coherent and legible spatial structure”. Table 1 presents the key relevant development plan policies.

In the Dublin City Area, much of the land to the north of the river is zoned “to preserve, provide and improve recreational amenity and open space”. Much of this is in the Phoenix Park, incorporating sports facilities and St Mary’s Hospital. Towards the eastern boundary of the city, land between the river and the Phoenix Park comprises existing residential areas and a small area zoned for mixed use development. This area is enclosed by a designated Framework Development Area (Chapelizod). Another Framework Development Area (Heuston Station and



Environs) is located south of the river incorporating Clancy Barracks and land to the east. The objective of these is *“to seek the social, economic and physical development and/or rejuvenation of an area with mixed use of which residential and “Z6” [Employment/Enterprise (light)] would be the predominant uses.”*

The entire of Phoenix Park is identified as a Conservation Area, along with land to the south of the river. In addition, the Park is a Zone of Archaeological Interest.



Table 1

Dublin City Development Plan 2005 - 2011

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
<u>Art, Culture and Tourism</u>			
ACT12	It is the policy of Dublin City Council, through land use zoning, policies and objectives, to protect and improve the tourism and cultural amenities of Dublin city. Dublin City Council will seek to protect the natural and built environment, which forms the basis of the city's attractiveness for tourists.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Heritage</u>			
H13	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to protect and enhance the character and historic fabric of conservation areas in the control of development.	Parts of the study area are designated conservation areas and designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
H41	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to seek the conservation and management of areas of natural environmental value.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
H42	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to protect flora, fauna and habitats, which have been identified, by the Habitats Directive, Birds Directive, Wildlife Act (1976) and the Flora Protection Order (S.I. No. 84 of 1999).	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
H44	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to update the Special Amenity Area Order for the North Bull Island and to prepare a Special Amenity Area Order for the Liffey Valley between the city boundary and Islandbridge.	If this is to be pursued it could be tied into designation of a Liffey Valley Park.	✓



Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
OBJECTIVE RO2	<p>In respect of the proposed Special Amenity Area Order for the Liffey Valley (Policy H44, Chapter 10), Dublin City Council shall pursue the following objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To develop lands adjoining Islandbridge House and the river Liffey for passive recreational use • To provide for a footpath along the north bank of the river Liffey from Islandbridge to Chapelizod • To investigate the feasibility of providing a footbridge across the river Liffey to allow for the development of a pedestrian route linking Liffey Valley Park and the War Memorial Gardens with the Phoenix Park • To retain areas of semi-wilderness along the bank of the river Liffey to allow for the survival of flora and fauna and the maintenance of wildlife habitats • To investigate the feasibility of altering the existing weir on the river Liffey at Islandbridge in order to improve access to the city centre section of the river by the rowing community • To carry out a feasibility study to examine the issues involved in constructing a barrage on the river Liffey including the maintenance of water levels to facilitate river based transport, the protection of all flora/fauna habitats and other ecological factors 	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing these objectives.	✓
H45	It is policy of Dublin City Council to protect the special character of Landscape Conservation Areas.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
H46	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to protect the unique natural amenities of all rivers within and forming boundaries to the administrative area of Dublin City Council and to establish River Basin Management Plans, in co-operation with other relevant authorities.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
Recreational Amenity and Open Space			
RO1	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to continue to manage and protect public open spaces to meet the social, recreational, conservational and ecological needs of the city, and to consider the development of appropriate complementary facilities, which do not detract from the amenities of spaces. In this context Dublin City Council will seek to provide toilets/changing room facilities as appropriate in all public parks under its control. Industrial developments of any kind will not be permitted in city parks and amenity open spaces and any complementary facilities will require prior specific planning permission.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
RO2	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to support the objectives of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government in its management of the open spaces under its control.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RO9	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to develop linear parks, particularly along waterways, and to link existing parks and open spaces in order to provide green chains throughout the city. Where lands along waterways are in private ownership it shall be policy, in any development proposal, to secure public access along the waterway.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RO10	<p>It is the policy of Dublin City Council to protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses in the city, and to promote access, walkways and other recreational uses of their associated public open space, incorporating flood strategies and subject to a defined strategy of nature conservation.</p> <p>It is the policy of Dublin City Council to maintain, improve and enhance the safety of the public in its use and enjoyment of the many public parks, open spaces and linkages within the city. This should apply, for example, to all areas of the Royal and Grand Canal.</p>	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RO11	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to seek the continued improvement of water quality, bathing facilities and other recreational opportunities in the coastal, estuarine and surface waters in the city.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
OBJECTIVE RO7	<p>In furtherance of Policy RO11, it is an objective of Dublin City Council to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish, where feasible, riparian corridors, free from development, along all significant watercourses in the city. • Restrict, where feasible, the use of culverts on watercourses in the city • Establish a working group in association with adjoining local authorities, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and Department of the Marine and Natural Resources to oversee the preparation of a guide on Irish river rehabilitation and a public education programme 	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing these objectives.	✓
RO12	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to endeavour to make provision for habitat creation and maintenance and facilitate biodiversity by encouraging the development of linear parks, nature trails, wildlife corridors and urban woodlands.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
RO13	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to promote the development of walking and cycling routes throughout the city and to support initiatives involving the creation of such routes. Development of such routes through parks, along river and canal banks and in the vicinity of heritage buildings will be promoted.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
Infrastructure			
U24	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to promote the development of Integrated Water Management Plans across the Region, looking at water quantity and quality issues at the Catchment/River Basin level. Integrated Water Quality Management Plans will be developed in cooperation with the adjoining Local Authorities and key stakeholders, in order to effectively manage, in a sustainable manner the entire life cycle of water in the region. In furtherance of this policy it is an objective of Dublin City Council to pilot the development and implementation of Integrated Water Management Plans in priority catchments, in co-operation with the adjoining local authorities, in order to facilitate the development of policy relating to integrated water management across the region.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
U25	In order to maintain, improve and enhance the environmental and ecological quality of our waters, it is the policy of Dublin City Council to promote the implementation of Water Quality Management Plans for ground, surface, coastal and estuarine waters in the area as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
U26	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to evaluate all watercourses in the city for rehabilitation potential, particularly in conjunction with sustainable drainage measures.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
U31	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to control development in the natural flood plain of a river and to develop guidelines, in co-operation with the adjoining local authorities, for permitted development in the different flood risk category areas.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
U36	It is the policy of Dublin City Council to require that for developments adjacent to watercourses of a significant conveyance capacity any structures must be set back from the edge of the watercourse to allow access for channel cleaning/maintenance.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

2.6 SOUTH DUBLIN COUNTY COUNCIL

2.6.1 South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2004 – 2010

The South Dublin County Development Plan was published in December 2004, and provides an overall strategy for South Dublin which includes to:

- *“Provide for an enhanced quality of life for all in the county by...protecting and improving the quality of the built and natural environments.*
- *Protect local assets by preserving the quality of the landscape, open space architectural and cultural heritage and material assets of the county.”*

It notes further the need to examine the high amenity and recreation areas around the Liffey Valley, with a view to preparing a Green Structure Plan for the County *“...to allow for the intensification of use of existing and proposed amenity networks.”* Table 2 presents the key relevant development plan policies.

In addition to planning policies, the development plan sets zoning objectives for a variety of uses *“...to ensure the orderly and sustainable development of the County...”* These cover 12 objectives, including:

- *“To preserve and provide for Open Space and Recreational Amenities (Zone F); and*
- *To protect and improve High Amenity Areas (Zone G).”*

Within each zone, a range of developments are identified that will be *“permitted in principle”, “open for consideration”* or *“not permitted”*.

The majority of the land along the northernmost boundary of South Dublin in proximity to the River Liffey is zoned to protect and improve High Amenity Areas, incorporating St Edmondsbury, Woodville, Hermitage and Fonthill. South Dublin County Council designated this area of the Liffey Valley (between Chapelizod and Lucan) as a Special Amenity Area with a view to preserving and enhancing its character and special features. The Special Area Amenity Order (SAAO) was confirmed in March 1990 and reviewed in 1995.

South of this is the predominantly residential area of Lucan and the Lucan Bypass. Within these areas are a number of identified trees and woodlands zoned for protection, and a number of *“protected structures”*. There is an Architectural Conservation Area to the north east of Palmerstown.

The plan identifies a number of specific local objectives, of which the following are most relevant:

1. *Provide for the amenity development of the Liffey Valley, including:*
 - *Secure control over some of the lands in the area covered by the S.A.A.O. with a view to the development of a Regional Park with public access to the banks of the River Liffey.*



- Consult with the E.S.B. with a view to removing or altering power lines in order to minimise their adverse effects on the visual amenity of the area.
- Consider in detail the need for additional car-parks in the area and in this regard to seek by negotiations with the owners the improvement of existing car-parks.
- Encourage the development of facilities for anglers and canoeists. The Council will consider possible conflicts which might arise between these sports and methods of overcoming these.
- Provision of public rights of way and public footpaths in the Liffey Valley.
- Take appropriate steps to ensure the protection of the flora and fauna of the Valley.
- Review the Management Plan for the area as necessary.

2. Seek the implementation of the provision of a footpath and cycleway across the River Liffey.

3. Investigate the feasibility of extending the Special Amenity Area Order to include all of the lands at Lucan Demesne, the Embassy - owned lands, the area behind Lucan BNS, St Edmondsbury, Fonthill, Woodville, the Kings Hospital and Waterstown Park, extending from the River Liffey up to the N4 and bordered by the Leixlip-Lucan Slip Road, Lucan Village Road, the Lucan Hill Road, the Lucan Road from the Church Car Park to Woodies, the N4 onwards towards the Old Lucan Road and onwards as far as Waterstown Park.

4. Investigate the provision of a Regional Park in the Liffey Valley as a public amenity on lands at St. Edmondsbury and Woodville....

...6. Develop a strategy in conjunction with Waterways Ireland and other relevant bodies, to make full use of the amenity of the Grand Canal and the River Liffey in South County Dublin including the promotion of Lucan as a water activity – based tourist destination.”

In addition, the Liffey Valley is identified as a proposed Natural Heritage Area for its ecological interest. In relation to amenity, the continued development and extension of the Liffey Valley Park is identified as an objective of the Council.



Table 2

South Dublin County Council Development Plan 2004 – 2010

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
Housing			
H15	It is the policy of the Council to restrict the spread of one-off housing into the rural, mountain and high amenity zones (zones B, H, and G) and to encourage such housing, where acceptable, into existing village nuclei subject to availability of the necessary services.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
H16	It is the policy of the Council, when considering planning applications for the refurbishment or replacement of existing dwellings in rural, mountain and high amenity zones, a) to be satisfied that there is a genuine need of replacement and/ or refurbishment. b) to be satisfied that the roof, internal and external walls of the dwelling are substantially intact.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
Recreation			
SCR14	It is the policy of the Council that good quality open space should be available for all age-groups and accessible to everyone, at a convenient distance from their homes and places of work.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
SCR16	It is the policy of the Council to manage to a high standard all of its public parks, playing fields and public open spaces.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
SCR17	It is the policy of the Council to continue to improve, landscape, plant and develop more intensive recreational facilities within its parks and open spaces.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
SCR18	It is the policy of the Council to retain in open space use, lands with established recreational uses where practicable.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
SCR25	It is the policy of the Council to (a) preserve and enhance existing pedestrian links and public rights-of-way which contribute to general amenity and are not a source of antisocial behaviour; and (b) create new pedestrian links and public rights-of-way linking amenities and facilities, particularly in new residential development areas.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
Infrastructure			
WD2	It is the policy of the Council to promote the implementation of water quality management plans for ground and surface waters in the county as part of the implementation of the EU Water Framework Directive.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
WD3	It is the policy of the Council to implement the provisions of the various water pollution and environmental protection legislation and regulations, and to implement the 'polluter pays' principle with particular regard to non domestic water supply and foul drainage.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
WD4	It is the policy of the Council to conserve and protect surface water catchments and manage catchment areas where appropriate to protect the surface water drainage infrastructure of the County.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
WD7	It is the policy of the Council to protect, maintain, improve and enhance the natural and organic character of the watercourses in the county and to promote access, walkways and other recreational uses of their associated public open space, subject to a defined strategy of nature conservation and flood protection.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Archaeology and Architectural Heritage</u>			
AA1	It is the policy of the Council to protect and conserve the archaeological heritage of the county.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
AA3	It is the policy of the Council to conserve and protect areas designated as Areas of Archaeological Potential.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
AA4	It is the policy of the Council to conserve and protect buildings, structures and sites contained in the Record of Protected Structures that are of special architectural, historic, archaeological, artistic, cultural, scientific, social or technical interest.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Landscape, Natural Heritage and Amenities</u>			
LHA1	It is the policy of the Council to protect the character of the landscape in the County in accordance with the policies and objectives of the Development Plan and with the "Draft Guidelines for Landscape and Landscape Assessment, 2000" as issued by the Department of the Environment and Local Government or any finalised Guidelines issued by the Department.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

LHA2	It is the policy of the Council to protect views and prospects of special amenity value or special interest.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA3	It is the policy of the Council to preserve and enhance the character and special features of the Lucan Bridge to Palmerstown Special Amenity Area.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA4	It is the policy of the Council to actively investigate the feasibility of extending the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area Order to include lands from the Dublin City Council boundary to the boundary with County Kildare.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
LHA5	<p>It is a policy of the Council to secure, as an amenity of national significance, the preservation of the Liffey Valley and its landscapes and to seek to have the lands brought into public ownership for the purpose of designation as a Liffey Valley National Park.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to pursue the creation of a Liffey Valley National Park together with the adjoining Local Authorities of Fingal and Kildare.</p> <p>It is an objective of the Council to preserve all areas within the Liffey Valley from major housing developments.</p>	Designation of a Liffey Valley would achieve the main objective of this policy and assist in achieving the secondary objectives.	✓
LHA6	It is the policy of the Council to protect and preserve areas designated or proposed as Special Areas of Conservation (E.U. Habitats Directive) and Proposed Natural Heritage Areas.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
LHA11	It is the policy of the Council to protect the natural resources of the County and conserve the existing wide range of flora and fauna in the County through the protection of wildlife habitats wherever possible.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA12	It is the policy of the Council to implement a strategy (prepared on a regional basis) for the management of rivers and streams throughout the County.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓

LHA15	<p>It is the policy of the Council to conserve the character of the Dublin Mountain and High Amenity Zones.</p> <p>In the implementation of this policy it is the intention of the Council to designate and conserve areas of outstanding natural beauty and/or recreational value. Such areas include the Dublin Mountains and the Liffey and Dodder Valleys, and are covered by the zoning objectives 'G' - "To protect and improve High Amenity Areas" and 'H' - " To protect and enhance the outstanding natural character of the Dublin Mountain Area".</p> <p>These areas play a crucial role in recreation and amenity terms, in addition to serving as valuable wildlife habitats.</p>	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA16	It is the policy of the Council to examine areas within the Dublin Mountains including the Bohernabreena Reservoirs and High Amenity Area Zones with a view to making Special Amenity Area Orders for all or part of them.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
LHA17	It is the policy of the Council to preserve the major natural amenities of the County (i.e. Dublin Mountains and River Valleys) and to provide parks and open spaces in association with them.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA19	It is the policy of the Council to facilitate, where possible, the development of a Green Structure where heritage and landscape are afforded protection, management and enhancement and where there will be adequate opportunity for passive and active recreation.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA20	It is the policy of the Council to retain the individual physical character of towns and development areas by the designation of green belt areas, where appropriate.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
LHA23	It is the policy of the Council to preserve and/or extend and enhance existing public rights-of way and to create new rights-of-way in the interest of amenity as opportunities or needs arise.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA24	It is the policy of the Council to promote the development of regional and local networks of hiking and walking routes and way-marked trails.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
LHA25	It is the policy of the Council to secure or improve amenity / viewing lay-bys in areas of recreational amenity, at the commencement of rights of way and walking routes and where there are views and prospects of special interest.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

The Fingal County Development Plan took effect from 27 June 2005, and provides a land use strategy, based on the principles of sustainable development, for the County to 2011.

It identifies a range of policies and proposals which seek to:

- *“...strictly control the further expansion of the suburbs into rural and high amenity areas and control one-off housing in the countryside...”; and*
- *“...ensure the protection of natural habitats, ecological resources and quality landscapes and the promotion of bio-diversity...”*

Natural heritage and the provision of public open space play a significant role in the strategy for Fingal. The following strategy statements are made in Chapter 2 of the Plan:

- *“Strategy HS1: To conserve, protect and enhance the National and County heritage, built and natural, and to provide for development without conflicting with this aspiration.*
- *Strategy HS2: To take a holistic and integrated approach to the protection and management of heritage.*
- *Strategy HS3: To promote awareness and understanding among the general public of the built and natural heritage of Fingal.*
- *Strategy SIS1: To improve the quality of life of all residents of the County and make the County an attractive location in which to settle in the future.*
- *Strategy OS1: To secure the provision of high quality, attractive and secure public and private open spaces, including playing pitches, together with appropriate intensive recreational/amenity/community/ facilities in association with all residential developments.*
- *Strategy OS3: To continue to maintain, improve and develop the County's network of high-quality regional parks, and to improve access thereto.”*

In relation to Green Belts, the Plan notes an important role they play in building on the currently under-used potential for recreation in Fingal. In particular, *“...development relating specifically to...open recreation use will be permitted and encouraged, with recreation promoted in the most accessible areas. Improvement of existing and zoned non-agricultural and recreational uses will be permitted where it can be demonstrated that these works will not result in material intensification of land use.”* A majority of land to the north of the Liffey is zoned for such Green Belt use, as well as to protect and improve High Amenity Areas.

Table 3 presents the key relevant development plan policies.



