4.0. WHAT YOU TOLD US  
And How We Have Responded

The design team have consulted the residents of Ballymun in various forms, including the Design Group, the Area Forums, the Focus Groups, at public meetings and at the two events. The following is an attempt to pick out some of the recurring concerns expressed with a brief note to explain how this has affected the Masterplan. By no means is this attempt to be exhaustive and it does not recount the full extent of the influence of these consultations on the form of the Masterplan. Many detailed issues have been addressed via consultation with residents. This will continue for the life of the project.

ADVICE, SUPPORT AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Q.1 Local facilities are required throughout Ballymun, not just in the Centre

RESPONSE
A.1 The whole organisation of the site, as shown in the Masterplan, is based around Neighbourhood Centres so that all homes are within 5-10 minute walk of local convenience shops, community meeting rooms, offices, play and childcare facilities and perhaps healthcare. The latter is the subject of a separate study by the Eastern Health Board now underway.

Q.2 What will happen to community groups currently housed in the towers and spines?

A.2 A survey is being done of all community groups to determine what their requirements are, where they would best be located, etc. The proposition is that all groups would be accommodated either in the centre of Ballymun or in one of the Neighbourhood Centres. See Section 6.

Q.3 There is a glaring lack of pre-school provision in Ballymun.

A.3 This is addressed under the headings of Education and Training and Children and Youth below.

Q.4 The new Arts Centre and Community Centre should be given a prominent central site.

A.4 After extensive consultation the Arts and Community Centres have been allocated a prominent site on the new square, proposed in the Masterplan, situated right at the heart of Ballymun.

Q.5 Community development support and training need to be resourced to keep up with the pace of the physical redevelopment.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Q.1 Generally there is felt to be inadequate facilities for training and education after school leaving age.

RESPONSE
A.1 Discusions have been instituted with FAS, DUC and another third level college about establishing adult education and access initiatives in Ballymun.

Q.2 Notwithstanding the point above, facilities for Adult Education were also needed outside schools and concern was expressed that existing initiatives in the towers and spines would be displaced and made homeless by the demolition.

A.2 New meeting rooms and offices located in each of the five Neighbourhood areas.

Q.3 It is felt that existing facilities in the schools could be utilised more extensively for a greater part of the day.

A.3 The Masterplan envisages environmental improvements and some enhanced facilities for the schools which should improve their attractiveness for pupils and parents, while increased economic prospects should help to convince pupils that it was worth pursuing educational qualifications.

Q.4 There is concern that there was no culture of staying on at school and that many children were now going to school outside Ballymun.

A.4 The EHB is currently undertaking a survey of childcare requirements in Ballymun and final proposals would be based on the findings of this survey. In the interim the Masterplan shows five locations for creche type facilities, one in each of the Neighbourhood areas.

LEISURE, SPORT AND RECREATION

Q.1 There aren’t enough pitches. All Ballymun (and other local) teams must be accommodated. Sport is very important in Ballymun.

RESPONSE
A.1 BRL have carried out exhaustive research into pitch usage. It is proposed to lay down new properly drained and protected pitches which can then be intensively used thus reducing the amount of land needed for playing fields. There will be an all weather pitch adjacent to the Holy Spirit School and the Junior Comprehensive and smaller all weather sports facilities are located within the parks.

Q.2 The changing/club facilities aren’t adequate.

A.2 New changing/club facilities are proposed for Poppintree Park, Ballymun.

Q.3 Greater use should be made of existing facilities which should be improved.

A.3 The Masterplan recommends the upgrading and expansion of - the Swimming Pool to include, perhaps, a Gym Complex and Children’s Adventure Centre and social facilities. Ballymun Recreation Centre to be extended and refurbished with some social facilities added, Poppintree Community & Sports Complex likewise and Ballymun Junior Comprehensive, which could be upgraded in exchange for greater public access.

Q.4 The changing/club facilities are proposed for Poppintree Park, Ballymun.

A.4 The Masterplan shows an Equestrian Centre with associated stabling and bridleways north of Poppintree Industrial Estate. The extent of this facility to be finalised with the Ballymun Animal Caring Association.

