



**SUSTAINABILITY PROOFING**  
**THE**  
**FINGAL DEVELOPMENT BOARD STRATEGY**

**DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

Submitted to  
**Sustainability Monitoring Committee**  
**Fingal Development Board**

Prepared by  
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## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

### **Introduction**

The Sustainability Monitoring Committee (SMC) of Fingal Development Board invited the Sustainable Development unit of *Tíros Resources Limited (Tíros Sustainable Development)* to undertake a Sustainability Proofing exercise of the Fingal Development Board Strategy 2002-2011. Tíros Sustainable Development undertook to assess the County Development Board Strategy on the grounds of sustainability in accordance with UK and Irish best practice in policy assessment.

In essence, the aim of this exercise is to assess systematically, comprehensively and impartially, the effects of the Fingal County Development Board Strategy on the Sustainable Development of the County.

### **Key Findings**

Overall, it was concluded that the Fingal Development Board Strategy is sustainable in its content.

The strategy was found lacking however in its integration of environmental protection with its economic strategy. It was also found that the strategy failed to set tangible goals and targets for each action which would effectively enable a more comprehensive evaluation of strategy success.

Policies/actions related to the review of the Fingal County Development Plan are of immediate priority, given the short time frame available to the Board to influence the plan.

### **Key Recommendations**

Recommendations were provided for linking various related actions and for enhancing actions for ease of implementation. Monitoring of specific actions was also recommended.

### **Way Forward**

Seven themes for sustainability were identified to guide the committee's work in 2004. Specific objectives were outlined with a view to implementing the sustainability themes.

## **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 The Brief**

The Sustainability Monitoring Committee (SMC) of Fingal Development Board invited *Tíros Resources Limited* to undertake a Sustainability Proofing exercise of the Fingal Development Board Strategy (2002). Tíros Sustainable Development undertook to assess the County Development Board Strategy on the grounds of sustainability in accordance with UK and Irish best practice in policy assessment.

In essence, the aim of this exercise is to assess systematically, comprehensively and impartially, the effects of the Fingal County Development Board Strategy on the Sustainable Development of the County.

### **1.2 Study Approach**

#### **1.2.1 Guiding principles**

The first step in applying the concept of sustainability is to establish sustainability principles that will guide the future work of the committee and against which the content of the Strategy can be verified.

A combination of UK Guidance principles and Irish Government principles (as set out by *Comhar, the National Sustainable Development Partnership*) were used to proof the Strategy, taking into account the strategic goals of the National Sustainable Development Strategy (*Sustainable Development: A Strategy for Ireland, Government of Ireland, 1997*).

In line with government policy as set out in *A Shared Vision for County/City Development Boards*, County Development Boards must assess their strategies against the National Sustainable Development Strategy. As the National Sustainable Development Strategy does not set out guiding principles that can be readily used for policy assessment, UK guidance was used as the basis for assessment (DETR, 2000), while having regard to the overall provisions of the Strategy.

Comhar published a set of Sustainable Development principles entitled "*Principles for Sustainable Development*" for use in the assessment of policies in relation to their impact on Sustainable Development. A selection of these principles was also included in the evaluation criteria to ensure comprehensive coverage of economic, social and environmental criteria (*see Annex 1 for a listing of the Comhar criteria*). The final assessment criteria used in the evaluation are outlined in Table 1.0 below. The rationale behind the criteria used in assessing the strategy is laid out in Annex 1.

### **1.2.2 Work Process**

Four meetings were held between the project consultants and the SMC. The initial two meetings set out the Terms of Reference and provided an introduction for the SMC to the concept of sustainable development.

The latter meetings assessed progress of the proofing exercise and discussed priority actions for the SMC going forward. Furthermore, a meeting was held between the lead consultant Aoife Cassidy and David Pryor of the SMC with the Dublin City Development Board to learn from the experience of a team that had completed a similar exercise.

**Table 1.0 Sustainable Development Criteria for Strategy Evaluation**

Sub-Theme	Criteria	Does the Strategy:
<b>Maintenance of high and stable levels of economic growth and employment</b>		
Local economy	Strengthen local economy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide for the needs of local firms</li> <li>• Encourage growth sectors</li> <li>• Encourage enterprise</li> <li>• Use close in preference to distant resources (Encourage purchase of local goods)</li> <li>• Support local employment</li> <li>• Reducing externality effects</li> <li>• Included cumulative long term impacts in decision making</li> </ul>
<b>Social Progress that recognises the needs of everyone</b>		
Sustainable communities and access to facilities	Meet housing needs especially of low income households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring all dwellings up to a tolerable standard</li> <li>• Improve poor quality housing estates</li> <li>• Meet the need of new households</li> <li>• Provide affordable dwellings for low income households</li> </ul>
	Promote Community viability and cohesion and access to essential facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage provision in under-serviced areas of: shops, post offices, health centres, banks etc.</li> <li>• Access to public transport</li> <li>• Provide dwellings to allow local residents to remain within their community</li> <li>• Involve local people in identifying community need</li> <li>• Avoid severance of communities</li> </ul>
	Promote a sense of safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce the risk of road accidents through slowing speed and road design</li> <li>• Design buildings &amp; open spaces to reduce feelings of insecurity and encourage informal surveillance</li> </ul>
	Promote access to the countryside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improve access to the land for residents and visitors particularly by walking, cycling and amenity use</li> <li>• Encourage the maintenance of public right of way</li> </ul>
Develop the capacity of the political system	Subsidiarity, open inclusive, transparent governance system	
Equity	Promote equity & equality of opportunities	Provide for the needs of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Disabled, Ethnic Minorities, Elderly</li> <li>• Carers of children &amp; adults</li> <li>• Between regions</li> <li>• Between generations</li> </ul>

