

TALLAGHT TOWN CENTRE

FROM GREEN FIELDS TO STREETS, SQUARES AND WALKS



ZIP Pedestrian Walk

Tallaght Masterplan



High Street



Tallaght Cross - Library Square

Urban Design

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Tallaght Town Centre: From Green Fields to Streets, Squares and Walks

An integral part of the successful implementation of the Tallaght Integrated Area Plan (IAP) has been the creation of new urban public space on previously greenfield sites, roads and car parks in Tallaght Town Centre. The challenge has been to create the streets, square and walks that make the heart of a Town of 100,000 people, in most cases where nothing has existed before.



Belgard Square West

Whilst much has been achieved and is evident on the ground, there is more to come. In order to build on success to date, South Dublin County Council adopted a Masterplan (Tallaght Town Centre Local Area Plan 2006), to provide for the development of new streets, civic and amenity spaces and a range of people-intensive uses appropriate to a town centre based on high quality urban design.



High Street Market



Tallaght Town Centre 1991



Tallaght Town Centre 2007

Streets

One of the first 'new' streets created in Tallaght was 'High Street', which is an entirely new street that links the old Tallaght Village Centre with the new Town Centre at 'The Square' Shopping Centre. High Street is a mixed use, mainly commercial street characterised by high quality materials, finishes and public lighting, as well as defined car parking. The Street leads to a pedestrian priority crossing of Belgard Road and is now host to a successful organic market on Fridays and Saturdays .

Other completely new streets are emerging around the Town Centre, most notably at Belgard Square West and North, which include a series of mixed use residential and commercial buildings. In other cases one side of a street has been formed, such as at Old Blessington Road. The Masterplan includes proposals for sites facing these new streets as well as new and extended street links into previously undeveloped or underutilised industrial areas.

The extent of change has been such that a new Town Centre street and space naming project has been initiated in order to properly reflect the character and diversity of the emerging Town.



Before and After: LUAS Terminus



Before and After: High Street

Urban Design

Squares

The first new public square created as a completely enclosed space in Tallaght Town Centre is the Library Square, immediately to the north of the Luas terminus. This is a mixed use Square that includes a range of residential, commercial (Marks & Spencer department store, Hotel, cafes/restaurants) and civic uses (County Library and Arts Centre). The Square is characterised by the use of high quality materials and lighting and a sculptor has been commissioned to ensure that the underground car park ventilation comprises a public art feature. (Image also on cover)



Library Square

Linked to Library Square, planning permission has been granted for a major new square at the heart of the Town. The major new Town Square is focused on the civic precinct that includes the library, arts centre, County Hall and theatre buildings on one side, and a permitted extension to 'The Square' shopping centre on the other. In addition to retail development, the extension includes cafes/restaurants and the relocation of the existing multiplex cinema onto the Town Square, together with office and residential accommodation above.



Central Town Square

In the Masterplan, the core of the new Town Centre is characterised by a series of interlinked Public Squares, which will also include a new Luas Square in addition to the Library and Town Squares described above. Two new smaller scale public spaces have also been recently created on the old Village Main Street.

Walks

One of the key aspects of the urban design strategy for Tallaght Town Centre has been to address the large-scale block pattern created as a result of the original (1970's) concept distributor road layouts, in order to ensure the provision of through-site links at the human, pedestrian scale.



High Street

The public pedestrian walk through 'Belgard Square' (Shelbourne Developments), is aligned to link the axis of the Old Blessington Road with bus stops and the western entrance to 'The Square'. This comprises a short mixed-use walk (commercial at ground floor) through a primarily residential development and serves to open up and enliven what would otherwise be an enclosed internal court and within an urban perimeter block.

Similar public walk-through streets are incorporated into the permitted extension to 'The Square', the redevelopment of the former 'Woodies' site and also the 'Park developments' site in the old Village Centre. In each case these links are aligned to form a new part of the emerging urban structure of the Town.

The Council is completing a new urban walkway, known as the 'Tallaght Zip'. This is designed to pull together the western and eastern parts of the Town. The Zip comprises a widened high quality pavement with features such as seating and mature planting and provides greater pedestrian priority where it crosses existing roads. Importantly, the Zip link the Luas terminus and Town Centre Squares with the ITT and Old Village. (Image on cover)



Belgard Square Walk



Belgard Square

The Masterplan

The Masterplan for Tallaght Town Centre, which was approved as a Local Area Plan in October 2006, highlights much of what is described above as the existing and permitted urban structure (dark purple/claret colour). This is the emerging core from which the future extension of the Town Centre will radiate (shown in dark blue).

The Plan strategy is based on a series of east-west axes to link the New Town to the Old Village area as well as north-south axes to allow for major future expansion. The principal axis in each direction meets in the middle at the New Town Square.

The east-west axes include the N81 as a major urban boulevard, the mainly pedestrian Zip (above), further street development on Belgard Square North and a new street link to extend Airton Road west to the Hospital.

The north south axes are focused on linking the main Town Park to the south of the N81 with 'The Square' via a heavily landscaped landbridge, on to the New Town Square and Civic precinct and into the Cookstown expansion area where a new urban park is to be formed on Council-owned land at the fulcrum of the Airton Road extension to open up this industrial area for redevelopment.

The strategy is supported by the existing Luas line and the preferred Metro West route along Belgard Road and negotiations with the Hospital and a consortium of landowners are underway to progress implementation.



Conclusion

The South Dublin County Council Planning Department has taken the lead role in ensuring the implementation of urban design strategies for Tallaght Town Centre. This has included working with internal and external bodies from design to completion on site. This holistic co-ordinating role has yielded improved outcomes that can now be used to further develop urban design improvement through implementation of the Tallaght Town Centre Masterplan.

Tallaght MasterPlan 2006

