Support for Community Gardens

I am writing in support of the rezoning of Newcomen Court, an existing area of open space within the North East Inner City (NEIC), from Zone 1 to Zone 9 (Amenity/Open Space Lands/Green Network) as it accurately re􏰀ects the existing use of the space as the home of Mud Island Community Garden and the Larkin Unemployed Centre's horticultural course for unemployed men.

The area I live in, the north inner city,  has one of the lowest tree canopies in the country and is in need of more designated open green spaces, not less. I have been a member of Mud Island Community Garden for over ten years. As well as providing us with fresh fruit and vegetables, it's been a wonderful way to meet people and socialise and its many annual events are hugely popular and well attended by the local community.  Mud Island was also a life saver for the local community and community organisations in the North Strand and Ballybough area during the Covid pandemic as it provided a much needed safe outdoor space to garden and to socialise.

Changing the site to Z9 recognises the existing use of the space at Newcomen Court and is consistent with many of the objectives in Chapter 10 of the Development Plan, in particular to protect existing green infrastructures and to develop multifunctional green spaces that meet community needs. Mud Island also actively contributes to the National Biodiversity Action Plan and the All Ireland Pollinator Plan and is an ideal site for increasing native hedgerow planting and adding to the tree canopy in the area.

I also support **Dublin Community Growers** submission asking for an additional objective to Chapter 10's Objective GIO28 Urban Farming and Food Production, namely - to create a designated post within Dublin City Council to work with local communities to develop, advise and support community growing projects, community gardens and allotments, so it would read:

1. To support the provision of urban farming and food production initiatives, where feasible, and in particular, on the roofs of buildings, as temporary uses on vacant, under-utilised or derelict sites in the city and in peripheral urban areas / near M50, and in residential developments;
2. to seek to increase the provision of allotments in the city in the order of 100%;
3. To carry out a survey of underutilised open spaces for community gardens with a view to identifying areas in the city
4. **To create a designated post within Dublin City Council to work with local communities to develop, advise and support community growing projects, community gardens and allotments.**