

DUBLIN BAY ASSOCIATION



March 2006



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Dubliners love their Bay and would like it protected, managed, developed and used in a sensitive manner reflecting the interests of all stakeholders. All stakeholders have a huge bond with the Bay and the DRA is determined to capture this goodwill and drive the DBA project forward.
- There is currently no overall co-ordination between the many authorities, State agencies and organisations whose remit includes the Dublin Bay area, and as such, it is difficult to monitor the development of Dublin Bay to ascertain if it is being developed to its full potential as both an asset of and amenity for the people of Dublin and visitors to the Capital. In addition, concerns about the Bay's unique environment have not been adequately taken into account. In October 2005, the Dublin Regional Authority (**DRA**) took the initiative to set up a Dublin Bay discussion forum. In November 2005, a request for submissions was published in the national press and eleven submissions were received.
- Three public meetings were held between February and March 2006 to discuss the proposition of establishing a body to drive the Dublin Bay project. The meetings were convened by the DRA, chaired by Cyril Forbes and facilitated by A&L Goodbody Consulting (**ALGC**). The purpose of the meetings was to listen to what all stakeholders had to say. At the first meeting, a motion was passed unanimously to set up a Dublin Bay Association (**DBA**), under the auspices of the DRA. All meetings were conducted in an open manner and every effort was made to make sure that stakeholders' voices were heard.
- The five key decisions taken at the public meetings were; to set up a DBA; that its first task is to agree the terms of reference of a master plan of the Bay; that the DRA would seek funding from Government for the DBA project; that a representative Council would be set up with the initial task of managing the master planning exercise and ensuring it was undertaken on an inclusive basis; and finally that the geographical coverage of the DBA would be from Howth to Dalkey and the River Liffey as far as the East Link Bridge.
- The key issues raised by the stakeholders included the modus operandi of the DBA, wildlife issues, natural heritage, environmental concerns, amenities, quality of life and commercial and infrastructure issues. In the first phase of the DBA initiative, it was not the intention to discuss individual issues or projects, rather to facilitate the exchange of views between parties.
- It is important to learn from State development agencies which have been set up in recent years, as perhaps in the future the DBA may be set up as a statutory body. In this regard, Temple Bar Properties Limited, Dublin Docklands Development Authority and Grangegorman Development Agency are important benchmarks to learn from.

- International benchmarks were also assessed in order to assist in finding a suitable organisational model that may be relevant for the DBA in the future. Having reviewed a number of Bay and Harbour Associations, Delaware, Sydney and San Francisco were found to be the most relevant to the DBA initiative.
- The remit of the DBA is to co-ordinate and facilitate, but not implement, the activities of the public bodies and private entities which operate within the Dublin Bay area. The day-to-day running of the DBA will be the responsibility of the DRA.
- The DRA, at its meeting on 21st March, agreed that the DBA should be established, with members to include representatives of the stakeholders who attended the public meetings and other relevant groups. The structure and composition of a DBA Council will be debated further, although it is envisaged that the Council will have approximately 10 members including a Chairman. The DBA will also seek nominees from the State agencies and Departments who are most directly responsible for activities in the Bay area. The Council will be set up later in 2006.
- There is agreement that a master plan of Dublin Bay is the best way to drive the DBA project forward. The DBA will determine the terms of reference for the study and manage and monitor the project under the guidance of the DBA Council. The DBA will scope out the precise terms of reference and a tender will issue as soon as is feasible.
- It is necessary that funding is available in order to resource the DBA project. The immediate priority is to fund the proposed master plan at an estimated cost of €1 million. The DBA initiative should be classified as a Flagship Project in the DRA's submission to Government on the National Development Plan 2007 - 2013.

1. BACKGROUND

Dublin Bay is a unique asset for the city and the region. However, there has been no overall co-ordination to date, between the many State agencies, Departments and organizations whose remit includes the Dublin Bay area. As a consequence, Dublin Bay has not been developed to its potential as an asset of and amenity for the people of Dublin, nor have concerns about the Bay's unique environment been adequately taken into account.

Against this background, in October 2005, the DRA decided to gauge the interest in setting up a discussion forum regarding the future of Dublin Bay. A request for submissions was published in the national press in November and eleven submissions were received from interested parties. These submissions are attached (**Appendix 1**).

