

Bluebell Waterways Project

Community and Stakeholder Engagement Report



Comhairle Cathrach
Bhaile Átha Cliath
Dublin City Council



August 2024

www.bluebellwaterways.ie

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Figure 1. Bluebell Waterways Site Location

Introduction



Preliminary Artists Impression of Bluebell Waterways

This report provides an overview of stakeholder feedback received on the Bluebell Waterways Project.

The engagement process documented in this report covers the period from the early stakeholder engagement and design period to the launch of the Bluebell Waterways Project and the public consultation from September 2023 through to June 2024.

The consultation activities comprised a series of meetings and workshops conducted over this period. A number of meetings were held specifically with directly impacted stakeholders including, The Wellness Sanctuary 'Bungalow', Maisonette Residents, Community Centre, Bluebell Community Council and Our Lady of the Wayside National School. Public submissions were also received by email and phone.

6,000+
Website
visits

3 Drop
in clinic
Sessions

**Community
& Stakeholder
Engagement**

6 direct
Stakeholder
meetings and
40+ emails
responded to

250+ people
engaged in
person

Context/Vision

The Bluebell Waterways Draft Plan was developed by the Land Development Agency (LDA) in partnership with Dublin City Council (DCC).

Bluebell Waterways is the working title for the 2.8 hectares of strategic lands located beside Lock 5 at the Grand Canal in Bluebell, Dublin 12 and comprises of public lands owned by DCC, outlined in red on the map.

The lands extend and include the DCC Maisonette homes, the Bungalow Wellness Sanctuary Project, and the old industrial filter beds on the green field site.

The LDA, in collaboration with partner DCC, seeks to unlock these lands located adjacent to major transport links to create a new place for people to live, work and play close to the city centre.

A key aim of this project is to provide high quality affordable and social homes incorporating the principles of sustainability, with an emphasis on active mobility and access to quality open spaces, all with the flexibility to adapt over time to changing circumstances.



Purpose Of Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

In progressing plans and proposals, the LDA promotes a proactive and inclusive approach to community and stakeholder engagement, starting from the earliest stages in the planning and design process, through to construction and eventual occupation of a housing scheme.

Stakeholders vary and are diverse – the LDA is committed to finding resolutions that balance common concerns and reflect the wider public interest in a manner consistent with the goal to build sustainable, affordable / cost rental housing developments.

The Agency adopts a tailored, project specific approach to each community and stakeholder engagement process it undertakes. The scale, scope and methods applied to undertake non statutory engagement varies according to specific requirements and condition.

Community is at the heart of Bluebell, and we began this project taking into account much of the groundwork and research carried out by the Bluebell Community Council and in particular, the Bluebell Framework for Renewal from December 2019.

Communication Methods

The LDA was first engaged by DCC in 2022 to progress plans for development of the lands at Bluebell. From the early stages of the project, a wide range of meetings took place with DCC officials, State Agencies & local community representatives to develop an understanding for the site and wider area.

A design team, led by Henry J Lyons Architects, were appointed on the project with KPMG Future Analytics assisting with the preparatory meetings, presentations and core stakeholder engagements during the development of the Draft Masterplan. A Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement Plan was developed in 2023 and preparations for a full public launch and consultation were planned for 2024.

The Bluebell Waterways Consultation on draft plans was launched in April 2024 with a dedicated website. www.bluebellwaterways.ie and communications channels:

-  Email: **Community@bluebellwaterways.ie**
-  Phone: **01 – 4102040**
-  Postal Address: **The Land Development Agency
Ashford House, Tara St, Dublin 2,
D02 VX67**



Public Consultation & Engagement Results



Over 250 people were directly engaged with (in person) during the consultation period. Others submitted their views, concerns and suggestions on the launch via email and phone submission.

The meetings in particular were found to be a positive and proactive experience for both the community, stakeholders and the LDA.

A summary of findings across a series of common themes is set out across the following pages and are presented under the key themes of Homes, Connections, Community, Environment & Sustainability.

The Bluebell Community Council also ran a survey in parallel with this consultation and many of the same themes and issues emerged. From their survey the key issues that were highlighted include Health Services, Public Safety, Community Engagement, Social Services & Parks & Playgrounds.

This is a summary overview only and is not intended as a complete record of all responses received during the consultation period.