**Prudent Use of Natural Resources**

Natural resources	Conserve energy & water	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage development with high thermal efficiency</li> <li>• Promote renewable energy &amp; CHP</li> <li>• Minimise water consumption, abstraction and maintain river and groundwater levels</li> </ul>
	Reduce land take & protect soil	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote the use of brown field sites &amp;/or re-use of vacant buildings in preference to green field sites</li> <li>• Follow a sequential approach to land development</li> <li>• High density buildings where appropriate</li> <li>• Safeguard the best &amp; most versatile agricultural land</li> </ul>
Waste	Minimise waste arising and maximise reuse, recovery and recycling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage development to reuse materials and soils</li> <li>• Provide recycling infrastructure</li> <li>• Minimise social and environmental impacts of transport and storage</li> <li>• Encourage reduction in demand for primary aggregates</li> <li>• Change consumption patterns</li> </ul>
Renewable resources	To be used within capacity for regeneration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce overgrazing</li> <li>• Sustainable forestry management</li> </ul>
Non-renewable resources	Minimum depletion of non-renewable resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Careful use of resources such as oil, metals, soil, groundwater</li> </ul>

**Effective Protection of the Environment**

Pollution & climate change emissions	Reduce the number of trips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Reduce need to travel</li> <li>• Locate employment &amp; housing in close proximity</li> <li>• Encourage Public Transport, Encourage combined trips</li> <li>• Locate new development in areas most easily served by public transport</li> <li>• Consider the possibility of developer contributions to public transport</li> </ul>
	Minimise pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Locate sensitive development away from existing sources of light, noise &amp; odour pollution</li> <li>• Resist development which may cause groundwater contamination</li> <li>• Encourage reclamation of contaminated land</li> </ul>
Natural conservation, landscape character, coastal & flood defence	Sustain the character & diversity of the countryside & coast, preserve landscape quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Protect tranquil areas</li> <li>• Ensure that development is in keeping with local character and landscape assessments</li> </ul>
	Conserve and enhance wildlife	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoid severance of habitats</li> <li>• Maintenance improvement of biodiversity</li> <li>• Replace habitat lost to development</li> <li>• Encourage sustainable farming practice</li> </ul>
Built environment	Sustain the character and vitality of urban centres	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Resist out of centre developments</li> <li>• Protect and enhance townscape</li> <li>• Support locally owned business</li> </ul>
	Improve the quality the built environment and harmony with surroundings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that development is in keeping with local character</li> <li>• Involve local people in building design</li> </ul>

## **2.0 SUSTAINABILITY APPRAISAL/PROOFING**

### **2.1 Aim of Sustainability Appraisal**

The UK DETR Guide (2000) defines sustainability appraisal as:

*"a systematic and iterative process undertaken during the preparation of a plan or strategy, which identifies and reports on the extent to which the implementation of the plan or strategy would achieve the environmental, economic and social objectives by which sustainable development can be defined, in order that the performance of the strategy and policies is improved."*

It was proposed that the Fingal Development Board Strategy be assessed with a view to improving the performance of the Strategy in relation to its contribution to the sustainable development of the County. It was further proposed that the workings of the SMC be enhanced through the provision of advice regarding implementation of key actions of the Strategy.

### **2.2 Sustainability Appraisal Process**

#### **2.2.1 Scoping the Strategy**

Scoping the Strategy is a method of proofing the Strategy as a whole and helps to check whether all of the sustainability issues and goals are covered. It is essentially a broad-brush examination of policy coverage. This perspective is important because gaps in coverage could mean some aspects of sustainability may be overlooked in future decisions and in the proposals of the strategy itself. The strategy is checked against each criterion in a scoping checklist to see if there is a policy/action to meet each of the goals. If so, the policy/action reference is recorded, if not, the absence of the policy/action is recorded. In referring to "actions" we are referring to the list of actions under each goal of the Fingal Development Board Strategy.

#### **2.2.2 Scoping the Visions and Goals of the Strategy**

Scoping the strategy found that both the visions and goals of the strategy are broadly sustainable, with sustainability featuring in the wording of both visions (e.g. land use planning vision) and goals (e.g. goal 3.8.8. re. quality of life). The potential for policy conflict arises in the lower part of the policy hierarchy, due to the growing complexity of the number of actions.

It was found that the strategic visions primarily reflect a 'quality of life' focus as opposed to a spatial focus. The following points are made with regard to scoping the visions and goals of the strategy:

- 1) The Economic Strategic Issue reflects a non-spatial vision with a strong social focus reflecting the role of the Development Board in the economic development of the County. The potential impact of economic development on the environmental quality of the county is not recognised in the strategy.

- 2) The Environmental Protection Strategic Issue covers most areas of environmental concern. The strategy would benefit from the application of this section across the entire strategy, with the aim of integrating environmental protection actions into other sectoral action portfolios. The environmental actions are commendable for their attention to the waste issue. The Environmental Protection vision must be commended in its wording which encourages the involvement of all in environmental enhancement.
- 3) The Housing vision is a positive, socially-focused vision. Housing is not viewed as an industry but as a means of achieving a community. The vision could include an aspiration for encouraging sustainable construction and design, e.g. houses constructed in order to reduce energy consumption, land take, water consumption and to maximize biodiversity.
- 4) The Lifelong Learning vision could be expanded to promote environmental education both within the "Formal Lifelong Learning Services" and in the "Developmental Learning Services". An environmental education programme would be a key tool for the protection of the environment.
- 5) The goals of the Strategy were found to be broadly sustainable. However, certain goals have the potential to conflict with the sustainability criteria, e.g. Goal 3.2.4 *"That the strategic value to Fingal of Dublin Airport will be maximised"*.
- 6) Other Goals could be positively enhanced to expand their coverage, e.g. Goal 3.2.1 *"That sustainable economic expansion will be achieved in Fingal while preserving the character of the rural part of the County"*. This goal could be expanded to also preserve the urban fabric of the county. Recommendations for enhancing the goals are discussed in greater detail in section 3.3.
- 7) One goal of particular note is the final goal of the strategy, goal 3.8.8, which states, *"That quality of life for people in Fingal is achieved through sustainable development"*. This should be an overarching goal of the entire strategy.

