



DÚN LAOGHAIRE CENTRAL

RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION

11th of July 2023

REF: The Boylan Centre

Dear Sir/Madam

We are writing to express our support for the development of the Boylan centre to be used for housing that benefits the town and in line with the council's policy objectives.

The DLCRA has become aware that it is likely the council will be buying the Boylan Centre from the Catholic Church and we strongly believe that this could be an opportunity for the town.

The housing crisis is the greatest challenge that our country faces and is acknowledged by the Taoiseach as a 'social disaster' that touches every aspect and strata of Irish society. The council obtaining the Boylan Centre in the heart of the town offers both a chance to contribute housing solutions as well as an opportunity to revitalise the town centre of Dún Laoghaire. The DLCRA **strongly supports the development of a mix of housing** on the Boylan Centre site.

We would like to highlight some issues that we hope the council will take into account when developing the site.

Dun Laoghaire as a regional centre has a high number of essential workers. Workers in St. Michael's hospital, in the County Council, Gardaí and teachers are all essential to the proper functioning of the town and county. In a situation which is experienced in some other capital cities housing and rental costs have ballooned resulting in many of such workers being forced to commute unduly long distances from areas with more affordable housing. The Irish Times (06/05/2023) reported that hospitals are drawing up plans to build or buy houses for nurses and other key staff as housing issues are effecting their ability to hire and retain staff. The Boylan centre site is located beside St Michaels Hospital and is beside transport links accessing the major hospitals in county Dublin. Could this be a potential development opportunity?

The majority of workers in Dún Laoghaire cannot afford to live close to the town and need to commute long distances. It should be noted that long commutes are detrimental in many respects. The commuters' and their families' quality of life is affected. Further their requisite expenditure on fuel is high and unavoidable. The resultant carbon creation is also unavoidable. Moreover, road congestion is aggravated. In addition, the community in the town suffers. It has become clear in recent studies that towns are more vibrant when people both live AND work in them. A town community is enhanced when those providing essential services tend to also live in the town.

If the council has a mechanism by which it can prioritise essential workers the DLCRA would strongly support it being utilised in this case.



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A mixed use development would allow other uses to be considered, having an aspect of **social housing, affordable housing** and housing for special objectives such as **assisted living** or housing for older residents of the county. Dún Laoghaire Rathdown county has the oldest age demographic in the country and many studies have shown that assisted living in the community is better for older people.

There are a number of national and local government policies that support housing essential workers in the town, such as the densification of urban centres and the **10-minute neighbourhoods policy objective** (PHP4 Development Plan). Having a mix of accommodation types and uses is seen in the **Multifunctional space** Policy Objective (PHP2 Development Plan). The council has also stated that it should enable *diverse age groups* to live together and the **Housing for All: Policy Objective PHP30** is concerned with assisted living and lifetime housing.

Additionally, since the Boylan centre is in the very centre of the town, its development might help with some of the issues that affect the town centre. For example, the retailers of the town are in need of an area to store rubbish and other towns assist with an area for wheelie bins to prevent vermin and bins clogging up lanes. Recycling facilities should be available for residents of the site at least and Tidy Towns are regularly requesting access to services such as water and lock ups to assist them in their volunteer work in the community.

Thank you for taking the time to read our submission, we look forward to seeing what the council plans to do with the Boylan Centre.

Best Regards

Mary Kelly-Borgatta
Chairperson
Dún Laoghaire Central Residents Association