Emerging Themes:

Homes



Connections



Community



Environment



Sustainability



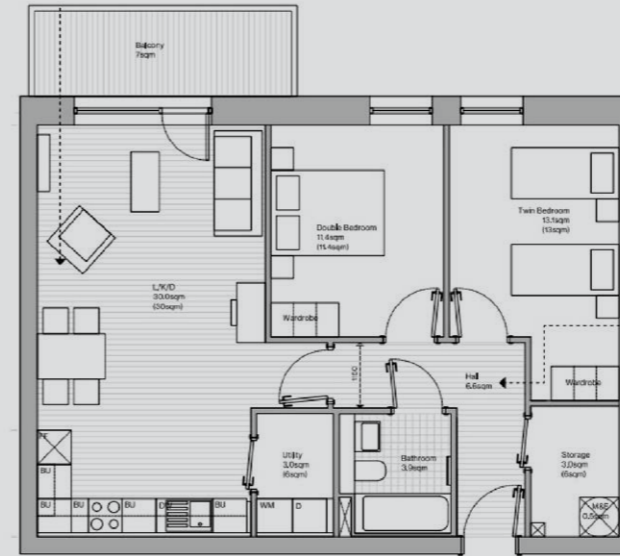
Homes

- » There were positive responses received from many on the quality, space and modern design of the new apartments. The general space and storage provisions were most welcomed, with the quality of water pressure, passive heating, sound and quality of life all gained positive responses.
- » There were some concerns raised specifically on the construction phase. Clarity was sought on aspects of this phase such as access, timelines, construction weekly times, dust & noise pollution and construction traffic.
- » Questions were raised and clarity sought around the de-tenanting process from residents moving from existing DCC homes into the new scheme. Key questions focused on the transfer list info, bedroom numbers, parking, ability to choose

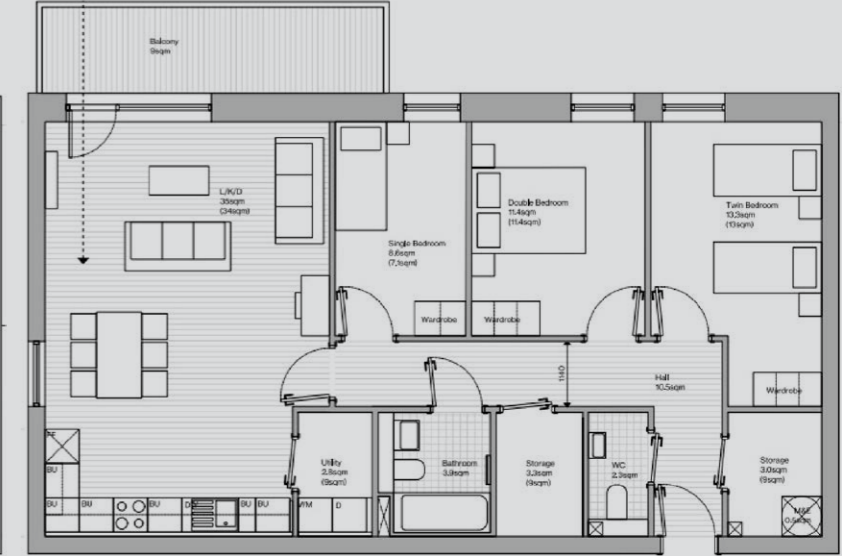
- to live beside existing neighbours, access codes, bin and recycling facilities, sound proofing, design aspects of layout of rooms, height of cupboards, heating systems, access for pets and open space provisions.
- » Comments were received on the specific design layouts of the apartments, some querying and welcoming age-friendly and disability friendly homes, the provision of rooms for carers and accessible bathrooms/wet rooms.
- » Concerns were raised about the general height of the scheme, particularly in reference to Bluebell Road.
- » Some residents welcomed the idea of moving into the new development but needed clarification on the de-tenanting process from DCC.