Table 3

Fingal County Development Plan 2005 - 2011

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
<u>Strategy</u>			
DAP15	To continue to foster agricultural uses and to promote recreational and leisure activities within this area for the benefit of the community at large.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Housing in the Countryside</u>			
RAP3	To permit only limited rural generated housing demand in the open countryside in rural areas and to limit areas zoned high amenity and greenbelt to essential housing need only.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Natural Heritage</u>			
HP23	To protect, conserve and enhance the County's natural heritage including its biodiversity, landscapes and geological heritage.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP24	To encourage and promote the appropriate management and enhancement of the County's natural heritage.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP25	To encourage and promote access to and understanding of the natural heritage of the County.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP26	To protect natural heritage sites designated in National and European legislation, and in other relevant International Conventions, Agreements and Processes. This includes sites proposed to be designated or designated as: Ramsar sites, Special Areas of Conservation (SACs), Special Protection Areas (SPAs), Natural Heritage Areas (NHAs), Nature Reserves, and Refuges for Flora or Fauna.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP34	To protect High Amenity Areas from inappropriate development and to reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP35	To protect sensitive landscapes identified on the development plan maps from inappropriate development and to reinforce their character, distinctiveness and sense of place.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP39	To protect and enhance the character, heritage and amenities of the Special Amenity Areas in accordance with the relevant Orders.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
HP40	To investigate the feasibility of extending the Liffey Valley Special Amenity Area Order to include lands from the Dublin City Council boundary to the boundary with County Kildare.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP41	To protect the Liffey Valley, its heritage and landscapes, whilst facilitating its enjoyment by the public.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HO 38 (Objective)	To implement the Management Plans for the Special Amenity Areas and review them as necessary in consultation with all relevant stakeholders.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HO 39 (Objective)	To co-operate with Government and the adjoining local authorities in seeking to establish a Liffey Valley Regional Park.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP43	To protect and enhance wildlife habitats in the County's greenbelts because of their importance as 'green lungs' and as links to the countryside for the urban areas.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HO45 (Objective)	To identify and protect, within the lifetime of the plan, the main elements of a Regional Ecological Network for Fingal.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
<u>Inland Waters</u>			
HP48	To protect rivers, streams and other watercourses and, wherever possible, to maintain them in an open state capable of providing suitable habitat for fauna and flora.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP49	To protect and enhance the natural heritage and landscape character of river and stream corridors and valleys to maintain them free from inappropriate development, and to provide for public access where feasible and appropriate.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
HP51	To ensure that, wherever possible, local rivers, streams and watercourses provide amenity and recreational benefits for the local community.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

Green Belt			
GBP2	To ensure that greenbelt lands provide for both active and passive recreational uses that do not degrade the primary agricultural land use of the area.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
GBP3	To encourage recreational amenities in greenbelt areas where such facilities are consistent with the functions and role of the greenbelt areas as outlined in the Development Objectives for greenbelt areas above.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓



2.8 KILDARE COUNTY COUNCIL

2.8.1 *Kildare County Development Plan 2005 – 2011*

The Kildare County Development Plan has the overall strategic goal “to make Kildare the first choice as a place to live, work, visit and do business by ensuring sustainable, balanced growth and the enhancement of the built and natural environment.”

The plan recognises that the Liffey Valley is a significant landscape “...characterised mostly by smooth terrain and low vegetation, with some areas of natural woodland. The corridor presents a landmark in the County, with scenic, extensive open mountain views.” It further recognises that “...the eastern and west-central upland areas together with the River Liffey confluence to the east...provide high amenity areas due to their landscape characteristics and distinctiveness and the visual amenity value.”

Its strategic objectives include:

- “To ensure the highest quality living environments...open space and recreational facilities accessible to all the citizens of Kildare.
- To protect, conserve and enhance the built and natural heritage of Kildare for future generations.”

Three Natural Heritage Areas (NHA) are identified in and around the River Liffey. These are:

- Liffey at Osberstown (01395)
- Liffey Bank at Athgarvan (01396)
- Liffey Valley Meander Belt (00393)

Table 4 presents the key relevant development plan policies.



Table 4

Kildare County Development Plan 2005 – 2011

Policy No	Nature of Policy	Appraisal	Consistent
Infrastructure			
WQ2	To ensure the protection and improvement of all drinking water, surface water and ground waters throughout the county by implementing the EU Water Framework Directive, and any other associated legislation.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
WQ3	To work in co-operation with all organisations and all major stakeholders to ensure a co-ordinated approach to the protection and improvement of the county's water resources.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
WQ5	To implement the River Basin District Management Plans that will emerge from the Eastern River Basin District and South Eastern River Basin District Projects.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
Retail			
RP28	To seek to improve and consolidate Kilcullen Town Centre, particularly to the north of the River Liffey, and to prepare an environmental enhancement strategy, subject to the availability of resources.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
Agriculture			
AG3	To encourage the development of environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, to ensure that development does not impinge on the visual amenity of the countryside and that watercourses, wildlife habitats and areas of ecological importance are protected from the threat of pollution.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
AG4	To ensure that all agricultural activities adhere to any legislation on water quality, such as the Phosphorous Regulations, Water Framework Directive and Nitrate Directive.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
Social Strategy			
PK1	To facilitate and develop a hierarchy of open spaces throughout the county to provide greater opportunities for recreation and amenity.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
PK2	To encourage and promote the provision of pedestrian and cycle routes and networks linking parks and open spaces to residential developments so as to facilitate recreation and amenity activity.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

<u>Tourism and Recreation</u>			
TR9	To protect the amenities of the County from insensitive or inappropriate development particularly any development which threatens the tourism resources of the County.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
IW1	To maximise opportunities for the use of canals and other waterways as tourism and recreational amenities and in this regard the council will co-operate with Waterways Ireland, National Parks and Wildlife Service of the DoEHLG and community groups to develop the infrastructure, quality and amenity of these waterways.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
IW2	To encourage the development of facilities for boating, canoeing, angling, cruising and other sustainable water based interests. The council will endeavour to provide appropriate access including access for rescue services to existing water-based activities. It will consider all interests and conflicts that might arise between the various interests in conjunction with the Eastern Regional Fisheries Board, the Irish Canoe Union, Inland Waterways, and local communities and clubs.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RP1	To protect and improve amenities and recreational assets in the interests of residents and tourists alike.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RP3	To seek an extension of the proposed Special Amenity Area Order for the Liffey Valley from Lucan to Leixlip (which is envisaged by the Dublin Local Authorities) to other parts of the Valley within County Kildare.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
RP4	To pursue the creation of a Liffey Valley Regional Park together with Fingal and South Dublin County Councils.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would achieve the objectives of this policy.	✓
<u>Heritage</u>			
NH5	The Council shall seek to conserve, protect and enhance wherever possible wildlife habitats such as rivers, stream, lakes, bog, fen, scrub and woodlands, field boundaries (hedgerows, and ditches) which occur outside of designated areas. Such features form part of a network of habitats and corridors, which allow wildlife to exist and flourish.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓

<u>Landscape Character Areas</u>			
RW3	To control development that will adversely affect distinctive linear sections of water corridors and river valleys, especially open floodplains.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RW5	To promote the amenity, ecological and educational value of the Canals and Rivers within the County while at the same time ensuring the conservation of its fauna and flora, and protection of the quantity and quality of the water supply.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RW6	To pursue the establishment of the Barrow Valley and the River Liffey Valley and the Canals as Areas of Special Amenity , as per section 202 of the Planning and Development Act, 2000.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park does not conflict with the provisions of this policy.	✓
<u>Protected Views and Scenic Routes</u>			
RV1	To restrict further development on the river shores that could present a visual intrusion and thus, potentially affect the quality of this viewpoint.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RL1 - Leixlip Bridge • RL2 - New Bridge • RL3 Celbridge Bridge • RL4 - Straffan Bridge • RL5 - Alexandra Bridge • RL6 - Millicent Bridge • RL7 - Caragh Bridge • RL8 - Victoria Bridge • RL9 - New Bridge • RL10 - Athgarvan Bridge • RL11 - Kilcullen Bridge • RL12 - New Bridge • RL13 - Ballymore Bridge 		



RV2	To preserve views and to ensure that further development does not disrupt available vistas or impact on the landscape quality and scenic value of the river corridor.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓
RV3	To preserve the visual amenity value of the designated viewpoints and protect the landscape vulnerability and quality of the river corridor, through restricting further development on the shores of the river that could present a disproportionate visual effect or disrupt the vistas available.	Designation of a Liffey Valley Park would assist in pursuing this policy.	✓



2.8.2 **Celbridge Local Area Plan**

The plan notes that most areas of open space in the Celbridge area are in private ownership. It notes the significance of areas around the River Liffey as valuable open space defining the river as an *“outstanding natural amenity in the centre of the town”*. It notes that accessibility to the river is currently restricted, and identifies the need for a management plan *“to encourage the maximum use of the river side areas while at the same time ensuring their conservation and protecting their pastoral qualities.”* Zonings in the plan seek to protect the amenity of the River Liffey whilst ensuring public access is made possible.

The plan identifies a proposed new bridge to the entrance to Castletown House, and a proposed slip road through the Donaghcomper demesne, which could represent a conflict with proposals for a Liffey Valley Park.

2.8.3 **Kilcullen Local Area Plan**

Policy P.2.6.4 of this plan states that *“it is the policy of the Council to protect land zoned as open space from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity and leisure uses and to the ongoing development of agriculture, will be permitted.”* In addition, it is the objective of the Council to *“protect the amenity and tourist value of the Liffey and develop walking routes along the Liffey...”* (Objective O3.9.3), and

Policy P2.8.2 notes that *“it is the policy of the Council to protect the views and prospects of special amenity value or special interest listed...”* which include *“views and prospects of the Liffey from all locations”* (Objective O3.11.2a).

2.8.4 **Leixlip Local Area Plan**

Policy P2.6.4 states that *“It is the policy of the Council to protect land zoned as open space from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity, community and leisure uses, and to the on-going development of agriculture, will be permitted.”* In addition, it is an objective of the Council to *“protect the amenity and tourist value of the Liffey and Royal Canal, protect their banks, footpaths and develop walking routes along the canal...”* (Objective O3.9.3) and *“promote the extension of the Liffey Valley Special Area Amenity Order to Leixlip”* (Objective O3.9.7).

Policy P2.8.3 notes that *“...it is the policy of the Council to protect the views and prospects of special amenity value or special interest listed...”* which includes *“...the Liffey from all locations”* (Objective O3.11.3).

2.8.5 **Newbridge Local Area Plan**

Policy P2.6.2 states that *“it is the Policy of the Council to extend and develop a linear park along both sides of the Liffey from the Dominican College to the motorway and to continue the development of the riverside park system in accordance with the Boylan report.”* The plan further notes that *“no development will be permitted on either bank within 80m of the River Liffey. Development along the river should front onto the river so as to ensure the passive supervision of the proposed linear park. The amenity strip along*



the west side of the River Liffey at Kilbelin shall be reduced to 50m and public access to same shall be provided at the southern end of the zoning."

Policy P2.6.5 states that *"it is the policy of the Council to protect land zoned as open space from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity, community and leisure uses, and to the on-going development of agriculture, will be permitted."*

Policy P2.8.2 states that *"it is the policy of the Council to protect the views and prospects of special amenity value or special interest listed" which include "views and prospects of the Liffey from all locations" (Objective O3.11.2).*

2.8.6 Sallins Local Area Plan

Policy P2.6.4 states that *"it is the policy of the Council to protect land zoned as open space from inappropriate development. Within such areas only very limited development, directly related to amenity, community and leisure uses, and the ongoing development of agriculture, will be permitted."*

Policy P2.8.2 states that *"it is the policy of the Council to protect the views and prospects of special amenity value or special interest listed" which includes "...views and prospects of the Liffey and Grand Canal from all locations." (Objective O3.11.2a)*

2.8.7 Straffan Local Area Plan

This plan notes that *"...it is the policy of the Council to...promote natural resources as amenities to be experienced and and enjoyed by all wherever possible." It is the objective of the Council to "investigate the provision of rights of way...along the River Liffey..." (Objective AR1), "improve general access to the River Liffey" (Objective AR2) and "protect the amenity and tourist value of the River Liffey, its banks footpaths and walking routes" (Objective AR3).*



3.1 INTRODUCTION

In addition to the suite of planning policy documents relevant to the proposed Liffey Valley Park, there are a range of other policy areas in which pertinent policy exists. Policies and programmes in the following areas are therefore briefly reviewed in this chapter:

- National and Regional Development;
- Recreation, Amenity and Play;
- Sports; and
- Tourism.

3.2 OVERVIEW OF RELEVANT NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND LOCAL POLICIES

3.2.1 *National Development Plan*

The *National Development Plan* ⁽¹⁾ (NDP) details a programme of structured and targeted investment in the development of Ireland over the period to 2006. It includes investment in a range of policy areas including rural development, health, water and local development. The Plan aims to provide funding for crucial areas of public policy from domestic sources, with a decreasing reliance on the role of EU structural funds.

There are three core areas of funding: social inclusion (including recreational infrastructure), balanced regional development and rural development. The Plan incorporates a number of specific areas of funding, of which the following main Southern and Eastern Region funds are of relevance in the relation to the proposed Liffey Valley Park:

- Angling – €11.47m;
- Conservation – €46.61m;
- Environment (Sustainable Development) – €0.018m;
- Habitat Protection – €46.61m;
- Tourism (Environmental Management) – €8.76m;
- Tourism (Development of Major Attractions) – €101.54m
- Inland Waterways – €23.76m.

(1) REFERENCE



3.2.2 **Tourism Policy**

Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism

At the national level, tourism policy is formulated by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism.

New Horizons for Irish Tourism: An Agenda for Action was published in September 2003 ⁽¹⁾. It provides a vision for Irish tourism which states that “Ireland will be a destination of choice for discerning international and domestic tourists which...respects the natural and built environments and supports their conservation and enhancement.” This is in recognition of the role of the unique qualities Ireland has to offer in terms of the natural and built environment in attracting tourism.

3.2.3 **National Tourism Policy**

Current policy on tourism is overseen by the Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism. The Department’s specific brief is that of;

Facilitating the continued development by the tourism industry of an economic and environmentally sustainable and spatially balanced tourism sector, through formulating, monitoring and reviewing a range of supporting policies and programmes, particularly within the framework of the National Development Plan and North/South Co-operation.

Essentially the Department oversees the policy application of Tourism Ireland which has overall responsibility for the promotion and development of the tourism product on the island of Ireland. In its recent marketing perspective, Tourism Ireland is seeking to communicate the Irish tourism brand through three essential pillars; *People, Culture* and *Place*. In regard to *Place* the Organisation recognises the significance of the physical experience of holidaying in Ireland and seeks to ensure that such physical characteristics are translated into a positive holidaying experience for both locals and visitors alike. In addition a greater regional focus is envisaged albeit that this will result in the current regional tourism organisations changing their role (other than for Dublin where it is recognised that the City Region must in its own right be seen to compete against other European City regions for the short stay visitor).

Of particular interest to this project is the recognition in the policy of Tourism Ireland that Ireland is now operating in a competitive market where demand for environment based activities, culture and heritage will remain strong. Tourism Ireland expects that holidays in unspoiled natural environments will expand considerably but will include a constituency of clients which are seeking active rather than passive interface with the environment, culture and heritage of the local community. The organisation notes that;

(1) *New Horizons for Irish Tourism: An Agenda for Action* (2003). Report of the Tourism Policy Review Group to John O’Donoghue T.D. Minister for Arts, Sport & Tourism



“even short stay visitors will seek multiple options, tailored to their individual preferences. Consumers will look for authentic experience and “living” as well as protected historic culture”.

3.2.4 Regional (Dublin and Kildare)

As indicated above there are proposals to restructure the current regionally based tourism operations of Failte Ireland. In this regard the Organisations that will fall out of this restructuring will need to be positioned through appropriate marketing material to promote the obvious potential of the valley. This will be detailed in the Strategy for the Valley.

3.3 RECREATION, AMENITY AND PLAY POLICY

3.3.1 National Play Policy

Launched in March 2004, Ireland’s National Play policy ‘*Ready, Steady, Play*’⁽¹⁾ covers a range of issues related to children of primary school age, and the importance of play in their development. It establishes a framework through which the provision of public play facilities and “*child friendly environments*” should be expanded over the five year period to 2009

It states as its vision “*An Ireland where the importance of play is recognised, so that children experience a range of quality play opportunities to enrich their childhood.*”

It recognises that general guidance at national level supports the provision of amenity areas by local authorities, and “...*that amenity areas be provided in a hierarchy of spaces ranging from regional parks, neighbourhood open spaces, local open spaces to incidental open spaces.*” A further point of note is the importance of play in children’s health and tackling childhood obesity.

Its principle recommendations include the extended use of creative landscaping and the expansion of play spaces.

3.3.2 National Recreation Policy

In the spirit of the National Play Policy, and building on its success, the National Children’s Office is in the process of developing a Recreation Policy for Young People in Ireland⁽²⁾. The policy will focus more the needs of older children and teenagers (aged 12 to 18), with a view to identifying existing opportunities for teenagers to become involved in recreational pursuits, and facilitating publicly funded projects to develop recreational facilities.

Its draft vision is stated as “*An Ireland where the importance of recreation is recognised so that young people experience a range of quality recreational opportunities to enrich their lives and promote their physical, mental and social wellbeing.*”

(1) Ready, Steady, Play! A National Play Policy (2004) National Children’s Office.

(2) Consultation Document for a Recreation Policy for Young People in Ireland (2005) National Children’s Office.



3.4 AGENCIES WITH RESPONSIBILITY FOR RECREATIONAL PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT.

Essentially there is no single agency that holds responsibility for recreational planning. This is, of itself, not a major issue provided the agencies concerned operate with each other to an agreed strategic perspective. The preparation of the Strategy will facilitate this process. Nonetheless it can be concluded that the Local Authorities along the Valley retain the most critical role in acting as planning authorities but also in their roles under Programme Group Six of their Statutory responsibilities.

Having regard for the planning process there is a need to provide the institutional means to enable greater complementarity in planning terms. This is addressed in the previous chapter. In regard to the recreational and sports planning of the Authorities the extent of inter-action has been relatively limited and therefore requires consideration in the context of the Strategy. Nonetheless considerable progress has been made by the Authorities in the preparation of County/City based Strategies which address the long term expansion of facilities across the full extent of the Valley.

A unified policy approach would probably address the inconsistencies in addressing local recreation need, rather than seeking at this point to engage in any organisational or institutional reform.

3.5 SPORTS POLICY

3.5.1 Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism

The Department of Arts, Sport and Tourism identifies the important role of sport in combating social issues such as drug abuse, exclusion and economic disadvantage, as well as opening up opportunities for employment and economic development. The Department states as one of its goals:

“to formulate and oversee the implementation of policies for the promotion and development of sport and to encourage increased participation in sport and recreation, particularly by disadvantaged communities”⁽¹⁾.

Sports Unit 1 of the Department is responsible for the development of sport and recreational policy and capital programmes for the development of sport in Ireland, and Sports Unit 2 is responsible for major sports capital projects. In addition, Unit 2 is tasked with undertaking a national audit of local sports facilities, including a review of the current sport capital programme, and developing a long term strategy for the development of sporting facilities throughout the country.

(1) http://www.arts-sport-tourism.gov.ie/what%20we%20do/sport/wwd_sport.htm



This research report ⁽¹⁾ recognises that the provision of adequate and appropriate facilities for sport (ie the supply side of reasons why people do or do not participate) may have “considerable background or conditioning effects” in determining levels of participation. For example a “*lack of footpaths or cycleway on roads may deter...from walking or cycling*”. The report also recognises the health benefits, both physical and mental, of those partaking in even modest levels of sport.

