

# Stillorgan

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Draft Local Area Plan 2018 - 2024



## 2. Plan Area Context

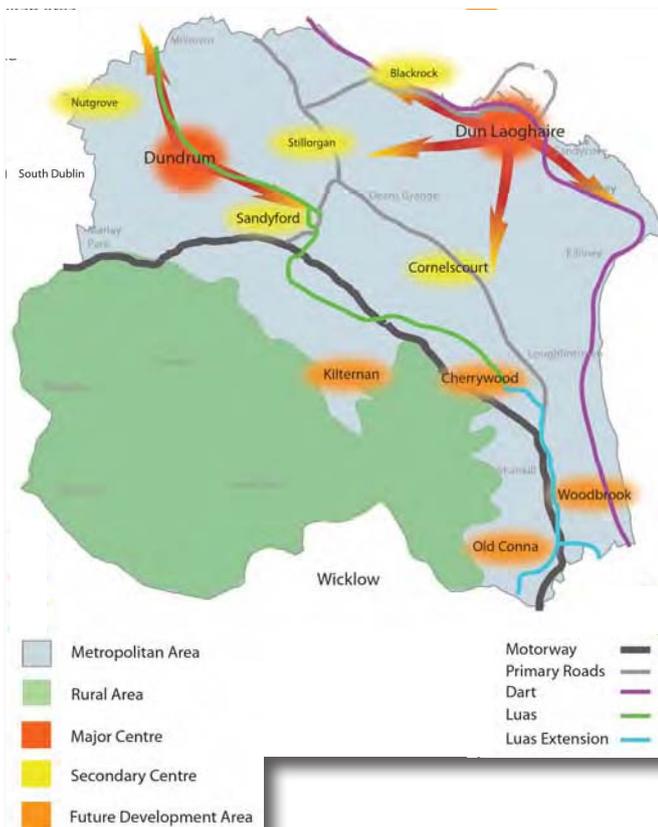
### 2.1 Planning Context

#### 2.1.1 National Context

There have been a number of changes in the national planning legislative and regulatory framework since the adoption of the original LAP in 2007. The most significant is the introduction of the 'Core Strategy'.

The Planning and Development (Amendment) Act 2010 introduced the requirement for an evidence-based Core Strategy to be incorporated as an integral and component part of County Development Plans. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to articulate a medium-to- longer term quantitatively-based strategy for the spatial development of the area of the Planning Authority and, in so doing, to demonstrate that a Development Plan and its policies and objectives are entirely consistent with national and regional development objectives set out in the National Spatial Strategy 2002- 2022 (NSS) and Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022 (RPGs).

The Core Strategy seeks to ensure a level of equilibrium between residential land supply in the County and forecast household growth. The Draft LAP lands, which are predominantly zoned 'District Centre', and therefore have a mixed-use focus as opposed to a purely residential one, form a part of the Council's medium-to-long term residential land supply and are highlighted in the Core Strategy as such.



Map 2: Core Strategy Map

A number of other important national planning and transportation policy guidance documents have been published since the adoption of the original LAP in 2007 and have been considered in the Drafting of the new LAP. These include:

- Smarter Travel – A Sustainable Transport Future (2009)
- Social Housing Strategy 2020 - Support, Supply and Reform
- Irish Water Proposed Capital Investment Plan 2017-2021
- Rebuilding Ireland - Action Plan for Housing and Homelessness, 2016
- Regional Planning Guidelines for the Greater Dublin Area 2010-2022
- Greater Dublin Area Transport Strategy 2016 – 2035

Possibly the most important recent publication has been the Draft National Planning Framework (NPF) 'Ireland 2040 – Our Plan' which was on public display in November 2017. The Plan forms the "spatial expression of Government policy" and will provide a National Planning Framework to guide national, regional and local planning and investment decisions for the years ahead, building on and co-ordinating the existing regional and local authority planning processes. The Framework is a strategic high level Plan and the practical implications of the policy will be implemented through the finer grained 'Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies' – yet to be published.