Two bedroomed apartment layout



Three bedroomed apartment layout



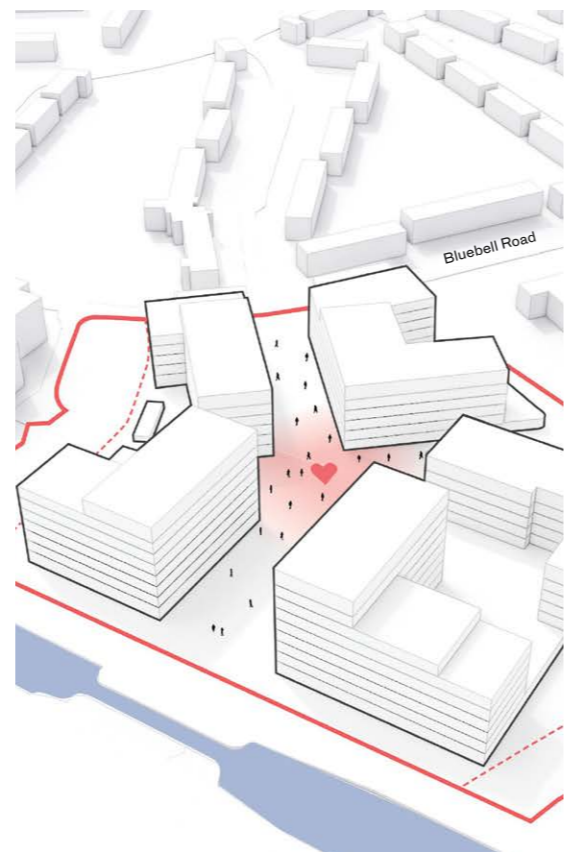
Connections

- » A wide variety of stakeholder and residents of Bluebell raised concerns on the present traffic problems in the area. Dublin Bus: Bus Connects and proposed cuts to buses, including no. 13, 68 and 69. Feedback was received that the three buses per hour were being reduced to one bus.
- » Residents stated that the buses and Luas are always busy during the peak hours, making it hard to access or arrive on time. Concerns were raised that the new development will add to this situation negatively.
- » Questions were raised regarding the potential new LUAS route adjacent to the site, especially concerns on the construction, operation and proximity to the homes. Uncertainty on the timelines of delivery was mentioned.
- » Comments were received regarding the car parking for the new development. A problem was identified by residents of the general on-street conditions linked to the use of the Community Centre and football pitch.
- » Specific consultation and feedback were received from the school, in maintaining their current connections onto Bluebell Road.
- » Feedback was received from An Gardai in relation to security on the canal and within the development.



