MAYNOOTH DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXERCISE

SHELAGH B. WADDINGTON

St. Patrick's College, Maynooth.

The following field exercise is designed for use with Leaving Certificate students. It is based on Maynooth, Co. Kildare, a town of approximately 5,000 inhabitants plus a large third level student population attending St. Patrick's College. The town has grown rapidly over the past several years, becoming increasingly a dormitory settlement for Dublin. The exercise outlined here need not be carried out in Maynooth, as it may be readily adapted for use in any town or city area for which County Development Plan information is available. The exercise was "road tested" by a group of AGTI members on 16th May 1992, and I gratefully acknowledge their helpful comments on that occasion.

A. Goals
1. To develop an understanding of the planning process.
2. To improve understanding of the factors affecting change over time in an area.
3. To develop a clearer understanding of the form of a settlement.
4. To apply a variety of geographical skills and techniques.
5. To develop decision making, interpretation and analysis skills.

B. Related Sections of Leaving Certificate Syllabus

Social Geography -	(d) the social landscape	(1) settlement . . . development, form.
Economic Geography -	(3) tertiary industry - services	
Regional Geography -	Ireland	
Teaching Objectives	'investigate social and economic problems of own area'	
	' . . . should acquire facility in the use of geography's mode of enquiry'	
Rubric	' . . . from the study and construction of . . . bar graphs, pie charts . . . as well as from other cartographic forms'.	

C. Prior Learning Required
Map reading skills, e.g. location, scale
Land use mapping techniques (just a brief introduction)
Basic understanding of the planning process (or at least the Development Plan - the notes below would be more than enough detail)

The Development Plan: This is a framework for development by local authorities and by private developers within their own areas. A

Development Plan is prepared by each local authority and should be reviewed at least every five years. The Plan should be dynamic and positive with an inbuilt flexibility to allow for expanding and changing types and rates of development. The method of producing the plan was amended in 1976 to allow for the incorporation of unforeseen but desirable developments and to allow for positive responses to representation made about the Draft Plan.

Advantages of the Development Plan
1. Public participation in planning of home area.
2. Local Authorities produce plan without needing Central Government approval.
3. Increased amenity spaces in residential areas since this system began.
4. Increased amenity tree planting.
5. Protection of buildings from demolition, unacceptable advertising.
6. Prevention of proliferation of roadside hoardings.

Problems/Disadvantages of the Development Plan
1. Lack of integration between the Planning section and the other sections of the County Council.
2. Plans tend to include vast numbers of vague objectives, to avoid "missing" any desirable development.
3. Lack of co-ordination between County plans and national/regional plans.
4. Plans are often very inflexible, despite the theoretical flexibility.

County Kildare Development Plan: Part I of the plan is a review of the overall development plans for the County and Part II concentrates on plans for the various towns in Co. Kildare, e.g. Maynooth. Each individual town plan is divided into three parts:

    (a) **Introduction** - the town is located and general points are made about its situation, both physically and in relation to development in surrounding areas. The history and basic architecture or plan of the town is given and a general review is made of what is provided in the town and some outline of future developments of these is given.

    (b) **Policy** - this lists the basic policy aims of the County Council during the period of the plan for the town.

    (c) **Objectives** - this section is composed of specific statements of what the Council aims to ensure will happen during the life of the plan. These objectives cover a wide variety of areas, including Utilities, Roads and Traffic, Housing, Community Facilities, Obsolete Areas and Renewal, Amenities. There is also a general statement about the preservation ad protection of Heritage items.

D. The Fieldwork

Teacher Preparations:

(a) Prepare and duplicate local map - 1:1000, 1:2500 or based on one in a local guide book (eg. Figure 1). Because of copyright restrictions it might be better to produce your own - once it is done it can be re-used.

(b) Obtain a copy of, or consult the County Development Plan - preferably an older one for this exercise, so that some of the objectives will have been achieved.

Either Select suitable objectives (disregard ones relating to sewers or any other things which would be hard for students to locate)

Or Select suitable sections from which students can choose their own objectives.

(c) Prepare a preliminary version of the student exercise handout.

(d) Visit the area and test the exercise to ensure that all chosen objectives can be identified/located.

(e) Amend handout if necessary, then duplicate.

Other requirements (in an ideal world): clipboards (1 per student), large polythene bags (to put clipboards in if it is wet - large enough to write on board when inside)

Immediately before the exercise:

(a) Review exercise with students, stressing practical details and safety.

(b) Divide class into 3's (a group this size is safe for working, unthreatening to passers-by, and ensures that the group can make decisions)

N.B. DO NOT ALLOW STUDENTS TO TAKE HANDOUTS, etc. AWAY WITH THEM BEFORE THE EXERCISE.

E. Student Handout - (see pages 109 and 110)

F. Data Analysis/Presentation

This section is not exhaustive, no doubt you can think of alternative ways to do this.

Current Objectives:

1. Students prepare individual maps to show achievement/non-achievement levels.

(map location, drawing skills)

2. Comparisons may be done between overall achievement level and achievement of different types of objectives.

(bar or pie charts could be drawn to summarize)

3. Students could discuss in groups or write individual answers to summary questions, e.g.

1. Which types of objectives appear to be more likely to be achieved?

Why do you think this is? (Answers might relate to cost, popularity with general public, etc.)

2. Some objectives have not been achieved. Suggest reasons for this.

3. When objectives had been carried out, were the results always satisfactory?

    Give an example of an unsatisfactory result, explain why this is so and suggest a solution to the problem.