Regional Spatial and Economic Strategies (RSESs) will be prepared by the Regional Assemblies and must be in accordance with the NPF. In addition, the preparation of Metropolitan Area Strategic Plans (MASPs) for the five cities, including Dublin - in the form of 12 year planning frameworks crossing administrative boundaries - will be a key feature of the RSES's.

#### 2.1.2 County Development Plan

The County Development Plan 2016-2022 provides the overarching planning framework for the County and sets out the zoning 'hierarchy' for the County. For towns and villages, the settlement hierarchy runs from the largest – 'Major Town Centres' (Dun Laoghaire and Dundrum) to the next order of scale 'District Centres' – (of which Stillorgan is one) to 'Neighbourhood Centres', which comprise local centres with a limited range of supporting shops and retail services which meet more local day-to-day needs of surrounding residents.

District Centres are defined in the County Development Plan as places where a "good range of comparison shopping would be expected (though no large department store) some leisure activities and a range of cafés and restaurants and other mixed uses. They should contain at least one supermarket and ancillary foodstores alongside financial and other retail services. District Centres should generally range in size from 10-25,000 sq.m. net retail sales area catering for a population of between 10,000-40,000" (P.87).

The County Development Plan states as an objective in relation to District Centres to "Support the viability of existing District

Centres and allow for the redevelopment and rejuvenation of ageing centres, to facilitate changing retail patterns and needs and to move away from single use sites by integrating retail provision at district level with other services, offices and residential to create vibrant centres serving the surrounding housing districts.” (P.85). This is particularly relevant to Stillorgan, in the context of the redevelopment potential of some of the primary retail sites in the Draft LAP area.

The policy on the retail hierarchy of the County is to “Encourage potential redevelopment as higher density, urban mixed-use centre in accordance with general provisions of the adopted Local Area Plan. Limited expansion of convenience and comparison retail floorspace.” (P.86).



Map 3: County Development Plan Map

When it comes to specific retailing policies for Stillorgan, The County Development Plan states the following:

(i) Stillorgan District Centre

- To promote the future redevelopment of Stillorgan as a multi-faceted, mixed-use sustainable District Centre having regard to the broad objectives of the adopted Stillorgan Local Area Plan.
- The regeneration and redevelopment of Stillorgan District Centre should create an urban context in respect of scale, design and layout.
- Good quality residential development shall be encouraged to ensure vitality and animation both day and night.
- The creation of quality spaces and enhanced public realm will be a prerequisite.
- Priority movement for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport should be ensured. The influence and impact

of the private car on the environs of the District Centre to be moderated.

- The residential amenity of established residential areas on the fringes of the District Centre to be protected and, where possible, enhanced.
- Net retail sales area in Stillorgan District Centre zoned lands to be capped at 25,000 sq.m. (P.92).

A number of Specific Local Objectives relating to Stillorgan are also included in the 2016-2022 County Development Plan:

**SLO 12:** To implement and develop the lands at Stillorgan in accordance with the Stillorgan LAP.

**SLO 151:** To support and facilitate the provision of a swimming pool and leisure facility within the Stillorgan area.

## 2.2 Historical Development

The history of Stillorgan is in many ways typical of the suburbs on Dublin’s Southside. A rural area with country houses set in large grounds up to the 18th century, its population grew with the arrival of the railway in the mid-19th century. The Harcourt Street railway line closed in the late 1950s and Stillorgan underwent significant development in the 1960s – very much reoriented towards the car, with ubiquitous low density housing estates and the first purpose-built shopping centre to be opened in Ireland. The Stillorgan Shopping Centre opened in 1966 and the construction of the shopping centre, neighbouring bowling alley and N11 bypass road fundamentally altered the character of Stillorgan’s historic village centre.