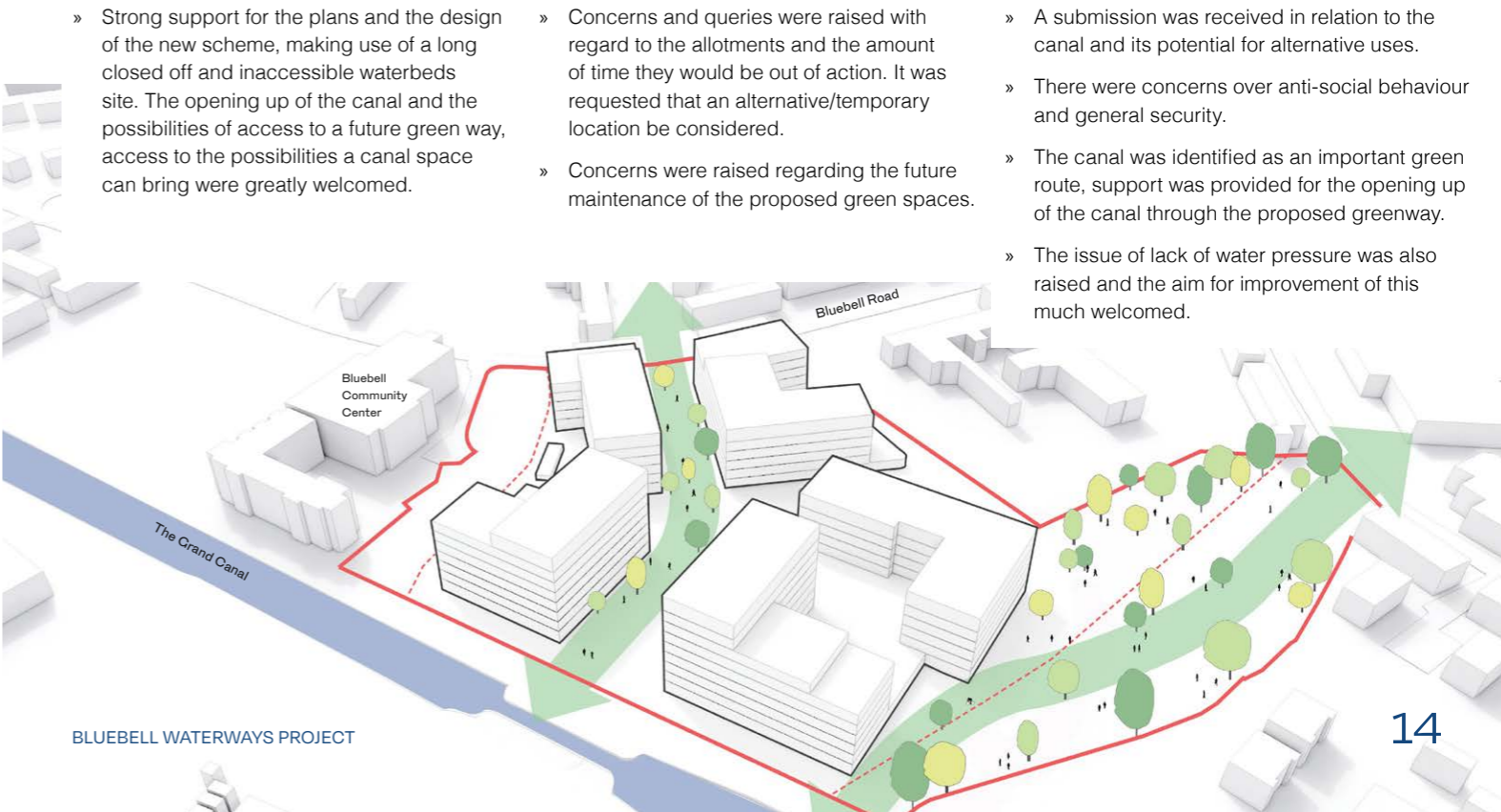
Community

- » A very strong positivity community spirit was experienced in the whole consultation. A great passion and love for the area expressed by many stakeholders who want to see this project being a catalyst for good in the area.
- » Various points were raised with regard to a need for infrastructure and amenities in the area. A need for additional options such as Medical Centre especially GP/ Dentist, access to better mini supermarkets, financial services and post office.
- » Questions regarding the long-term plans for Bluebell Village and concerns around its connectivity to the wider area were raised. Additional details were on how the development complies with Age Friendly Guidelines.
- » It was noted that a business investment for young locals is required in the area.
- » Queries arose on the current playground in Bluebell, with a preference expressed for upgrading the existing over having a new playground.
- » Issues were raised on lack of bins in the existing playground.
- » A lack of multipurpose sports spaces was identified, with specific consultation received from the Community Centre.
- » A support was expressed on the amount of community spaces proposed within the new development.
- » The Wellness Sanctuary was a main focus for consultation, receiving requests for the bungalow to remain. It was also discussed in detail on the functionality of the Bungalow in its proposed new space in the development.
- » The new plans for the Wellness Bungalow space gained strong approval and was welcomed with hope that the entire project would be transplanted carefully and retain its heart and spirit.
- » The staff and principal of the school provided feedback on overlooking, increased number of students and provided information on their proposed Special Needs Unit.



Environment

- » Strong support for the plans and the design of the new scheme, making use of a long closed off and inaccessible waterbeds site. The opening up of the canal and the possibilities of access to a future green way, access to the possibilities a canal space can bring were greatly welcomed.
- » Concerns and queries were raised with regard to the allotments and the amount of time they would be out of action. It was requested that an alternative/temporary location be considered.
- » Concerns were raised regarding the future maintenance of the proposed green spaces.
- » A submission was received in relation to the canal and its potential for alternative uses.
- » There were concerns over anti-social behaviour and general security.
- » The canal was identified as an important green route, support was provided for the opening up of the canal through the proposed greenway.
- » The issue of lack of water pressure was also raised and the aim for improvement of this much welcomed.



Sustainability

- » Positive feedback was received on the proposed energy efficiency of the building and modern heating systems, in comparison to existing maisonettes.
- » The launch of the new LDA Sustainability Strategy was welcomed and how this project would benefit from this.
- » Discussions were held on how green friendly transport options could be incorporated into the scheme.
- » Car sharing options were suggested.
- » Support was received on the HPI mandate for the project.