On foot of what was seen as a generally positive response, in January 2006, the DRA decided with the assistance of ALGC as a facilitator, to organise a series of three public meetings with stakeholders to discuss the proposition that a body be established to drive the Dublin Bay project. ALGC was also asked to write a report for the DRA which took account of the submissions made by stakeholders and the outcome of the public meetings.

2. STAKEHOLDER MEETINGS

2.1. Public Meetings

Three public meetings were held between 22 February and 21 March 2006, which were attended by approximately 30 stakeholders. The list of attendees (not all of whom attended all three meetings) is enclosed (**Appendix 2**) as are the submissions received (**Appendix 3**).

The meetings were convened by the DRA and chaired by Cyril Forbes. The Chairman made it clear at the outset that the purpose of the meetings was to listen to what stakeholders had to say. A wide variety of views had been expressed in the submissions received to date and the public meetings were designed to allow all stakeholders articulate their respective positions. It was not the DRA's intention to promote specific projects or to take a position on particular issues, but rather to explore how best to give momentum to the Dublin Bay project. It was taken as a given that all stakeholders wanted to protect the Bay and ensure that this national asset was protected and developed in a coordinated and sustainable manner. The Chairman said Dublin Bay is a fantastic amenity, to not only those resident along the coast, but to the citizens of Dublin and to the region's many visitors. It is an asset which is often taken for granted.

The purpose of the initial meeting was to find out whether there was an interest in setting up an organization to drive the Dublin Bay project. All stakeholders present voiced their enthusiasm for such an initiative and supported the necessity for it. In light of this wide consensus, a motion was passed unanimously to set up the DBA, under the auspices of the DRA.

Two further meetings were held on 6 March and 21 March 2006. Presentations were given by Michael Sheary of the Dublin Port Company, Sean O'Laoire of Murray O'Laoire Architects on master planning, Lisa Pollock of ALGC on international benchmarks and Gerry Duggan on behalf of Senator Tom Morrissey on the Progressive Democrat's proposals for Dublin City and Port. Also at the final meeting Peter Brennan of ALGC presented the report on the Dublin Bay project which was presented subsequently to the DRA. All presentations can be found in **Appendix 4**.

At all three meetings there was a comprehensive exchange of views on a wide variety of issues from the participants. The issues highlighted by the stakeholders are outlined in the following section of the report.

2.2. Decisions taken

Five key decisions were taken at these stakeholders' meetings:

- To set up a Dublin Bay Association.
- That the first task of the DBA should be to agree the terms of reference for a major master planning study of the Bay.
- The DRA should seek funding for this initiative in their submission to Government.
- A representative DBA Council should be set up, with the initial task of managing the master planning exercise and to ensure that it was undertaken on an inclusive basis.
- The geographical coverage of the DBA should be from Howth to Dalkey and the River Liffey as far as the East Link Bridge.

2.3. Transparency

An important facet of the work of the DBA is that its meetings have been conducted in an open manner. Nobody has been excluded from attending and every effort has been made to ensure that stakeholders' voices have been heard. In line with this policy of transparency, this report, including all submissions received to date, will be accessible on the DRA's web site (www.dra.ie).

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES RAISED BY STAKEHOLDERS

3.1. Key Issues

The following is a summary of the main points made in the submissions received and the range of issues discussed.

Dublin Bay Association

- Sustainable management and development identified as key drivers of the DBA.
- The need for an agreed structure and clear terms of reference.
- All relevant stakeholders need to be represented by the DBA. Broad participation is necessary.
- A Council should be formed comprising of appointed representatives.
- Master planning should be given priority.

- An evaluation mechanism should be put in place to qualitatively and quantitatively evaluate the work of the DBA.
- Learn from others such as the Cork Harbour Forum and international precedents. Links should be made with other state agencies, authorities etc. who have commissioned studies and plans.
- What will be the DBA's powers?