Photo 1: Aerial view of Stillorgan Shopping Centre, 1968

The OSI’s 6 inch map, surveyed around 1837 (Map 4), shows development in Stillorgan focussed on Lower Kilmacud Road and the Dublin Road, with a Police Station located in a prominent position on the corner of these roads. Some of the large houses are identified - Beaufield, Grove House, Jane Ville with Stillorgan House and Stillorgan Priory occupying a prominent position to the East of the village.

The OSI's 25 inch map, surveyed in 1907 shows a number of (renamed) large houses Tigh Lorcaín Hall, Glen Albyn and some new features such as St Lawrence's Church (RC). The status of Thornhill, Oatlands and Mount Merrion Houses, to the north, remained largely unchanged from the earlier 6 inch map.

The Cassini map, surveyed c.1930's shows the emergence of some of the earliest 'mainstream' housing developments in the area, including Sycamore Road and Trees Road in Mount Merrion to the north of the Plan area.

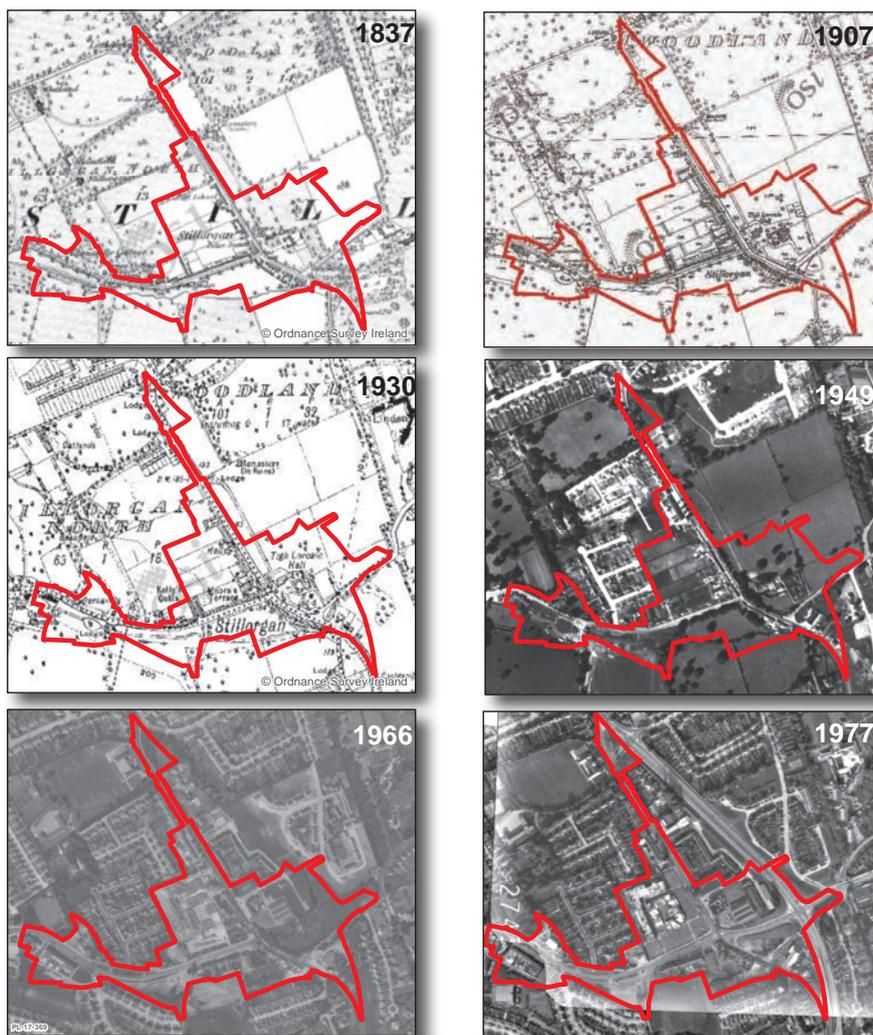
The orthophotography image from 1949 shows the completed Beaufield Park development with Woodlands Avenue, Woodlands Drive and Priory Grove under construction. The parade of shops at the Old Dublin Road is also a new addition.