### 2.2.3 Scoping the Actions

The actions of the strategy are individually assessed in Appendix A. In terms of overall coverage of the sustainability criteria, the four main criteria (*maintain economic growth, social progress, prudent use of natural resources, and protect the environment*) are well represented throughout the strategy. Few actions offer coverage of all criteria, primarily due to the sectoral nature of the action portfolios. This is not to say that actions are only deemed 'sustainable' if all criteria are covered, but that some actions by their nature cannot strive to achieve all things, e.g. the action 3.6.4.6 *'The enhancement of support programmes to focus on the needs of the families of drug users'* is a positive social action with no requirement to achieve environmental protection.

Achieving coverage across all criteria is more appropriately applied to actions related to spatial development.

### 3.0 SUSTAINABILITY PROOFING THE ACTIONS OF THE STRATEGY

This section contains a summary assessment of the proofing exercise. A full assessment of the strategy may be found in Appendix A. The summary assessment is presented as follows:

- Key actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the county.
- Key actions with the potential to conflict with the sustainable development criteria.
- Opportunities for enhancement of the actions.
- General observations.

Each point is dealt with separately below.

### 3.1 Key Sustainable Actions

Proofing the strategy revealed several actions with the potential to clearly contribute to the sustainable development of the county, if implemented. Key sustainable actions are outlined for each strategic issue below.

#### 3.1.1 County Identity

The Strategic Issue of 'County Identity' contains actions relating to the promotion of a unique identity for County Fingal. The actions under this heading cover elements of all the sustainability criteria, i.e. economic, social, resource use and environmental. Key County Identity actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the county are presented in Table 3.1 below (actions denoted \* are identified for prioritisation in the context of advancing the sustainability agenda of the Board).

**Table 3.1 Key County Identity Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.1.1.4	Data Collection on a Fingal basis	Necessary for the generation of indicators for monitoring.
3.1.2.6*	Rural Landscape Preservation Programme	Effective proposal if linked with other actions, see Table 3.10 below. Should be viewed in the context of the Landscape Categorisation generated as part of the County Development Plan.
3.1.2.8	Craftspersons Guild	Important in the generation of a vibrant local economy. Implementation should be informed by a local socio-economic study.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

One key action is singled out for prioritisation in the context of County Identity – that of the development of a Rural Landscape Preservation Programme. A Programme of this nature has the capacity to link with several other proposed actions in the delivery of a coherent approach to sustainable spatial planning (see Section 3.3 below).

### 3.1.2 Land Use Planning

The Strategic Issue of ‘Land Use Planning’ contains actions relating to strategic planning issues, zoning objectives and the preparation of planning guidance. This section of the strategy presents several innovative actions, primarily relating to the integration of land use and transportation objectives. It is recommended that the land use planning actions identified for prioritisation below should be included in a submission to Fingal County Council for input to the Review of the County Development Plan.

Key land use planning actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the county are presented in Table 3.2 below.

**Table 3.2 Key Land Use Planning Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.2.2.1*	Carrying Capacity Study	Important first step in a series of proposed inputs to the review of the County Development Plan. This will be a multi-faceted study covering environmental capacity as well as existing infrastructural capacity. The issues papers prepared as part of the CDP should inform the infrastructural capacity element; a new study may be required to assess environmental capacity.
3.2.2.3*	Residential Design Guidelines	Effective if implemented as part of a suite of guidance notes (see Appendix A for examples of enhancement options). This action could be re-focused to prepare Development Control Standards (DCS) as opposed to design standards. The SMC should make detailed submissions to FCC with regard to potential DCS.
3.2.2.8	Clustering Community Amenities	Accords with sustainable spatial planning principles.
3.2.4.3	LUAS, Metro, Heavy Rail Infrastructure	Provision of public transport infrastructure is essential for the sustainable development of the County. This action should have regard to the South Fingal Fringe Study.
3.2.5.2*	ABC Locational Policy	Potential to create integrated land use and transportation zoning objectives.
3.2.7.4*	Development Control and Planning Guidelines	Guidance notes have the potential to shape development in line with sustainability principles.
3.2.3.9	Country Markets	Very positive action. The practical operation of markets may require examination.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

In relation to the implementation of key initiatives identified in relation to land use planning, the following points are noted:

- Ideally, the proposed carrying capacity study should inform the preparation of the Rural Landscape Preservation Programme by identifying vulnerable areas/resource-zones.
- The outcome of the Rural Landscape Preservation Programme should inform the preparation of the Residential Design Guidelines, particularly in relation to the design and siting of rural housing.
- In turn, the Residential Design Guidelines should form part of the proposed Planning and Development Guidelines, particularly in relation to shaping Development Control Guidance.

A significant number of land use planning actions directly refer to the review of the CDP and are scheduled for commencement in 2003. In this light, the timing and co-ordination of key actions will be critical to successful implementation.

### 3.1.3 Transportation

The Strategic Issue of 'Transportation' contains actions relating to the provision of transport infrastructure, with a significant focus on the provision of public transport infrastructure. This section presents several highly sustainable actions with a strong focus on the provision of modal choice and the design of integrated land use and transportation objectives, however there is no specific goal of reducing the need to travel. Such a policy could also be linked to the development of broadband in the county for use in tele-working.