Wildlife

- Dublin Bay is an important breeding ground for the light bellied brent goose. Dublin Bay is the most important site in Ireland holding 2,328 birds in 1999. The two greatest threats to all birds are disturbance and loss of habitat, both of which are evident in Dublin Bay. Belfast Lough once had a flock of brent geese but they have left following uncontrolled expansion of the port and port related development which destroyed their feeding and roosting grounds.
- Dublin Bay is one of the greatest wetlands in the world and is home to several internationally important bird flocks as well as a very large number of birds of lesser conservation status.
- There is potential for wildlife tourism from the natural heritage of the Bay.

Natural Heritage

- There is increasing acknowledgement about the importance of nature as a factor in quality of life.
- There is currently a deficit in research material to define the ecology of the Bay and its hinterland.
- Importance of Integrated Coastal Zone Management.

Environmental Concerns

- Objection from a number of stakeholders to the possible infilling of Dublin Bay and related impacts.
- ISO 14000, the international environmental management standard should be implemented at Dublin Port and a third party certification obtained like other European ports.
- The importance in recognising the impact of climate change on our environment.
- Concern over the storage of dangerous or inflammable goods in Dublin Port which are close to residential areas.

Amenities

- Water based tourism and leisure needs to be developed. Proper infrastructure is necessary and marketing of facilities. There is a critical shortage of marina berths. Marine leisure tourism is completely sustainable, eco friendly and brings economic development to an area. There are currently only three public slipways between the city centre and Bray.
- Concern that an infilling in the Bay would lead to destruction of water amenities for tourists and Dubliners e.g. walking, swimming, jogging, bird watching, boating, fishing.
- The infilling of the Bay would diminish or nullify some of the planned and ongoing amenities provided by Dublin City Council. There also could be possible damage/destruction to the nature reserve, scouting facilities and two golf courses which are currently in the area.
- Develop cruiser tourism.

Quality of Life Concerns

- Current safety statistics are not encouraging with a number of spillages and fires in the Bay area.
- Concern over increasing visual and noise pollution.
- Concern over increased traffic congestion with significant health implications.

Commercial

- There is a need to get a balance between commercial, environmental and leisure activity in the Bay.
- The current capacity of the Port is not being fully utilised. i.e. 24 hours a day.
- There is little or inadequate management tools being used by Dublin Port Company i.e. no ISO 9000 certification. Such tools would enhance the use of assets and unused capacity.
- 38% of the volume of goods imported and exported into Ireland goes through Dublin.
- Mixed feeling regarding moving Dublin Port fully or partially to Bremore.
- Concerns expressed about the proposals to develop Dublin Port.

Infrastructure

- Improvement of roads, paths, cycle paths, toilet facilities, shelters along the promenades necessary.
- In order to develop water based tourism, the following is needed: new infrastructure, co-ordinated development plan, development of marine leisure centres, rural marinas, diving facilities, sea angling and extreme sports.

3.2. Conclusion

A wide variety of issues have been raised by stakeholders. For example, concern has been expressed about the future of the Booterstown Natural Reserve, about the impact of global warming on the Sandymount area, about proposals such as the Dun Laoghaire Baths development. In addition, two widely contracting visions were presented about the future of Dublin Port.

In the first phase of the DBA project it was not the intention to discuss individual issues or projects. Instead, the DBA sought to facilitate the exchange of views between parties who, legitimately, have different perspectives on some issues.

As the master planning exercise unfolds, all stakeholders will be given an opportunity to meet with the appointed master planner. In this way the projects and issues raised during the DBA's consultation exercise can be addressed in the proposed master plan.

4. DEVELOPMENT AGENCIES

4.1. Introduction

A number of development agencies have been set up in recent years by the Irish Government for specific projects. Typically, the development agency approach is used where a multiple of State agencies and organisations wish to develop a property or properties for their common benefit. It is important to learn from the experiences of such agencies should it be decided at some stage in the future, and in the light of the conclusions of the master plan, to set up the DBA on a statutory footing. To this end, the three development agencies mentioned below may provide a model for the DBA.

4.2. Temple Bar Properties Limited

Temple Bar Properties Ltd. is the company empowered by statute in 1991 to oversee the regeneration of Temple Bar as Dublin's Cultural Quarter. With the physical redevelopment of the area completed in 2001, Temple Bar Properties' mission is now to sustain and further develop Temple Bar as Dublin's Cultural Quarter, building on what has taken place to date in the area and in partnership with all Temple Bar stakeholders, to ensure the area remains a bustling cultural, residential and small business district.