The orthophotography image from 1966 shows a dramatic change over the intervening seventeen year period. A wave of new housing development was completed during this period including Allen Park, Linden Lea Park and Cherry Garth. The Shopping Centre and Bowling Alley have been recently completed and the roads have been widened. The road reservation for the Bypass of Stillorgan is clearly visible to the east of the village, with the layout of St Laurence's Park and Patrician Villas setback to provide for the dual carriageway.

The orthophotography image from 1977 shows the completed N11 bypass road. Present day Stillorgan remains largely unchanged from this period, aside from a few infill developments that were completed in the intervening years – Westbury, Woodthorpe and Treesdale residential schemes and the Stillorgan Mall retail development.

The six images and maps show the evolution of Stillorgan over almost 200 years. The most dramatic transformation in the built form of the area occurred in the 1960's and 1970's coinciding with the era of mass motoring the construction of the dual carriageway Bypass of the village and the predominantly car-based shopping centre.

The construction of the Bypass created an issue for Stillorgan that has, arguably, never been successfully resolved. The lands between the village core and the N11 were developed in a manner that allowed the village to 'bleed' into the N11 without a coherent sense of enclosure or entry point to Stillorgan. It will be an Objective of the LAP to address this issue.



Map 4: Historic and Ortho Maps

## 2.3 Demographic Profile

The Draft Local Area Plan has a relatively limited spatial area and is confined predominantly to the commercial/retail centre of Stillorgan. As a consequence, the actual residential population within the Draft LAP boundary is very limited, being confined to approximately a dozen properties in St. Laurences Park.

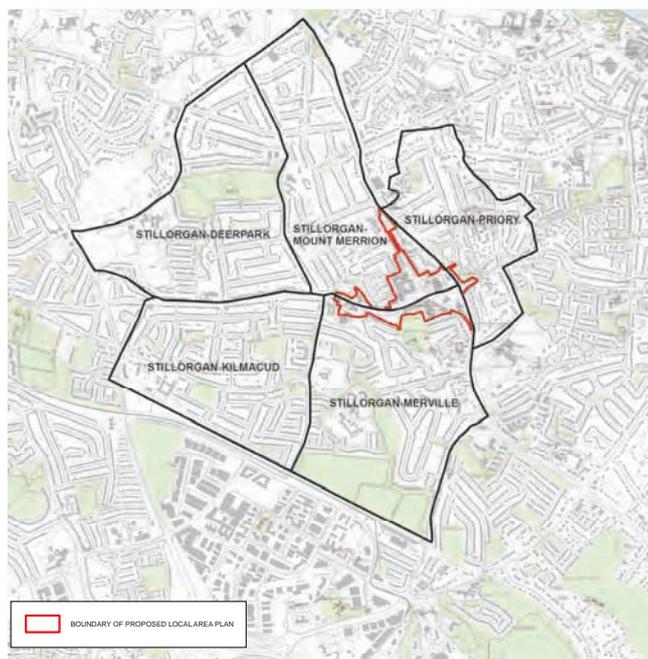
In order to gain a more considered perspective on demographic trends in the wider Stillorgan area over time, it is necessary to examine a wider area. There are six 'Stillorgan' Electoral Divisions, as defined by the Census <sup>1</sup>.

Examining this wider contextual area, Map 5 shows a population of nearly 17,300 persons (Census 2016). Historically, the area has consistently been losing population over a considerable period of time, only having been reversed with some growth in the last 10 years. The population of the area in 1981 was c.18,000 and fell as low as c.16,000 in 2006 - representing an overall decline of 11%.

The long term 1981 to 2016 population trend for the area records a decline of 4% which contrasts markedly with a period when the population of Dublin grew by 34% and the population of the State grew by 38%.

As can be seen in Figures 2 and 3, the population trendline for Stillorgan is quite unlike the long term trend for either Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown, the wider Dublin area or the State as a whole. The population of the Stillorgan area was in decline from the late 1970's until the mid-2000's, only showing a recovery from the 2006 Census on. This population increase was focussed largely on the various infill apartment schemes developed along the N11 corridor.

