

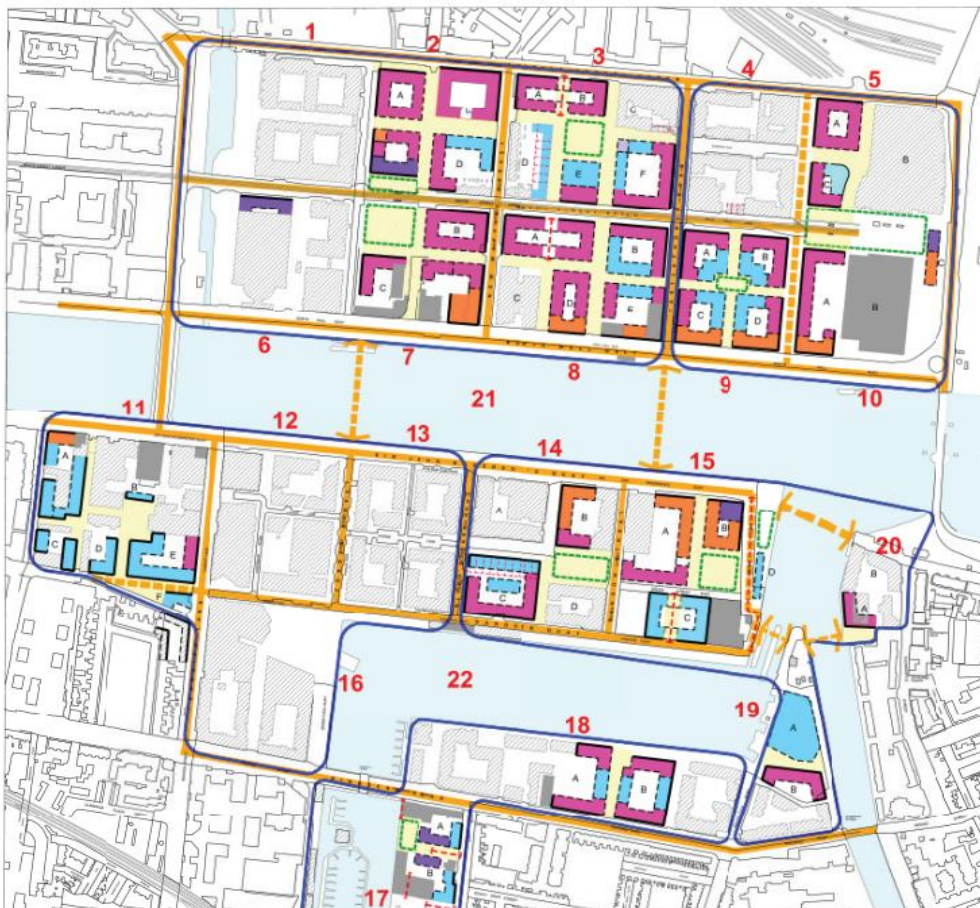
Proposed amendment to the North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme in relation to Pedestrian Bridge relocation across the River Liffey

1. Introduction

Dublin City Council is the designated Development Agency for the North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock Planning Scheme approved by the City Council in November 2013 and and Bord Pleanala in May 2014.

2. Proposal

The North Lotts and Grand Canal Dock SDZ Planning Scheme contain objectives to provide two pedestrian bridges over the Liffey; a western bridge at Forbes Street, and one further east / downriver at Castleforbes Road. (see orange-coloured dashed arrows on the map below, from Fig 33 of the SDZ scheme).



Although the Forbes St Bridge (westernmost route illustrated above) would accommodate a desire line from Spencer Dock Luas stop and Docklands Road Station to Grand Canal Square, the NTA has requested that design work be suspended while a review of the Dart underground Tunnel (which runs directly underneath the proposed Forbes Street Bridge) takes place. If built over the Dart Tunnel, the bridge would be prohibitively expensive.

The proposed Castleforbes pedestrian bridge (easternmost one above) is close to Tom Clarke (East Link) Bridge. Facilities for pedestrians and cyclists on the existing Tom Clarke Bridge are poor at present. A feasibility study recently concluded that widening the bridge is not possible and that a new pedestrian/cyclist bridge should be provided immediately west of it. This will reduce the need for a new bridge at Castleforbes Street.

It is considered that a proposed new pedestrian bridge between the 2 proposed pedestrian bridges (as illustrated in the SDZ) together with the proposed pedestrian and cycle bridge adjacent to Tom Clarke Bridge would have a number of advantages over the existing Bridge proposals, in that they could be delivered in a shorter time frame, and less expensively than the existing proposals. The reduction in the number of bridges also allows for more quayside space for boats / tall ship events etc. It is also important to note that connectivity westwards from the southern end of the Tom Clarke bridge will improve significantly when the Dodder bridge is delivered. The main downside is that the mid location is not on a direct desire line which leads directly from the River Liffey to Grand Canal Square.

3. The Next Stages

Section 169 of the 2000 Planning Act states that an SDZ Planning Scheme “shall be deemed to form part of any development plan and any contrary provisions of the development plan shall be superseded.”