4.3. Dublin Docklands Development Authority

The Dublin Docklands Development Authority was created by the Dublin Docklands Development Authority Act 1997 to lead a major project of physical, social and economic regeneration in the East side of Dublin. The Authority has the following four strategic priorities as it moves through the second period of five years:

- To maintain the momentum of the roll-out of physical development in the form of buildings and infrastructure.
- To achieve genuine architectural legacy and landmarks.
- To create a sense of place for Docklands, one which reflects the vibrancy, diversity and excellence of Docklands, and most importantly, one which is progressively experienced by the resident, the worker and the visitor.
- To realise the potential of the people of the Docklands. This means that all the people of the Docklands should be empowered through the project to achieve their full economic and social potential.

4.4. Grangegorman Development Agency

The purpose of the Grangegorman Development Agency Act 2005 is to establish an Agency whose function, in the first instance, is to prepare a strategic planning scheme for the Grangegorman site which is situated adjacent to the Broadstone and North Circular Road in Dublin. The master plan will provide for the needs of Dublin Institute of Technology, the Health Services Executive, the Ministers for Education and Science and Health and Children, the local community and the city. The Act incorporates provision for extensive consultation with all interested parties. These include the academic and student bodies of Dublin Institute of Technology, the Ministers for Education and Science and Health and Children, local residents and health care staff and patients located in or near the site. The Department of Transport will also have a major input because of the public transport requirements of the developed site.

5. INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING

5.1. Introduction

Again with a view to finding a suitable model that may be relevant to the Dublin Bay project in the future, a number of international benchmarks were assessed by way of desk top research. Having reviewed a number of bay and harbour associations, ALGC short-listed the authorities in Delaware, Sydney and San Francisco as having the greatest degree of relevance to this project. A brief description of these statutory bodies follows.

5.2. Delaware River and Bay Authority

Delaware River and Bay Authority was created in 1962 as a bi state government agency for the states of Delaware and New Jersey in the United States of America. Its mission is to provide safe, efficient and modern terminals, crossings, vessels and related transportation while participating in controlled economic development opportunities supported by a technically proficient and professionally motivated work force dedicated to providing high quality customer service. Primarily, it operates a number of airports, bridges and ferry services between the two states. The Board comprises of six commissioners from Delaware and six from New Jersey.

5.3. Sydney Harbour and Foreshore Authority

The Sydney Harbour and Foreshore Authority (SHFA) was established in 1999. The SHFA is subject to the control and direction of the Minister for Planning of New South Wales. It is charged with the responsibility of balancing community, cultural, tourism, heritage and commercial objectives. Its vision is to continually improve Sydney's significant waterfront precincts, balancing visitor, community and commercial expectations. The SHFA funds its own operations principally from rental and other property income. It is one of the biggest landholders in Sydney with approximately 400 hectares of property and land. The board consists of seven members and the working structure is divided into four teams; Tenant and Asset Management Services, Major Projects, Commercial Partnerships and Visitor Services and Corporate Services.

5.4. San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission

The Save San Francisco Bay Association was set up in 1965 as citizens were concerned about the amount of infilling taking place in the Bay. In 1965, an Act was passed which set up the San Francisco Bay Conservation and Development Commission (BCDC) as a temporary state agency. The BCDC was commissioned to complete a San Francisco Bay Plan, similar to a master plan. Following its completion, the BCDC became a permanent federally designated state coastal management agency for the San Francisco Bay segment of the coastal zone. The mission statement of the BCDC is that it is dedicated to the protection and enhancement of San Francisco Bay and to the encouragement of the Bay's responsible use. The Commission is composed of 27 members who meet twice a month. Since its formation, the BCDC has had a number of successes. Before 1965, there was only four miles of shoreline open to the public, today there is over 200 miles. The BCDC has commissioned a number of large pieces of work such as the Regional Seaport Plan and the restoration of the Bay wetlands. It is important to note that stakeholders were concerned that the formation of such a Commission would have

detrimental effects to economic development while conserving the Bay. In reality the opposite has been the case.

5.5. Conclusion

These examples demonstrate that there are international precedents relevant to the Dublin Bay project which the DBA may wish to examine in more detail at an appropriate time.