The demographic profile of the area would tend toward an older population, with the proportion of retired families roughly twice the State average. There are a significantly lower proportion of families with pre-school and school-going age children.



Map 5: Stillorgan Electoral Divisions Map

This demographic trend is explained by the 'suburban lifecycle'. New housing estates in Stillorgan were settled by young households in the 1960's and 1970's (young couples and young families, perhaps some mature families). As the families grew and matured, household size increased. After the initial rapid development, most households "age in place", with slowly shifting demand for services, facilities and dwelling types.

As households age further and children begin to leave home, the average household size decreases, resulting in more empty nester (two person) households, often still living in large family dwellings. The overall result is a sustained decline in population for some time in the cycle.

While this 'suburban lifecycle' is a common feature of Dublin suburbs developed in this era, there can be negative consequences to this sustained trend of population decline, as evidenced in the Stillorgan area over the 30-35 years between 1970 and 2005. Research carried out by the Planning Department in Dún Laoghaire-Rathdown suggests that population decline in the County has contributed to localised problems, including reduced school enrolments, depressed public transport patronage and reduced demand for social and community infrastructure.

The implications of the ageing demographic of Stillorgan are addressed in a number of policy areas in the LAP. In relation to residential development, there is a requirement to consider the housing mix in the area which may not suit all current housing needs – the provision of apartments or smaller houses to provide greater choice or opportunities for older people wanting to stay in the area but downsize, for example, as an addition to the 3-bedroom semi-detached house is a policy response addressed in Section 4.5.3 Residential Development.

Also the LAP (Section 4.8.1) addresses the provisions of the County's 'Age Friendly Strategy' 2016-2020 in relation to the public realm, specifically through the implementation of the Stillorgan Village Area Movement Framework Plan, in order to provide pleasant, accessible and safe walking routes and age friendly spaces within the Plan area, in accordance with the 'Goal for Outdoor Spaces' as set out in the Strategy.



Photo 2: View to Beaufield Park, Stillorgan

<sup>1</sup> Stillorgan-Deerpark, Stillorgan-Kilmacud, Stillorgan-Leopardstown, Stillorgan-Merville, Stillorgan-Mount Merrion, Stillorgan-Priority

Family Cycle <sup>2</sup> (no. of families)	Stillorgan	(%)	Dun Laghaire-Rathdown	(%)	State	(%)
Pre-family	409	10	6726	13	131877	11
Pre-School	328	8	5630	11	141320	12
Early School	371	9	4938	9	133003	11
Pre-Adolescent	373	9	4906	9	131263	11
Adolescent	444	11	5542	10	135218	11
Adult	1263	30	14341	27	293462	25
Empty Nest	400	9	4949	9	118939	10
Retired	637	15	6375	12	94128	8
<b>Total</b>	<b>4225</b>		<b>53409</b>		<b>1179210</b>	

Figure 1: Families by Life cycle

<sup>2</sup> Pre-family = Family nucleus of husband and wife or cohabiting couple where wife is under 45 years;  
 Empty-nest = Family nucleus of husband and wife or cohabiting couple where wife is aged between 45 and 64 years;  
 Retired = Family nucleus of husband and wife or cohabiting couple where wife is aged 65 years and over;  
 Pre-school = Family nucleus where oldest child is aged 0-4 years;  
 Early-school = Family nucleus where oldest child is aged 5-9 years;  
 Pre-adolescent = Family nucleus where oldest child is aged 10-14 years;  
 Adolescent = Family nucleus where oldest child is aged 15-19 years;  
 Adult = Family nucleus where oldest child is aged 20 years and over