Given that the SDZ was designated by Government due to its economic or social importance to the state, the correct procedure is to make an amendment to the Planning Scheme.

The procedure for amending an SDZ Scheme (under S170) has been simplified under the Planning and Development Amendment Act 2015 as follows:

- a. The Planning Authority (as Development Agency in DCC’s case) applies to an Bord Pleanála (ABP) requesting an amendment, with a supporting case.
- b. ABP to decide whether amendment is “material”. If the amendment would significantly increase (or decrease) the density of development in the SDZ, or change the overall objectives of the SDZ Scheme, then it must go through the full Consultation and City Council Approval process.

- c. If the amendments are not material, ABP can proceed to make a decision. If the amendments are deemed significant in environmental terms, ABP may require an SEA/AA to be carried out. If material, the Board will require the Planning Authority to carry out a 4 week public consultation, and submit a report on any submissions received to them.

Conclusion:

Overall, it is considered that the SDZ Scheme should be amended to provide:

- a. A new Pedestrian bridge linking New Wapping Street and Blood Stoney Road to replace the currently proposed bridges at Forbes Street and Castleforbes Road.
- b. A new pedestrian/cycle bridge to the west side of Tom Clarke (East Link) Bridge
(see amended SDZ Fig. 35 below).

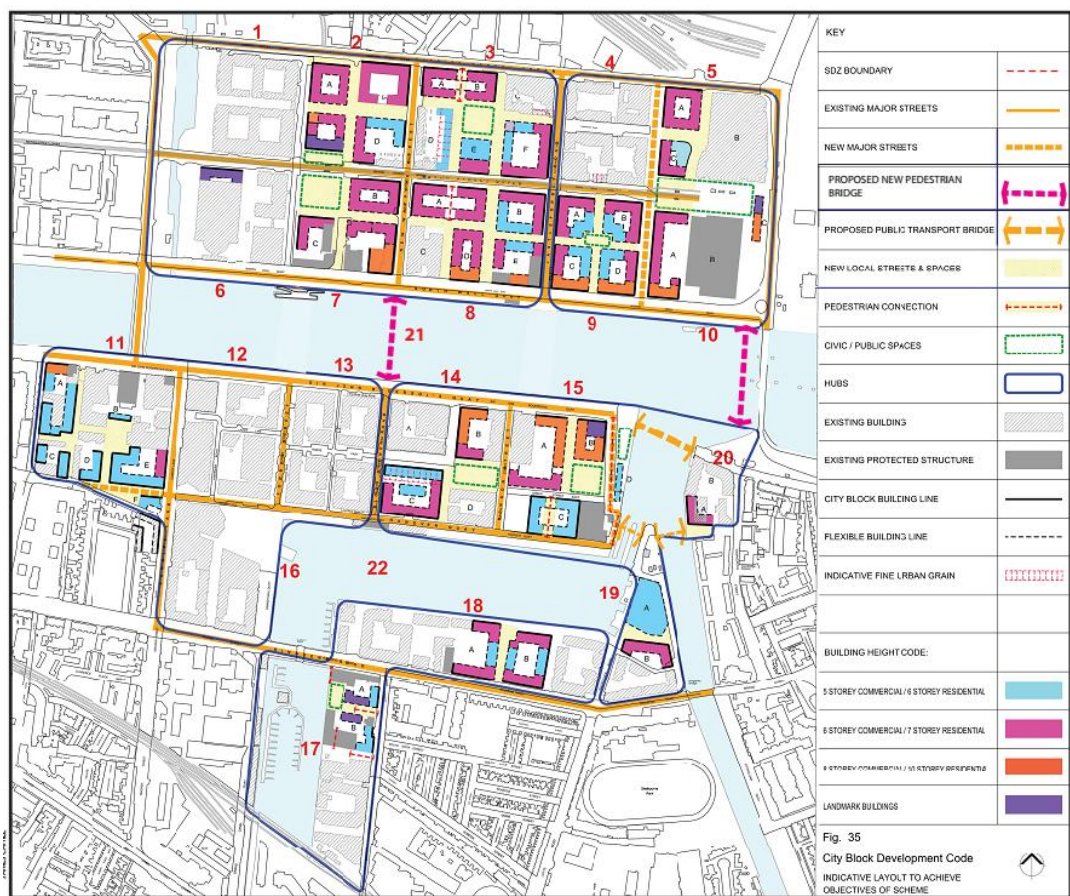


Fig 35- Development Code for City Blocks

Recommendation;

That the Planning Authority make an application to An Bord Pleanala requesting an amendment under Section 170A of the Planning and Development Act 2015 to provide;

- a) A new pedestrian bridge linking new Wapping Street and Blood Stoney Road.
- b) A new pedestrian/cycle bridge to the west side of Tom Clarke (East Link) Bridge, both to replace the currently proposed bridges at Forbes Street and Castleforbes Road.

Consequent text and graphics to also be amended.

Report presented to the Members for noting,

John O'Hara
City Planning Officer