If implemented, the key actions highlighted in Table 3.3 below, together with those relating to land use planning (see Table 3.2 above) have the capacity to significantly contribute to the sustainable development of the county. It is recommended that the transportation actions identified for prioritisation below should be included in a submission to Fingal County Council for input to the Review of the County Development Plan.

**Table 3.3 Key Transportation Actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.3.1.3 3.3.1.4 3.3.2.4	Cycle Route Infrastructure	Essential actions for the provision of modal choice. It is recommended that the SMC identify key routes for input to the review of the County Development Plan.
3.3.1.6	Traffic Cells	The identification of a pilot study would be useful in evaluating the potential effectiveness of this measure.

3.3.4.1 3.3.6.5	Public Transport Infrastructure	Provision of public transport infrastructure is essential for the sustainable development of the County.
3.3.4.2*	Land Use Zoning of Interchanges	Link with ABC Locational Policy (3.2.5.2).

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

### 3.1.4 Economic Development

The Strategic Issue of 'Economic Development' contains actions relating to the management of the rapid economic growth Fingal has undergone in the past ten years and the promotion of the county as a centre of entrepreneurship. Actions in this section address infrastructural deficits in the county together with human resource issues that affect local business. A central focus of the strategy is the promotion of the local economy (this is also prevalent in the County Identity section), which, in itself, is a highly sustainable goal.

The Economic Development actions have little linkage with the environmental criteria but have a strong social focus. The economic assets of the county are identified and strengthened through the range of actions; however, the natural and cultural heritage is not referenced, notwithstanding the promotion of the natural and cultural heritage in shaping the identity of Fingal (Chapter 1 of the Strategy). An additional goal reflecting the importance of maintaining a high environmental quality would be important to include in any review of the strategy. An example of such a goal could read,

*"That Fingal's economic sustainability is underpinned by a high quality natural environment".*

Key economic development actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the County are presented in Table 3.4 below.

**Table 3.4 Key Economic Development Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

<b>Action Ref.</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Comment</b>
3.4.5.1*	To commence the provision of a heavy rail link by 2005 through Dublin Airport.	Important action in the context of strengthening the economic position of Fingal.
3.4.8.1*	The identification of those parts of the county without broadband coverage in order to allow for the provision of infrastructure by 2005.	Important action in the context of strengthening the economic infrastructure of Fingal.
3.4.1.3	The establishment of a Fingal Skills Observatory, by 2003, to carry out Fingal based annual labour market research and planning, to include a review of labour supply and demand and to convene an Employment Forum.	Key action for the collection of local data for use as sustainability indicators.
3.4.2.4*	Indigenous high technology and high potential start-up businesses to be given priority for financial support in Fingal from 2002.	Important action that could potentially stimulate and support the enterprise culture advocated in the strategy. It is recommended that a research paper (addressing market realities) is prepared with a view to implementing this action.
3.4.6.5*	To organise a branding scheme for Fingal food by 2003, incorporating the auditing of quality, the devising of a logo and the encouraging of Fingal restaurants to use local produce.	This action represents another tread of the development of local produce such as that advocated by the development of County Markets (Action 3.2.3.9) and Fingal Fine Foods (Action 3.1.2.1). A branding scheme could include provisions for auditing quality incorporating environmental criteria such as organic methods of production, preservation of habitats on the farm, levels of antibiotic use, etc.
3.4.9.3*	The appointment of an Alternative Energy Project Officer by 2003.	Very positive action. Remit of the officer should be guided by various actions of the strategy in terms of design, locational strategies and infrastructure development. This action could have a farmer focus to promote biomass fuel. A review of existing projects e.g. Biomass production in Enniskillen would be a useful starting point.
3.4.11.3	Career teachers in schools to emphasise a focus on micro-enterprise as an alternative to other career routes from 2003.	Positive forward-thinking policy for the development of a local indigenous industry.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

### 3.1.5 Housing

The Strategic Issue of 'Housing' contains actions relating to housing need, social inclusion and spatial planning. This section of the Strategy presents several innovative actions, primarily relating to the design and mix of housing proposed for Fingal. It is recommended that the housing actions identified for prioritisation below should be included in a submission to Fingal County Council for input to the Review of the County Development Plan.

The social inclusion principle is strongly evident in the goals and actions of the Housing section. There is positive recognition of the role of housing design and spatial planning in generating high quality living environments and socially-inclusive developments.

A sense of urgency is outlined in relation to addressing the projected housing needs of the county, however, this sense of urgency does not fully translate into actions. Several actions lack clear implementation pathways. The following actions are weakly worded and have the potential to be ineffective if not monitored carefully:

- Action 3.5.1.1 'To continue to promote...'
- Action 3.5.2.1 'To undertake research...'
- Action 3.5.2.2 'To optimise efficiency...'
- Action 3.5.3.1 'To actively plan...'

It will be important to identify the 'how' in implementing the above actions.

Key housing actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the county are presented in Table 3.6 below.

**Table 3.6 Key Housing Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.5.1.2	To review the CDP to ensure that lands zoned for new residential development are properly served by essential services.	Locating services close to residential areas promotes a sustainable growth model and aids social inclusion.
3.5.5.1*	To introduce innovative Guidelines to improve housing design encouraging high density, mixed schemes, reduced maintenance, good access and the reduction of noise pollution.	Innovation action with much scope for linkage with land use actions (3.2.2.3, 3.2.2.13). Guidelines could also promote local waste management.
3.5.5.2*	To promote the use of alternative modes of transport by ensuring the planning for Public Transport needs is included in the design of new housing estates by 2003.	Highly sustainable action that promotes the integration of land use and transportation and addresses the issue of maximising accessibility. Potential to explore means of using developer levies to support public transport provision.