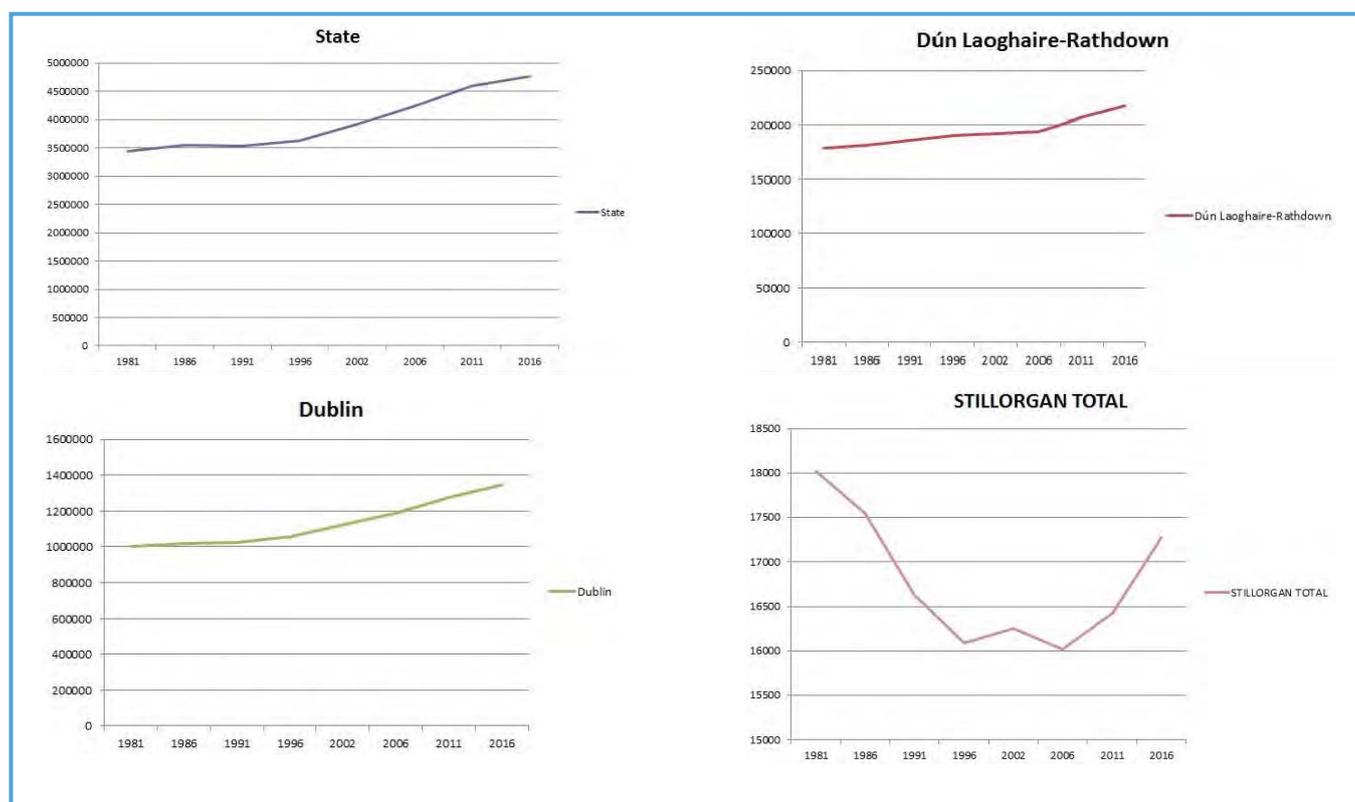
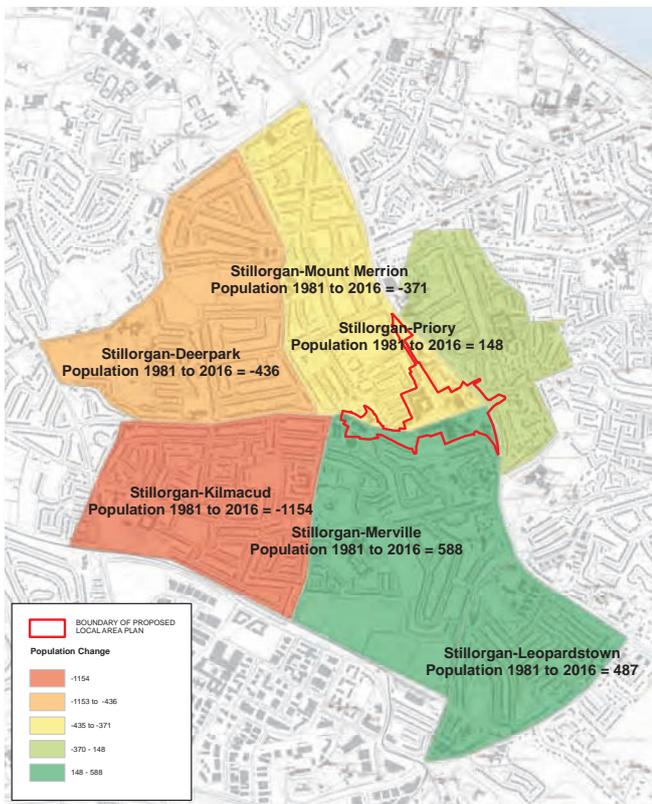