4. Look at the maps produced by the other groups. Are your conclusions the same?

    Try to explain why you have different results in some cases.

Future Objectives

1. Students prepare individual maps to show the locations of their suggested new objectives, and state these in written form.

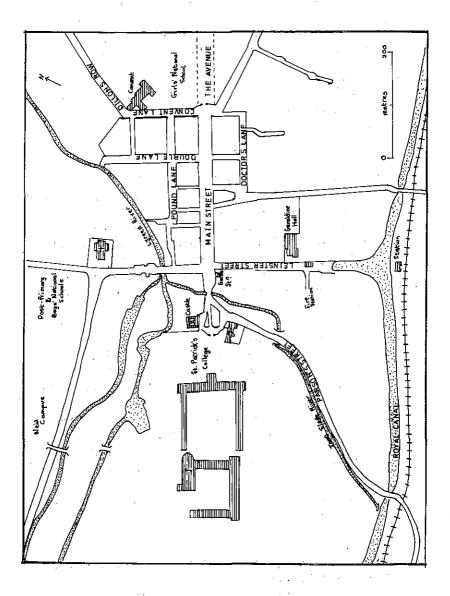2. Collect suggestions from all groups and produce a summary map and set of objectives.

    This would probably be more successful with input from the teacher - perhaps with her/him producing a summary objective sheet and students making individual maps.

3. Students analyse suggestions in terms of location, cost, types of objectives (e.g. amenity, community facilities, etc.) Maps can be drawn to summarize, plus graphs of various types.

4. Students could discuss in groups or write individual answers to summary questions, including Q3, plus:

    1. Summarize the types of changes which the class feel would be of most benefit to the town.

    2. State the *three* new objectives which you feel should be included in the next County Development Plan. One should come from each section of objectives.

    3. Explain in detail your reasons for selecting *each* of the three new objectives.

G. Possible Extensions to the Exercise

1. Hold a mock 'public' meeting to deal with one or more controversial objective.

2. Devise a questionnaire and carry out a survey to find out what changes local residents would like. Compare these with what the County Council suggest in the Development Plan.

3. If students are working in more than one area, comparisons can be made between them or if the exercise has been done before changes can be considered. The second idea also introduces the use of secondary data sources.

Figure 1. Outline map of Maynooth

STUDENT HANDOUT
DEVELOPMENT PLAN EXERCISE

Read the whole handout **before** doing anything else.
Ask for help if there is anything which you do not understand.

Before you go out

Read through the following list of objectives from the 1977 Kildare County Development Plan. (The Teacher should go through this list to ensure that vocabulary is understood).

3.6 Community Facilities
1. Implement plans for the provision of new Branch Library.
2. Complete the construction of bus shelter and public toilets in the Square and integrate with amenity scheme.
3. Implement as far as possible the provision of public swimming pool.
4. Co-operate with the Maynooth Development Association in the establishment of sports and social centre near Harbour.
5. Assist the EHB in its efforts to set up the area headquarters for the provision of health services in north Kildare adjacent to the existing fire station.

3.7 Renewal of Obsolete Areas
1. Investigate the possibility of removing the galvanised iron shed in Leinster Street opposite the entrance to the fire station.
2. Investigate the redevelopment of derelict and blighted property adjoining the Convent at Dillon's Row.
3. Investigate the redevelopment of Pound Lane area paying attention to the character of some existing buildings of merit.
4. Investigate the rehabilitation of property in Parson's Street, paying particular attention to the character of the street and its preservation if possible.
5. Direct the clearance of all unauthorised structures and hoardings in the development area.

3.8 Amenity
1. Investigate the cleaning and development of the amenity potential of the stream flowing beside Parson's Street.
2& 3 Prepare an amenity scheme for the Harbour and Canal Area and facilitate its implementation as far as possible. Investigate the retention of the canal and harbour as an amenity feature.

4. Investigate a scheme for the re-planting of the trees in Main Street.
5. Protect and preserve the area at the College Gates and Geraldine Castle - the main street axis together with the avenue to Carton (Investigate Tree Preservation Order); protect and preserve the main architectural cross axis to the Harbour.
6. Implement amenity scheme for Courthouse Square as far as financially and physically possible.
7. Investigate an amenity scheme for the Lyreen River Area, including the construction of a footbridge and a pedestrian right of way from Double Lane to the Boys' School.

Locate the item or area referred to in each objective on the map provided. Mark the objective number of the map in pencil at the correct place.

Go into the town and visit each of the places you have marked on your map.

I   At *each* site
   a   Decide whether or not the objective has been carried out successfully.
   b   Mark your decision on the map by using the code   * = successful
                                                                                   x = not carried out
                                                                                   + = partly done
                                                                                   ? = not sure
   c   In your field note book make comments on what you have found, e.g. if an objective has been only partly achieved, what has been done?

II As you go around the town
   a   Look for places where you feel changes should be made to improve the town.
        Find at least *three* of such places, one in *each* section of the plan.
   b   Mark these places on your map, using letters A, B, C etc.
   c   In your note book, list details of changes which you feel should be made.

When you have finished the exercise meet at (wherever is appropriate). You must be at the meeting place no later than (add a suitable time).

Important   Stay with your Group
                            Follow instructions **carefully**
                            Take care when crossing roads
                            Remember that you are representing the school in public.

Take with You   This handout, your map, clipboard, pens/pencils,
     -                    notebook, polythene bag.