3.6 HEALTH PROMOTION

The National Health Promotion Strategy 2000 – 2005

The strategy ⁽²⁾ also notes a lack of physical activity as a contributor to poor health, and states as one of its strategic aims “...to increase participation in regular, moderate physical activity.”

Physical Activity Campaigns

A campaign called the 'get a life, get active' was launched in Dublin in May 2001, and later an emphasis on walking was incorporated into the programme. Running over eighteen months, the campaign included distribution of handbooks on physical activity, getting active and walking for a healthier heart.

This campaign was followed up in June 2003 with a new physical activity campaign called 'Let It Go, Just for 30 Minutes “...aimed at the 50 per cent of the population that does not engage in any form of regular physical activity.” ⁽³⁾

(1) Sports Participation and Health Among Adults in Ireland (undated). Irish Sports Council.

(2) The National Health Promotion Strategy 2000 – 2005. Department of Health and Children, Health Promotion Unit.

(3) http://www.healthpromotion.ie/campaigns/#physical_activity



4.1 INTRODUCTION

In order to understand the ecological resource within the Liffey Valley, it is necessary to outline the physical and historical influences that have created the contemporary environment.

The interplay between solid geology, glacial processes, soil formation, hydrology and ecology has formed the basic materials upon which human activities have impacted. This is, however, a constant and ongoing interrelationship, with topography, access to water and soil conditions influencing the spatial distribution and types of human activities practiced within the valley over the past several millennia.

Although human habitation has been the most recent environmental influence, in many ways it has been the most profound. Patterns of land ownership, settlement development, agricultural and ritual activities have all been modified in response to local variations of biotic and abiotic elements and constraints. A description of the physical environment of the River Liffey Valley is presented below.

4.2 PHYSICAL INFLUENCES**4.2.1 *Geology***

The underlying geology of the region of County Dublin and Kildare over which the River Liffey flows is formed principally from carboniferous rocks with Lower Palaeozoic rocks dominant in the upper reaches of the river between the source at Blessington and Kilcullen. Most of the region of carboniferous rocks is low ground and is covered by a thick blanket of quaternary sediments and peat deposits.

The Lower Palaeozoic rocks consist of greywackes (sandstones cemented by a high proportion of muds) and shales. The land associated with these rocks begins to rise upstream of Kilcullen as a result of regional folding in the area.

Downstream of Kilcullen the carboniferous limestones support good quality pastoral farmland and species rich calcareous grasslands. Steep mounded areas along the river are associated with the limestone rocks within the otherwise flat basin down stream of Kilcullen. These mounds relate to Waulsortian limestone deposits, which are mounds or reefs that



grew from the rapid accumulation of carbonate mud produced by organisms. An example of this is the steep ridge lines that dominate the northern bank of the river at Palmerstown. Another example occurs at Newbridge, where a large isolated mound has resulted from Waulsortian depositions.

The quaternary is the latest geological time scale and marks the period of the ice age which began 1.6 million years ago. Ireland experienced two separate glaciation episodes during the ice age. The present topography and surface features apparent along the Liffey Valley all relate to the latest of these glaciations. Along the lower reaches of the River Liffey alluvial deposits and till provide fertile soil material.

4.3 ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

The Liffey Valley comprises a mosaic of vegetation and habitat types that have evolved in response to the underlying surface geology, topography, soil and human activities. The predominant land use within the valley is for agricultural purposes with pasture land accounting for approximately 60% of the land cover. Arable land cover is also significant, accounting for approximately 12% of the land cover. The high level of pasture and arable farmland reflects the fertile and well drained soils of the valley. While semi-natural habitats account for a small proportion of the valleys land cover the discrete pockets of habitat that do occur throughout the valley are of high ecological and conservation value.

Juvenile River Stage – Source to Ballymore Eustace

The River Liffey rises above the Blessington Lakes, which are designated as a Natural Heritage Area under the EU Habitats Directive 1992, in the Wicklow Mountains and meanders through the broad plains of County Kildare. The ecological resource along this section of the river has been significantly altered by intensive farming practises adjacent to the river corridor. As mentioned above the predominant land use within the corridor is pasture and arable farming. Most of this activity is concentrated in the Kildare lowlands adjacent to the mature stretches of the River Liffey.

The land cover adjacent to the juvenile section of the river upstream from Ballymore Eustace is more varied and represents an area of higher ecological value. Natural moor and heathland habitats still exist at the source of the river. These habitats are of high ecological value and are represented by dry siliceous heath which are acidic and poor in nutrients. The underlying geology, consisting of acid volcanic and igneous intrusions (which resulted in a major mountain building episode in this region) provided the foundations for the development of these moors and heaths.



This habitat broadly corresponds to the “European dry heath” habitat, protected under Annex I of the EU Habitats Directive, 1992. Typical components of the vegetation include Ling (*Calluna vulgaris*), Bell Heather (*Erica cinerea*) and low-growing Western Gorse (*Ulex gallii*). Prostrate juniper (*Juniperus communis*) is also a common feature of these habitats and any area covered with scattered juniper can be associated with the Annex I habitat “*Juniperus communis* formations on heaths or calcareous grasslands”.

In the last half a century much of the heathland habitat within the study corridor has been lost to intensive coniferous forestry plantations. These areas are characterised by even-aged stands of trees that are usually planted in uniform rows at the same time. The majority of the conifers are non-native in origin and include such species as Sitka Spruce (*Picea sitchensis*), Lodgepole Pine (*Pinus contorta*), Norway Spruce (*Picea abies*) and Larches (*Larix spp.*). In general these plantations represent a low ecological resource. In recent times planting of conifer plantations on naturally acidic areas, with low base buffering capacity, has been linked with adverse ecological impacts to groundwater and freshwater sources.

Mature River Stage – Ballymore Eustace to Leixlip

The pastoral heartland of the study corridor is situated west of Blessington Lakes and Ballymore Eustace where the river’s characteristics change from a juvenile, high energy river to a wider, deeper and slower flowing mature river. The principal ecological resource along this section of the river corridor is the riparian habitat. Both banks of the river along this section are predominantly well vegetated with hedgerows and associated treelines. The species composition of these linear woodland features varies due to factors such as age, management and exposure. In general land given over to pasture within old estates that are less intensively managed tend to correspond with older and more established linear woodlands. An example of this is the section of the river which flows through Harristown House. Some of the species associated with the riparian vegetation within this estate include Holly (*Ilex aquifolium*), Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*), Oak (*Quercus spp.*) Willows (*Salix spp.*), Honeysuckle (*Lonicera periclymenum*) and Hedge Bindweed (*Calystegia sepium*).

Areas designated statutory conservation protection under the EU Habitats Directive, 1992, occur within the river corridor close to Newbridge. This includes the Pollardstown Fen Special Area of Conservation, Oberstown Natural Heritage Area and the Grand Canal Natural Heritage Area which crosses over the River Liffey at Straffan. Pollardstown Fen is the largest spring-fed fen in Ireland and has a well developed flora and fauna. Of



particular conservation importance is the occurrence of all three of the Whorl Snails (*Vertigo spp.*) that are listed on Annex II of the EU Habitats Directive. Pollardstown is the only known site in Ireland (or Europe) to support all three species (*Vertigo geyeri*, *V. angustior*, *V. moulinsiana*) and thus provides a unique opportunity to study their different habitat and hydrological requirements. Owing to the rarity of this habitat and the numbers of rare organisms found there, the site is rated as of international importance.

Old-age River Stage - Leixlip to Glenaulin

The ecological resource of the Liffey Valley immediately to the west of the city at Palmerstown and Lucan is considerable; with a variety of habitats that sustain rare flora and fauna.

Of principal note in this area of the valley is the proposed Natural Heritage Area (NHA), which stretches from the Glenaulin weir at Palmerstown upstream to the Dublin/Kildare border. The river is the focal point of this NHA but the Mill Race which runs parallel to the river for three kilometres upstream from the weir is also a significant feature of the site. The site also encompasses Waterstown Park and the Hermitage golf course on the southern bank of the Liffey, while the Strawberry Beds and St. Catherines Demesne are located on the northern bank.

This section of the river is a designated salmonid river. A lack of active management of the Mill Race in recent times has resulted in a drop in water level due to the colonisation of much of the banks and in-stream channel by thick vegetation, some of which is invasive and threatens to dominate the bankside if appropriate action is not taken. These invasive species are characterised by very aggressive types such as Japanese Knotweed (*Polygonum cuspidatum*) and Russian Vine (*Fallopia baldschuanica*).

The main terrestrial habitat included within the site is mixed deciduous woodland on fertile, limey alluvium and boulder clay, in which Beech (*Fagus sylvatica*) is dominant in some areas. St. Catherines Woods, located within St. Catherines Demesne is a mixed woodland of predominantly native broadleaves. The common woodland species include native species such as Ash and Oak along with Beech and Sycamore. The development of an open canopy within the woodland promotes a diverse herb layer, which has been noted as a valuable botanical resource and as such the woodland has been designated as an Area of Scientific Interest.

Elsewhere, Ash (*Fraxinus excelsior*) is common while Willow species (*Salix spp.*) and Alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) are the dominant trees along the rivers banks. There are also some stands of Larch (*Larix*) and Scot's Pine (*Pinus*



sylvestris). Toothwort (*Lathraea squamaria*) has been recorded on a number of tree species.

The ground flora commonly includes Ivy (*Hedera helix*), Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*), Violet species (*Viola spp.*), Lords-and-ladies (*Arum maculatum*) and Hart's-Tongue Fern (*Phyllitis scolopendrium*). These woodlands occur on both sides of the river and are typically derived from old estates.

The threatened Green Figwort (*Scrophularia umbrosa*), a species listed in the Irish Red Data Book, is recorded from a number of stations along the river within the site. This stretch of the River Liffey has the greatest number of recently recorded populations of this species in Ireland. The Rare and legally protected Hairy St. John's-Wort (*Hypericum hirsutum*) (Flora Protection Order 1987) has been recorded from woodlands in this site. This species has only been recorded in Kildare and Dublin, at sites on the River Liffey, since 1970. The threatened Yellow Archangel (*Lamiastrum galeobdolon*), listed in the Irish Red Data Book, is also recorded from these woodlands.

The Strawberry Beds are another ecological feature within the pNHA. They occupy the north bank of the river between Knockmaroon Hill in the east and the Lucan Bridge in the west. The soil of the area is very fertile and up until the middle of the last century the predominant industry was agriculture. The topography of the Beds was intensively managed, with the construction of terraces for the cultivation of a variety of crops. These terraces are now mainly landscaped gardens, however some areas are growing wild and exhibit a diverse ecosystem. There are large expanses of wooded areas within the Beds which are typically comprised of Beech, Oak, Sycamore, and Ash with scattered Conifers, especially Silver Firs. Three flower species listed above (Green Figwort, Hairy St. Johns Wort and Yellow Archangel) as rare or threatened in Ireland occur within the Strawberry Beds.

In terms of fauna the Strawberry Beds are home to a number of species. Two very rare species of millipede occur here; *Adenomaris gibbosa*, (otherwise found only in the French Pyrenees) and *Brachyaetuma bagnali*. There are also two rare species of woodlice, *Trichoniscoides Albidus* and *Trichoniscoides sarsi*. There is a dense badger population on the valley hillside. The following are also common; Newts, Frogs, Hedgehogs, Shrews, Rabbits, Mice, Rats, Squirrels (red and grey), Otters, Stoats, Foxes, Mink and Bats. Seventeen species of butterfly have been recorded in the area, of which three are rare species; the Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*), Wood White (*Leptidea*) and Small Copper (*Lycaena phlaeas*). The Kingfisher (*Alcedo atthis*) and Dipper (*Cinclus cinclus*) is known to breed on the Liffey



at Lucan. Both these species have specific habitat requirements with the Kingfisher requiring slow-flowing or clear still water and well developed mature bankside vegetation on which to perch. Steep earth banks are also required for nesting. The Dipper requires high quality water as it feeds on invertebrates in fast flowing, shallow riffle conditions. The Dipper is sensitive to reductions in invertebrate populations thus indicating the importance of good water quality for species diversity.

Glenaulin to Chapelizod

At the city boundary on the north side of the river, at Glenaulin, there is a small but dense woodland. The dominant species are Sycamore and Ash. Willow and alder line the river bank while patches of herbaceous vegetation are dominated by Reed sweet-grass (*Glyceria maxima*), a particularly robust grass that can out-compete other species and reduce biodiversity. Meadowsweet and Willowherb are also dominant along the bank. Green figwort has also been found on a narrow bank along this stretch of the river.

The steep and well developed earth bank sides along this stretch of the river provide ideal nesting sites for Kingfishers. A pair of resident Kingfishers are known to nest and forage between Sarah Bridge and upstream to the western edge of the weir.

A narrow but continuous strip of vegetation on the south bank stretches from Belgrove Lawn to Laurence Brook. This strip is again dominated by Ash, Sycamore and Willow, with some Horse-chestnut (*Aesculus hippocastanum*), Beech and Elder (*Sambucus nigra*). Ivy and Ivy Broomrape (*Orobancha hederacea*) occur frequently throughout the ground flora along with Wood Avens (*Geum urbanum*), Bush Vetch (*Vicia sepium*), Cow Parsley (*Anthriscus sylvestris*), and Nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*). Ivy broomrape is a saprophytic species that produces no photosynthetic parts and derives all its nutrients requirements exclusively from ivy. Its occurrence suggests a lengthy continuous history of this woodland

The islands associated with the weir at Chapelizod support a varying amount of semi-natural woodland dominated by Willow, Sycamore and Ash. These areas are not accessible by foot which makes them ideal refuges for breeding birds and mammals.

Chapelizod to Islandbridge

Fennel pondweed is abundant in-stream within this section of the main channel. This plant is characteristic of eutrophic waters. Spiked water-milfoil (*Myriophyllum spicatum*) is associated with the fennel pondweed



(*Potamogeton pectinatus*), while Rigid Hornwort (*Ceratophyllum demersum*) and St. John Nuttall's waterweed grow in the slower waters of the river. Reed Sweet-grass forms a mono-specific layer in places along the river bankside. Areas dominated by this plant are low in diversity and of little ecological value. Other parts of the bankside, not dominated by Reed sweet-grass sustain more interesting floral assemblages with the occurrence of Flowering Rush (*Butomus umbellatus*) and Green Figwort of particular note.

Grasslands of value exist to the south of the river immediately west of the War Memorial Park. These grasslands are typical of dry calcareous conditions and support a diverse range of flora. They sustain a number of species of orchids, including Early Purple (*Orchis mascula*) and Pyramidal (*Anacamptis pyramidalis*). Yellow archangel is also associated with this grassland.

The ecological value of the grassland areas has decreased with a reduction in grazing, mainly by horses whose numbers have been restricted in more recent times. In the absence of grazing animals an appropriate mowing regime will have to be introduced to improve and maintain the biological diversity of these grasslands and ensure that the area is not colonised by rank vegetation. Semi-natural grasslands also exist on the north bank but a lack of management in recent times has allowed rank grasslands, dominated by weedy species to develop. The Memorial Park grasslands are of little ecological value as they are intensively managed and dominated by typical amenity grasses such as Perennial rye-grass (*Lolium perenne*), Creeping bent (*Agrostis stolonifera*) and Yorkshire fog (*Holcus lanatus*).

An extensive area of woodland is found on a steep escarpment on the south bank of the river by the War Memorial Gardens. The woodland is dominated by Ash and Beech, while a number of other species occur throughout the canopy such as Sycamore, Horse-chestnut and Lime (*Tilia spp.*). The understory consists of Elder, Hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*), Willow spp., Hazel (*Corylus avellana*) and Ash and Elm saplings. Bramble (*Rubus fruticosus*) forms a dense cover and together with the steep slopes of the escarpment makes the woodland inaccessible in places. The ground flora of this woodland is typical of a calcareous woodland, characterised by Wood Avens, Lords and Ladies, Hart's Tongue, Herb Robert (*Geranium robertianum*) and Fern species. However the most notable attribute of the ground flora is the occurrence of the Red Data Book specie Yellow Archangel.

Other areas of woodland include the islands below Islandbridge Weir. These woodlands are well developed with thick foliage bearing trees



resulting in an almost entirely closed canopy during the high summer months. As a result of the heavy shade, the dominant component of the ground flora is ivy. Ivy broomrape is also associated with the ivy found in this woodland.

A range of mammals have been recorded along this section of the River Liffey. Otters were frequently noted in the Islandbridge up until the late 1990's; however there is no current information on the extent of the population along the river. Sighting and activity fluctuates on a yearly basis, which is most likely a result of declines in the rivers fish stocks. These declines have had a similar effect on seals, which were an occasional visitor as far upstream as Chapelizod.

4.4 THE RIVER LIFFEY ANGLING

The River Liffey rises in the Wicklow Mountains 17 km south of the city of Dublin and flows in a long crescent for over 120 km before entering the sea at Dublin Bay. The river's upper reaches - from the Sally Gap to Poulaphouca reservoir - hold good stocks of small trout. Below Poulaphouca, as it meanders and glides through the plains of Co. Kildare, this poor mountain water is transformed into a rich trout river.

There is reported excellent fishing for wild brown trout at Ballymore Eustace, Kilcullen and Newbridge. Just outside Dublin between Celbridge and Straffan there is also some excellent trout fishing while salmon and sea trout fishing is available between Lucan and Islandbridge.

Fishing is controlled by a number of Angling Associations and riparian owners.

Islandbridge to Lucan

Islandbridge is a good spot for salmon fishing and this area usually produces the first salmon annually. Some sea trout can also be caught.

The Dublin and District Salmon and Trout Anglers Association has extensive fishing water on the river at Islandbridge, at the Strawberry Beds along the lower Lucan road, the Wrens nest and at CPI. The Lucan Trout and Salmon Angling Association has fishing rights on the south bank from Lucan bridge to the Hermitage Golf Course. Fishing is prohibited between Lucan weir and the bridge located downstream from the weir.

Rye Water

The Rye Water is a major tributary of the River Liffey. It rises in Co. Kildare and flows in a south-easterly direction for 17 km before joining with the



Liffey at Leixlip. Although the river has been drained it is generally fast flowing over a stoney bottom. This river contains good stocks of brown trout.

The stretch of the Rye Water from Sandford's Bridge to the Leixlip Aqueduct (where the Royal Canal flows over the Rye) is owned by Intel Ireland Ltd., and is controlled by Leixlip and District Angling Association. Access to this stretch is from Kellystown Lane and from the towpath beside the Aqueduct. There is very good quality trout fishing, particularly in spring.

