

2011 - End of Year Review

A Good Start

2011 began strongly for the Grangegorman project with a new Chief Executive, consultation complete on the draft Strategic Plan and designation as a Strategic Development Zone (SDZ). In February 2011 the Board of the Agency adopted the Grangegorman Strategic Plan and with that focus shifted to the development of the draft Planning Scheme, which was a necessary step in the SDZ process.

The first physical element of the Grangegorman project also got underway in 2011 with the beginning of construction of the new HSE Mental Health Replacement facility. This new state of the art home for the residents of St. Brendan's is being built by John Sisk and Sons and is due for completion in autumn 2012. Once the residents move in it will open up the site for the beginning of work on the DIT side of the project.



New CEO, Mr. Michael Hand

The GDA submitted the SDZ Planning Scheme to Dublin City Council in April 2011 and the local authority, with the assistance of the Agency, began a 6 week long consultation process. Following this the City Manager submitted a report on the observations received to the elected members of the Council, who adopted the plan at a special meeting on 25th July. Four appeals on the decision were made to An Bord Pleanála, who held an oral hearing on the matter in November. A decision by the Board is expected early in the New Year.

A Great Mid-Year

One of the single biggest projects to be carried out as part of the overall redevelopment of Grangegorman is the public realm and site infrastructure element. Along with all of the common services for the new urban quarter such as water, ICT and Sewerage, this project will design and lay out all of the areas between the buildings. This is a significant undertaking in itself and therefore it was necessary to begin it as soon as possible. A Moore Ruble Yudell led team is advancing this project to design stage as an extension to their Masterplan appointment.

With an ever expanding workload the GDA itself had to expand in 2011. Three new members of staff joined the team over the summer, one as Director of Architecture and two new project co-ordinators. One of the first tasks of the new coordinators was to organise for a range of surveys and ground investigations to be carried out throughout the site. In addition to this the Employment, Education and Training forum, which is implementing the "Joining up the Dots" recommendations, took on a full time co-ordinator, Ms. Anne Casey.



Area of the public realm



New Employment, Education and Training Co-ordinator, Ms. Anne Casey.

A Challenging End

The completion of the An Bord Pleanála hearing in November was a great milestone for the project. However, there were also some setbacks at the end of 2011 as the Government announced it was cutting direct capital funding to the project until at least 2017. On the face of it this seemed as though the project would now be shelved, this is not the case. While the Government will not be providing direct funding it is supporting the Agency in proceeding with the Public Private Partnership element of the project. In addition, other aspects of the project will proceed using philanthropy and DIT resources. Therefore, instead of the planned 70% of DIT students relocating to Grangegorman in 2016, it now looks like 50% will be here in 2017.



GDA Board members, HSE and Sisk representatives at Contract signing for new hospital

And 2012?

With 2011 coming to a close it appears that 2012 will certainly pose some additional challenges in ensuring that the Grangegorman project stays on course. But there is much to look forward to. The Agency is working with a number of other organisations on achieving Broadstone Gate. It now looks as though a planning application is not far off. The Agency is also working towards carrying out very necessary conservation work on the listed buildings in Grangegorman and to eventually restore them with new uses as part of the new quarter.

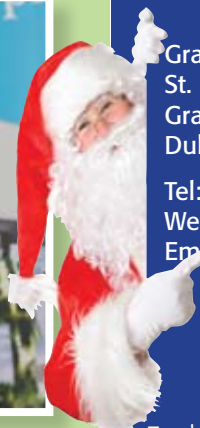
On that note the Agency would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who has been involved with the project this year. The level of support for what is happening on this fantastic project has been immense and it is this support which spurs us all on to ensure that we continue to do everything we can to progress it at all levels.

We look forward to the challenges and rewards that 2012 undoubtedly holds and we hope to see support continue to grow on this vital project for Dublin city. In the meantime Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year on behalf of everyone at the Grangegorman Development Agency.

New HSE Mental Health facility



Former President Mary McAleese visited Grangegorman this year



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