3.5.5.3*	To review the CDP, commencing in 2003 to encourage mixed use zoning, with the emphasis on the provision for educational, social & recreational facilities as well as employment possibilities within or adjacent to new schemes.	Highly sustainable action. Could be linked to actions in land use section such as 3.2.2.8.
3.5.3.1	As part of the implementation of the Fingal Co. Co. Housing Strategy, to actively plan and nurture a diverse social mix in housing, from 2002, thereby avoiding ghettoisation or marginalisation.	Important social action. May require guidance to help with implementation.
3.5.3.5	To reduce the occurrence of anti-social behaviour by addressing the design & layout of existing & new estates through the implementation of Residential Design Guidelines.	Positive action with clear method of implementation.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

### 3.1.6 Health and Social Services

The Strategic Issue of 'Health and Social Services' contains actions relating to the provision of local authority, state agency and central government resources. The actions are aimed at promoting a more efficient and integrated service delivery. The SMC noted that action 3.6.2.2 (re. the facilitation of strategic alliances for integrated service delivery) was achieved in relation to the provision of sheltered accommodation and health services for the elderly in Heartstown, which could serve as a guiding model for the future roll-out of health and housing services.

The emphasis of the Health & Social Services strategic section is on research and analysis of the existing situation. The resultant information must be strategically used in order to ensure successful implementation. As the majority of the actions are highly sustainable in social terms, careful monitoring of the outcome of the research actions will be necessary in order to evaluate their effectiveness in optimising service delivery, integration and participation.

**Table 3.6 Key Health and Social Actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of County Fingal**

<b>Action Ref.</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Comment</b>
3.6.1.3	To provide a Social Welfare local office in Swords by 2004, in the context of integrated State Agency provision, and full Social Welfare services in Balbriggan by 2005.	This action promotes social equity and access to services. The action has a clear remit and is specific in its intent. This is one of the most specific social service policies in the strategy.
3.6.2.2	To facilitate the creation of strategic alliances between all Agencies & organisations providing services for older people by 2004, in order to bring about the development of cohesive packages of care.	This action would enable service providers to avoid service duplication. The needs of the growing elderly population should also be taken account in the review of the development plan. Agencies involved in service provision should be consulted on how the growing elderly population will impact on the need for smaller accommodation units and nursing homes.
3.6.6.6	To carry out an analysis, by 2003, of the current provision of ambulance services in the county relative to population density & distances to the nearest A&E Unit.	Link this with the review of the CDP.
3.6.6.10	In noting the Primary Health Care element of the National Health Strategy and taking into account the number of Primary Health Care Units needed for a county with rapidly expanding populations, to liaise with the appropriate Agencies with a view to Fingal being a pathfinder area for the said Strategy.	

In terms of adherence to the sustainability criteria, the health and social services actions are highly sustainable. It is the case however that clear methods of implementation are not defined for several actions (e.g. actions 3.6.4.6; 3.6.4.7; 3.6.6.7; 3.6.5.2).

For example, action 3.6.5.2 provides for improvement in the linkages between GPs and the Mental Health Teams based in the community. This action represents more of a policy position as opposed to an 'action'. How this policy can be achieved would perhaps represent a better action capable of implementation and subsequent monitoring.

Overall, this section identifies actions that propose to analyse, research and enhance the existing service base, but it is not clear how the outcome of such activity would impact on service provision. These actions will require careful monitoring in order to ensure their effectiveness.

### 3.1.7 Lifelong Learning

The Strategic Issue of 'Lifelong Learning' contains actions relating to the management of the educational programmes both within the formal education sector and also in promoting access and participation for individuals outside the formal education sector.

No lifelong learning action was found to conflict with the sustainability criteria. This is mainly due to the fact that the actions lack a physical impact, relating primarily to educational programmes. Key actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the county are presented in Table 3.7 below.

**Table 3.7 Key Lifelong Learning Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.7.1.5*	To develop 4 Adult Learning Centres in Fingal by 2005, while simultaneously extending adult career & educational guidance services.	Focused action with measurable target.
3.7.2.5	To develop and implement a socially inclusive Fingal Sports Strategy by 2003, and ensure that all planning and building requirements are addressed to provide the required physical infrastructure.	This should be linked to the review of the development plan. The provision of sporting facilities is key in promoting fitness and therefore reducing illness and pressure on the health service in the long run. Sporting facilities should be located close to residential areas.
3.7.4.1	To encourage all secondary schools in Fingal to take up the CSPE programme.	Key policy for furthering social change.
3.7.4.4*	To continue to resource the Fingal Volunteer Centres, thus enabling them to continue their advocacy work in the Education Sector.	Key action for social development.
3.7.4.6	The promotion, from 2002 of the Meitheal concept, by supporting initiatives such as " <i>Reach out-Be a Better Neighbour</i> " with a specific focus on older citizens in order to reduce the mortality rate by greater community awareness and monitoring.	Positive social policy.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

### 3.1.8 Environmental Protection

The Environmental Protection actions are comprehensive in their coverage of environmental protection. Gaps in coverage are minimal and include protection of the soil resource and resource use in general, including that of energy use.

The Environmental Protection actions require integration with the other actions of the strategy, particularly in relation to land use and transportation.

No environmental action was found to conflict with the sustainability criteria. This reflects the fact that the focus of this chapter is environmental protection. Key environmental protection actions with the potential to contribute to the sustainable development of the County are presented in Table 3.8 below.