River Liffey - Leixlip to Straffan, Co. Kildare.

Free fishing is available on the Liffey on the left bank upstream of Leixlip Bridge to its confluence with the Rye Water. Fishing is prohibited from the Rye water to Leixlip dam. The Celbridge-Straffan fishery which stretches for approximately 6.5 km is a good trout fishery with many trout over 1lb in weight regularly taken. This section is leased by the Dublin Trout Anglers Association. The best location is on the South bank (right bank looking downstream) from Straffan Bridge to Pausdeen Bridge with the exception of a few hundred yards where the river flows through a wood on private land.

Straffan to Kilbride, Co Wicklow

The Clane Trout and Salmon Anglers Association have fishing rights to the main channel section upstream of Straffan to a small tributary just north east of Rathmore from where the Dublin Trout Anglers have rights up to Alexandra Bridge south of Clane. The Clane anglers have then access again from Alexandra Bridge up to Millicent Bridge. Again these sections are reported to be good brown trout fisheries.

The North Kildare Trout and Salmon Anglers Association have fishery rights from Millicent Bridge to Kilcullen from where the Kilcullen Trout and Salmon Anglers Association have rights as far as the old railway bridge at Harristown. The Ballymore Eustace Trout and Salmon Anglers Association have the rights upstream from here as far as Golden Falls just downstream of the Blessington Lakes.

Blessington Lake - Pollaphuca Reservoir

This lake is the largest reservoir (c2,000 hectares) in Ireland and is approximately 27 km from Dublin. It has approximately 70 km of shoreline with many inlets and bays which offer the angler excellent game fishing. The lake is controlled and managed by the Electricity Supply Board and a permit for fishing is required.



There is a small stock of wild brown trout in the reservoir. The E.S.B. annually stock the lake in the Russborough and Tulfaris areas with brown and rainbow trout averaging over 1lb. Some ferox trout to over 10lb have been recorded in the Vallymount area.

Upstream of the lakes the Kilbride Anglers Club have a fishery lease from Ballyvard Bridge to Ballysmuttan Bridge. The river's upper reaches from Sally Gap to Pollaphuca Reservoir hold good stocks of very small trout. Bigger trout found in this stretch have probably moved upstream from the reservoir.

4.5 CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT

The Three Rivers Project is a recent government initiative based on developing catchment based water quality monitoring and management systems for the Boyne, Liffey and Suir River Catchments. The aim was to establish a pilot project which would develop management strategies, on a river catchment spatial level, to reduce organic and nutrient inputs and prevent pollution to rivers and lakes.

As well as trying to control the input of organic material and nutrients to water courses the project also identified the negative effects of water abstractions from river systems including the potentially adverse impacts upon the hydrometric and ecological functioning of the system.

The River Liffey catchment is the most densely populated catchment in Ireland. As such it is especially sensitive to abstractions. While the Greater Dublin Area and the major towns of County Kildare support approximately 75% of the population in the Liffey Valley, they occupy only 6.6% of the land area within the catchment. Excessive abstraction of water from this system may reduce the rivers capacity to assimilate discharge which could lead to detrimental water quality issues. Similarly discharges from urban storm water systems within these areas can carry significant nutrient loads particularly in 'first flush' run-off after a dry spell where material has settled. In addition these systems can be contaminated by sewage effluent through improper connections or overflows from sewage pumping stations during flood conditions. These systems can also discharge toxic substances to water courses due to spillage, inappropriate storage in industrial facilities and illegal dumping.

Agriculture is the predominant landuse in the Liffey catchment, with 75% occupied by arable lands or pasture. The impacts of agriculture on the water quality of the River Liffey are associated with diffuse pollution arising from the inappropriate application of fertilisers, pesticides and animal manures. Other potential negative impacts of agriculture include



animal access to rivers, soil erosion associated with over grazing and some harvesting, and spillage or runoff of oils, chemicals or pesticides to water courses.

Other potential impacts on water quality arise when best management practices are not implemented for forestry activities and pollution arises from the “unsewered population” of rural and urban areas. It is for this reason and others mentioned above, i.e. the excessive nutrient loading of storm water run-off, that the river downstream of Leixlip has been classed as "high priority" with unsatisfactory sites also located at Lucan Bridge and Islandbridge.

Following on from the Three Rivers Project a more extensive and coordinated approach to catchment management was to be required with respect to the implementation of the Water Framework Directive.

4.6 WATER FRAMEWORK DIRECTIVE

The Directive 2000/60/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council, 23rd October 2000, establishing a “*framework for community action in the field of water policy*” promotes an “integrated” approach to the protection of inland surface waters, transitional waters, coastal waters and groundwater within river basins (Council of the European Commission, 2000). The most significant requirement was the identification of River Basin Districts (RBD) and the preparation of River Basin Management Plans (RBMP), with the aim of achieving “good ecological status” (EC, 2003). River Basin Districts were to be established in “administrative areas” and River Basin Management Plans to be prepared in relation to each District. The transposition of the Directive into Irish National law was achieved through regulations in 2003 (S.I. No. 722 of 2003).

A considerable body of information exists on the environmental context within which the Water Framework Directive (WFD) sits. In particular, The WFD characterisation process (www.wfdireland.ie) required an analysis of the pressures and impacts that human activities exert on Irish waters to be undertaken. The purpose of the analysis was to identify surface water bodies and groundwater bodies at risk of failing the objectives of the directive due to the effect of human activities. The pressures and impacts analysis was also referred to as a Risk Analysis. The risk relates to the probability of a water body failing to achieve good status or suffering deterioration in water quality status.

One of the first major milestones required by the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is the preparation of Summary Characterisation Reports (Article 5) for all River Basin Districts in their jurisdiction. This involves:



- an analysis of River Basin District characteristics,
- a review of the impact of human activity on the status of surface waters and on groundwater, and
- an economic analysis of water use

The principle objective of the report is to provide summary information on the initial characterisation at River Basin District (RBD) level. This initial assessment serves to identify those waterbodies that are either **at risk** or **not at risk** of achieving the Directives objectives by 2015. Following this initial Report in 2005 further characterisation of waterbodies designated as **at risk** or **probably at risk** will be undertaken leading up to the production of the draft River Basin Management Plans (RBMPs) in 2008. Final reporting on Characterisation to the EU Commission will take place in 2010 when RBMPs are finalised.

The designated competent authorities in Ireland have prepared a single combined National Summary Characterisation Report for the purpose of reporting by the statutory deadline of 22nd December 2004.

“Characterisation Reports” must be prepared for every River Basin District. The Reports, based on readily available information, are a description and scientific assessment of each basin based on identified pressures and impacts arising from human activity acting on the water bodies within the basin. The River Liffey is located within the Eastern River Basin District (ERBD) and a summary of key findings for the Liffey Catchment is provided below.

4.7 EASTERN RIVER BASIN DISTRICT

The ERBD is defined as the physiographic region within Hydrometric Areas 07, 08, 09 and 10 that drains to the Irish Sea, and adjacent transitional and coastal waters. It stretches from County Wexford to the south to County Louth to the north, entirely containing County Dublin and also parts of Counties Meath, Kildare, Wicklow, Offaly, Westmeath and Cavan. Land use is dominated by agricultural, urban, natural areas (forests and bogs), and coastal areas. It is the most highly urbanised and populated basin district in Ireland.

4.7.1 *Summary of Liffey Risk Assessment*

The baseline risk assessment of human pressures and impacts on all water bodies which was carried out by the characterisation process identifies those waters which, by reference to present circumstances and based on the



best information currently available, might not meet all of the new criteria being established for good status.

The status of waters will be determined by water pollution indicators plus a wide range of new criteria based on pressures and impacts arising from aspects such as abstractions and hydromorphological alterations, commercial marine fishing activities and invasive aquatic alien species.

The initial assessment of risk which was completed earlier this year did not address future changes in pressure management. For example, it was not possible to take account of future changes due to implementation of the National Spatial Strategy, investment in wastewater treatment facilities or agricultural reform policy. As the availability and detail of information improves during the River Basin Management Planning (RBMP) process the implications of future changes in pressures and management measures will be taken into account.

In general terms the Eastern RBD contained the highest proportion of water bodies across all water types at risk from pressures. The most significant pressures being diffuse pollution sources and morphological alterations.

The information which fed into the risk analysis involved the collection and collation of data from the following sources;

- EPA Biological Water Quality Q Ratings
- Mines, Quarries and Landfills
- Section 4 Discharge Licences
- Wastewater Treatment Plants
- Morphology
- Point & Diffuse Sources
- Integrated Pollution Prevention Control (IPPC) Licensing
- Abstractions
- Combined Storm Overflows (CSO)

The risk assessment overall for rivers with respect to the River Liffey indicates an “*at risk*” situation for the main channel and some of the larger tributaries i.e. The Rye River (see figure xx). The overall risk assessment in relation to Lakes (i.e. Blessington, Poulaphouca) indicated a “*probably at risk*” scenario.

The point source overall risk assessment for groundwater bodies indicates an “*at risk*” situation in and around the greater Dublin area and stretching upstream to Celbridge/Straffan where the groundwater environment is considered “*probably not at risk*”. This designation also applies to the



Kilcullen area while the catchment in and around Newbridge and Blessington indicates a “*probably at risk*” scenario.

In summary, the Liffey Valley in terms of the water resource, could be considered to be in a relatively vulnerable state given the level of pressures and impacts which exist in the valley and in particular as the rivers moves downstream to the sea. It is essential that priority be given to protecting the Liffey Valley water resource with respect to ensuring the development of park status in the future.



This Chapter provides a description of the Liffey Valley from a cultural heritage perspective. It briefly describes the role of the Liffey from prehistory to present times and provides a clear analysis of who, why and how the Liffey was utilised by humans from earliest times up to the twentieth century. The aim of this Chapter is to provide an accessible description of the Liffey Valley whilst emphasising that the Valley must be understood and considered as a complete entity.

In addition to literature reviews (including maps), fieldwork and GIS, this Chapter has been augmented by discussions with relevant stakeholders.

5.1 AUDIT OF CULTURAL RESOURCES

Part 1: from Celbridge to Islandbridge

1. Celbridge/Kildrough
2. Celbridge to Leixlip
3. Leixlip
4. Lucan
5. Lucan to Palmerston
6. Palmerston
7. Chapelizod/St Lawrence
8. Islandbridge/Kilmainham

note: the arrangement within each section is generally chronological; distances are approximate, from nearest point of River Liffey.

5.1.1 Part 1: from Celbridge to Islandbridge

Celbridge/Kildrough

Celbridge (*Cill Droighid*, the church of the bridge), a bridging point over the Liffey, which takes its name from this fact, was linked to the monastery of St Mo-Chúa of Clondalkin, whose well is near the mill. It subsequently developed into the pretty and well-endowed estate village of nearby Castletown House and a woollen-milling centre. It is now an expanding dormitory town of Dublin, somewhat beset by the environmental and social problems associated with rapid growth.



Historic-settlement features:

Holy Well. Tobar Mo-Chúa, associated with St Mo-Chúa of Clondalkin is located on the main street near the mill entrance. Following a traffic accident in the 1960s, it was filled with stones and tarmacaded over by the county council. A stone plaque, marking its location, was subsequently damaged; its remnants are now in the mill.

Church. St Mochua's ruined Cofl parish church, Tay Lane. A possibly medieval single-nave structure, with remains of traceried east window, said to have been destroyed in 1798. With graveyard and 'Death House', a bleak windowless memorial chapel, which housed the important eighteenth-century mausoleum of the Connolly family by Thomas Carter, with effigies of William Connolly (1662-1729) and his wife, Catherine (*née* Conyngham). The figures are currently kept at Castletown House for security, but the surround remains *in situ*.

Castle. Lord Dungan's Castle, an ivy-clad ruin on the north side of the avenue to Castletown House, was shown in an eighteenth-century illustration as a tower, with four corner towers, somewhat reminiscent of Dunsoghley Castle in Fingal. Residence of Dungan family from 1588 to 1690.

Bridge. As its name suggests, Celbridge is an ancient bridging point. A bridge was in existence in 1714, but is not included on the 1656 Down Survey County Kildare map. The present 5-arch structure is of *circa* 1800.

Celbridge Abbey. The original house was the residence of Esther van Homrigh, better known as Vanessa, the name given to her by her friend, Dean Jonathan Swift. A seat beneath the rocks by the river is said to have been their favourite retreat. The house was rebuilt in Georgian-Gothic style towards the end of the eighteenth century, and is of 2 storeys over basement, with a 6-bay front; the two centre bays breaking forward and rising above the parapet on either side; battlemented parapets, with small pinnacles at the corners. Delightful riverside setting and garden, which, until recently, was open to the public. Two footbridges, of one and two arches respectively, traverse a canalised section of the river. Currently owned by St John of God Kildare Services.

Castletown House. The earliest and largest Palladian house in Ireland, set in mature parkland through which the Liffey flows. It was built for William Connolly MP (1662-1729), who was Speaker of the Irish parliament. Designed by the Italian Alessandro Galilei and also in part by Sir Edward Lovett Pearse. The 13-bay centre block of three storeys over basement is joined by Ionic colonnades



to 2-storey, 7-bay wings. The magnificent interior is decorated with rococo stuccowork by the master stuccadores, the Francini brothers. There are vistas from the house of the celebrated Connolly Folly (1740) and (in winter) of the 'Wonderful Barn', a corkscrew-shaped grain store of 1743. Gateway with sphinx-like figures by Sir William Chambers. Castletown is now in state ownership. Its contents are owned by, or on loan to, the Castletown foundation. It is open to the public. The parkland is an important Irish example of eighteenth-century landscape gardening, with deciduous trees, radiating avenues and long vistas. The area fronting the house towards the Liffey is open to the public. The farmyard has recently been reacquired, and is to be refurbished and opened. The exterior parkland and walks have tremendous improvement potential, but in the short run need of more evident management.

St Raphael's, formerly Oakly Park. Distinguished 3-story over basement, 7-bay ashlar-faced house of 1724. It became the home of the Napier family, of whom Lady Sarah Napier (*née* Lennox), daughter of the duke of Richmond, was aunt of Lord Edward FitzGerald, the United Irishman, and mother of Generals Sir Charles Napier (1782-1853), famous for his conquest of the Scind in India, and Sir William Napier (1785-1860), the military historian. Now owned by St John of God Kildare Services, and somewhat lost amongst the utilitarian buildings associated with this organisation's work.

Kildrought House. Stone-built Classically-proportioned townhouse of *circa* 1720 set back from main street.

Setanta House Hotel, formerly Celbridge Collegiate School for Girls. Handsome plain schoolhouse of *circa* 1740, designed by Thomas Burgh, with hipped roof and dormer attic; extended *circa* 1820; approached through a handsome Classical entrance arch, with twin lodges. Closed as a school in 1970s, and converted into a hotel.

Jassamine House. Handsome 5-bay, 2-storey townhouse of *circa* 1750 beside main gate of Castletown; tripartite doorway and fanlight; cutstone pediment with lunette window.

Mill. Celbridge was the site of a medieval mill. A mill was in existence at this location prior to 1800, when extensive improvements were made for a corn and tuck mill, including the building facing Tea Lane. Extensive adjoining woollen mill erected in 1805, driven by 200-horse power water wheel (or wheels: three are mentioned in 1831). Employed up to 600 people in early nineteenth century. By 1841 part of the woollen mill was operating as a flax mill, and the old corn mill was a flour mill, both operated



by the firm of Shaw and Haughton. Much of the great woollen mill was derelict by then. In 1879 this enterprise ceased production, and by 1903 the flour mill was in ruins. In that year a mill to manufacture paper from turf, brought by canal to Hazelhatch, was established on the ground floor of the old woollen factory, but the industry was a commercial failure and closed in 1906. In 1935 the mill reopened as a water-powered factory for the manufacture of woollen cloth blankets and tweed. In 1939 it was converted into a factory for the manufacture of clothing. The building was totally refurbished and for a time was the largest producer of ladies' fashion wear in Ireland. In 1953 production was concentrated on supplying wool for carpet manufacture, before closing in 1982. Acquired by Celbridge Community Council in 1984, which now operates it as an amenity centre and location for small businesses. River continues to drive an electric turbine. Other mills with weirs were in existence upstream.

Church. Christchurch Cofl. Originally a nave and tower board of first fruits structure 1813; porch 1861; rebuilt and faced with red Whitehaven stone 1884.

Celbridge Lodge, formerly Kildrought Parsonage. 3-bay classical rectory of *circa* 1830 of 2 storeys over basement; portico of coupled, fluted Doric columns; eaved roof on bracket cornices; now a private residence.

Church. St Patrick's Church (RC). Handsome J.J. McCarthy Gothic-revival building of 1857, with tall nave, low aisles, steep-sloping roofs and external buttresses.

2. Celbridge to Leixlip

Historic-settlement features:

Priory. St Wolstan's priory of Augustinian canons of St Victor. Founded by Adam de Hereford in 1205; dissolved 1536. 1/4 km. south in St Wolstan's twd. Some remains.

Bridge. New Bridge, built by John Le Decer mayor of Dublin in 1308, linking Cloneyburrow and Parsonstown twds. Originally of four arches, it was rebuilt with three to facilitate construction of the hydro-electric dam for Leixlip.

Classical house. St Wolstan's 1/4 km south in St Wolstan's twd. Said to have been built in seventeenth century, but now with an eighteenth-century aspect. 3-storey, 5-bay centre block, with 2-storey projecting wings.



Tudor Revival house. Donacomper, 1/4 km south in Donacomper twd. Remodelled in Tudor Revival *circa* 1835, with gables, mullioned windows and hood mouldings, polygonal lantern and cupola. Reported handsome interior. Sometime home of Sir Ivone Kirkpatrick, permanent secretary of the British Foreign Office. Reported now scheduled for development.

Salmon leap. Beside Weston Park in 1837,

Mill. Reid's flour mill in production near Weston Park in 1837; mill wheel 28 feet in diameter, of 60-70 horsepower, capable of producing 7-800 barrels weekly.

3. Leixlip.

Name from the Norse, meaning Salmon's leap, in relation to the falls on the Liffey, now harnessed for a hydro-electric scheme, where it meets the Rye Water. Later a medieval settlement and bridgepoint. In 1837 it was observed that the countryside around Leixlip

concentrates much that is pleasing and picturesque in landscape. The surface is finely undulating and richly diversified with wood and water, and the view embraces the town with its ancient bridge, numerous elegant seats and highly cultivated demesnes, ancient and picturesque ruins, distant mountains and a variety of other interesting features of rural scenery (S. Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland* [London, 1837], ii, 257).