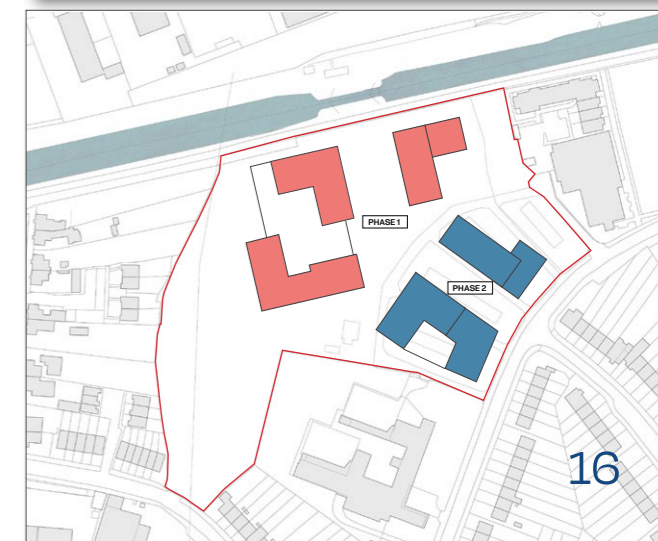
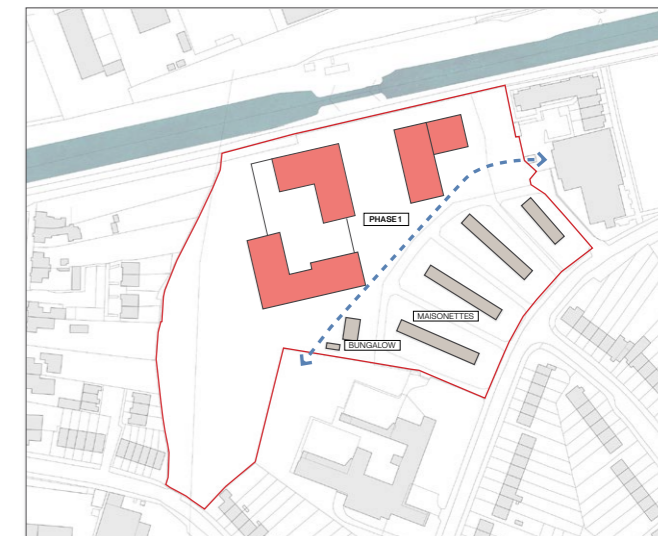


Preliminary Artists Impression of Bluebell Waterways

Plan-Making and Consultation

Feedback that was received as part of the public consultation process which included suggestions and comments on plan-making, that can be summarised as follows:

- » The strong consultation process to date was praised and many welcomed the relationship that has developed and the availability of the project team to meet, discuss, listen and engage.
- » Clarification on the timelines of next steps in planning process.
- » Queries regarding the alignment of the proposed Luas with the principles contained in the Bluebell Waterways Draft Plan.
- » The importance of inclusive consultation with the general public was raised, support was received for consultation methods throughout the process.
- » The importance of continued communication throughout the process was highlighted beyond submission of the planning application.



Next Steps

We wish to thank everyone who generously contributed to the stakeholder engagement process and for sharing their ideas, suggestions and concerns. The design team will now consider these and reflect on the proposals to date. A Planning Application will then be submitted in Q4 of 2024 and we intend to continue and build on our close community and stakeholder engagement as we proceed.

Where appropriate, we will seek to address collective concerns and take on board ideas that will strengthen the Bluebell Waterways Project proposals. This will ensure that we create a vibrant and integrated community through housing-led regeneration in the heart of Bluebell.



Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Report finalised

July 2024



Scheme Update and Consultation Report published

August 2024



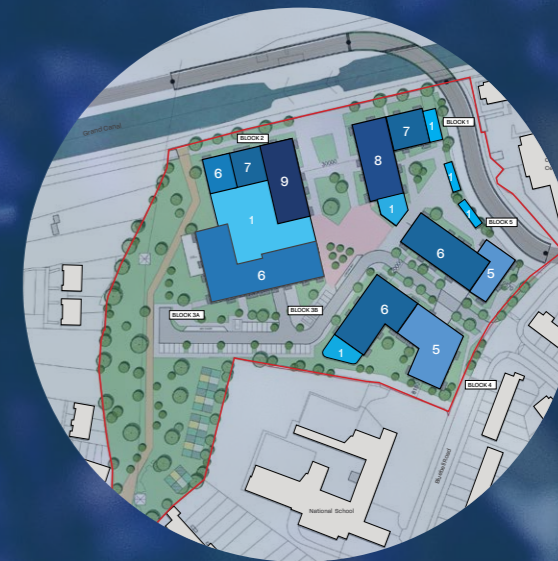
Planning Application stage

Q4 2024



Future Steps and Engagement

2024 onwards



Formal Submissions received from:

Turas Training Bluebell Waterways

Inland Waterways Association of Ireland (IWA)

Bluebell Community Council

Bluebell Waterways Project

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