

Joining up the Dots: New study recommends integrated strategy for employment and education as part of Grangegorman redevelopment Monday 9th March, 2009:

Findings of a new report show that the future of Dublin's north inner city will be greatly enhanced by the Grangegorman redevelopment project. The study identifies significant employment, education and training opportunities and recommends that an integrated strategy be developed to ensure that this potential is realised.

The study, entitled "Joining up the Dots", was commissioned by a group comprising the key stakeholders in the redevelopment project, including community groups and statutory agencies. It identified that up to 5660 jobs will be created over the period up to the completion of the project and beyond.

The jobs estimate includes 4,500 construction jobs alone over a 10 year period, which is good news for an industry that has been one of the hardest hit by the recession. A further 1160 new posts are identified in the Science and Technology Park, retail, offices, health, and education facilities in the new quarter.

The report also highlights the many positives in the area, which is a very historic part of Dublin city, and which now has a rich cultural mix and a highly active community. In the last 15 years there have been "significant improvements in respect of most national indicators of disadvantage" but there is a lot more to be done. The recommendations in the report offer a roadmap for ensuring that this progress continues, through an integrated plan developed by all the agencies and groups involved.

John Fitzgerald, Chairperson of the Grangegorman Development Agency, believes that this report again re-enforces the need for a major urban development to take place in Dublin's north inner city and the positive effect it will have on the area.

He said "Dublin's north inner city has always been one of the most disadvantaged areas in the country. We now have the opportunity to not only provide top class health, education and community facilities in this location, but to also create employment at a time when it is needed most. The Employment Study outlines this opportunity and makes recommendations on how it can best come about."

The location of a major higher education institution in the area will be a significant advantage for future prosperity in this area of the city and education and training are cited as the key priorities for development. Welcoming the report, the President of DIT, Professor Brian Norton said, "This study is not just another report. It provides an integrated strategy, developed over many months by a working group comprised of DIT, City of Dublin VEC, FAS, GDA, HSE and the North West Inner City Network (NWICN), and informed by consultation with other interested groups. It identifies clear routes and responsibilities for all to ensure that this unique opportunity delivers the best outcomes, particularly in terms of education and employment."

The authors reference the important work already being done by the DIT Access Service to encourage non-traditional student groups from schools in the area to progress to third level education and recommend that building on that and other educational and training initiatives

should be a priority for the GDA area. With an increased focus on education and training along with the new health, education and community facilities being built, there is no doubt that the Grangegorman project is of major significance not only to the north inner city but to Dublin as a whole.