Today, the town retains much of its Georgian character, with a handsome mid-eighteenth mall and other Georgian buildings and many well situated big houses along the Liffey Valley, although these and their parklands are under threat from development.

Historic-settlement features:

Viking site? Mound at Cooldrinagh, 1/2 km east is probable Viking site in opinion of late Professor Tom Fanning, Department of Archaeology UCG. It marks the western limit of the Viking settlement of Dublin.

Ring Barrow(?) Cooldrinagh.

Castle. Leixlip Castle, originally built by Adam de Hereford in early thirteenth century, is situated on a rock that overlooks the confluence of the Rye Water and the Liffey. Except for the massive round tower, most of the medieval structure was replaced in the eighteenth century, with a regular 4-bay, 3-storey



front towards the river. A battlemented parapet added in 1837 and many pointed Georgian Gothic windows preserve its medieval character. Meticulously cared for by Hon. Desmond Guinness, founder and former president of the Irish Georgian Society, who has resided here since 1968.

Bridge. Medieval bridge (at least one illustration of it shows a pointed arch) upstream of salmon leap. Remnant obliterated in development of hydroelectric scheme.

Church. St Mary's Cofl. Medieval west tower; nave and north transept of *circa* 1800.

Priory. St Catherine's Priory 1/4 km. north in St Catherine's twd. House of Canons of St Augustine, founded in 1219 by Waryn de Peche, lord of Lucan. In 1227 it became a dependency of the abbey of St Thomas in Dublin, to which it was fully annexed in 1327. Thereafter it was an appropriated (parish?) church, served by a canon of St Thomas's and was part of that abbey's property at its dissolution in 1539.

Holy Well. St Catherine's Holy Well 1/2 km north in St Catherine's twd.

Mall. Terrace of mid-eighteenth-century Georgian town houses.

Leixlip House. 3-storey, 5-bay mid-eighteenth century house, with 2-storey bow-fronted wing.

Bridge. Graceful three-arch stone structure of 1734, but much altered in late nineteenth century.

Toll house. Erected *circa* 1740 at east end of Leixlip bridge; a refined 3-storey stone building.

Beckett's Hotel/Cooldrinagh House. Imposing 3-bay, 2-storey over raised basement house of *circa* 1765, with Victorian additions; Ionic doorcase. Apparently superseded earlier house, now an out-office, with 1720 datestone, on same site. It was the home of Samuel Beckett's mother, and the writer recalled playing on the entrance steps leading to the doorway as a child. Haha in somewhat battered parkland. House restored as a hotel, having fallen into dilapidation.

Aqueduct. Completed 1796 to carry the Royal Canal over the Rye Water.



St Catherine's Park. Delightful Palladian-style Georgian house, consisting of small centre block, with pavilions joined to it by curved sweeps. Said to have been designed by Francis Johnston in 1798.

Distillery. Rye Vale Distillery producing 20,000 gallons of whiskey annually in 1837. Apparently out of production by 1852, when premises in possession of Laurence Carton and Alex Burke.

Mill. Rolling mill for the manufacture of sheet and bar iron beside river in 1837.

Mill. Flour mill, the property of John Mitchell in 1852.

Mill. Corn mill, the property of Thomas Ennis in 1852.

Flour mill and three corn mills. Apparently also on Rye Water, the property of Laurence Carton and Alex Burke in 1852.

Mill. Corn mill in St Catherine's Park twd the property of Thomas Ryder in 1852.

4. Lucan.

Lucan is situated amidst some of the most charming scenery of the Liffey Valley. Despite much urban development to its south, it largely retains a delightful village character. The home of the Sarsfield family in the seventeenth century, it passed by marriage to the Vesey's in the 1690s, and from 1758 developed as a fashionable spa with a sulphuric 'boiling spring'. 'The water, though limpid, emits a peculiarly offensive odour, and the taste is equally disagreeable', but it was 'found efficacious in scorbutic, bilious and rheumatic affections'. (S. Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland* [London, 1837], ii, 321). The spa made Lucan a popular resort for those in pursuit of its medicinal waters up to the twentieth century. The main street dates from 1800-30.

Historic-settlement features:

Holy well. In Lucan demesne.

Castle. Tower house adjoining Church of Blessed Virgin/ St John in Lucan demesne.

Parish church. Sizeable medieval nave-and-chancel parish church of the Blessed Virgin/St John, with ogee-headed double window and gable belfry in Lucan demesne; adjoining churchyard. Visible from rear of De Vesey Arms pub.



Bridge 1. Of *circa* 1730s, which gave rise to Dean Swift's couplet:

*Agmondisham Vesey, out of his bounty
Built the bridge at the expense of the county.*

Roque's map of 1756 shows the bridge spanning the Liffey immediately north of its confluence with the Griffeen river, and at the junction with the Coldblow road on the north bank; it seems to have been swept away by floods soon after this time. Some remnants survive on north bank, including a round-headed arch and a pointed arch, the latter suggesting it may have been a repaired medieval bridge. It is located 300 m. upstream of Bridge 2.

Bridge 2. An elegant stone bridge of several arches ornamented by a frieze was erected by Agmondisham Vesey II in 1771, but washed away in 1786; part of an arch is extant on the south bank beside the weir, 200m upstream of present bridge 3. O'Keeffe and Simington (*Irish stone bridges* [Dublin, 1991], p. 272) argue that this is the bridge depicted in Thomas Roberts's painting of early 1770s in NGI.

Bridge 3. Single-span bridge of 1814, designed by the engineer George Knowles, with cast-iron balustrade manufactured at Phoenix iron-works, Dublin; at 111 feet, it is the longest masonry span ever erected in Ireland and 'looks like a greyhound in full stride'; it succeeds at least two earlier eighteenth-century bridges that were swept away by floods (see Bridges 1 and 2 above).

Ornamental canal and Bridge 4. The Griffeen river, a tributary of the Liffey, traversed by a Palladian bridge of 1773, was canalised for ornamental and practical purposes through Lucan village in the nineteenth century. O'Keeffe and Simington (p. 272) think the datestone on this bridge may have been altered, suggesting that it was a reused datestone from the bridge of the 1730s.

Linen printing house. Depicted on Roque's map of 1756, proprietor Mr Sissons; with adjoining bleach green 1/4 km north.

Lucan House and demesne. A magnificent neo-Classical Palladian villa, erected in the 1770s by Agmondisham Vesey MP, who acted as his own architect, to replace the earlier multi-gabled house attached to a tower, painted by Thomas Roberts in *circa* 1770. The latter was the family home of Patrick Sarsfield (*circa* 1650-1693), titular first earl of Lucan, perhaps the most famous of all Irish soldiers. The Sarsfields, wealthy Dublin merchants, were settled in Lucan before the end of the sixteenth century. Through marriage with Patrick Sarsfield's niece, Charlotte, it passed to the



Vesey family. The present house is of 2 storeys over a basement, with a 7-bay entrance front, which has a central feature of a pediment raised on a 3-bay attic, and carried on four engaged Ionic columns, the ground floor beneath them being rusticated. The interior has very fine plasterwork, much, if not all, of it by the accomplished Dublin stuccadore, Michael Stapleton. The small but attractive demesne along the south bank of the Liffey includes a monument to Patrick Sarsfield in the form of Coade-stone urn of *circa* 1790 to the design of James Wyatt and a Gothic hermitage, a horseshoe-shaped stable block, gate lodges and pillared entrance gateways. Lucan house and estate is now the well-maintained residence of the Italian ambassador. Much of the riverine demesne is now a public park.

Cotton works. Upstream of the bridge defunct before 1850 (maybe successor to linen printing house above?)

Quarry. On north bank *circa* 1770.

County Bar formerly Spa House. Erected in 1795. In 1837 it comprised 'a centre and two wings, in one of which is an assembly room... in which concerts and balls are given' (S. Lewis, *A topographical dictionary of Ireland* [London, 1837], ii, 321).

St Andrew's Church. CofI Gothic parish church, erected in 1823 that is close to a 1793 design of James Gandon, who lived nearby; nave with tower and spire. Nave and apse appear to be set at right angles to tower and entry porch.

The Crescent. A handsome terrace of 3-bay 2-storey-over-basement houses dating from *circa* 1790s, which displays unaltered original features including paired doorways, fanlights, 12-pane sash windows and iron railings. Houses such as these would have been let to visitors in the spa season. There are several other well-built terraces in Lucan.

Weir. Late eighteenth century: said to have subsequently provided power for ironworks on north bank.

Garda Station. Originally constructed *circa* 1810, only the rebuilt façade remains after a reconstruction in 1989.

Wesleyan chapel. Erected 1832.

Convent. St Joseph's Presentation Convent; detached 2-storey convent of 1837.



Iron works. Of *circa* 1870, of which only the red-brick chimney remains. Weir said to have provided power for this enterprise.

Spa Hotel. Victorian hotel of *circa* 1891, with polychrome brick banding, tall tower, timbering and glass porches, built to supersede nearby eighteenth-century Spa House. A tunnel under the road leads to the spa, which rises close to the Liffey.

Mill. Corn mill in Dodsborough twd the property of Anne Davis in 1852.

Weirview Cottages. Two terraces of ten modest houses, erected *circa* 1890 for industrial workers, construction is of rubble stone with roughcast finish, with red-brick window and door dressings.

Millbank. A terrace of ten two-bay brick houses, erected *circa* 1890 for industrial workers.

5. Lucan to Palmerston

Historic-settlement features:

Ringfort. 1/2 km north-east in Annfield twd.

Ringfort. 1/4 km north in Astagob twd.

Motte and castle. Castleknock 3/4km north. Ditched and ramparted oval motte, at one end of which is a secondary mound with remains of an octagonal keep. The former was constructed by the Norman Hugh Tyrrell, but used as a base by Rory O'Connor, the last High King of Ireland in his unsuccessful attempt to oust the Normans from Dublin in 1171.

Mill. Watermill at Castleknock (apparently on Liffey) 1592. Mill dam south of Glenmaroon.

Fishery. Luttrellstown Fishery mentioned in 1654.

Country House. Luttrellstown Castle 3/4 km north in Woodlands twd. Originally a castle, which was the seat of the Luttrells, whose members included Brigadier Henry Luttrell (d.1717), whose premature withdrawal contributed to the catastrophic Irish defeat in the battle of Aughrim (1691) and who was afterwards murdered in Dublin, his brother Simon (d. 1698), a prominent figure with Sarsfield in the Wild Geese, and his descendant, the second earl of Cahampton (1743-1821), a British general, whose vigorous suppression of the United Irishmen did much to defuse their rebellion in 1798. In 1800 he sold Luttrellstown to Luke White MP,



a self-made millionaire, who renamed it Woodlands, and encased the old castle, and made additions to it, in romantic early nineteenth-century Gothic, with battlements and turrets. In the early twentieth century the name was changed back to Luttrellstown. In 1927 it was purchased by Hon. Ernest Guinness, who gave it to his daughter, Mrs Brinsley Plunket, on her wedding. She made many improvements, especially to the interior before selling the property for development as a luxury golf club. The demesne is of great extent and beauty, with a large lake spanned by a many-arched bridge, a sham ruin, a cascade, an obelisk and a Doric temple.

Bridge. A wooden bridge, erected *circa* 1800 by Lord Carhampton linked Luttrellstown with the south side of the river, at a point where a mineral spring 'with a petrifying tendency' was discovered by Dr Ruttly in the mid-eighteenth century. Not extant.

Classical House. Woodville, 1/4 km. south; on site of medieval Ballydowd Castle; mid-eighteenth-century house, consisting of symmetrical centre block and late-Georgian wing; called a seat 'deserving the attention of the curious' and a 'superb structure'; with a cottage decorated with stained glass close to the river side; became the home of the painters Eva and Laetitia Hamilton after 1950; demolished 1972. Some farm buildings extant.

Georgian House. Summerton 1/2 km north. A 2-storey late Georgian house, with an entrance front consisting of recessed centre between 1-bay projections, joined by an Ionic colonnade; heavy quoins; parapeted roof; interior with Adamesque plasterwork.

Country House. Hermitage House 1/4 km north. Despite a claim that it dates from *circa* 1700, what remains visible of the original house within the present golf-club building suggests a villa of *circa* 1800. Perhaps it superseded or incorporated an earlier structure. A golf club was founded in 1905 on part of the land, and in the 1930s the club leased Hermitage House from Mr Crozier, who was then the owner. A new clubhouse was built in 1970. A magnificent setting on high ground overlooking the Liffey valley; Delightful 'golf-club' parkland.

Country House. St Edmondsbury 1/4 km north. A multiple-bay, 2-storey over basement villa with Doric porch on coupled columns, built on a splendid site overlooking Liffey; the original house was built for Edmund Sexton Pery, Speaker of the Irish parliament 1771-85; wings and a balustraded roof were added in the mid-nineteenth century; stone ice-house in grounds; late 19th



century farm buildings; since 1898 it has been a convalescent home of St Patrick's Hospital, Dublin.

Georgian House. King's Hospital School/Brooklawn House, 1/4 km south. A 4-bay, 2-storey-over-basement villa of *circa* 1760; Doric entrance doorway.

College. Castleknock College 3/4 km north. Originally a 5-bay, 3-storey house of *circa* 1790; enlarged in 1834 as a seminary for Dublin archdiocese, it is now a well-known second-level college operated by the Vincentian fathers.

House. Knockmaroon, Knockmaroon twd. 1/2 km north. A plain 5-bay, 2-storey late Georgian house of *circa* 1815, with a long service wing. Later extensions and farmyard complex.

House. Glenmaroon, Knockmaroon twd. 1/4 km north. A house in the Edwardian Tudor Mansion House style, built for Hon. Ernest Guinness. Now a home for children with learning disabilities.

Mill. Anna Liffey Flour Mills in Liracra twd. Operated by George Shackleton and Sons from 1860 to 1998. Waterpower created by nearby Anna Liffey weir of *circa* 1765, with sluice and sluice gates. There appears to have been a mill on this site, associated with the Luttrell demesne, from the eighteenth century. Anna Liffey Mill is complete, and is now owned by Fingal County Council. Open by appointment.

Mill race. Brooklawn twd; single-stage weir and extensive mill race of *circa* 1850, with ruined mill to the south.

Strawberry Beds. 1/4 km. north in Strawberry Beds twd.; south-facing slopes suitable for strawberry growing to supply the needs of Dublin from at least the nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth; when the fruit was ripe, a procession of sidecars carried passengers out from the city of Dublin to here, where 'the strawberry vendors, pipers, fiddlers and publicans reaped a rich harvest, the sounds of revelry filled the air, and when the shades of night had fallen numerous involuntary dismounts were made from the cars on the homeward journey'. The south-facing slopes were also utilised for other market-gardening activities.

Schoolhouse. 1/4 km north in Astagob twd. Built 1870-90, and now a residence.

Victorian Country House. Fonthill 1/4 km. north in Fonthill twd. A 4-bay, 2-storey-over-basement villa of *circa* 1870, in red brick with stone quoins and stringcourses, built on a splendid site



overlooking Liffey; stables and coach house adjoin it. Formerly a residence; now an office.

Power Station. Sureweld Ltd, 1/2 km. south in Hermitage twd. a brick building originally erected as a power station with two 100hp steam-driven dynamos to provide electricity at 500 volts for the trams connecting Lucan to Dublin, and at a lower voltage for domestic lighting in the locality.

House. Farmleigh, Knockmaroon twd. 1/4 km north. A three-storey Victorian 'Georgian' mansion built in 1881 for Edward Guinness, first earl of Iveagh, incorporating an early-nineteenth-century house; entrance front with pedimented breakfront between two three-sided bows; balustraded roof parapet; splendid interiors; now in state ownership and open to the public.

Bridge. The Silver Bridge, a cast-iron structure on rock-faced cut-limestone piers, formerly with a wooden pavement, of *circa* 1886. It was constructed to carry water pipes from the power station at Mill Lane, Palmerston, to the water tower at Farmleigh; and also electricity. It was decked with timber to allow it to be used for family walks from Farmleigh across the river, but strictly barred to others, who crossed via a downstream ferry that was active until the mid-twentieth century.

6. Palmerstown

The settlement may take its name from the yew trees that provided 'palms' on Palm Sunday - in the middle Ages the land were owned by the Hospitaller Order of Fratres Cruciferi in Thomas Street, Dublin. The late Nessa O'Connor has provided a comprehensive and well-informed account of its history and antiquities in *Palmerstown: an ancient place* (2003). Palmerston was an important milling centre in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Despite the expansion of Dublin, a surprising amount of riverside historic buildings and rural character remains extant. The historic Mill Lane area is in a very dilapidated and run-down state, but well capable of rehabilitation.

Historic-settlement features:

Barrow. Ring barrow, probably Bronze Age 1/2 km west, off Mill Lane.

Bronze Age burial. Off Mill Lane.

Church. St James's Church 1/4 km south-west off Mill Lane. Possibly a ninth- or tenth-century Early Christian stone church, to



which a twelfth-century chancel has been added; primitive round-headed chancel arch; a mid-seventeenth century date is also suggested, and there is certainly evidence of later adaption of the original structure; heavy-handed restoration by Dublin Country Council in 1970s; surrounding churchyard; evidence of vandalism.

Hospital/Georgian House. Stewart's Hospital formerly Palmerston House, 1/2 km south-west. Erected by John Hely-Hutchinson (1724-94), a leading political and legal figure and provost of TCD, who purchased the property in 1763. House now submerged in a hospital for children with learning disabilities.

Georgian House.Riversdale House, a 3-bay, 2-story over basement classical villa of *circa* 1790.

Mill race. Mill race built to power the mills at Mill Lane, Palmerston Lower twd.; it starts at the New Holland weir opposite Wren's nest/Hermitage Golf Club and runs parallel to the Liffey for *circa* three kms. Five single-arch stone bridges span the route, Most of the bridges have been vandalised, but could be refurbished as the stone work is dumped in the water. There has always been a right of way along the race, according to local residents. When Mr Somerville-Large owned Brooklawn - the present King's Hospital School lands - he had to put gates at both ends of his land to allow pedestrian access along the mill race.

Mills. The mill race powered a series of mills and the pump house to supply Farmleigh with water and hydro-electricity, all at the end of Mill Lane. Listing downstream, they were as follows:

Scutch Mill. Building extant as the Sun Chemical Company of Coates Lorilleux; associated rettory for breaking down the stems of the flax survives in the form of a brick cylinder further downstream above the outflow of the millstream to the Liffey. Palmerston was an important centre of linen printing in the eighteenth century.

Lead and copper mill and spade forge, the property of M. McGarry and John O'Brien in 1852. Now gone.

