



# Accommodation Crises

Docklands Business Forum's Submission to the  
Department of Local Government's Sustainable  
Urban Housing Update

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## **1. Introduction**

The Docklands Business Forum<sup>1</sup> (DBF) is the business association for the Dublin Docklands and is recognised as the primary business organisation by the Dublin Docklands Area Master Plan<sup>2</sup>. With more than 100 member organisations, representing over 35,000 employees, the DBF is a key stakeholder in the Docklands' area.

The purpose of the Docklands Business Forum is to ensure Docklands realises its full potential by becoming a world centre for international commerce, entrepreneurial innovation and maritime tourism. We offer businesses an opportunity to take part and contribute to a range of activities and initiatives furthering these goals while also using their participation to create valuable networks for their own enterprise.

## **2. Planning Context**

Dublin's Docklands is the country's fastest growing urban area. Now producing 9% of Ireland's GDP and over 40,000 professional jobs created it is also the country's most successful urban regeneration. Now a Strategic Development Zone (SDZ), Dublin City Council estimates the floor space in the planning pipeline will deliver an addition 20,000 employees into the area. But apartment space at the most optimistic estimate will only deliver room for 8,000 new residents'.

Docklands age profile is young as a survey recently carried out by the Docklands Business Forum of over 1000 local employees demonstrates. While many of these young employees would wish to live close to work and adjacent to the city centre few can afford to. There are too few apartments available in the area and those that are are well beyond the price bracket of most local employees. Consequently people are buying in the surrounding counties and commuting ten to fifteen hours a week to work.

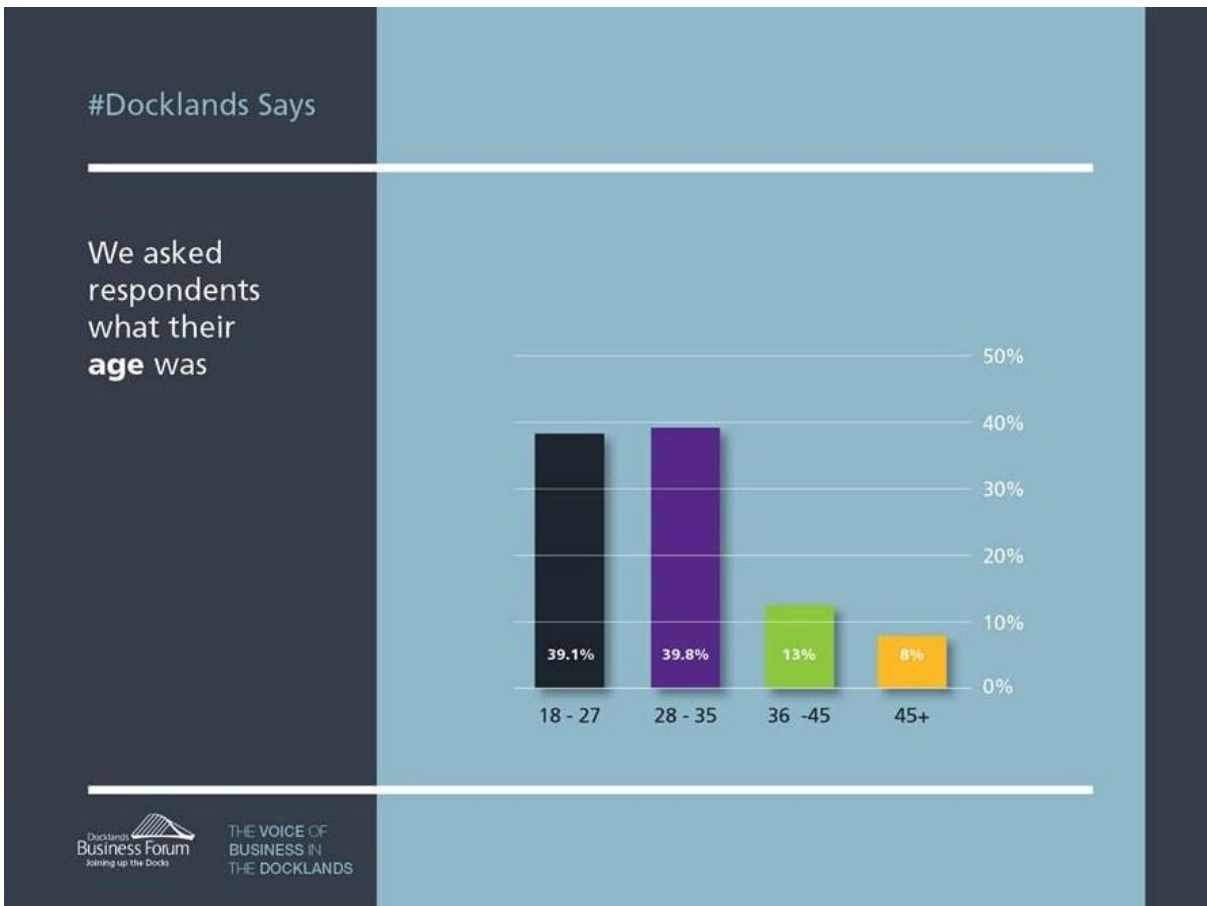
The result of over cumbersome planning regulations, however well intentioned, has (i) a devastation impact on people's quality of life, (ii) puts unnecessary pressure on transportation infrastructure, (iii) negatively impacts the environment, (iv) makes it impossible for local employers to retain talent and (v) adversely affects Dublin's attractiveness for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI). This is all the more striking when one considers at the day of writing the Taoiseach is visiting the World Economic Forum in Davos to promote the country and capital as a location for FDI.

Under the current regulations little will change to this regulatory own goal. There are only 42 promised apartments to be developed in the Bolands Quay site in southside Docklands and the average price for these is expected to be €850,000 to €900,000 with a monthly rent of approximately €3,500. On the other side of the Liffey on North Wall Quay the Dublin Landings Development is expected to deliver 270 apartments but with an average price tag of €550,000 and monthly rent of €2,500. While these developments will provide excellent accommodation for their lucky residents few if any of the soon to be 60,000 local employees will be able to afford to live in them.

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<sup>1</sup> [www.docklandsbusinessforum.ie](http://www.docklandsbusinessforum.ie)

<sup>2</sup> Policy ED13 Page 69



79% of Dockland Employees are between the ages of 18 and 35 and most would be keen to live in the area. Having such a young community would dramatically improve the area.

### 3. Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments

The Docklands Business Forum welcomes the publication of the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government's document Sustainable Urban Housing: Design Standards for New Apartments and the opportunity to make a submission.

We have however a number of concerns regarding the draft document as outlined that can be neatly summarised. While we welcome the changes that will make apartments more attractive to develop and more affordable to buy and live in we are concerned that the changes do not go far enough.

Since the last change in regulations and the implementation of the SDZ the accommodation crises in the country has deepened. Brexit has delivered an unprecedented FDI opportunity further expanding the need for affordable accommodation in Dublin. While we greatly welcome the direction the changes in a number of areas are going we feel allowing for 75% single bedroom or studios in apartment developments and a further reduction of dual aspect to 25% would be more realistic for this areas young hard working demographic.