Q.5 We would like a major leisure centre (e.g. rink/multiplex cinema, etc.).

A.5 Sites for these facilities will be identified, probably within the Poppintree Park and Coultry Park areas.

Q.6 Skate Boarding/Roller Blading and areas for teenagers are required.

EMPLOYMENT AND ECONOMIC REGENERATION

Q.1 The most urgent need is for jobs for local people, well paid jobs as far as possible! It was stated frequently that renewing the housing without changing the other economic fundamentals would have no long term impact.

RESPONSE
A.1 Large areas of land, 43 hectares in Sitlogue/Naul and 17 hectares in the central area have been zoned in the Masterplan for wealth employment generating activities. Tax incentives to encourage inward investment to these areas are being sought via the IAP submission.

Q.2 The skills requirements associated with new job creation to be identified at an early stage to allow training programmes to be put in place for Ballymun residents.

A.2 Discussions with the Ballymun Partnership (BP), FAS, Dublin City University and a New third level institution, regarding new training programmes for Ballymun, are ongoing. BRL is working with existing Ballymun based training initiatives.

Q.3 Building industry skills training programmes to be set up in advance so that Ballymun residents could benefit from the Redevelopment Building Programme.

A.3 FAS and other local training organisations have been consulted and advised of the likely skills requirements. Procurement procedures will include requirements for local employment and training content in every contract.

Q.4 Local businesses should get maximum benefit from the redevelopment.

A.4 Contract documentation will include provisions to give local small contractors the opportunities to tender for appropriate works.

Q.5 Businesses won’t invest until the image of Ballymun is changed.

A.5 In some ways all the provisions of the Masterplan are aimed at changing Ballymun’s image. However, there are some specific measures proposed; an early package of environmental and landscape improvements. Sustained media involvement highlighting the changes taking place and the long term advantages of Ballymun’s location along with prompt response to negative publicity for Ballymun.
CHILDREN AND YOUTH

Many of the issues brought up with respect to children and youth, for example the provision of creches, providing things for teenagers to do, training and educating teenagers, etc. are dealt with under the headings of Employment and Economic Development, Leisure, Sport and Recreation and Education and Training - there are some other recurring issues.

RESPONSE

Q.1 Lack of play facilities. The only decent ones are in the refurbished blocks for use by residents only.

Q.2 Youth facilities & centralised facilities could be more spread across the whole area. What will become of groups displaced by demolition?

Q.3 Hostels for homeless and vulnerable young people to be located within the general mass of housing. Single sex facilities required.

HEALTH AND PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Q.1 Great concern has been expressed that the redevelopment will result in the loss of green space.

Q.2 The fate of Santry Woods has been brought up many times.

Q.3 Road safety issues are important in Ballymun with so many children around.

Q.4 Residents are very keen to know about proposals for housing standards and types. Houses with gardens seem to be the general preference though there is some interest in new flats.

RESPONSE

A.1 The Masterplan incorporates a strategy for introducing play facilities for all age groups. Four areas have been identified for playgrounds to be installed in the near future. They will be located near existing facilities, such as schools, which will provide some supervision. In the longer term, as the redevelopment evolves further, permanent secure play areas will be built in each neighbourhood.

A.2 Community meeting rooms and offices in each of the Neighbourhoods and the Civic Centre will accommodate youth groups, amongst other users. All active groups will be accommodated and encouraged.

A.3 No sites have been identified for hostels as such at this moment, the idea being that these will just form undifferentiated elements of housing in amongst all the rest. The Town Centre has been identified as a possible location for a "Foyer" type scheme for introducing young people to independent living and work.

OTHER ISSUES

A number of other issues have cropped up again and again in consultations, for example, concerns about housing allocation policies, details of housing standards, housing management, etc. These are of fundamental importance to the ultimate success of the redevelopment. However, they have not yet been settled and they do not, in fact, have significant impact on a physical Masterplan which deals with broader less detailed issues. Such matters are being dealt with and will continue to be the subject of ongoing consultations for which structures have been established.