Iron Mill, the property of M. McGarry and John O'Brien in 1852; now gone.

Power Station to provide water and generate electricity for Farmleigh, both carried there across the Silver Bridge. Extant.

Oil mill in Palmerston Lower twd. the property of M. McGarry and John O'Brien in 1852; extant.



Cotton factory the property of M. McGarry and John O'Brien in 1852; extant. Plans mooted for conversion of it and oil mill into apartments.

Logwood mill, the property of M. McGarry and John O'Brien in 1852. Demolished in 1960s.

Pigeon House. Eighteenth-century pigeon house.

Weir. V-shaped weir of circa 1760; stone sluice in west bank with evidence of sluice-gate fittings.

Millworkers' cottages. Terrace of millworkers' cottages, some of two storeys; oldest date *circa* 1780.

Mill. Mill in Saintlawrence twd the property of James Macken in 1852. Not known whether anything extant

7. Chapelizod/St Lawrence

A liffeside village on the Dublin Lucan Road. Strictly speaking Chapelizod relates to the settlement north of the Liffey, while the village on the south bank was St Lawrence. The name Chapelizod is said to derive from the chapel of Isolde/Iseult, the Celtic princess whose hand was sought from her father, King Aengus, by Sir Tristram/Tristaun. The legend was rediscovered by Wagner in his famous opera *Tristaun and Isolde* (1865), and the event is depicted in a fresco in the City Hall, Dublin. The manor was part of the possessions of the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham. After the dissolution it passed through several hands, until in 1665 it was acquired by the first duke of Ormond, lord lieutenant, on behalf of the crown, as apart of a scheme to enclose the Phoenix Park. Thereafter, until 1726, the residence on the property at or near Chapelizod became the occasional country residence of the lord lieutenant or his deputy. A riverside commercial park east of the village called the King's Hall is said to be on its site. A linen factory was established in 1671. As the Liffey flows into Chapelizod, a weir forms a large mill race to make an island that was formerly a considerable industrial centre. The old part of the village, north of the Liffey is a pleasant backwater of Georgian houses, some of three storeys; millworkers' cottages; and a CofI parish church with a medieval tower.

Historic-settlement features:



Hospital. Hospital/lepers' house of St Lawrence. In existence by 1275. Endowed with land by the Knights Hospitallers of Kilmainham. Location uncertain, but presumably on south bank at later village of the same name, still commemorated in street names.

Church. St Lawrence's CofI church. Medieval tower. Nave said to have been built *circa* 1700; datestone states it was restored 1859.

Fishery. First mentioned in thirteenth century; salmon weir 1524; probably located near the present mill dam.

Mill. Linen manufactory in 1671.

Enclosed Park. Phoenix Park covers 1,762 acres making it one of the largest enclosed parks in Europe. In 1662 the lands were acquired by the 1st duke of Ormond, lord lieutenant, for the purpose of creating a royal deer park, The Phoenix, which was located at the modern King's Hall commercial park, at the east end of Chapelizod was the vice-regal country residence (not used after 1726). The present park received its layout in the lord lieutenancy of the earl of Chesterfield (1744-7), who erected the handsome Phoenix Column in 1747. The Vice-Regal Lodge, now Áras an Uachtaráin, was developed from a smaller house after 1782. The 68-metre, neo-classical Wellington Monument Testimonial (1817) dominates the skyline.

School/hospital St Mary's Chest Hospital/Hibernian School, 1/2 km north in Phoenix Park; erected 1769 as The Hibernian Soldiers' School for the maintenance, clothing and instruction of soldiers' children. The chapel is by Thomas Cooley. The main building was enlarged by Francis Johnston *circa* 1810. The building comprises a centre block and 2 wings, 3 storeys in height; 200 children in 1837.

Bridge. Anna Livia Bridge formerly Chapelizod Bridge. The new name inspired by James Joyce, who refers to Chapelizod in *Finnegan's wake*. Of three arches plus a small arch. Date of erection unknown, but probably 18th century.

Mill. Woollen mill flourished until *circa* 1800, with a large factory, two fulling mills and an extensive corn and wash mill.

Mill. Flax spinning mill, the successor to the woollen mill above; employed more than 600 persons in 1837, the property then and in 1852 of Ms Crosthwaite and Sons.

Bleach green and several mills. Mentioned in 1837; bleach mill and weaving factory, the property of Thomas Doran and Ms



Crosthwaite and Sons in 1852; the mills, located on an island formed by the Liffey and the millrace, have all been demolished to make way for apartments. However, the millrace survives.

Church. RC parish church of the Nativity and the Virgin Mary opened 1837. Single nave; interior is High-Gothic Revival.

Arts and Crafts cottages. Style suggests *circa* 1900.

8. Islandbridge/Kilmainham

Historic-settlement features:

Holy well. St John's Well, mentioned in 1837, the venue for pattern days 'for the working classes of the metropolis'; obliterated by construction of railway line in 1844.

Bully's Acre. An old burial ground, which was possibly the site of St Maignend's monastery, as it contains the shaft of what was probably a High Cross. It was a cemetery that was much used for the interment of paupers and convicted criminals (including, briefly, Robert Emmet). The pattern day of St John the Baptist (29 June) attracted large, rowdy crowds to the locality in a carnival atmosphere, which was such a nuisance that parliament in 1710 passed an act declaring the assemblages at Bully's Acre to be a danger to the public peace and imposing fines, whippings and imprisonment as penalties. However, the gatherings continued until the destruction of St John's Well in 1844. Across the avenue leading to the Royal Hospital is the officers' burial ground. The other ranks' burial ground is beside the N4.

Priory of St John the Baptist. The principal priory of the Knights Hospitallers in Ireland was founded by Strongbow *circa* 1174. It was one of the wealthiest and most powerful medieval Irish religious houses. It was dissolved in 1540, although it enjoyed a brief revival in 1557-8. Nothing now remains of its buildings which are believed to have occupied the site of the Royal Hospital Kilmainham.

Royal Hospital. The outstanding seventeenth-century Irish public building; purpose-built home for old soldiers, erected in 1680-6 to the design of Sir William Robinson, following the concept of *Les Invalides* in Paris and anticipating Chelsea Hospital in London. Four ranges surround a square courtyard. Three with arcades were residential, and the fourth (north) range comprises the chapel, dining hall, governor's apartment, tower and steeple. The interiors of both chapel and dining hall have plasterwork and



wood panelling of the highest quality. The building is now the Irish Museum of Modern Art. The adjutant general's office (1808) and the West Gate (which formerly stood on the nearby Liffey Quay) were designed by Francis Johnston. Other features include a walled garden, the deputy master's house, the infirmary and the doctor's house.

Salmon weirs and fishery. Mentioned in 1738; acquired by Dublin Corporation *circa* 1741, which leased it to various tenants who exploited it up to the twentieth century.

Mills. Mentioned as being for sale in 1738; extensive flour mill in 1837, owned by Messers Manders and co. Now sympathetically converted into modern apartments.

Printworks. Established 1786, enlarged by W. Henry, the proprietor in 1837, when 600 people were employed. He had a handsome residence near the works. Probably part of the Mills complex.

Bridge. Sarah Bridge or Island Bridge, a single elliptical arch of stone, with 31.7m span, which was the longest masonry span in Ireland until the completion of Lucan Bridge in 1814. Foundation stone laid in 1791 by Sarah, countess of Westmoreland, wife of the lord lieutenant, after whom it was named.

Gaol. Kilmainham Gaol (*circa* 1790s). Outstanding example of late-eighteenth century penal institution, with cells etc. intact. Fine carved tympanum featuring chained serpents over entrance door. Many historic associations including 1798 leaders, Charles Stewart Parnell, 1916 executions. Now a museum.

Courthouse. Handsome, neo-classical courthouse of 1820 designed by Isaac Farrell.

Clancy Barracks. Built in 1798 as The Royal Artillery Barracks, to which a cavalry barracks was added in the mid-nineteenth century. It was sold by the Department of Defence in 2002, and implementation of recent planning permission for its redevelopment will see most of the present structures demolished.

Pavilion. TCD Rowing Club boathouse *circa* 1900.

Memorial Park. Islandbridge War memorial and gardens, designed by Sir Edwin Lutyens, to commemorate Irishmen killed in World War I. It was completed under the direction of OPW and formally opened in 1940. Includes large formal quadrangle, cross, classical pavilion, rose gardens and riverine park.



5.1.2 *Inventory of historic-settlement features in vicinity of River Liffey*

Part 2 :from source (Kippure) to Celbridge

- Kippure to Blessington
- Blessington
- Blessington to Ballymore Eustace
- Ballymore Eustace
- Ballymore Eustace to Kilcullen
- Kilcullen
- Kilcullen to Newbridge
- Newbridge
- Newbridge to Clane
- Clane
- Straffan
- Straffan to Celbridge

notes: the arrangement within each section is generally chronological; distances are approximate, from nearest point of River Liffey; the stretch from source to Ballymore Eustace has been the subject of a paper survey only.

5.1.3 *Part 2: from source to Celbridge*

1. *Kippure to Blessington*

Historic-settlement features:

Barrow. 1/4km south at Ballynabrocky.

Motte and nearby graveyard. North bank 1km south-east of Ballysmuttan bridge.

Pollaphuca Reservoir sites (within 1km of shoreline):

East bank (north-south):

Cairn 1. Woodend Hill.

Cairn 2. Woodend Hill.

Megalithic tomb. Blackrock.

Mound. Butterhill.



Standing stone. Knockiernan.

Megalithic tomb. Carrig.

Holy Well. Lackan.

Church. Templeboodin Bridge.

Bullaun. Templeboodin Bridge.

Fulacht Fia. Ballyknockan.

Sweat House. Annacarney.

West bank (north-south):

Tower House. Threecastles 1/4 km north-east. Rectangular tower with third-storey barrel vault; fire place and turret stair. National Monument.

Graveyard. 1/2km north-west near Crosscoolharbour.

2. Blessington

A seventeenth-century manor of Michael Boyle, archbishop of Dublin, who laid out the one-street village; in 1778 the estate devolved to Lord Hillsborough, later 1st marquis of Downshire.

Historic-settlement features:

Holy Well.

High Cross. St Mark's Cross. Early Christian. Originally at Burgage, it was moved to this site when threatened with submersion by the building of Poulaphaca Reservoir. *Circa* 4m high, with wide arms and unpierced ring. National Monument in State Care.

Church. Coff church; late 17th century, with monument to Archbishop Boyle of circa 1682.

Market House.

Church and castle. By lakeside at Burgage twd.

Palladian House. Russborough 1/2km west. Outstanding granite house by Richard Castle, completed *circa* 1748 for Joseph Leeson, 1st earl of Milltown. Entrance front of almost 250m, consisting of a 7-bay entrance block of 2 storeys over a basement,



joined by curving Doric colonnades to wings of 2 storeys and 7 bays, which are themselves linked by outbuildings to walls with rusticated arches surmounted by cupolas. Outstanding interior baroque plasterwork, art collection and furniture, the collection of the late Sir Alfred and Lady Beit. Open to the public.

Baltyboys twd. Birthplace of Edris Stannus (1898-2001), better known as Dame Ninette de Valois, the celebrated ballerina, choreographer and director, who has been called 'the mother of English ballet'.

Church. RC church by A. and D. Wejchert 1982.

3. Blessington to Ballymore Eustace

Historic-settlement features:

Stone circle. Athgreany stone circle or The Piper's Stones. 1 km south-west of Poulaphaca Reservoir in Broadleas Commons twd. A large stone circle, *circa* 30m in diameter, of thirteen granite boulders, some standing, some lying. Date uncertain, but probably Bronze Age or Early Iron Age. It takes its modern name from bagpipe music, said to have been played on the spot by fairies.

Pillarstone. The Long Stone. 1/2 km south-west of Liffey in Longstone twd. A prostrate pillarstone of granite. Date uncertain, but probably prehistoric.

Ringfort. 1/4 km south-west of Liffey in Longstone twd. Iron Age

Ringfort. 1/4 km east of Liffey in Bishopsland twd. Iron Age.

Bullaun Stone. 1/2 km south-west in Longstone twd. Probably Early Christian..

4. Ballymore Eustace

Ballymore Eustace (the big town of the FitzEustaces) is a picturesque village, with many old shopfronts, mill cottages and more substantial houses, descending from high ground on east bank of River Liffey. The settlement has evolved from the manorial village of the archbishops of Dublin, the constables of whose manor from 1373 to 1524 were the Anglo-Norman FitzEustaces who dominated the locality until the end of the



seventeenth century, and from whom the village takes its name. Their castle was demolished in the early nineteenth century.

Historic-settlement features:

High Cross. St John's Churchyard, upright granite High Cross in three sections - base, shaft and head - closed ring with boss in centre and on shaft; otherwise plain; inscription states it was [re]erected in 1689.

small granite cross. St John's Churchyard, upright granite cross slab, *circa* 1m. high.

tomb effigy. St John's Church, sixteenth-century tomb effigy of an armoured knight, one of the FitzEustaces, an Anglo-Norman family, who were hereditary constables of the archbishop of Dublin's manor here. The effigy was originally at New Abbey, Old Kilcullen.

medieval field systems. Possible survival of medieval open-field strips in field patterns in vicinity of Ballymore Eustace.

Church. St John's CofI church. Board of First Fruits nave and tower, with projecting sacristy; datestone 1820.

Cloth factory. Extensive riverside textile mills, with millstream; established by Christopher Drumgoole in 1802; 700 employees *circa* 1837; operated until mid-twentieth century; now derelict and over-grown. Gateway of *circa* 1800 in good condition

Mills. Noted in 1753 and also in 1851, when it was the property of John Copleton; site unknown but possibly also utilising cloth-factory millstream.

Stone bridge. Handsome 6-arch, hump-back stone bridge of *circa* 1850.

6. Ballymore Eustace to Kilcullen

Historic-settlement features:

Ringfort. 1/4 km south in Knockatippaun twd. Iron Age.

Motte. 1/4 km south in Cramersvalley twd. Late twelfth century.

Medieval parish church. St James's Church. 1/4 km north-east in Coghlanstown twd.; long nave with ogee-headed windows,



including double window in east gable; stairwell with stone steps probably leading to attic priest's chamber; battlemented parapet; site includes a granite cross base, a plain granite cross slab, and a fragment of a seventeenth-century FitzEustace commemorative cross(?), with the inscription 'Eustace, Lord Portlester 1462'. Architectural details suggest a mid-fifteenth-century date for the church.

Medieval (?) parish church. 1/4 km south in Gaganstown twd. Not seen.

Friary. 'New Abbey' Observantine Franciscan friary 1/4 km south at New Abbey graveyard. Founded 1486; suppressed 1539; outline of church with nave, choir and transepts suggested by reconstruction of lower wall courses; late fifteenth-century mensa tomb-top (originally recumbent, but now set upright under protective canopy by Kildare County Council) with effigies of the founder, Roland FitzEustace of Harristown Baron Portlester and lord deputy of Ireland, and his wife, Margaret d'Artois (who also have a tomb in St Audeon's Dublin); a panel of weepers, which includes St Catherine, Madonna, a friar, a coat of arms, passion symbols and another unidentified figure, is also on the site. In 1582 the property was granted to the poet Edmund Spenser, who may have written much of *The faerie queene* here.

Stone cross. 3/4 km north-west in Coghlanstown twd. Small granite roadside cross. Date unknown.

Harristown Demsene. Harristown was a parliamentary borough until 1800. The demesne was developed by John La Touche in the late eighteenth century and is currently occupied by Mr Hubert Beaumont. Harristown House. 1/4 km north-west is an ashlar-faced late-Georgian 9-bay house with Ionic portico; built for John La Touche; originally of 3 storeys over basement, but rebuilt in 2 storeys after fire *circa* 1900; set in splendid parkland, with many mature trees, extending both sides of the Liffey with handsome entrance gates at Harristown (1 km north) and Brannockstown (1/2 km south) linked by estate through-road. The estate includes a handsome 7-arch bridge, 90 m long, which carries estate through-road across Liffey. Apparently this was originally a public bridge, but on its incorporation into the demesne, public needs were met by the erection of a new bridge near Brannockstown. Present bridge has eighteenth-century appearance. There is also a Unitarian graveyard 1/4 km south. House open to the public on certain days.

Bridge. Brannockstown Bridge; 5-arch structure erected to supersede Harristown Bridge on its incorporation into Harristown



demesne. Inscription states: 'John La Touche Esq. built this bridge *circa* 1788'.

Georgian House. Ardenode 3/4 km south in Ardenode twd., set in handsome parkland.

Georgian house. Sallymount House, Brannockstown, 1/2 km south; a Georgian block of 3 storeys over basement, 6 bays long and 5 bays deep, with Victorian additions; set in splendid riverside demesne of parkland; handsome entrance gate.

Georgian house. New Abbey House, 1/4 km. south nr Kilcullen; a house of 2 storeys over basement, built *circa* 1755 near the site of the Observantine Franciscan priory of the same name; entrance front with 1 bay on either side of a central 3-sided bow, in which is a pedimented entrance doorway; 3-bay side elevation; urns on roof parapet; late nineteenth-century Doric porch and early twentieth-century 2-bay wing; set in handsome parkland

Mill. Cherrymills, Harristown, the property of Patrick Hanlon in 1852. A mill was in existence here in 1753. Not seen, and its precise location is uncertain.

Mill. Corn mill and flour mill in Harristown Lower, the property of Patrick Bierne in 1852. Not seen, and its precise location is uncertain.

Church. St Patrick's Church of Ireland, Carnalway, 1 km north; handsome Hiberno-Romanesque revival structure of *circa* 1900, with Hiberno-Romanesque archway leading to churchyard; includes Harry Clarke window (1921), dedicated to St Hubert, which was commissioned by the then rector Canon J.O. Hannay (aka George A. Bermingham, the prolific novelist).

Dismantled railway. Rochestown/Mullaghboy twds. Great Southern and Western Railway Company branch line of *circa* 60 kms from Sallins to Tullow, which opened in 1885; passenger service terminated 1947; line closed 1959 and subsequently dismantled.

Brannockstown village. Very well maintained Victorian village, set amidst parklands of surrounding demesnes.

6. Kilcullen

Kilcullen (the church of St Cuillinn) shares its name with that of Old Kilcullen, 3km south-west, which was an important Early



Christian monastic site and medieval walled town. Following the erection of a bridge across the Liffey at what is now modern Kilcullen in the fourteenth century, there was a gradual shift in importance and wealth away from the old settlement to the new. Although the scene of considerable development and with considerable traffic congestion, the town retains a pleasant character, with a number of old shop fronts and hostleries.