**Table 3.8 Key Environmental Protection Actions with the Potential to Contribute to the Sustainable Development of County Fingal**

Action Ref.	Key Action	Comment
3.8.1.1	The appointment of an officer by 2003 to act as a central co-ordinator of a voluntary agreement for the coastal areas of Fingal.	Voluntary agreement for <i>the protection and enhancement</i> of the coast? Consideration should be given to applying a statutory protection to the coast. Coastal Protection will require focused action that a dedicated officer could achieve. Could the Heritage Officer advise here?
3.8.1.2	To develop a coastal walkway between Skerries & Rush by 2005 as part of an overall coastal walkway from the north of Balbriggan to Sutton.	The walkway should be designed to ensure least amount of disturbance to wildlife. Walkways are useful ways of raising public awareness & enjoyment of the environment.
3.8.1.4*	To carry out an Eco-audit, by 2003 including a coastal air survey of areas popular with visitors and to develop Visitor Management Schemes to deal with any problems/erosion highlighted in the audit.	A highly commendable action. Visitor Management programmes should include policies on improving access to the countryside. Local tourist operators should be borne in mind; the scheme could be used to promote the growing area of Eco-tourism.  Will the scheme be carried out in conjunction with the carrying capacity study?
3.8.2.3*	The carrying out of a full analysis, by 2004 of the waste stream produced in Fingal.	Key action to enable effective waste planning.
3.8.2.6*	To develop a waste minimisation pilot scheme by 2003 involving where suitable, social economy initiatives.	Important action with an emphasis on social inclusion. Scheme could take direction from the results of the waste stream analysis (3.8.2.3).
3.8.3.2	To improve the standard of water in the rivers etc. in line with EU Directives.	Essential action for the sustainable development of the county. The FDB should be consulted or make a submission in relation to the Eastern River Basin Management Plan.

3.8.4.3*	To make reps for the inclusion of comprehensive Hedgerow Management Guidelines, by 2003, in the <i>Code of Good Farming Practice</i> .	Recommend a hedgerow protection policy for the development plan. Perhaps link with the 'Networks for Nature' Heritage Council Initiative.
3.8.7.2*	To ID the 10 worst litter black spots in Fingal by 2003 and implement an Action Plan to detect & prosecute offenders particularly in these areas, & to publish litter offenders by area.	Effective action.
3.8.8.2	The establishment by 2003 of an educational programme for schools, which encourages "prevention, minimisation, reuse and recycling" as the proper hierarchy of waste management.	Positive action.

\*Recommended for Prioritisation

### 3.2 Key Actions with the Potential for Conflict

Actions with the potential to conflict with the sustainable development criteria represent a minority of actions of the strategy.

The key areas of concern are outlined in Table 3.9 below and relate to the unrestricted nature of actions for the development of the Airport and the unqualified facilitation of road infrastructure in and around the airport. Cross-referencing with environmental and social principles will be required. Furthermore, there is a need to link the goal relating to the promotion of the Dublin-Belfast Economic Corridor to sustainable land use considerations.

Additional actions were identified as having an uncertain impact on the sustainability criteria (see Appendix A), and would benefit from clarification of their overall aim. Concern is also noted regarding the unrestricted nature of economic development of major population centres within the county.

**Table 3.9 Actions that have the potential to conflict with the sustainable development criteria**

<b>Action Ref.</b>	<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Comment</b>
3.2.1.2	Agricultural Zoning	Potential to conflict with the overall Goal (3.2.1) if not linked with Rural Landscape Preservation Programme (Action 3.1.2.6).
3.2.4.1	Development of Airport & Environs	Considerable potential for this policy to allow unimpeded growth of the airport without due regard to the impact both on the local and global environment.
3.3.2.2	Road Infrastructure	Link to env. Impact assessment. Do any of the proposed roads isolate communities from essential facilities?
3.4.2.2	To identify sites for construction of high technology unit spaces, by 2004, to meet demand in the North of the County	This policy requires qualification of the type and location of suitable sites, e.g. sites with a high accessibility profile in non-rural areas.
3.4.3.3	To review the CDP, commencing in 2003, to ensure that the North South road network and that connecting with Dublin Airport, is sufficient to meet projected demand.	This action would benefit from linkage with action 3.3.5 which calls for a heavy rail link through the airport (depending on route). Public transport provision should be prioritised over the provision of additional road capacity.
3.4.3.1	CDP to continue to focus on assisting the economic growth of major towns of Fingal.	Policy requires linkage with sustainable land use policies, e.g. assisting economic growth consistent with environmental protection (e.g. air quality).
3.4.3.4	To review the CDP, to ensure that special needs of Third Level Institutions are fully taken into account inc. location and capacity needs.	Positive policy that would benefit from linkage with policies that promote access to public transport.

### **3.3 Opportunities for Action Enhancement**

#### **3.3.1 Linking Actions**

Several actions have the capacity to be linked with the aim of achieving a coherent approach to implementation. Several actions appear under different strategic issues but have a common focus and should therefore be implemented in tandem.

Actions that would benefit from linkage with other actions are presented in Table 3.10 below.