Figure 2: Population trends - Stillorgan in context

## Population Change

The map and charts below show the long-range demographic and population trends for the wider Stillorgan area. The increase in population in the area which occurred between 2006 and 2016 was focussed predominantly on a relatively small number of infill apartment schemes. Map 12 shows the census 'Small Areas' with the largest concentrations of apartment schemes in the area. It is these infill apartment schemes, mostly delivered in the last 10 years which have led to a re-emerging pattern of population growth in parts of the wider Stillorgan area- including The Grange on Brewery Road, Churchview on St. Brigid's Drive, Beechwood and St Raphaela's. This infill development, and the resulting population increase is a manifestation of the policy of successive County Development Plans which sought to positively promote infill residential development and to support new housing growth along key public transport corridors throughout the County.



Map 6: Population Trends by Electoral Division Map

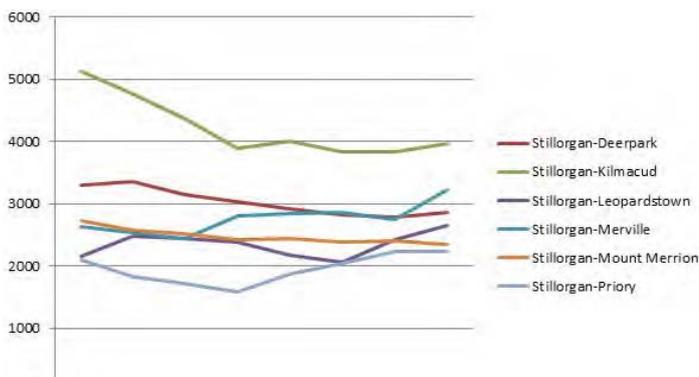


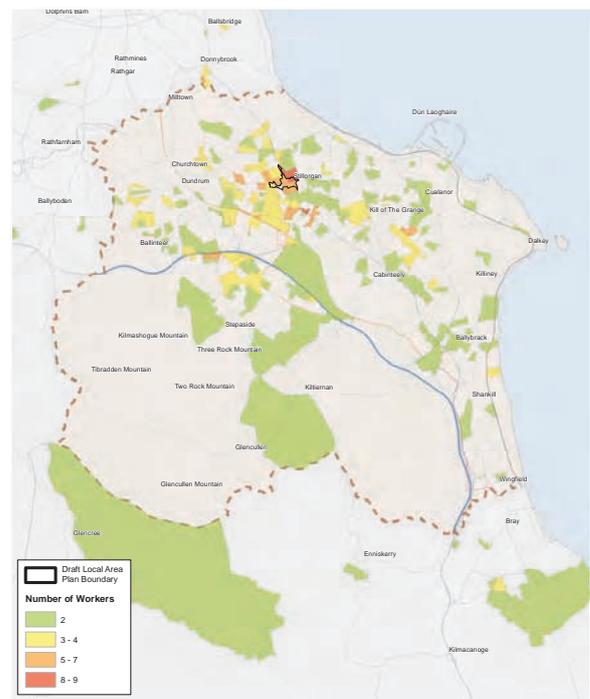
Figure 3: Population trends by Electoral Division 1981 - 2016

