



**Submission
to
Dublin Docklands Development Authority
on its new
Draft Master Plan 2008**

**22nd September 2008
by the
Inland Waterways Association of Ireland**

1 Introduction

This document is a submission from the Dublin Branch of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland in relation to the Dublin Docklands Development Authority's new draft Master Plan for the five year period 2008 to 2013.

2 About IWAI

The Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (founded in 1954) is the largest body representing inland waterways boaters and enthusiasts in Ireland. The association has ~4500 members organised in 20 branches across the island of Ireland. The majority of our members are boat owners and users and support the responsible use of all kinds of boats on our waterways. We organise over 200 events on and around Irish waterways each year. We operate a website (www.iwai.ie) devoted to information about our inland waterways. Our quarterly magazine "*Inland Waterways News*" is circulated free of charge to all members and to a wide range of other interested bodies.

In the Dublin area, we organise rallies, cleanups, etc. on the Royal Canal, Grand Canal and River Liffey (see photos at right) and advocate the use of these waterways as living waterways/navigations for leisure and commercial use – more information is available at <http://dublin.iwai.ie>.

3 Conventions

In this document, text that has been extracted from the Draft Master Plan is shown in *italics*.



4 Observations and Comments

4.1 The Dodder Bridge

The proposed Dodder Bridge is currently at design stage. Once complete, it will provide a critical piece of public transport infrastructure and the Authority will continue to support its construction as a reserved public transport, pedestrian and cycle bridge. Although the Dodder Bridge is likely to cater for bus services initially, the bridge should be designed so that it has the flexibility to carry BRT and/or Luas services in the future.

Navigation access between the River Liffey and the Grand Canal Basin must be retained – hence the new Dodder Bridge must be capable of opening to permit sail craft. Access to the basin is already limited by tidal conditions (due to silt deposited by the River Dodder). There should be no restrictions on bridge opening times and it should open on-demand.

4.2 Infrastructure to support “animating” Water Bodies

Section 6.3.4 WATER BODIES - “There should be focus on increasingly animating the water bodies.

The IWAI is fully supportive of measures to “animate” the waterways (Spencer Dock, Royal Canal, Grand Canal, Grand Canal Dock and the Liffey). However the policies to deliver the support infrastructure required to achieve this are missing from the current plan.

In order to achieve these goals, the IWAI would like to see provision made for:

- **Secure storage of boats (including engines) when not in use;**
- **Parking for cars and trailers (where a boat is launched and recovered in a single day or for example over a weekend);**
- **Provision to do minor maintenance on boats;**
- **Changing rooms, toilets (for active water sports participants).**

IWAI supports the objectives outlined by “Docklands Water Sports” as described in the document “Dockland Water Sports - An Inner City Adventure” (download from

<http://www.docksports.org/DockSports%20Draft%204.pdf>

In order to make any aspects of this vision a reality, IWAI contends that support infrastructure as outlined above is required and would like to see policies defined in the Master Plan to support this.

Currently, parking is prohibited in the environs of the slip at Grand Canal Dock and no secure parking is available in the vicinity of the slip at York Road, Ringsend reducing ease of use of these facilities.

4.3 Graving Docks (Grand Canal Dock)

In line with the above ambition (section 4.2) and with its Waterways Conservation remit, IWAI would like to see the Graving Docks at the Grand Canal maintained as working dry docks.

Furthermore, we would suggest that the land formerly occupied by the 3rd Graving Dock and now vacant be zoned and used to deliver the infrastructure outlined above, viz.

- Secure storage of boats (including engines) when not in use;
- Parking for cars and trailers (where a boat is launched and recovered in a single day or for example over a weekend);
- Provision to do minor maintenance on boats;
- Changing rooms, toilets (for active water sports participants).



This site also might serve the Dodder in line with your policy UD 49.

4.4 Provision for launching small boats (*Dinghies, RIBs etc.*)

The IWAI would support the provision of more facilities for the launch of Day Boats (rowing boats, canoes, RIBs, Tenders, Dinghies etc.)

IWAI supports the proposal to develop and promote Pigeon House Harbour as outlined in policy UD50. However, it would further advocate the specific provision of a slip.

Again, IWAI advocates the provision of supporting infrastructure as outlined in section 4.2.

4.5 Provision for Liveaboards (aka residential boats, houseboats etc.)

Section 6.3.4 WATER BODIES contains the following statement: *“There should be focus on increasingly animating the water bodies. Pigeon House Harbour in Poolbeg, which is proposed to be developed for recreational and leisure use, could become the embarking point for a public transportation water ferry to O’Connell Street Bridge. Opportunities for house boats, which contribute to the life along the water’s edges, should be actively encouraged.”*

The last sentence quoted (and underlined) above is not backed up by specific policies in the current Draft Master Plan.