**Table 3.10 Key Actions that would Benefit from Linking with other Actions**

<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Action Ref.</b>	<b>Link with:</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Agricultural Zoning	3.2.1.2	3.1.2.6, 3.4.6.5	Industry in agricultural areas must be linked to Landscape Protection policies. This new zoning should be used to facilitate development of food processing activities linked to the development of the Fingal branding scheme.
Residential Design Guidelines	3.2.2.3	3.2.2.20, 3.5.5.1	Floor space requirements can be specified in Design Guidance. Guidelines should include advice on pollution.
Development of Airport & Environs	3.2.4.1	3.2.4.2, 3.2.4.4, 3.8.5.1, 3.8.6.1	Development of the Airport will require a masterplan approach, integrating objectives for land use, transportation and operation. Development should also take account of the airport's contribution to air quality and regulate noise levels.
Road Infrastructure	3.3.2.2		This action will require cross-linkage with Environmental Protection policy.
Country Markets	3.2.3.9	3.2.3.7	Potential to link with action re. viability of farming industry.
LUAS, METRO and heavy rail link through airport	3.2.4.3	3.2.4.1, 3.2.4.2, 3.2.5.2, 3.2.5.4, 3.2.6.1, 3.2.6.2, 3.2.7.1, 3.4.3.1, 3.4.5.1	Public Transport objectives must be linked with land use objectives.
Branding scheme for Fingal food	3.4.6.5	3.4.6.1, 3.2.3.9 3.1.2.1	This action should be linked with 3.2.3.9 (county market) and with 3.4.6.1 (establish a network between producers and retailers) and with 3.1.2.1 (to support unique county products). These actions act in synergy to one another in establishing a local economy based on local produce.
Development in agricultural sector	3.4.6.8	3.2.3.9 3.2.3.7 3.4.4.6 3.4.6.5 3.4.6.6 3.4.6.1	Action should be linked to the establishment of a county market (3.2.3.9) and to tourist initiatives such as action 3.4.4.6, developing tourist accommodation in traditional farmhouses. Farmers examining the potential for crop diversification could link with the work of the alternative energy officer, e.g the establishment small scale biogas digesters to supplement local energy supply. Farmers involved in forestry initiatives could use forest thinnings as a fuel source.

Broadband Infrastructure	3.4.8.1	3.2.5.2, 3.5.5.2	Could take the opportunity to link any planned investment with mixed use zonings advocated in action 3.2.5.2. The use of Broadband for work purposes should be examined for use as an alternative form of transport. Policy could be used to reduce actual demand for travel.
Energy providers to review existing networks	3.4.9.1	3.2.2.3, 3.2.7.4, 3.4.9.3	Link with review of CDP, Design Guidelines and with the appointment of an alternative energy officer.
Design Guidelines	3.5.5.1	3.2.2.3	Link with the Residential Design Guidelines action.
Eco-audit & Visitor Management Schemes	3.8.1.4	3.1.2.6, 3.2.2.1	Link with Rural Landscape Preservation Programme (3.1.2.6), and Carrying Capacity Study. These actions are all linked in examining the extent of use that the land can absorb.
Public education campaigns to promote re-cycling practices	3.8.2.6	3.7.4.5, 3.8.1.6, 3.8.8.2 3.8.2.7, 3.8.7.2	Link with waste awareness programme in schools (3.7.4.5 & 3.8.8.2), and with the policy to discontinue the practice of issuing plastic bags (3.8.2.7) and with 3.8.7.2 which is the implementation of action plans in litter blackspots.
Wildlife Officer	3.8.4.1	3.2.2.1, 3.8.1.1, 3.8.4.4, 3.4.6.8, 3.8.4.2,	A wildlife officer would be central to monitoring biodiversity in the county, and would play a key role in the carrying capacity study and eco-audit, and in developing visitor management schemes. The growing importance of agri-environmental schemes under the CAP will mean that farmers need guidance in how to manage their land in a sustainable fashion particular with regard to the implementation of NHAs. A wildlife officer could be used to act as a central co-ordinator of coastal policy also.
Air Quality Management Plan for the Dublin Region	3.8.5.1	3.3.4.1, 3.3.4.2	Air quality is dependent to a large degree on transport emissions, the location of new development around public transport nodes as outlined in 3.3.4.1 and 3.3.4.2 would be a key way of reducing the need to travel.

### 3.3.2 Enhancing the wording of actions

Examination of the wording of certain actions will be necessary to ensure effective implementation. The following outlines examples of actions which may suffer from ineffective wording, with suggestions for enhancement. Examples of effectively worded actions are also given.

Examples of ineffective wording:

- *"To promote sport on a County Fingal basis within the County by 2005".*

This action lacks definition of how the action will be achieved. For example, will the focus be on youth programmes, pitch facilities, or promotional campaigns?

- *"Continue to give consideration, in re-zoning of lands for development, to the environmental impact on rural landscapes and rural development".*

This action fails to identify how the consideration would be achieved. The actions could be re-worded as follows:

*“Continue to give consideration, in re-zoning of lands for development, to the environmental impact on rural landscapes and rural development by implementing the recommendations of the Rural Landscape Preservation Programme”, i.e. linking to the outcome of a related action item.*

- *“The principle of access for pedestrians and cyclists to be a factor in considering planning applications for residential schemes from 2002”.*

This action could be linked with the action relating to Development Control Guidelines (3.2.7.4) with a recommendation that this action be included as a development control guideline.

- *“To support, by 2004, unique County Fingal products that are Fingal-branded, such as Fingal Fine Foods and Fingal County Markets”.*

This action fails to indicate how the policy will be measured. It is recommended that strategy-makers avoid wording policies that are difficult to measure.

Examples of effective wording:

- *“To develop, by 2004, a Rural Landscape Preservation programme for County Fingal focusing on indigenous elements such as hedgerows, village character, fishing ports, green spaces, commonage and access to the islands”.*
- *“To publish, by 2003, planning and development guidelines, in simple language, to include an outline of roles and responsibilities in the area of development control”.*

These actions are effectively worded because they identify:

- (1) A timeline for implementation.
- (2) An explanation of the focus of the action.

Several actions would also benefit from enhancement of either their wording or content by further qualification. Key actions that would benefit from further qualification are presented in Table 3.11 below.