## 2.4 Employment Profile

### 2.4.1 Employment in Stillorgan

A total of 1,119 people work within the Stillorgan Local Area Plan area. Since 2006, the CSO have been publishing information, as part of the Census, on the location of employment. It is now possible to map both where jobs are located and the commuting 'footprint' of a given area, to display where the workers in a place like Stillorgan reside. Map 7 shows the point of origin for workers in Stillorgan – the location where these workers reside. The map is colour-coded to show higher concentrations as a red colour. As can be seen from the map, a high proportion of people who work in Stillorgan live in close proximity to the centre of Stillorgan, or are based along the N11 corridor.

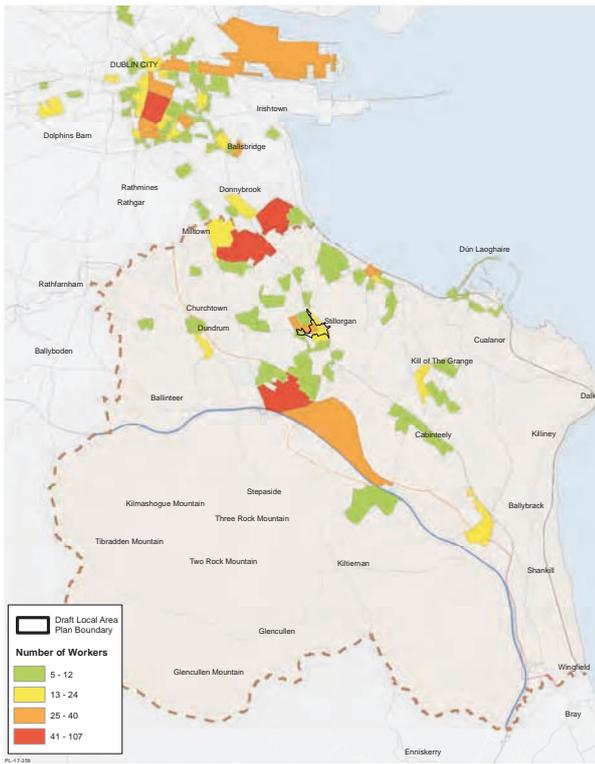
It is also possible to map the location of employment for residents of Stillorgan. Map 8 shows the location of jobs for residents of Stillorgan, with the greatest proportion of jobs being located in the City Centre, UCD/South City area and Sandyford.



Map 7: People who work in Stillorgan – where do they live?



Photo 3: View of commercial buildings at Stillorgan Village



Map 8: People who live in Stillorgan – where do they work?

## 2.4.2 Commercial Profile

While the majority of employment in Stillorgan is retail/retail services based, there is also a commercial office presence. In terms of the commercial floorspace profile of Stillorgan (excluding retail), data from the Valuation Office (which records commercial office floor area) shows that there are 47 no. commercial office units in Stillorgan, comprising only 5,000 sq.m in total. The largest office unit is just over 600 sq.m, with an average office unit size of c. 100 sq.m. This is smaller than the County average size of commercial unit – 350sq.m. The larger commercial office occupiers are involved in financial services and software development and support.

At only 5,000sq.m in total, the scale of commercial office activity in Stillorgan is clearly less significant than other District Centres in the County – for example, Blackrock District Centre comprises c.35,000sq.m in commercial office floorspace. In this regard, Stillorgan is more similar to the predominantly retailing function of District Centres such as Cornelscourt and Nutgrove.



Photo 4: View from The Hill, Stillorgan