6. REMIT OF THE DUBLIN BAY ASSOCIATION (DBA)

The proposed aim of the DBA, as agreed at the public meetings, is to co-ordinate and facilitate but not implement the activities of the public bodies and private entities which operate within the Dublin Bay area. This remit was approved by the DRA at its meeting on 21 March 2006.

The day-to-day running of the DBA will be the responsibility of the DRA.

7. THE DBA'S REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL

The DRA will discuss the structure and composition of a DBA Council.

While the matter has to be debated further, a number of ideas as follows are submitted for consideration:

- The DBA Council could comprise of representatives from the north and south of the Bay in equal numbers.
- The Council could have approximately 10 members, including a Chairman appointed by the DRA.
- Membership could rotate annually thereby giving as many people as possible an opportunity of participating in the work of the Council
- The composition of the nine places could be allocated as follows:
 - Three elected representatives.
 - Three representatives of local, sports and community groups, including resident associations.
 - Three nominees from the social partners including nominees from Dublin and Dun Laoghaire Chambers.

It will be essential that the representatives from each group represent the views of all stakeholders in that group i.e. the representatives from resident associations represent all resident associations on the south side or north side of the Bay respectively and undertake to communicate the work of the DBA to this wider constituency.

The DBA will also seek a nominee from the authorities and State Agencies responsible for the Bay, including:

- Dublin City Council
- Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council
- Fingal County Council
- Dun Laoghaire Harbour Authority

- Dublin Port
- The Departments of Transport and Communications, Marine and Natural Resources.

It is envisaged that the DBA Council will be set up later in 2006. The DRA will seek nominations as soon as is feasible. Once the Council has been formed, it is envisaged it will meet bi-annually.

8. DBA MASTER PLAN

Inspired by the presentation made by Sean O'Laoire, there was a consensus that the best way to drive the project was to undertake a comprehensive master plan of the Bay.

The DBA should determine the terms of reference for the study and manage and monitor the project under the guidance of the DBA Council.

It is envisaged that the master plan would involve a full audit of the Bay and its immediate hinterland, including environmental challenges and its natural features and habitats with a view to assessing an optimal land and marine use strategy having regard to the Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area and on-going work including coastal surveys being carried out by Fingal and Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Councils and a proposed master plan of the south docks area by Dublin City Council.

At its meeting on 21 March 2006, the DRA approved the proposal that the DBA should put in motion the steps necessary to procure consultants who will be tasked to prepare a comprehensive master plan for Dublin Bay. To this end, it is envisaged that the DBA will meet with experienced consultancies with a track record in master planning with a view to outlining the DBA's requirements. These meetings will discuss how best to approach the task of procuring a master planner, the scope of the brief and the methodology to be followed to ensure the exercise is conducted in a transparent manner. A tender will issue as soon as is feasible and having regard to progress in securing funding for the DBA project.

9. NEXT STEPS

9.1. Introduction

All agree that there is a need to articulate a vision and shared policy framework for Dublin Bay. In order to achieve this, a master plan of the Bay must be completed. It is crucial that there is a linking of current knowledge, vision and action.

9.2. Funding

It is necessary for the DRA to receive funding from the National Development Plan (2007–2013) in order to resource the DBA. The immediate priority of the DBA is to fund the proposed master plan at an estimated cost of approximately €1 million. The DRA therefore agreed that the DBA initiative should be classified as a Flagship Project in the DRA's submission to Government on the NDP.

9.3. DBA Council

The Council will be set up later in 2006.

9.4. **Master Plan**

The DBA will scope out the precise terms of reference. A procurement strategy and terms of reference will then be agreed by the DBA Council. A request for tender will be published by the DRA at national and EU level. Once consultants have been appointed, it is envisaged that the master plan will be completed within 12 months. The master plan contract will be managed by the DBA.

9.5. **Conclusion**

Dublin Bay is a natural asset for Dubliners. The DBA initiative has demonstrated that Dubliners love their Bay and would like to see it protected, managed, developed and used in a sensitive manner reflecting the interests of all stakeholders.

The DRA is determined to capture this goodwill and to drive the Dublin Bay project forward on foot of the findings and recommendations as set out in this report.