We propose that policies be adopted that encourage provision of facilities for liveaboards on the Liffey and in Spencer and Grand Canal Docks. Necessary facilities include power, water, refuse-disposal, pump-out (sewage) services and secure parking for bicycles.

4.6 Grand Canal Dock as a Natural Heritage Area

Grand Canal Dock – is zoned as a proposed Natural Heritage Area (in map 07209_specific objectives_low res.jpg (at http://www.dublindocklands.ie/files/business/docs/07209_specific%20objectives_low%20res.jpg)).

Given the small area involved, how is this compatible with existing leisure activities (sailboarding, power boating, kayaking etc.) and endorsed elsewhere in the master plan?

Given its depth, the Grand Canal Dock area is a particularly poor environment for fish life as acknowledged in “Coarse Angling Guide to the Grand and Royal Canals of Ireland” published by Dúchas The Heritage Service 1998.

IWAI opposes this proposal.

4.7 Weirs on the River Liffey

Section 6.3.4, page 164 contains the following statement “*The regeneration of the river is imperative and it is proposed to establish weirs to maintain a constant water level and ameliorate the banks to strengthen it as a public amenity.*”

This proposal would destroy the current amenity of the tidal River Liffey – and make it impossible for Barges and Canal Craft to reach Islandbridge due to the height restrictions imposed by the Liffey Bridges, particularly the Talbot Memorial Bridge and the new James Joyce Bridge. IWAI opposes this.

4.8 The Campshire Vision 2007

The Campshire Vision 2007 is referenced in section 1.5.4.

This document contained outline plans for a new bridge across the main part of the Grand Canal Dock. IWAI would strongly oppose this impediment to the use of the Grand Canal Dock for water sports and we are happy to note that it is not in the Draft Master Plan.

IWAI supports the boardwalk as proposed on page 47/48 of that document with the proviso that adequate room is left to facilitate the easy navigation of traditional barges of 61 ft (18.5m) x 13 ft (3.9m) with headroom provision of 3m (taller than the existing railway bridge).

4.9 Comments on specific Policies:

4.9.1 Policy LU56: Seek to protect and improve canal, coastal and river amenities

IWAI supports policy LU56 in full.

4.9.2 Policy T35: Undertake a joint survey of the River Liffey within and beyond the Docklands Area, in cooperation with Dublin City Council, the department of the Marine and other relevant agencies, to investigate and identify the conditions required (including the design of bridges) to ensure the continued use of the River as an amenity, a recreational area and as a channel for boats, river taxis and ferries.

IWAI Supports Policy T35.

We would ask all parties concerned to note that the James Joyce bridge constructed in 2003 has reduced the time window for which the Liffey is navigable up to its traditional end of Navigation at the former Guinness Wharves at Victoria Quay. No new bridges should so-restrict navigation of the River Liffey.

4.9.3 Policy IF3 Support the elimination of the discharges from the outfall of the Greater Dublin drainage sewer (Grand Canal Tunnel) from its present location in the inner basin of the Grand Canal Dock.

IWAI supports this policy in full.

4.9.4 Section 6.1.2 – Water Bodies: Continue to enhance the physical and psychological connections between the Docklands community and surrounding water bodies, enabled through ongoing improvements to public realm at the water edges; continued implementation of physical access; development of key public spaces and buildings; and initiatives such as the Authority’s River Regeneration Strategy to generate ongoing activity on and around water bodies.

IWAI supports this objective.

4.9.5 Policy UD6 Seek to implement appropriate activities within the River Liffey, as set out in the River Regeneration Strategy and Campshire Vision, which will assist in animating and bringing greater vibrancy to water way and surrounding area.

IWAI supports the above.

4.9.6 *Policy UD 37 Implement a linear park suitable for active and passive recreation and incorporating cycle and pedestrian routes along the Royal Canal*

IWAI supports this policy.

IWAI is disappointed that there appears to be no recognition of Spencer Dock itself, which is the core of the Linear Park, as a navigable waterway and suitable for boating and other on-water activities.

4.9.7 *UD 48 Maximise and enhance the amenity potential of the water bodies in accordance with the River Regeneration Strategy and all other relevant Docklands strategies.*

4.9.8 *UD 49 Seek improved public access to the River Dodder; seek to enhance its banks with appropriate hard and soft landscaping; and investigate the provision of a weir/weirs to maintain constant water level.*

4.9.9 *UD 50* Promote the creation of public access to Pigeon House Harbour and investigate the feasibility of developing the harbour for public recreational and public boating purposes.*

4.9.10 *UD 51 Continue with Waterways Ireland to provide public amenity use in Grand Canal Dock. Seek the provision of a continuous walking path around the edge of the outer dock.*

IWAI strongly supports the above policies UD48, UD49, UD50, UD51.

5 Contact Details

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