Historic-settlement features:

Ringfort near east end of bridge noted in 1837.

Holy well. St Brigid's Holy Well on riverside walk to New Abbey, which allegedly follows the route of a Penal mass path.

Bridge. Original bridge erected 1319; present 6-arch structure erected *circa* 1850; renovated and widened 1970.

Mill. A mill was in existence here in 1753. The site of this and the below mill has been re-developed, and the mill race filled in to make a riverside walk; however one mill building, dated 1830, with a section of the mill race survives, and a millstone has been set in cement on the walk to recall the former usage of the site. A corn mill at Main Street the property of Michael Murphy in 1852

Mill. Corn mill at Main Street the property of Michael Brady in 1852.

Church. Roman Catholic Church of Sacred Heart and St Brigid, completed in 1875; a very handsome and largely unaltered structure, of nave, aisles and apse designed by J.J. MacCarthy; with striking foliate capitals adorning the columns of the interior nave arcade.

7. Kilcullen to Newbridge

Historic-settlement features:

Church. Castlemartin 15th century parish church of the Virgin Mary 1/4 km west; with tower-residence and 16th century tomb of a FitzEustace knight.

Church and churchyard. Athgarvan 1/4 km west. Possibly a medieval parish church; not seen.

Priory. Greatconnell Priory of Our Lady and St David, 1/2 km east in Greatconnell twd, a house of Canons Regular of St



Augustine founded by Justiciar Miler Fitzhenry in 1202, as a cell of llanthony Prima in Wales. It became one of the most important medieval Anglo-Irish monasteries whose prior was a lord spiritual of parliament. Dissolved 1540. Over-grown remains of church suggest it was a building of some distinction. Adjoining graveyard. Situated beside lane leading to Connell Ford (see below).

Ford. Connell Ford linking Walshestown Crossroads and Greatconnell; lane approach to river on both banks extant; this was the original Liffey crossing for this area until superseded by a new bridge at Newbridge (see below) before 1728. The approach from the Greatconnell side passes the priory of the same name (see above). The survival of an important medieval fording place and the approaches to it into modern times is significant, and this is an important feature.

?Castle. Athgarvan 1/4 km. west. Could not be located; several local people approached were unaware of it.

Seventeenth-century House. 1/4 km. north-west in Greenhills twd. This is a complex structure, which is probably mainly a seventeenth-century house.

Classical House. Castlemartin 1/4 km. west. On site of former castle of the FitzEustaces. Splendidly maintained U-shaped house of circa 1720, of 2-storeys over basement; 9-bay breakfront and side elevations, set in surrounding of parkland with magnificent wrought-iron entrance gates; home of Sir Anthony O'Reilly, the international businessman, who purchased it from Lord Gowrie, the poet, politician and businessman, who wrote of it in his poem *Easter 1969*:

*Behind me, also rooted raptured to a corner
Of earth and Ireland, the eighteenth-century house
Grey face, dummy windows alternating with true
Were in the dawn succinct at 6 a.m.*

Mill. Flour mill at Athgarvan the property of Joseph Reeves in 1852 A mill was in existence here in 1753, and the mill is still in operation, although no longer water-driven; mill buildings, including a mid-nineteenth-century malt house, with an extensive weir and millstream are extant.

Mill. Flour mill at Greatconnell the property of Thomas Farrell in 1852. A mill was in existence here in 1753.

Georgian House. Athgarvan House, 1/4 km west; 3-storey, 5-bay house in parkland overlooking river.



Bridge. Athgarvan Bridge, *circa* 1840. Fine cut-limestone 5-arch road bridge.

8. Newbridge

Newbridge is one of the youngest of Irish towns, having developed around the barracks erected in 1816 which is now in part the headquarters of Bord na Móna. There is a good local history: Mary Connolly, *From Connell to Droichead Nua* (2001).

Historic-settlement features:

Motte. 1/4 km east in Oldconnell twd. Circa 1200.

Church. 1/4 km east in Oldconnell twd. Not seen but possibly a medieval parish church.

Bridge. What may have been the original 'new bridge' is marked on Herman Moll's map of 1728, about 300m upstream of the present bridge. Prior to that the Liffey was crossed in this locality at Greatconnell Ford (see above). Following flood damage in the 1780s, the duke of Leinster undertook the bridge's replacement. Difficulties were encountered with the foundations, so the new bridge of 5 arches was erected at the present site. In 1936 the Georgian bridge was superseded by the present three-arch bridge.

Cavalry Barracks. Erected 1813-19 to accommodate two regiments of cavalry. Substantially intact; re-utilised as headquarters of Bord na Móna.

Convent. Holy Family Convent. Symmetrical brick-built convent of *circa* 1850 in Gothic style.

College. Newbridge Dominican College 1/4 km west.

9. Newbridge to Clane

Historic-settlement features:

Holy well and graveyard. 1/4 km west in Barretstown twd.

Bridge. Carragh Bridge is a narrow 6-arch stone bridge, dated on stylistic grounds 1450-1650 by O'Keeffe and Simington, although *Survey of the architectural heritage of Kildare* suggests a mid-nineteenth century date!



Church. Single-nave medieval parish church in Bodinstown twd, 1/2 km east. Churchyard burial place of Theobald Wolfe Tone (1763-98), father of Irish republicanism.

Church. Probable medieval church in Waterstown/Castlekeeley twd, 1/4 km west.

Classical House. Millicent, 1/4 km west in Millicent Demesne twd. A 7-bay Georgian house of 2 storeys over basement, with pedimented, break-front centre, set in riverside parkland.

Bridge. Millicent Bridge, a six-arch structure, probably eighteenth-century in date; superseded a ford located a little downstream.

Classical house. Yeomanstown House 1 km. west in Yeomanstown twd. Early eighteenth-century 2-storey-with-attic, 5-bay pedimented house of exceptional quality.

Classical House. Blackhall, 1/2 km east in Blackhall twd. A 7-bay Georgian house of 2-storeys, the 3 centre bays being recessed; flat roof, surmounted by remarkable cupola. The seat of Theobald Wolfe, after whom Theobald Wolfe Tone was named, his family having been tenants on the estate. It was also the birthplace of Rev. Charles Wolfe (1791-1823), whose poem *The burial of Sir John Moore* has been widely anthologised. Now a well-maintained stud farm.

Mill. Flour mill 1/4 km north at Carragh, Yeomanstown twd, the property of Henry Doyle in 1852. A mill was in existence here in 1753.

Aqueduct. Leinster aqueduct, built 1780; Impressive seven-arch stone structure, designed and built for the Grand Canal Company by Richard Evans, to carry the Grand Canal and its towpath for 200m across Liffey in Waterstown twd.

Bridge. Victoria Bridge in Morrinstown Lower. 1837

Mill. Flour mill at Tankardstown, the property of Patrick Haughton in 1852; multi-storey structure now re-utilised as a guesthouse, entitled 'The Old Mill'; mill race, weir and mill wheel extant.

Country house. Morrinstown Lattin 1/4 km south in Morrinstown Lower twd. A house originally of 1692, but with façade remodelled in Tudor-revival style in 1845 by the addition of three steeply pointed and pinnacled gables, oriels and a Tudor porch. The south wing, which was no more than a façade, appears to have been demolished.



Church. Coolearrigan Cofl church, Millicent North twd, 1/2 km west; handsome limestone Hiberno-Romanesque revival structure of *circa* 1900, comprising nave, porch and tower, with dressings in red sandstone. The churchyard is accessed by a lych gate.

10. Clane

Clane (from *Claonadh*: a slope) is a riverside village and important site of historic settlement, which is currently expanding into a congested computer town.

Historic-settlement features

Early Christian monastery. St Ailbe founded an early Christian monastery here in sixth century. Location of important reforming synod held by Archbishop Gelasius of Armagh in 1162. Precise location unknown, but perhaps immediately west of Liffey in vicinity of holy well, parish church and friary

Holy well. East side of village.

Motte. De Hereford motte, 1/4 km west erected pre-1200.

Friary. Franciscan friary, 1/4 km north, founded in 1258 by Gerald FitzMaurice (FitzGerald), fourth Baron Offaly (d. 1287), and dissolved in 1540, although by then much of the church, chancel and dormitory had been destroyed and the stone work reused to repair Maynooth Castle. A mutilated effigy appears to be late thirteenth century and is said to be that of Gerald FitzMaurice. The friary consists of an impressive fifty-metre nave, with a south transept near the west end. Most of the dressed stone is gone, but some dressings remain of a very large east window; large openings in the south wall for windows that lit the nave; surrounding graveyard still in use. The building has recently been cleared of ivy.

Castle. A ruined castle mentioned in 1837.

Pale Ditch. Portion late-medieval pale-ditch earthwork. 1km north-west in Loughbollard Commons.

Castle and College. Castle Browne/Clongoweswood College SJ. 2km north in Castlebrown/Clongowes twd. A 3-storey house on site of medieval FitzEustace castle, which was remodelled as a symmetrical Gothic Revival castle with round corner towers and battlements in 1788. Since 1814 it has been a Jesuit boarding school, with splendid avenue of limes, parkland, extensive school



buildings, playing fields; Neo-Gothic chapel with Stations of the Cross by Seán Keating.

Church. St Michael and All Angels CofI church. Board of first fruits structure of *circa* 1830 comprising nave and tower. Formerly a ruin, this building has been re-roofed and is now again used for divine service.

Mill. Corn mill and woollen factory at Carrigeen twd, the property of Peter McCracken in 1852. A mill was in existence here in 1753. Not seen.

Bridge. Alexandra Bridge of 3 large and 1 small arches, 1864.

Mill. 1/4 km north in Irishtown twd. Noted in 1753.

Church. RC church of St Patrick and St Brigid, comprising nave with aisles, erected in 1884.

11. Straffan

A pretty village just north of a bridge across the Liffey, which is now famous for its leading golf course, luxury hotel and related development.

Historic-settlement features:

Motte. 1/4 km south in Ladycastle Lower twd.

Mill. Noted in 1753

Georgian house. Straffan Lodge, a 2-storey over basement, 5-bay house, 1/4 km north, with steam museum.

Italianate/late classical house. Straffan House 1/2 km north. Nineteenth-century 5-bay house of 2 storeys with attic; Mansard roof behind balustraded roof parapet; Corinthian portico and adjoining tower; decorated chimney stacks. Quadrangular stable block nearby. Now extended as a luxury hotel and golf club. Handsome farmyard/stable block.

Church. Straffan CofI Church. Neo-Gothic T-shaped structure of 1837, with battlemented entrance tower, surmounted by slender spire. It was originally the private estate chapel for nearby Straffan House, but in 1933 was handed over to the Representative Church Body. The cross of 1910 that surmounts the spire is unusual for a CofI church, and was controversial at the time.



Bridge. 3-arch, hump-back structure of *circa* 1850, immediately downstream of weir, with sluice and fish pass.

Graveyard. Lych gate of *circa* 1920 at entrance of CofI graveyard, with remains of earlier church.

12. Straffan to Celbridge

Historic-settlement features:

Holy Well. 1km north in Ardrass Lower twd.

Church. St Patrick's Chapel. 3/4 km north in Ardrass upper twd. Fifteenth-century church, with unusual stone roof. A National Monument in state care.

Tower house. Barberstown Castle, 1 km north-west in Barberstown twd. A tower house, with two projecting towers, of *circa* fifteenth century, with plain 2-storey wing attached. Now extended as a hotel.

Lyons estate. 2km south in Lyons demesne twd. In Celtic Ireland, Liamhuin (Lyons Hill), still a feature of the landscape, was a royal seat and place of assembly of the kingdom of Leinster. The estate includes a medieval castle, church and graveyard. Lyons House is a splendid Neo-Classical 9-bay, 3-story block with curved bow on either side of entrance front, joined to 2-storey wings by curved sweeps; triangular-pedimented portico on four columns, three of which are Egyptian of red granite from the Golden House of Nero, Rome. Constructed 1797-1810. Formal garden with largest ornamental lake in Ireland. Now the centre of an impressive demesne, it was the seat of the Aylmers, who sold it in 1796 to Nicholas Lawless, first Viscount Cloncurry, whose son Valentine Lawless, second Lord Cloncurry, was imprisoned *circa* 1798 for his association with the United Irishmen. His descendant, Hon. Emily Lawless (1845-1913), poet and author lived in Lyons House, which was later the seat of the Department of Agriculture of UCD. Currently the house and demesne are owned by the Ryan family, who have completed a splendid restoration of the property

Grand Canal. Borders north side of Lyons estate, where there is a handsome range of Georgian buildings, which were Lord Cloncurry's private canal station. Aylmer's canal bridge is nearby.

Georgian House. Killadoon 1/2km west in Killadoon twd. Plain 3-storey, 5-bay block of *circa* 1770, entered by a 'pattern-book' tripartite doorway with a fanlight; joined to a single wing by a curved sweep.



Mill. Ferrit's Mill noted in Simmonstown twd in 1752.



6.1 RECREATIONAL & AMENITY USES OF THE LIFFEY VALLEY

The potential Liffey Valley Park area is composed of a series of linked open spaces along the River Liffey.

Together these open spaces, including the river itself, provide a range of recreational facilities that are of an enormous amenity value. The recreational and amenity uses of the Park include:

Water based

- canoeing;
- rowing; and
- angling;

Land based

- walking, including dog walking;
- cycling;
- formal sport;
- informal games & leisure;
- golf; and the opportunity for
- education and nature studies.

The opportunity for most of these recreation and amenity activities tends to be focussed in the area from Straffan to Islandbridge, and often, from Lucan to Islandbridge. An overview of provision is provided below.

6.1.1 Water based Recreation & Amenity Activities

Canoeing, rowing and angling are the three primary recreation uses of the River Liffey:

- *Canoeing* – takes place along the stretch of river between Straffan and Islandbridge. The most popular section is at the Sluice Weir near the Spa Hotel in Lucan. The Irish Canoe Union training centre is located at Strawberry Fields (and they hope to eventually move their headquarters to this location). On average, up to 200 people can be found out canoeing on the river of a weekend. Annually, on the first weekend of September the ‘Liffey Decent’ canoe race takes place. This is an international event which is almost 28.5 kilometres (17.6 miles) in length, and includes 10 weirs. Some 900 to 1,200 entrants participate annually. Regular upkeep of the weirs and clearing of trees from the river is required to maintain a safe environment for canoeing.
- *Rowing* – This takes place on a 1,500 meter stretch of the river between Islandbridge and Strawberry Fields. Eight clubs row here. This stretch of the



river is straight and, as such, is ideal for rowing. Many other stretches of the river are either not straight enough for the required distance, or contain too much growth to be suitable for rowing.

- *Angling* – takes place along approximately 80% of the river corridor. Trout and salmon are the predominant fish species landed. There are seven angling clubs (with a combined membership of approximately 800 people) who control these waters, which cover:
 - a stretch of the river at Ballymore Eustace;
 - the stretch of river between Kilcullen and Pausdeen Bridge (just upstream of Celbridge);
 - a small area at Lucan; and
 - a small area at Chapelizod.

6.1.2 Land-based Recreation & Amenity Activities

Land based recreation and amenity activities compose a mixture of formal and informal activities. For example, people may use the Park to play or watch ball sports, or they may use the park to walk the dog or read a book.

In research undertaken on behalf of Dublin City Council in May 2004⁽¹⁾, it was found that the following activities are undertaken by users of the Park.

Table 6.1 Recreation & Leisure Activities undertaken in Liffey Valley Park (161 respondents)

Activity	Most important	2nd most important	3 rd most important
Walking	84% (130 respondents)	3% (5 respondents)	4% (6 respondents)
Walking the dog	0	9% (14 respondents)	2% (3 respondents)
Informal games	0	17% (27 respondents)	13% (21 respondents)
Formal games	6% (10 respondents)	17% (27 respondents)	2% (3 respondents)
Watching sport	4% (6 respondents)	22% (35 respondents)	15% (24 respondents)
Cycling	1% (2 respondents)	9% (14 respondents)	7% (11 respondents)
Sit/read/rest	3% (5 respondents)	12% (19 respondents)	12% (19 respondents)
Passing through	1% (2 respondents)	10% (16 respondents)	32% (52 respondents)
Other	1% (2 respondents)	1% (2 respondents)	13% (21 respondents)

As can be seen, people tend to use the parks for a variety of reasons.

- *Walking tracks* – Walking is a popular use of the individual parks located along the River Liffey; and resources such as the Lucan Demense, for example, are much valued for passive recreation. However, most of the length of the river does not have any public riverside walking tracks. Furthermore, there is little pedestrian access across the river. For example between Lucan and Chapelizod there is no cross-river access. The only major linear walking track within the study corridor is along the canal.

(1) *General user study of the Liffey Valley Park*, May 2004. Commissioned by Dublin City Council and undertaken by the Rural Development Unit of University College Dublin.



- *Cycling tracks* – No dedicated cycling tracks are currently provided along the river.
- *Formal Sport* – There are a number of playing fields located within the Park area. These include GAA, soccer and rugby playing fields and general sporting grounds, as depicted in the map overleaf. There may be potential for a greater number of playing pitches to be provided within the Park, however this would have to be balanced with other recreational, leisure, heritage and ecological uses of the river corridor.
- *Informal Games & Leisure* – the corridor comprises a range of open space within the already established parks in which people are free to spend their leisure time as they please. They can lie in the sun, read a book or throw a ball around for example. However, such opportunities tend to be spatially concentrated in the lower reaches of the river.
- *Golf* – A number of golf courses are located along the River Liffey. These include the K Club and Naas, Athgoe North, Celbridge, Newcastle, Finstown, Lucan, Leixlip, Westmanstown, Luttrellstown, Castleknock and Hermitage golf courses.
- *Tourism potential* – Along the River Liffey there is great potential for tourism. The region contains, for example, King John’s Bridge, medieval churches and castles, 10th and 18th century houses and churches, historic mills (including Shakleton’s Mill and Cellbridge Mill), Phoenix and Memorial Gardens, Farmleigh, Lucan Demense, Lucan House, Primrose Hill, Lucan Spa,

In addition, there are many ideas circulating for future potential tourism and recreation opportunities.

6.2 RESULTS OF PUBLIC SURVEY FOR LIFFEY VALLEY PARK

6.2.1 Survey design

Questionnaires were sent to 500 people living near the River Liffey in Dublin City, South Dublin, Fingal and County Kildare. The distribution of questionnaires despatched broadly reflected the relative populations of these areas. Names were taken from the electoral register. Since October, the full register is no longer available for such use or even for viewing by the public. Therefore, this survey may represent a final opportunity to survey the public in this manner.

