

2013-08-19

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Louise Holden

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Recommended Citation

Holden, Louise, "New DIT Campus Will Redraw Dublin" (2013). *Media*. 3.
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New DIT campus will redraw Dublin

Huge changes are afoot at DIT as its scattered campus begins the migration to a new home

Louise Holden

Mon, Aug 19, 2013, 06:00

Most Dubliners are aware by now that the multi-campus college that is DIT is making its way to a new one-stop-shop in north Dublin. What is less well known is the huge impact that this move is going to have on the city of Dublin, as DIT gets set to occupy a new city quarter that will transform the area forever.

Prof Brian Norton, president of DIT, says that for the 20,000 students studying at the institute the move should be seamless. The Grangegorman campus has been home to DIT playing fields and students' union events for many years now, so the buildings are familiar.

And a number of DIT's services have already relocated to Grangegorman. The vanguards of the move – from a student perspective – will be the arts, science and social science students, roughly 1,000 of whom will make the move to Grangegorman in September 2014.

There will follow three years of continued expansion at the campus in time to accommodate DIT's intention to have 10,000 students on campus by September 2017. By that same year, the DIT campus at Grangegorman will have its own Luas stop at DIT Broadstone. The transformation will be complete by 2020 when all activities and students will be based at Grangegorman.

At the heart of the city

Norton wants to debunk any notion that DIT students are being cast out into the sticks. The new entrance, off the North Circular Road near Phibsborough, will be a hop and a skip from O'Connell Street, he says, and just two Luas stops away when the new system is in place.

“The first thousand students to move to the campus next year will be coming from our current campuses on Mountjoy Square and Portland Row. They will use a dedicated entrance just down the road from the Phibsborough crossroads, well-served by buses. They will be still be very much at the heart of the city but as the campus grows, they will enjoy services they currently don't have all in the one place: canteens, careers services, health, sports. It will be much more accessible.”

The Grangegorman campus, once the site of St Brendan's Hospital, comprises 70 acres, 50 acres of which will be occupied by educational buildings when the development is complete. It will have an indelible effect on the geography of Dublin, says Prof Norton.

“This will constitute a new quarter of the city, transformed like the docklands was over the past decade,” he says.

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DickBarrett Rank 0

I really hope the move goes as planned. Knowing how our Departments of Finance and Education behave, proper funding could be derailed and corners cut, and the denizens of the new DIT could find themselves having to sit in portakabins connected by muddy paths for several years. Please Ruari and Michael, do not let that happen.

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