**Table 3.11 Actions which would Benefit from Enhancement/Qualification**

<b>Key Action</b>	<b>Action Ref.</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Prohibit one-off housing	3.2.3.4	This action would benefit from linkage with residential design guidelines.
Urban Forestry	3.2.3.3	Policy could be qualified with the clear intention of using native species and also by examining ways in which these forests could be used in community building and local economic initiatives e.g. coppicing. – Ref. NeighbourWood Scheme.
Protection of rural character and Green Belt from residential development	3.2.2.2	Could be expanded to protect ecology/habitats, promotion of sustainable design and sustainable drainage.
Recreational Use Strategies	3.2.2.13	Guidance on best practice will be required here. Scope for expansion to require developers to submit energy audits, waste strategies, and sustainable drainage proposals.
Planning and development guidelines including the area of development control	3.2.7.4	Potential to expand to include a checklist for developers regarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Energy use</li> <li>▪ Waste management proposals</li> <li>▪ Mobility management</li> <li>▪ Design guidelines</li> <li>▪ Habitat protection/enhancement measures.</li> </ul>
The CDP to continue to focus on assisting the economic growth of major towns	3.4.3.1	This action would benefit from specifying the towns and qualifying the action with sustainable development criteria.
To continue to promote the development of housing which is appropriate to need, household & income size, in order to avoid single social class estates	3.5.1.1	The challenge here is to identify how to achieve this policy. A number of Health & Social Services actions are non-specific in how they will be achieved (see Appendix A).
The appointment of sufficient Garda resources by 2004, including Community Gardaí, in line with national norms	3.5.3.6	This action falls within the Housing goals without reference to the specific requirement needed. The question should be raised – can the CBD Strategy realistically deliver on this issue?
To continue to resource the Fingal Volunteer Centres, thus enabling them to continue their advocacy work in the Education and Training Sector, thereby recognising and supporting those volunteers in the community who provide lifelong learning services	3.7.4.4	Action should target which particular services require support. Environmental awareness courses e.g. waste awareness or an IT course would support several key actions outlined in this strategy. The CDB should prioritise the type of services it is supporting, to enhance other key action areas.
To review the CDP, commencing in 2003, to include areas proposed for SAC, as put forward by the NGO SAC Shadow list	3.8.4.4.	Action could be enhanced that the local wildlife officer mentioned in 3.8.4.1 would aid farmers in drawing up management plans for their SACs.
The collection of litter remaining on river banks following floods	3.8.7.3	Action could be broadened to facilitate local nature groups to actively manage local rivers, for the benefit of biodiversity.

## **4.0 WAY FORWARD**

### **4.1 Themes for Sustainability**

A summary sheet of the priority actions of all strategic issues was prepared for review. The summary sheet is attached as Appendix B.

The objective of the review was twofold:

- To identify a focused number of sustainable actions to champion as the sustainability agenda of the committee for 2004.
- To identify specific objectives to guide a submission for input to the review of the County Development Plan.

A meeting of the SMC was held with the specific intention of agreeing priority actions for 2004. It was also an objective to 'theme' the actions to guide the work of the Committee in 2004. The following themes represent the results of the prioritisation meeting.

## **THEMES FOR SUSTAINABILITY 2004**

### **CARRYING CAPACITY**

*Water, Drainage, Transport, Health & Social Services, Communications Infrastructure*

### **DESIGN GUIDELINES AND DEVELOPMENT CONTROL STANDARDS**

*Residential design guidelines, planning and development guidelines, Social mix, integrating public transport routes with housing design layouts, design and layout to minimise anti-social behaviour*

### **SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORTATION**

*Rail, bus and cycle networks*

### **LOCAL ECONOMY**

*Local marketing Programmes, Craft Guild/Skills Observatory (link with design guidelines), County Market, Branding initiative, start-up business support, sustainable tourism product development, study of local economy*

### **COASTAL PROTECTION AND MANAGEMENT**

*Coastal Co-ordinator, Coastal Walkway, Eco-Audit, Coastal waste analysis, water quality SMC should make a submission to the proposed Coastal Zone Study referenced in the Manager's Report*

### **WASTE/ENERGY**

*Alternative Energy Officer (link with design guidance), Fingal Waste Stream Analysis, identification of litter black-spots, school's programme for waste management and awareness*

### **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE AIRPORT AND ENVIRONS**

*Rail link with City and Swords, planning for transport interchanges, sustainable land use considerations, environmental parameters for expansion*

## 4.2 Sustainability Objectives for 2004

The specific objectives outlined below arise in relation to implementing the themes identified for 2004. These objectives should guide a submission to the review of the County Development plan.

### **SUSTAINABILITY OBJECTIVES 2004**

**Prepare a submission to Fingal County Council's Development Plan Review with particular regard to land use planning, transportation and housing.**

**Produce Guidelines for Sustainable Development that address design guidelines and development control standards for input to the County Development Plan Review. Consider the preparation of Village Design Statements for key villages of Fingal.**

**Prepare a local economy position paper with particular emphasis on the development of a sustainable tourism product.**

**Prioritise the carrying capacity study with a view to identifying environmentally vulnerable zones. Draft a hedgerow protection policy for inclusion into the Development Plan Review.**

**Consider a statutory protection designation for the coastal zone.**

**Ensure involvement in the drafting of the Masterplan for the Airport and Environs.**

### **4.3 Conclusion**

Overall, it can be concluded that the Fingal Development Board Strategy is sustainable in its content.

The strategy is lacking in relation to integrating environmental protection into its economic strategy. The strategy fails to set tangible goals and targets which would enable a more comprehensive evaluation of strategy success.

The strategy is a highly innovative document, providing a blue print for the future development of the county. Of particular note for praise are innovative planning and transport policies which are integrated and highly sustainable. The implementation of these policies would greatly enhance the county's contribution to the sustainable development of the region. Policies related to the review of the Fingal County Development Plan are of immediate priority, given the short time frame available to the Board to influence the plan.

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**February 2004**

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