The questionnaire contained a limited number of questions so as not to compromise an adequate response rate. Questions were asked about park use and about the characteristics of the respondent. The core of the questionnaire was an exercise in which respondents were asked to rate



forty park attributes, for example, playgrounds or surfaced paths. The ratings accorded to a seven point scale scanning a range from none-some- plenty or “not important” -“somewhat important” -“essential”, depending on the nature of the attribute. The results permitted a straightforward analysis of ratings and a Principal Components Analysis of respondent type.

6.2.2 *Questionnaire returns*

A total of 95 questionnaires were returned of which three were unusable. The response rate at 19% was above the minimum of 15%, but rather disappointing considering that the survey was addressing a local issue. The most probable reason for the rather low response is that the issue had no relevance for a proportion of recipients who either rarely visit the Liffey Valley or rarely use parks. Previous surveys of park use in Dublin have indicated that 46% of the population visit parks at least every 2-3 months with occasional use by an additional 10%.¹

6.2.3 *Sample area*

Some indication of the response rate is provided by the narrow corridor from which most replies were received. Questionnaires had been sent to people living within five kilometres of the Liffey Valley. The rationale for this approach was that such an area would capture the majority of potential users. Previous surveys have indicated that journeys by foot, bicycle or car all fall around an average of eleven minutes, while most park users live within just half a mile.² However, it is accepted that a Liffey Valley Park would be a regional and possibly unique park that could attract more distant users, especially if more specialist facilities are provided.

Of those who responded to the survey, 67% live within a 20 minute journey of the Liffey Valley. Of these, around two thirds typically walk to their nearest point on the Liffey Valley, which suggests that most of the respondents live within just two kilometres of the Liffey. Only 7% of respondents travel for more than 30 minutes.

The majority of responses were from Lucan, but with good numbers received also from the Leixlip, Celbridge and the Dublin City area (e.g. Chapelizod, Inchicore, Kilmainham).

(1) ¹ For example, Bullock (GREENSPACE 2004) reference to LMS Omnibus rather than postal survey.

(2) ² Bullock (2004), Wallace (2000), Gormley (1980).



Table 6.1: Home of respondent

(1) LOCATION (2)	(1) Percent of total responses	(1) Percent of responses by respective sample
(1) Dublin City area	(2) 20%	(2) 24%
(1) Lucan	(3) 24%	(3) 23%
(1) Palmerstown	(4) 4%	(4) 13%
(1) Fingal	(5) 9%	(5) 17%
(1) Leixlip	(6) 15%	(6) 14%
(1) Celbridge	(7) 19%	(7) 18%
(1) Kildare other.	(8) 4%	(8) 8%
(2)	(9)	(9)

6.2.4 Sample composition

Questionnaires were sent out to a roughly equal number of men and women as well as to young people listed on the electoral register who were living with their parents. However, many more women (62%) than men (38%) returned the questionnaire.

Only 3% were less than 20 years of age, while 32% were aged between 21 and 40 years, 37% between 41 and 65, and 7% were of retirement age. Allowing for the non-inclusion of children in the survey, the proportions are fairly representative of the population, but for some under-representation of young adults who form around 7% of the population of the counties relevant to the study.

Single people represented 17% of respondents, a figure that matches that for the relevant counties. Those people who are married or have a partner represented the majority at 73%. The remainder were either separated or widowed.

People with children of less than 17 years represented 44% of the sample. The response is representative in that, on average within the project counties, the proportion of people with children of 15 years or less is 37%.

The majority of households, 80%, had at least one person in full-time employment, while 41% had two or more household members in employment. Twenty-four per cent of households contained somebody who was either involved in home duties or was otherwise not working. Forty-six per cent of households had at least one member in school or



college. There were people of retirement age in 13% of the households surveyed.

No question was asked about income, but 14% of respondents had not taken a foreign holiday in the last two years, while 34% had taken two and 30% had taken three or more. The figures suggest a more affluent sample than for the population as a whole.

The largest proportion of people (39%) regarded themselves as being fairly fit. The figure that is probably not too surprising given that the sample includes a high proportion of regular park users. Thirty-four per cent regarded themselves as doing some exercise, while 11% thought they did not do as much exercise as they should.

6.2.5 Green space use

The usual green spaces visited by respondents were Phoenix Park (35), various parks and green spaces in Lucan (13) of which Lucan Demesne (4), Castletown House (12), and St Catherines Park (7) were most popular. Smaller numbers of respondents also visited the Griffen Valley Park, the Memorial Gardens, Glenaulin Park and the Donedan Forest.

Several of the same destinations represented the respondent's nearest, or (otherwise) favourite, section of the Liffey. Sections of the river at Lucan feature prominently (15), including Lucan Demesne. So too do the Strawberry Beds (10) and Castletown House (6). However, around one quarter of respondents did not (or could not) answer this question.

A large proportion, 39%, of visits to these green spaces are made at least weekly. A further 20% of visits are made at least monthly. Only one individual visited just twice a year to less. The figures therefore indicate a more committed sample given that previous face-to-face omnibus surveys that were not specifically directed at parks have indicated that more likely proportion of weekly visits for the general population is 21%.

Of the most regular visits, the largest absolute number of trips is made with family. However, proportionately, trips alone dominate the most regular category (see table 2.2), while many less regular users visit with family or others at least several times within each six month period.



Table 6.2: Type of visit (% by category)

(1)	(1) Alone	(1) With family	(1) With others
(1) Weekly	(2) 48%	(2) 37%	(2) 21%
(1) Fortnightly	(3) 6%	(3) 15%	(3) 11%
(1) Monthly	(4) 8%	(4) 21%	(4) 27%
(1) Several times in last six months	(5) 19%	(5) 24%	(5) 32%
(1) Twice year or less	(6) 19%	(6) 3%	(6) 8%
(2)	(7)	(7)	(7)

The largest proportion, 37%, of respondents typically walk to the nearest section of the Liffey. Allowing for trips for which users might choose one or other means of transport, this figure rises to 58% of respondents. The car is typically used by 30% of respondents, although an additional 19% use a car at least sometimes. A few respondents travel by bicycle, but none singularly. Only one person used the bus, but as one of several transport alternatives.

6.2.6 Park attribute ratings (in order)

The park attributes rated highest are shown in the table below. Clearly, people are above all anxious that there should be a high level of security and also that the area should be preserved and kept free of development. The fact that a visible ranger service was also rated as being very important supports the security factor, especially given the frequent references respondents made in their comments to security and problems of drinking and anti-social behaviour.

The attribute rated second highest is rather interesting in that it does not relate to personal use and instead suggests an association between the Liffey Valley and local identity or civic pride. Interesting too is the importance given both to a continuous path along the length of the park, and to a continuous cycle and pedestrian path into central Dublin. The high rating placed on this attribute is possibly surprising given that some respondents would have been elderly and many others would be unlikely to make the trip or to regularly use a bicycle.

Attributes relating to the natural environment of the river, its water quality, shrubs and habitat also rate highly.

Table 6.3: Most valued attributes (see Appendix for full list)



(1)	(1) Attributes rated highest
(1) 1	(2) Security and firm control of anti-social behaviour
(1) 2	(3) Kept free from development
(1) 3	(4) Attractive to non-locals and tourists
(1) 4	(5) Natural landscaping
(1) 5	(6) Visible ranger service
(1) 6	(7) River water quality of very high standard
(1) 7	(8) Riverside walks
(1) 8	(9) Encouragement of riverside shrubs and plants
(1) 9	(10) Continuous cycle/walking path into Dublin
(1) 10	(11) Continuous path
(2)	(12)

Paths, access and car parking also appear in the upper to middle scale. Playgrounds and adventurous play areas for children also rate highly. Needless to say, these attributes are rated as being essential by parents with young children.

In general, more specialist activities including kayaking, cultural events, music events, watersports and angling, are all given lower average values. However, this is rather a reflection of the fact that most respondents would not engage directly in these activities. The average ratings are still in the range of being regarded as “somewhat important” rather than undesirable.

6.2.7 *Respondent comments*

Respondents were invited to make comments. The most common responses related to the need for good security (18 comments) and good maintenance (14). Reference was often made to drinking and other instances of anti-social behaviour. Several respondents replied on the need for playgrounds (9) and on designated areas to walk the dog (8). Most of the latter comments were by dog owners rather than by people enraged by loose dogs or dog mess. Other calls were made for car parking, development control, cycle facilities and naturalness.

6.2.8 *Variation in attribute ratings*

The greatest variation in ratings applies to cafes/tea rooms, tennis/basketball/ bowling, management as a single park, and surfaced paths. The first of these is probably regarded as unnecessary by some respondents while, for others, it may reflect a perceived association with



teenagers or loitering. For others, a café would enhance their visit and, indeed, some respondents explicitly commented to this effect.

There is also variation in response to the attribute “managed as a single park”. One person thought it would be better if the park were to be managed as separate entities, although others may simply have considered this attribute to be less important than attributes they rated higher. The related attribute of a “clear identity for a Liffey park” appears higher up the scale, being rated as “quite important”.

The variation in opinion on surfaced paths is also interesting. Again, several people commented that they much wanted more paths. Older people and parents with buggies obviously value hard surfaces, but others may consider these to be rather unimportant or, otherwise, that too many paths could conflict with the naturalness of the area or introduce too many new users to hitherto peaceful areas. In either case, respondents were more in agreement about the case for a continuous path along the Liffey.

The sample sizes are rather small through which to arrive at reliable variations by county. In any case there is relatively little variation in the order of ratings at this level, and particularly with regard to those factors of security and development. However, Leixlip respondents attached relatively higher ratings to playing fields and trails. The residents of Celbridge were most keen that the area should be kept free from development. In Lucan, a “clear identity for the park” was viewed as being more desirable than among respondents elsewhere, although the same other attributes appear amongst the highest ratings. In Dublin City, “access” and “traffic calming” were regarded as being very important. In Fingal, “regular mowing of grassed areas” and “woodland” were regarded as being relatively important. However, the Fingal sample is rather too small to allow for firm conclusions. The rural Kildare sample is certainly too small to report.

Grouped by respondent type (see Table 2.4), the data reveals broad agreement once again in relation to those attributes rated highest. For parents with young children, playgrounds are clearly important but, in common with other groups, are considered less important than security. For older people, naturalness appears as the highest rated attribute (although the sample size for this group is small).



Table 6.4. Preferred attributes by population group

(1)	(1) Parents young children	(1) People less than 40 years	(1) 40-65 years	(1) Over 65
(1) 1	(2) Free from development	(2) Security	(2) Attractive to non-locals	(2) Security
(1) 2	(3) Security	(3) Free from development	(3) Free from development	(3) Natural landscaping
(1) 3	(4) Park rangers	(4) Water quality	(4) Security	(4) Free from development
(1) 4	(5) Attractive to non-locals	(5) Park rangers	(5) Park rangers	(5) Riverside shrubs
(1) 5	(6) High water quality	(6) Playgrounds	(6) Path into Dublin	(6) Continuous path
(1) 6	(7) Playgrounds	(7) Attractive to non-locals	(7) High water quality	(7) Surfaced paths
(1) 7	(8) Footbridges	(8) Path into Dublin	(8) Riverside walks	(8) High water quality
(1) 8	(9) Path into Dublin	(9) Footbridges	(9) Identity for park	(9) Attractive to non-locals
(1) 9	(10) Continuous path	(10) Riverside walks	(10) Continuous path	(10) Riverside walks
(1) 10	(11) Identity for park	(11) Riverside shrubs	(11) Natural landscaping	(11) Wildlife habitat
(2)	(12)	(12)	(12)	(12)

6.2.9 *Principal Components Analysis*

A Principal Components Analysis (or factor analysis) was performed to examine patterns in the data. Such an analysis is particularly useful for identifying different types of respondents as identified by user motivation, i.e. attributes to which certain respondents give rather similar ratings. A components analysis is useful in demonstrating the mix of facilities that would be useful to attract certain types of users. Unlike the results in Table 2.4, all the survey data is used in the analysis.

The ratings data (above) provide a straightforward demonstration of the respective importance given to attributes on average. On this basis, most respondents agree that security and preservation from built development are important. However, there are many types of user, including people involved in both passive and active recreation, people who place a high value on family facilities and people who value environmental attributes, amongst others. The Principal Components Analysis helps to identify



some of the most obvious preference groupings and, therefore, possible user types.

Unfortunately, the sample size is rather small compared with that which would be ideal for a reliable analysis. Possibly for this reason, the Kaiser-Mayer-Olkin (KMO) index of 5.17 is below the preferred threshold of six. However, the Bartlett's Test of the suitability of the data for components analysis is significant.

The analysis reveals that there are eleven main factor correlated components (eigenvalues >1) and this is confirmed by a scree plot of the data. A varimax rotation of the data is helpful in demonstrating where the greatest correlation between attributes resides.

Component 1

The first component demonstrates a close correlation between attributes representing more active recreation, including children's playgrounds, adventurous play areas for children, playing fields, facilities for tennis/basketball/bowling and, to a somewhat lesser degree, music events and car parking. Cafes, cycling, woodland and seating also attract reasonably high values. The component appears to represent the types of activity that young people or those with young families might prefer.

Component 2

The second component very clearly reflect the environmental interest. Riverside walks, restoration of the traditional demesne landscape, quiet areas for recreation, wildlife habitat, woodland and high water quality are all represented.

Component 3

The third component speaks for itself. Circular paths for short strolls, surfaced paths, continuous paths, car parking, and seating are each represented.

Component 4

Component 4 indicates a high correlation between water sports, kayaking and angling. Anglers and kayakers might be rather bemused to find themselves grouped together given the minor conflicts that have arisen at the Strawberry Beds, but they do of course value a common resource. Water quality attracts a reasonably high value.



Beyond this point, the components become rather vague, although security and naturalness, habitat protection and park designation, and bridges, paths and cycling, all make an appearance together in subsequent components. Each are related of course, for instance good security is particularly appreciated by those who might prefer a more natural landscape, but are anxious that a lack of obvious maintenance could encourage anti-social behaviour or present a threat of assault.

The commonly held preferences do not necessarily map onto any particular individual type as defined by socio-demographic characteristics such as parents with young children, age or fitness. For instance, many people other than just parents might consider that a playground should be an important park attribute. As a check of whether the above four components could be predicted by respondent characteristics, the average ratings for variables comprising the component were used as a dependent variable in a linear regression and in a probit analysis (rounded to one or zero). For the first component, the only significant variables were the frequency with which people visit their nearest park (positive) and age (negative). For other components there were a few significant variables, but none that were especially influential.

6.2.10 How often respondents would visit a Liffey Valley Park

Over half the respondents (61%) claimed that they would expect to visit a Liffey Valley Park at least once per week if it were to contain the facilities that they had rated highly. Those who thought they would come at least monthly represented 26%. Only 11% thought they would still only come several times every six months or less.

6.2.11 Full rating list (in order)

Rating order	Average rating	attribute
1	6.75	Security
2	6.61	Keep free from development
3	6.37	Attractive to Non-locals
4	6.36	Natural landscaping
5	6.28	Visible park ranger service
6	6.20	High water quality
7	5.99	Riverside walks
8	5.96	Riverside shrubs
9	5.94	Continuous path into Dublin
10	5.90	Continuous path



11	5.88	Bridges for pedestrian use
12	5.84	Clear identity for park
13	5.73	Creation of wildlife habitat
14	5.66	Regular mowing
15	5.58	Play ground
16	5.51	Woodland areas
17	5.49	Surfaced paths
18	5.49	Numerous access points
19	5.47	Seating
20	5.42	Adventurous play areas for children
21	5.42	Traffic calming
22	5.31	Circular paths
23	5.04	Restoration of demesne landscape
34	4.93	Encouragement or Wildlife
25	4.92	Cycle paths
26	4.92	Car parks
27	4.90	Playing fields
28	4.86	Managed as a single park
29	4.81	Cut back shrubs
30	4.76	Quiet areas
31	4.75	Trails
32	4.60	Kayaking
33	4.59	Cultural events
34	4.55	Cafes and tea-rooms
35	4.52	Restoration of industrial heritage or signposting
36	4.49	Encouragement of Water sports
37	4.04	Facilities for tennis, basketball and bowling.
38	3.91	Music events
39	3.71	Angling

6.3 THE ECONOMIC ARGUMENTS FOR GREEN SPACE PROVISION

The local authorities in the Liffey Valley area do not have the opportunity to benefit from residential property values due to the absence of domestic rates. As access to public owned parks is free, there are no prices by which to judge the value of the services provided through the local authorities park areas. The fact that parks are an example of a non-market good, makes management a challenge and means that planners have no information on how people value the type or quality of amenities provided.

Total Economic Value

Nevertheless, public green space does have an economic value. The first of these would be most familiar to users as recreation, be this active recreation



or more passive activity such as enjoying the surroundings. This recreation contributes directly to welfare in the same manner as paying activities do and, as such, is an economic benefit. This benefit can potentially be quantified, although it can be difficult to apply a value to a specific park in that recreation can be substituted by recreation taken elsewhere. However, while the Liffey Valley area contains several public areas, few have the unique river environment that can be offered by a necklace of publicly owned spaces that would comprise the Liffey Valley Park. Therefore, such a necklace of parks adjacent to the Liffey would possibly have a high value due to this more unique environment.

In addition, parks provide indirect benefits. These include biodiversity protection, moderation of climate, noise mitigation, particulate capture (air quality improvements), hydrology (flood control and water quality) and health. However, it is likely that there are significant benefits in terms of noise mitigation and particulate capture from green space alongside the N4 in Dublin City. There will also be significant benefits from maintaining the water quality of the Liffey given the use of this water for drinking. Obviously a park is not the only means to protect water quality. Much can also be achieved by development control and pollution management. Nevertheless, there is still likely to be a significant economic benefit.

In addition, another potential indirect benefit for the Liffey Park is an encouragement of bicycle commuting and the consequent savings in carbon emissions and loss of working time as well as benefits to health. The former are likely to be insignificant, but any association that can be demonstrated with human health is assured to be important given the savings on healthcare costs, maintenance of labour productivity and the value attached to life (i.e. statistical value of life). Improved health through greater exercise would be a significant positive benefit that could be roughly estimated based on probable numbers of users and the other physical activities in which they engage.

Studies of green space have demonstrated that people especially value the protection from built development that a designated park provides. This particularly applies where people are conscious of the value of their property. It certainly appears to be a significant factor in the public survey results undertaken as a part of this Strategy process.



This baseline report has assessed the ecological, built heritage and recreational resources of the Liffey Valley from Islandbridge to Ballymore Eustace. Whilst every attempt has been made to identify the principal resources, any further information or highlighting of particular sites or features are welcomed as local knowledge is of great importance in such an exercise.

