

Examine the development of one urban area in any Irish region you have studied.

(30 marks)

Answer

In this answer I will discuss the development of Dublin city. Dublin city has developed from a small Viking settlement in the 9th century where the Vikings established Dublin as a small trading town on the south banks of the river liffey. In the 13th century the Normans took over Dublin and went on to fortify the city building Dublin castle, which later became the centre of British administration. Dublin continued to develop as an important trading city.

During the 1950's, Dublin city experienced rapid development. The availability of employment within the city, particularly around the Dublin docklands, resulted in huge levels of rural to urban migration for employment. Dublin continued to attract industry as cheap employment for companies was available and consequently population continued to grow in the 1970s. In an attempt to control urban sprawl, new towns were developed on the outskirts of the city including Blanchardstown and Tallaght. These new towns accommodated the overspill of population from Dublin city; however, Dublin continued to grow into the 21st century and these towns were engulfed by the sprawling city. Ireland's current population stands at 4,857,000 (2018). On top of this, for the first time since 2009, there was net inward migration of Irish Nationals adding to the employment sector and contributing to the current demand in the housing market in the Dublin region. This had been compounded in Dublin's development with the rise in non-nationals entering the workforce, now making 12.2% of the Irish population.

Multi-national companies have been attracted to Dublin, locating on the edge of the city due to the good transport infrastructure. This further encouraged the growth of Dublin city. Dublin's boundaries now extend as far as Meath and Kildare. The increase in commuters has put pressure on transport infrastructure in the city with peak travel times increasing. Planners have attempted to tackle these problems by upgrading the M50 Motorway to six lanes, the extension of Dart services as currently proposed into North county Dublin, designated bus corridors (QBC's), the extension of the LUAS and the building of Port tunnel, but as it stands the busiest intersection in the countries road network is still found at the M7/ M50 intersection.